Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice: Education in multicultural societies

Day 1: 15 October

8:30 – 9:30   Registration, Room: In front of Skriða
9:30 – 9:45   Opening, Room: Saga Film, Studio
9:45 – 10:30  Keynote I: Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, Room: Saga Film, Studio
11:00 – 12:30 Parallel session I

Room: Borgartún 30, 3d floor
Knowledge and Understanding: Municipal Educational Policy Related to Immigrant Students in Iceland

Hanna Ragnarsdóttir and Anh-Dao Tran, University of Iceland, IS

"The main aim of this paper is to explore the views and the experiences of key people in the central offices of four municipalities in Iceland in implementing policy related to immigrant children and students. It is one of the two aims of the project titled Municipal educational policy related to immigrant students and its implementation in four Icelandic municipalities. The project is a two-year project (2014-2015) and complementary to the three-year (2013-2015) NordForsk and Icelandic Centre for Research funded project Learning spaces for inclusion and social justice: Success stories from immigrant students and school communities in four Nordic countries (LSP).

Both projects are grounded in the field of critical multiculturalism, which has focused on challenges in modern multicultural societies, such as questions of cultural rights of minority groups, and that education has developed in relation to the defined needs of a particular majority or majorities (May & Sleeter, 2010; Nieto, 2010; Parekh, 2006). Other theoretical approaches in the field of policy and leadership are also applied (Artiles, Kozleski & Waitoller, 2011; Sergiovanni, 2001; Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000; Townsend, 2007; Woods, 2005).

Interviews were conducted with eight key people in the central offices of the four municipalities. Purposeful sampling was used for selecting the participants. The schools in the LSP project were located in these municipalities. The main research questions were the following: 1) What educational policies related to immigrant children and students have been developed in the four municipalities in recent years and how have these been implemented? 2) What support for implementation is available for the schools? 3) What are the main obstacles to implementation of the policies?

The findings from the interviews indicate that the key people are aware of the importance of enriching the immigrant children´s/students´ heritage language and in bridging their home and
school languages and cultures. They emphasize the necessity to cooperate with the parents, and the need for members of the school community (administrators, teachers, parents, staff) and different institutions to cohesively work together for an effective educational experience for the children. Despite the budget constraints after the 2008 financial crisis, there has been a positive development in inclusive strategies of immigrant children.

**A University Program with “The Whole World as a Focus”: Supporting and expanding an international education program in Iceland**

Susan Elizabeth Gollifer and Brynja Elizabeth Halldórsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

The International Studies in Education Program (ISEP) at the University of Iceland, which is taught in English, was a social justice response to demographic change in the country, including a growing immigrant population. Although the initial planning of the program took place during Iceland’s years of economic prosperity, implementation in the fall of 2008 coincided with the onset of the financial crisis. Since its inception, a number of articles have documented the progress of the program by drawing on the experience of multiple stakeholders. These articles have addressed important issues: the role of English, de facto segregation of students, and local contexts within global trends (Books et al., 2010); the case-study approach as pedagogical practice (Macdonald and Pálsdóttir, 2011; 2013); the challenges and implications of empowering diverse teachers for diverse learners (Ragnarsdóttir, 2012); and the effects of critical pedagogy and experiences of female student graduates (Ragnarsdóttir & Blöndal, 2014). In this paper we build on the lessons learned from previous documentation to focus on systemic and pedagogic concerns.

The presenters of this paper are the current ISEP coordinator and a teacher who has been working on the program since 2011. Our intention is to revisit issues raised in previous articles and to discuss how the program has responded to these and with what effect. We address systemic and pedagogic concerns, including the impact of policy and financial constraints on options for non-Icelandic speaking students beyond the ISEP, and working with progressive pedagogies in conventional education settings.

In particular we emphasise the strengths and challenges of an emerging community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), which has succeeded in maintaining momentum to sustain the ISEP. Our community of practice is characterised by teachers and students working formally and informally, collaboratively and intuitively to shape and direct the program, and advocate for systemic and pedagogic change.

Although located in the Icelandic context, our paper contributes to a broader international dialogue on the purpose of higher education in multicultural societies. We propose that the concept of community of practice applied within higher education may lead us to explore and find answers to Henri Giroux’s (2015) question: What might it mean to define the university as a pedagogical space that disrupts, disturbs, inspires and energizes young people to be individual and social agents rather than as an institution that redefines itself in terms of market values and reacts mostly to market fluctuations?

**Inclusive Practices or Exotic Happenings? – A Study of a Global Focus Week in a Norwegian Primary School**
Thor-Andre Skrefsrud, Joke Dewilde, Anne Skaret and Ole Kolbjørn Kjørven, Hedmark University College, NO

Global Focus Weeks are frequently seen as important parts of schools’ work on inclusion and social justice. The research literature, however, is far more skeptical, arguing that such weeks are not inclusive but represent “exotic happenings” which instead reinforce boundaries and stereotypical images (Øzerk, 2008).

From this point of departure, the project which we report from aims at exploring and understanding how diversity comes into play in different school subjects and in various working methods in a Global Focus Week. The research questions are accordingly: How is cultural, linguistic, literary and religious complexity represented during a Global Focus Week in a Norwegian primary school? How is a Global Focus Week in a Norwegian primary school perceived by different participants?

In the project, we view Global Focus Weeks in light of Mary Louise Pratt’s (1991) concept of ‘contact zone’. The contact zone refers to the complexity of cultural, linguistic and religious diversity which characterizes a modern plural society, and it invites to constantly exposing oneself through negotiations, putting ideas and identities at risk. We approach and explore Global Focus Weeks in a multidisciplinary manner including a transcultural (Welsch, 1999), a transreligious (Bergmann, 2004), a translingual (Garcia, 2009), and a literary perspective (Nussbaum, 1997). Thus, we aim to provide a thick description of this particular kind of contact zone and of the different meanings ascribed to this week.

The research project is designed as a qualitative study of a single case, bounded in time and place. In this paper, we will present preliminary analyzes of one Global Focus Week in a Norwegian Primary School. The data to be analyzed and presented will be collected early fall 2015, using participant observation, audio-recording, interviews and the collection of documents. In our presentation, we wish to discuss our preliminary findings in order to refine our analytical tools.

Room: Borgartún 30, 6th floor, Room A.

Discourses about Cultural Diversity in Preschool and Teacher Education

Aslaug Andreassen Becher and Brit Steinsvik, Høgskolen i Oslo, NO

This paper is based on an interdisciplinary research project called Diversity in Teacher Education. The project has about 20 researchers working in different academic subjects in early childhood and teacher educations. The aim of the project is to develop more knowledge about social practices of cultural diversity in teacher educations in Norway.

The topic and aim of our study is to find out more about how teacher educators talk about diversity. How do they express themselves and why? What concepts are in work, what frames of understanding can we find. Further, in what ways are National Guidelines communicating to the teacher educators in this field.

How do their discourses construct institutional knowledge about cultural diversity is produced and performed with students.

Methods in use are focus-group interviews with teacher educators from two university colleges in Norway.
The empirical material has been transcribed and shared in a common research base. In this paper we use discourse analyses, following Fairclough, in working with selected texts/interviews. In this paper we have strategically selected five group interviews for in dept analyzes. We search for nodal points in the texts and the contexts these are part of.

The preliminary results provide us with tensions, contradictions and variations in frames of understanding (discourses) inside and between the focus groups. These are connected to themes as visible – invisible, assimilation-integration, what is cultural and what is multicultural, what kind of cultural differences are relevant in teacher education and not.

In discussing these results we will use theoretical perspectives from Charles Taylor, Parekh, Banks, Cummins, Gressgård and more. Their theories are helpful in discussing what kind of policies democratic societies must have in relation to cultural diversity. Discourses on cultural diversity in teacher education are influencing how social and educations practices concerning cultural similarities and differences are performed in the next generation of students. How teacher educators position themselves in relation to the dilemmas between distinctiveness and sameness, between particularity and generality, between individual rights and group rights are thus of importance, also in relation to the conference theme on learning spaces for inclusion and social justice.

A multilayered concept of culture

Cecilie Thun and Karin Fajersson, Oslo University, NO

This paper will explore multicultural perspectives in teacher education in Norway. More specifically, we investigate teacher educators’ experiences with and understanding of multicultural perspectives in the teaching of arts and crafts.

The paper is based on group interviews with teacher educators at two University Colleges in Norway, as part of the project ‘Diversity in teacher education’ (DILUT). The interviewees are teaching arts and crafts at the Department of Early Childhood Education and at the Department of Primary and Secondary Teachers Education.

Diversity and multiculture are central concepts, and in this paper we explore a multilayered concept of culture. Our interviewees have a particular responsibility for teaching future teachers and kindergarten teachers about the arts, culture and creativity. They see themselves and their students as cultural mediators and they emphasize the importance of being able to be critical and reflective of their role as cultural mediators. In that respect, multicultural perspectives are viewed as a resource. They also underline the significance of cultural heritage and history.

This paper will examine some potential tensions in our data material. Firstly, the tension between culture as ‘arts and culture’ and culture as a concept within the social sciences. Secondly, the tension between culture as tradition and ‘roots’ (stable) versus culture as meaning-making in new communities (dynamic). Thirdly, the tension between culture as national versus culture as global. Fourthly, the tension between culture as ‘genuine’ versus culture as interpretation. And fifthly, ‘multicultural identity’ as visible signs of differences versus ‘multicultural identity’ as common for all.

In addition, we would like to explore some silences in the data material. Dimensions like class, gender, race, and power differences in majority – minority relation were not emphasizes in the interviews. We will apply an intersectional perspective, which means that gender, ethnicity and class, and other categories of difference, are seen as intersecting. Intersectionality can be defined as ‘the
interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power (Davis 2008:68). An intersectional approach explores how categories of difference are ‘intertwined and mutually constitutive’ (Davis 2008:71). Thus, categories are seen as dynamic and changeable, not predetermined and stable. Moreover, the analytic approach recognizes the differences of power in minoritizing and majoritizing processes (Staunæs 2003; Berg et al. 2010). In an intersectional approach, power is not stable, but depends on the intersection of different categories and the specific situation.

**Born at Leifstöð Iceland International Airport: The Deficiency Model**

**Anh-Dao Tran and Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS**

The research presented in this paper includes part of the data that forms the foundation for the doctoral study Deficient “foreigners” or untapped resources: Students of Vietnamese background in Icelandic upper secondary schools. The study aims to provide new knowledge about immigrant youth’s progress through the upper secondary school system, in general, and youth of Vietnamese background, in particular. The ultimate goal is to bring about more school success, which would improve school attendance and deter dropping out. Education would be seen as a more effective way of integration and preparation for active citizenship in the future for all students.

The objective of this specific paper is to explore the social and academic experiences of students of immigrant background who were from the upper secondary schools in Iceland and participated in the study.

This paper applies the lens of critical multiculturalism to the Icelandic situation. Multicultural education is inclusive, insisting on valuing diversity and equal opportunity regardless of gender, religion, belief, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, disability, or other status (Banks, 2007). It has the teaching philosophy that encompasses 1) rigorous leadership and clear vision on the part of principals, 2) teachers’ thorough understanding of their own perceptions with the aim of understanding their students and therefore being culturally responsive in their pedagogy, 3) the alteration of curriculum and the school environment to benefit students of diverse background (Banks, 2007; Gay, 2000; Nieto, 1999).

In the research, interviews were conducted with thirteen students, eight teachers, and four administrators. Purposeful sampling was used for selecting participants. Underpinning critical ethnography with a multicultural education perspective, I wish to contribute to a transformative educational system that engenders equity and well-being across ethnic groups (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Equity, freedom, and universal well-being are the basic ingredients of a democratic society.

The findings from the interviews indicate that due to the lack of resources and knowledge about pedagogical practices informed by multicultural education philosophy, the administrators and teachers in the study resorted to doing the best they could. The immigrant students’ experiences were that despite their warm feeling towards their teachers and their belief that their teachers were trying to do their best, the students were perceived by many teachers to be deficient due to their lack of Icelandic language proficiency and were socially isolated from their Icelandic-heritage peers.”

**Room: Saga Film, Studio**
A discussion of the research of Melby-Lervag and Lervag on transfer of reading comprehension

Thor Ola Engen, Hedmark University College, NO

For a long time, there has been a wide consensus among researchers that second language learners have a weaker comprehension of reading and language than first language learners. This state of affairs have recently been confirmed by the Norwegian researchers, Monica Melby-Lervåg and Arne Lervåg in a meta-analysis based on more than 2500 independent studies (Melby Lervåg & Lervåg, 2011a, 2013).

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, Jim Cummins formulated four consecutive and interdependent hypotheses, which – considered in conjunction – predict that (various forms of) bilingual education – under more specified conditions – will improve second language learners’ school achievement, by allowing them to establish language and reading comprehension in their first language, as a basis for transfer to the second language. For a long period, these hypotheses have given bilingual instruction a key position when it comes to designing suitable educational models for linguistic minority students.

In line with Cummins’ hypotheses, Melby-Lervåg and Arne Lervåg in their meta analysis confirmed the existence of a correlation between decoding related reading skills in the first and second languages. At the same time, however, they found that transfer is quite modest as far as language comprehension is concerned and virtually non-existent when it comes to reading comprehension. Melby Lervåg & Lervåg therefore conclude by recommending schools to concentrate unilaterally on improving the students’ second language skills (Melby Lervåg & Lervåg, 2011a).

These results and recommendations not only contradict the predictions of Cummins’ hypotheses, in essence they also undermine the theoretical foundation of bilingual education as a tool for adaptive education of language minority students.

In the present paper, I will not dispute that the reliability of research is improved by increased amounts of data and more sophisticated statistical processing. What I will argue, however, is that the validity of Melby Lervåg and Lervåg’s meta-analytical study is seriously threatened by their misinterpretations of the Cummins’ hypotheses.

Firstly, of the four Cummins hypotheses, Melby Lervåg and Lervåg include only two in the theoretical basis for their meta analysis, seemingly not being aware of – in any case ignoring to take into account – that the two hypotheses included – on certain crucial points should be clarified and modified by the two hypotheses not included.

Secondly, and mainly as a consequence of not taking the internal coherence of Cummins’ hypotheses into consideration, Melby Lervåg and Lervåg’s theoretical understanding of the concept of transition, of the conditions for transfer and of what is actually transferred – deviates profoundly from Cummins’ position.

As a consequence, Melby Lervåg and Lervåg’s criteria for selecting studies, and their categories for analyzing data make their meta analysis an invalid test of Cummins’ hypotheses. Even if they are not verified, the key position of Cummins’ hypotheses when it comes to designing the best educational opportunities for linguistic minority students is certainly not refuted by Melby Lervåg and Lervåg’s meta analysis.
The symbolic value of fluent literacy and legitimate language proficiency in Icelandic secondary schools

Ásgrímur Angantýsson, University of Iceland, IS

This paper investigates how theories of language as social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2008) as well as theories of reading as a cultural process (Gee, 2004) can be utilized to understand Icelandic as a school subject and language of learning and teaching in a relatively monolingual community. The purposes are twofold: (a) to identify the students’ motivations and expectations towards learning Icelandic at school in times of global English, with respect to the idea that learning the appropriate language gives social and cultural value (Bourdieu, 2008), and (b) to identify the teachers’ and administrators’ motivations for emphasizing the importance of learning and teaching Icelandic, particularly in light of ideas of cultural reproduction in education (Grenfell, 2012).

The presentation is based on preliminary results from 30 interviews conducted in six lower secondary schools and four upper secondary schools in Iceland in 2013–2014. The participants consist of 10 focus groups of students (ages 12, 15 and 18), 10 individual teachers of Icelandic, and 10 individual school principals. It turns out that most of the students believe it is desirable to acquire fluency in reading and formal writing. In their view, however, too much time is devoted to traditional school grammar at the cost of this goal. Furthermore, the students think that success in Icelandic as a school subject depends to some extent on reading habits and language instruction at home. These views, as well as certain comments by the teachers and principals, support the idea that schools tend to reward their students for knowledge and skills that are not necessarily highlighted in the classroom but which can rather be viewed as advantageous results due to a systematic cultural reproduction within families and social networks (Bordieu, 1973).


Do all young children in Iceland, including children with disabilities, have equal access to ‘the good childhood’?

Leigh M. O’Brien, State University of New York at Geneseo, US

In a summary of the 2011 “Nordic Perspectives on Caring and Teaching in Early Childhood” symposium at Sarah Lawrence College, it was noted that as part of creating a good childhood, Nordic schools create an atmosphere of inclusiveness where children are given opportunities to learn their physical limitations while developing social skills. This perspective is also found throughout Iceland’s online curriculum documents. My research in Iceland will help me continue to think about what it means to create ‘the good childhood’ in early years’ settings and how that might be related to inclusivity in diverse cultural contexts. Via this work, I hope to expand the ongoing international
conversation about varying approaches to early care and education (ECE) with particular attention to young children who are considered to have a disability.

The importance of high-quality ECE is almost universally acknowledged (e.g., Barnett & Hustedt, 2003; Maxwell, 2013; Winter, 2007). However, what exactly constitutes quality and who has access to high-quality ECE is not as clear (see, e.g., Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 2006; O’Brien, 1993b, 2015). My prior Fulbright work in Sweden suggested that the stated goal, a school for everyone, was not always realized; the Swedish school system often struggled to reconcile societal goals with school and classroom practices in terms of working with young children with disabilities. The focus of my research in Iceland will be on the similarities and differences between early years education in Sweden and Iceland. Thus, the purpose of this study is to pursue an answer to the following questions:

- What does the Icelandic concept of ‘the good childhood’ (Einarsdóttir, 2006) look like in schools for young children?
- Do all children, including children with disabilities, have equal access to this “good”? That is, does Education for All, the guiding policy of the national education system in Iceland (as per the Ministry of Education), play out the way it is intended?
- Last, how are preschool teacher practices influenced by cultural values and national policies?

In my mixed-methods research (Creswell, 2011, 2014), I will use surveys of teachers and parents (Fink, 2013), school and classroom observations (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011), analysis of government and site documents (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), and ethnographic interviews (Seidman, 2012) with preschool teachers to attempt to answer the questions posed above.

To me, this issue is one of social justice: Are all young children included? Do they all receive the same quality of education? Are schools, in fact, for every

Room: Saga Film, Room B.

Teachers’ perspectives on Multicultural Music Education: Interactive aspects of additive, inclusive and critical approaches.

María Westvall, Jan-Erik Mansikka and Marja Heimone, Örebro University, SE

This paper discusses how music teachers in Finland describe and define cultural and musical diversity and multicultural competence in relation to their teaching practice. Data were collected through focus group interviews with four different groups of teachers at Swedish-speaking minority schools in Finland. Group A consisted of four teachers from a bilingual municipality in Ostrobothnia, Group B entailed four teachers from a predominantly Swedish-speaking municipality in Ostrobothnia. Group C included three teachers from a bilingual town in southern Finland, and Group D consisted of three teachers in a Swedish-speaking school situated in a Finnish-speaking area (language island).

The findings reveal that the teachers found that the subject of music have a creative potential in relation to multicultural education. At the same time they highlighted some concerns when considering cultural diversity in the music classroom related to their teaching practice, the subject of music and the students as musical agents. Furthermore, three different perspectives on the ways in which the teachers spoke about multicultural competencies were identified: An additive, an inclusive and a critical perspective. The additive perspective comprises how cultural or musical diversity is considered to be something in addition to the majority’s perspective or the general ‘musical norms’ in the class. The inclusive perspective deals with organising the teaching in such a way that learning about musical diversity and/or applying diverse approaches in music education may result new and unexpected outcomes. Finally, the critical perspective questions established practices and cultural forms, power structures and has an emphasis on fostering critical and reflective students.

Keywords: General music education, Cultural and musical diversity, Multicultural competence, Critical Multicultural Education.

“Undoctored” first-person accounts from two student immigrants to Iceland

Kriselle Lou Suson Cagatin and Marly Simone da Cruz Gomes, introduced by Robert Berman

We are used to hearing immigrant students’ stories filtered and interpreted through various theories, perspectives and “lenses.” In this presentation, three students of immigrant backgrounds tell their own, abbreviated but “undoctored” stories about their educational experiences in upper secondary and/or elementary schools in Iceland. Kriselle arrived from the Philippines as a teen and Marly from Cape Verde at 12. Both are secondary school graduates. Kriselle is a graduate from the University of
Iceland and Marly is an undergraduate, meaning that they are not “typical” immigrant students. In fact 58% of 19 year-old immigrants in Iceland do not attend secondary school (Statistics Iceland, 2011). Nevertheless, we can learn from their stories. For example, Marly dropped out of secondary school on more than one occasion. On the other hand, Kriselle, arriving as a teen in Iceland and speaking Filipino and English, attended an English language secondary school IB program, which she calls “the best decision of my life.” They discuss difficult educational challenges and how they overcame them – “or at least pushed through,” as Kriselle says. They will share what they say is most important for teachers, researchers and student counselors to know about educating students of immigrant background. For example, they arrived from abroad with strong language backgrounds – just not in Icelandic! In Marly’s cases, her teachers neither celebrated, nor even really attempted to incorporate her languages into her learning. In addition, both agree that students with a foreign background require better guidance than they get from schools, if only to be informed about different opportunities by truly engaged counselors. What also emerges from these students’ stories is one of Iceland’s strengths for immigrant students: the flexibility of upper secondary education, which allows students to plan their education individually. However, they say that it should not be a surprise to learn that students with immigrant backgrounds have to make an extra effort to prove themselves to be as qualified as their locally-born counterparts. “And that extra effort can be very scary and difficult. But it is an important life skill to be prepared for discrimination and to compete against privilege to make something of ourselves.”

Room: Borgartún 30, 6th floor, Room B

Education, Diversity and the Challenges for Justice: Educators’ discourses on xenophobia in Japan

Yuka Kitayama, Buskerud and Vestfold University College, NO

This paper examines emerging xenophobia and the challenges for justice in education in Japan. It highlights the characteristics of the far-right movements and their impact on education, and examines concerns and reactions of educators through empirical research with teachers, teacher trainers and officers from local educational authority. It reports educators’ voices, reflecting their concerns and uncertainties regarding education against racism, as well as examining different interpretations of the problems perceived by educators from different cultural backgrounds.

In February 2013, a 14 year old Japanese girl was filmed while she was chanting with a loudspeaker in an anti-Korean demonstration lead by far-right groups, and the video was uploaded onto YouTube and widely shared. One the other hand, some ethnic schools have been targeted by racist attacks by far-right groups such as Zaitokukai, which was ordered to pay fine for damages made by their racist demonstration against a Korean Elementary School (Fackler, 2013). These incidents suggest that the rising far-right movement is a threat to children not only because it would involve them as offenders, but also its racial harassments would target minority children.

In addition, schools often become an arena of political conflicts on issues such as the national anthem or the national flag of Japan as they are considered symbols of militaristic nationalism. There have been various attempts to enhance nationalism in education by political conservatives. The Fundamental Law of Education was revised in 2006 and “fostering patriotism” was added to the purpose of education. Also, the current government promotes Moral Education which emphasizes discipline and traditional morality, and they ordered the board of education in Okinawa to adopt a
conservative textbook despite the refusal of the local school board (The Japan Times, 19 October 2013).

The interview reveals that approaches in combating racism tend to depend on individual teachers due to the lack of institutional strategies to challenge racism. Also, it found that problems on xenophobia and prejudices were perceived differently among educators from different cultural backgrounds. This paper also explores approaches to challenge the far-right ideology and movements from the viewpoint of human rights principles.


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Struggle for trust – Unintended Consequences of an “Integration Project”

Markéta Levínská and David Doubek, University of Hradek Králové, CZ

The paper has resulted from a several-year cooperation of the research team Bittnerová, Doubek, Levínská (2011) that examines issues related to Roma education in the context of social exclusion (spatial and/or symbolic isolation; limited access to healthcare, shopping, education and other services, high unemployment, substandard living conditions). The present project “Decision-making processes of helping professions in the sphere of intercultural relations” (grant no. P407-12-0547; 2012-2015) is supported by the GACR. The research is based on ethnography employing research techniques of participating observation as well as informal and semi-structured interviews.

We started our research with the issue of education related concepts that Roma parents, pupils and their non Roma teachers use. The theoretical point of departure for us was the theory of cultural models of Claudie Strauss and Naomi Quinn (2001). This approach proved to be fruitful beyond the educational context as we successfully used the theory to reconceptualize the somehow theoretically deadlocked issue of the „Romahood“ (Romipen, Roma ethnicity) which we understand as a radial family resemblance category driven by a prototype (Doubek, Levínská 2015, Wittgenstein 2001, Lakoff 1990) in the context of distributed culture (Schwartz 1978). The fieldwork experience and theoretical deliberations lead us to the role of „helping professions“ in the process of constitution of the Roma category in the context of social exclusion as we observed these professionals to play an important role in transactions between the majority and Roma minority. This shifted focus also lead to extension of theoretical perspective.

In our paper we want to discuss implications of two spectacular failures of „integration“ activities that brought creation of symbolic barriers instead. The governmental Agency for Social Inclusion – the main institution that deals with the integration of the Roma minority – initiated the establishment of “social centers” together with Mayors in the two towns where we conduct our research. Both centers that were intended to provide social services and afterschool education activities for all citizens were rejected by overwhelming majority in local referendums initiated by citizens driven politically by overt racism and legitimizened rhetorically by arguments of perceived incompetence and vested interests of Mayors. After these referendums, local communities become more divided than ever before. Paradoxically, the Roma themselves often voted against these plans. What mistakes were made and what learnings can be taken from these events, in order to ensure that similar integration projects do not fail in the future? To tackle this complex and multilayered problem we need to understand what actually happened, what the Centers meant for all participants.
and what was actually refused. For the analysis of the racism we use our above mentioned analysis of the Roma category combined with psychoanalytically informed analysis of Frantz Fanon (2008). The particular local context and post-communist history must be taken into the account to understand the status anxiety that propels the racism. It’s not just racism and status anxiety, the issue of internal migration and the dynamics of „established“ and „outsiders“ also informs the problem (Elias 1994). Besides it all was a big performance with conflicted actors trying to shatter the „stage props“ and compromise opponents by showing the ugly „true“ backstages (Goffman 1959) And finally, there are deep economical and structural conditions that form political interests in the place that must also be understood. The failure of „integration“ is then not a refusal of embracing intercultural differences but symbolic refusal of the impoverished status of the whole town the local Roma being the most glaring symbol of that impoverishment.


13:30 – 15:00 Parallel session II

Room: Borgartún 30, 3d floor  Symposium

“We are all failures – at least the best of us are“ (Barrie): Researching Immigrant Students’ School Success – Concepts, Methods and Ethics

Thor André Skrefsrud, Heidi Layne, Joke Dewilde, Fred Dervin

Symposium Abstract: This symposium represents a joint meta-analytic review of the NordForsk-funded project Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice, during which we worked on the idea of success in relation to ‘immigrant students’ in four Nordic Countries (2013-2015). Our first task consists in discussing the framework of discourses on ‘the’ immigrant in our own work in Finland and Norway. Who is a migrant? Who decides? Isn’t there a danger of neo-essentialising certain groups although we claim to ‘do’ non-essentialism? And how sustainable and social justice-oriented the label is? The second interest lies in the very notion of success. Institutions, educational actors and people outside the school context may have very different and somewhat unstable understandings of what success is and what symbolises success. Whose voices should we listen to and why? Isn’t
there a risk to disempower certain voices by only pushing through the agenda of success in research? Furthermore how can one work with such a ‘faulty’ notion without ‘ripping’ people off their agency, co-constructed aspirations and contradictions? Shouldn’t work on success also share the instability that the notion represents? This leads us to our third interest: ethics and responsibility. Nolens volens, as researchers, we hold symbolic and concrete power that needs to be questioned. As a start, as white privileged subjects working mostly with ‘coloured’ migrants, have we reflected enough on the influence this has on our perspective on success? Are there ways we could lower the hierarchy our presence in the field represents? The symposium is composed of four papers which review these questions.

Lessons from research on “successful” schools: Dilemmas of methods, ethics and critical thinking

Thor Andre Skrefsrud, Hedmark University College, NO

This paper reflects upon the potential conflict between a “best practice-research” which aims at identifying “what works” within a standardized curriculum and across different contexts (OECD, 2007, Slavin, 2002), and an ethnographically-inspired research which aims at describing and understanding the complexity and ambiguity of educational practices and classroom interactions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1996).

The reflection is related to experiences from research conducted within the Learning Spaces project, more specifically to the organizational provision of learning for newly arrived students in two primary schools in Norway. One of the main aims in the project has been to explore and understand how social justice is implemented in equitable and successful diverse Nordic school contexts. In order to contribute to this aim I have studied schools which organize tuition for newly arrived students in different ways – one offers separate reception classes while the other practices direct integration into mainstream. The methodological approach has been inspired by ethnographical research and includes participant observation, formal and informal interviews with teachers and school leaders, and collection of school policy documents (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

In the paper I will discuss the possible contributions from this research with regard to recommendations of “best practice”. The theoretical frame for the discussion is Volckmars’ (2000) critic of a research which reduces the complexity of pedagogical practice by affirming views the researcher had in advance, framed within the notion of “decisionism”. The paper argues that an ethnographical fieldwork may give a valuable contribution also when it comes to understanding “best practice”. In my case the fieldwork includes episodes and situations of what could be said to characterize “good practice” when it comes to the provision of organizational learning conditions for newly arrived, but also practices that might be seen as the opposite. A recommendation of “best practice” within this approach would thus not point towards one specific organization model. On the contrary it could be argued that different models may have their strength and weaknesses in different contexts and for different students, and that “best practice” would be to develop a consciousness towards the variety of needs within a diverse student body of newly arrived.
Research on ‘successful immigrant students’. A critical approach to research ethics and methodology

Joke Dewilde, Hedmark University College, NO

The objective of the Learning Spaces project is to contribute to inclusion and social justice in schools in the 21st century. The first aim is to ‘understand and learn from the experiences of immigrant students who have succeeded academically and socially’. I set out to develop a participant-sensitive methodology together with young people, applying a critical understanding of research ethics and methodology (Cannella & Lincoln, 2011). The aim of this paper is to reflect upon what it means to engage with the struggle for equity and justice as a critical researcher in a study on ‘successful immigrant students’.

Advocating a critical research ethics, Cannella and Lincoln (2011, p. 81) describe the tendency in traditional social science to define ethical research methodology in terms of its ability to contribute with universalist results which can be used to ‘save’ humankind as ‘an imperialist imperative’. In contrast, they describe a critical research ethics as relational and collaborative, in addition to one that aligns with resistance and marginality.

More precisely, I will show how I collaborated with Mohammed (19) and Bahar (16) in developing methods which would allow me to ‘get to know them’, as I framed my research aim for them. Through a process of negotiation, Mohammed suggested that he could write reflective texts at the end of our interviews, and Bahar invited me as her Facebook friend, which in both cases allowed me to study identity negotiations (cf. Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004) in their writings.

During interviews, the young people gave a somewhat glossy picture of their (successful) lives. In addition to possibly being in response to the fact that they were recruited as ‘successful immigrant students’, I interpret their stories to being in dialogue with wider school and societal discourses which have a tendency to report on difficulties connected to first generation newcomers. The students’ writings nuanced the positive picture as they showed traces of struggle for equity and justice.

The ultimate goal of the Learning Spaces project is to develop guidelines and school reform based what is learnt from ‘successful immigrant students’ and ‘successful school communities’. Applying a critical perspective, the researcher needs to engage in Mohammed and Bahar’s struggles and put their range of knowledges, understandings, languages, and ways of being at the centre of their actions. This involves “being responsive and responsible to, while both trusting and avoiding construction of the Other” (Cannella & Lincoln, 2011, p. 83).

“I may look like Somali but I am a Finn” - Who are we talking about when researching immigrant students?

Heidi Layne and Fred Dervin, University of Helsinki, FI

Since its institutionalization in the nineteenth century, ‘Western’ research has normalised and universalised societies, but also the successes of their members (Boatca, 2010). Immigrant students are constantly researched and discussed within the academy and in the field of multicultural/social justice education. Yet too little emphasis is placed on problematizing the fact that they are isolated as being immigrant students. Who decides the categories for immigrants, the majority and minority? This paper ‘crosses’ data from teachers’, students’, school counselors’, and other school staff...
members’ definitions of who these immigrants are. At the same time we compare and interrogate their discourses on future opportunities for “students with an immigrant background”. Our analysis is based on Sara Ahmed’s (2006) critique of white antiracism, which allows us to feel good and less threatened by the other, based on the claim that “we have so good systems in place for support that there’s nothing else to do”.

**Comfortability as convenience in Nordic education? Desperately seeking immigrant success stories**

Fred Dervin and Heidi Layne, University of Helsinki, FI

While working on this Nordforsk project, we often felt that we were running after something, chasing after some dream. The consequence was often contradictory moments of eureka, dissatisfaction and uncomfortability. We asked ourselves so many questions that remain unanswered: is this or that a sign of success? Is it ‘their’ success or ‘ours’? How much our own biases related to the very idea of success influence our work? This student strongly argues that she is successful but that one appears too shy to be so positive, who are we to present as successful then? And how come this student seems to contradict herself about how successful she has been? Is our vision of success too short-term and too linear? What about the voices of parents and friends? How to balance these potentially counter-discourses on success? And how do we report our results? Recycling the metaphor of the liquid from Z. Bauman (2004) to describe our contemporary world, success appeared to be like water running from a tap: impossible to grasp as it drops through our fingers. Yet, as the project had promised to ‘catch some Nordic dreams’, we decided to devise a ‘convenient’, ‘imperfect’ but somewhat simplexifying (portmanteau word composed of simple + complex) framework that would allow us to avoid many of the caveats described in this symposium. The framework is represented by two ‘simplex’ continua placed on crossed axes: subjective and objective projections of success and explicit and implicit projections. We believe that this framework can help us to give a more ‘comfortable’ picture of success which can intersect the potential contradictions and/or parallels between e.g. ‘political arithmetic’ constructions of success (grades, selection criteria to enter a specific school: objective-explicit or -implicit projections) and students’ co-constructed discourses of their success (subjective-explicit or -implicit projections). This is far from being a satisfying recipe but we feel that it can allow us to identify some ‘snapshots’ of success while asking for more.

Room: Borgartúnam 30, 6th floor, Room A

**How do students experience cultural diversity? A Narrative Approach to Migration**

Cosmin Ionut Nada and Helena Costa Araújo, University of Porto, PT

“The main goal of this study is to understand international students’ experience in Portugal according to its complexity and diversity. The intention is to comprehend the learning opportunities provided by migration and its relation with the specificity of each migration account. The participants are international students officially enrolled in public Portuguese universities.

Multiculturalism is a widespread feature of our society and (cultural) diversity is present in almost any country in the world (Petrovski & Petrova, 2011). This diversity has become a trait of most universities as international students’ number increased considerably in the last years (Bruch & Barty, 1998; Grillo et al., 2011; Leong & Liu, 2013). Regarding this tendency, Portugal constitutes no exception, presenting a strong increase in the enrollment of international students. According to the
National Directorate of Statistics about Education and Science (DGEEC), in 2012 people from 129 different countries were studying in the Portuguese universities. Analyzing the data provided by the same agency it is possible to observe that, in a decade, the number of international students in Portugal almost doubled.

During their international sojourn, students are exposed to different contexts that force them to experience diversity. Understand how students make sense of their international experience is the central aim of this study. According to Nye (2007, p. 112) “the study of multiculturalism—in contrast to any particular ideology or public discourse of multiculturalism—is an attempt to understand and analyse various contexts and experiences of diversity”.

In order to be able to reach the lived experience of students a qualitative methodology is required. Based on a narrative approach, this research focuses on the interpretation of data taking into account not only the patterns found in students’ narratives but also the singularities that are present in each story. In Larson’s view, “through narratives, we can penetrate cultural barriers, give voice to human experience, and understand human intention and action” (2010, p. 455). Duff and Bell (2002) believe that narrative gives researchers a holistic view of experience, without reducing its complexity and richness.

Based on the narratives constructed jointly with 12 foreign students in Portugal, we will answer questions like: What could push students to purse higher education in a different country than their own?; How do foreign students maintain/modify their identity in a completely new frame of cultural and symbolic references? Finally, based on the analysis of their detailed day-to-day experiences we will try to determine, together with the students, when and how learning experiences arise.

We believe that this study is suitable to the conference theme since its focus lies on the learning opportunities provided to students by their migratory experience. Through a multiculturalist theoretical frame, this study presents in detail the migration accounts of 12 diverse students, respecting the uniqueness of their narratives and valuing their experiences.

Three pathways to adulthood among young immigrants in Iceland

Gestur Guðmundsson, University of Iceland, IS

This paper reports on a small explorative study with problem-oriented biographical interviews with twenty immigrants in Iceland, 18-25 years old, that are analysed from the perspective of transition to adulthood (Heinz, 2009) and as active cultural responses to their situation (Gudmundsson et al., 2013). Most of the respondents have immigrated from East Europe and Southeast Asia, but some from Africa and South America. Half of them have been in Iceland for more than 10 years and the other half 1-5 years. The analysis identifies three different pathways of education and work among the respondents.

The educational system of Iceland can be characterised as universalistic; it provides 10 years of comprehensive compulsory education and access to upper secondary education is open to everyone over 16. However, in upper secondary education (USE) our respondents have faced excluding selection. Most of them have started in special departments with weak prospects of completing any track that gives access to further education or qualified jobs, while their responses have formed three different patterns.

Some respondents have displayed good skills in mathematics, natural science and English and have been guided towards tracks where they can concentrate on these subjects. These respondents have...
completed their USE within average limits, have had limited contact with Icelandic peers, aim for further studies and work in a third country, and they display cosmopolitan orientation.

Other respondents have chosen tracks where proficiency in Icelandic is vital and as a rule they have taken advantage of the flexible study system, have concentrated on Icelandic and maths in the first terms and later added subjects that need proficiency in Icelandic. Most of them finish USE 1-3 years after schedule and aim for studies that will enable them to assist later generation of immigrants, such as teachers or social workers.

The third group contains individuals who as a rule had a hard struggle at the beginning of USE and dropped out after 1-3 years. They have taken unskilled work, some of them within their ethnic community of immigrants, and most of them harbour future plans of own enterprise, often restaurants of their ethnic cuisine and are embedded within an ethnic community.

These pathways have been “chosen” in an adolescent life world isolated from Icelandic peers in school but rather related to co-workers in part-time jobs, and with strong ethnic family ties. The narratives indicate that USE in Iceland does not offer elaborate programs or pedagogy for young immigrants. The educational policy is presented as multicultural, but practices are overwhelmingly monocultural (Gitz-Johansen & Horst, 2010). However, on the one hand the respondents have seen their social isolation from the majority population as a bigger obstacle than the pedagogy, and on the other hand the majority of the respondents have managed to find responses to deal with their disadvantaged positions. Some of the main assets of the respondents have been family support and good access to the labour market, while main assets provided by the USE are the flexibility of the study system which can be utilised by the students and by dedicated teachers.

References


Preschool as a Platform for Building Social Capital and Equality with Multicultural Children and Families

Nichole Leigh Mosty, Headteacher, IS

Here at Ösp Preschool we strive to empower staff, children and families of diverse backgrounds. We approach education and our services holistically in order to ensure that every child, member of staff and family is provided with a wide array of opportunity to better themselves. We emphasize our belief in working with our strengths as enablers to promote forward and upward development rather than looking to meet standards set through testing. We work with diverse teaching methods through play and discovery in order to better meet individual needs, desires, interests, levels of development, experiences and strengths. Our six core values are Well being, Equal Opportunity, Democracy, Creativity, Language Development and Play. We work with these values in a manner which no one value carries more importance than another but one might be our method to better reach and empower a child or parent. We place extreme importance on shared learning between home and
school, and work with parents as equal partners and value them and their contributions to our school.

Through our approach we have found that children are quicker to adapt to our school for example through quicker rates of developing comprehension and vocabulary skills with Icelandic as a second language. Before we started working with these core values and methods we had larger number of children who received allotted time for special education and skills training. We have also found that our children are quicker to develop positive social habits and behaviors with children who do not speak the same mother tongue.

Regarding cooperative work between home and school we have made great strides here as well. We feel that parents trust and look to us more, both for personal issues and educational concerns. Parents come to us for advice regarding how they raise their children and difficulties they incur with behaviors exhibited in the home. They have also found a foothold in coming to us with new ideas and questions regarding our programs at our school. For the first time in over five years we have an active Parent Cooperative, whom recently sent in their appraisal of the school with words of praise and encouragement.

Room: Borgartún 30, 6th floor, Room B.

Linguistic diversity in early childhood education language pedagogies

Gunnhild Tomter Alstad, Hedmark University College, NO

Since the turn of the millennium, there has been increasing amount of children from linguistic and cultural minorities in early childhood education in Norway. In 2003, 6% of all children attending early childhood education were children from linguistic and cultural minorities. In 2015, the amount of minority children had raised to 12%. This paper explores some of the issues and complexities which are currently emerging in language pedagogy that involve emergent multilingual children and in particular focus on how linguistic diversity is reflected in language teaching practices. Previous Scandinavian studies show that preschool practices are based on a monolingual norm (Axelsson, 2009; Kultti, 2012), and that other languages than the majority language are silenced.

The paper provides examples from my doctoral thesis, a case study of three preschool teachers’ second language teaching practices in terms of their management of language learning, their language use, and their knowledge, perceptions, and understanding of their second language teaching, documented through interviews with the teachers and video-observations of teacher/child interactions. Data are explored by using the concepts ‘monoglossic’ vs. ‘heteroglossic’ norms from García’s framework for bilingual education (García, 2009), and by Cummins and Early’s concept ‘identity texts’ (Cummins & Early, 2011) and Norton’s ‘identity investmest’ (Norton, 2011, 2014). The teachers’ practices reflect both monoglossic and more heteroglossic norms and orientations to language diversity and bilingualism. The findings are used to discuss conditions for linguistic diversity in early childhood education and for early childhood teacher education.

Language learning through drama. To inspire language learning through drama and theatre

Ása Helga Ragnarsdóttir and Rannveig Björk Thorkelsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

The aim of this paper is to present an Aesthetic pedagogical design when working with language
through drama in multicultural classroom. The backdrop for this paper is the finding from a two studies on drama done by the author’s. The first is “Can drama through Icelandic tales, increase children’s vocabulary”? The methodology of the study was quantitative approach (Comparative research). Eight multicultural classes of seven years old pupils took part in the study and were data gathers through questionnaire. The finding showed increase in vocabulary between the questioners, most in the classroom where drama was used. The second “Creative learning through drama” The methodology was mixed methods. A total of 16 teachers were interviewed and 22 students to find out if drama can help pupils to learn. The findings showed that drama is particularly useful for students with learning disabilities and for immigrant students when learning languages. The most well researched arts to academic transfer literature focuses on the effect of classroom drama on verbal skills (Conrad, 1992; Podlozny, 2000; Kardash and Wright, 2006; Ragnarsdóttir and Thorkelsdóttir, 2013).

When working in a comprehensive aesthetic approach the emphasis is on multimodality, creative thinking, art experiences as an important aspect of learning, different view of learning, inquiry-based and embodied learning and teaching and drama used as method.

Heritage language teachers’ view of heritage language instruction in the Greater Reykjavík Area

Renata Emilsson Peskova and Maria Sastre, University of Iceland, IS

Heritage language instruction worldwide has undergone significant developments (Cummins, 2014; Kenner, 2004; Thomas & Collier, 2003; Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014). In Iceland the parent-run initiative (Mother Tongue Association) has provided non-formal heritage language (HL) instruction to plurilingual children since 1994. Parents’ motivation to bring up their children as bilinguals has proved to be strong enough to sustain the activity despite negligible support of authorities. In the last couple of years, the Icelandic state, as well as the City of Reykjavík have taken the first steps to acknowledge the role of HLI. They issued policies that are in support of heritage language instruction and active bilingualism (Mennta- og menningarmálarárðuneytlið, 2013; Mennta- og menningarrárðuneyti, 2014; Nations, 1989; Skóla- og frístundasvið, 2014; United Nations, 1990).

The Mother Tongue Association is undergoing a structural development, as well as essential changes in its aims and goals. These changes are directly linked to the needs of the society, which reflect the developments in the new field of heritage language education (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014) worldwide. In Iceland, heritage language (HLI) instruction has been part of the field of Second Language Acquisition (Icel. annarsmálsfræði) (Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2007).

The aim of this project was to find out about the HL teachers’ view of HLI in the Greater Reykjavik Area. Mixed methods were used. HL teachers associated with the Mother Tongue Association answered questions in a questionnaire and 3 qualitative interviews were taken with heritage language teachers who in some cases are also parents of plurilingual children. As an additional source of information, photographs and videorecording from heritage language classes were used.

Findings indicate that heritage language teachers are devoted to their work which they find very important for the plurilingual children and their families. However, there is little connection with formal school environments. They would appreciate more official support for their work.

The sustainability and quality of HL instruction of plurilingual children in the Greater Reykjavik Area is very important to the families, children’s lives and the plurilingual society as a whole. The HL
teachers’ experience and motivation, as well as their successful cooperation cultural and other institutions can serve as an inspiration and a model to interested parties abroad.


Room: Saga Film, Room B

A minority community envisions its future in multicultural Canada

Olenka Bilash, University of Alberta, CA

Canada’s Ukrainian-Canadian community has long been recognized as a strong proponent of multiculturalism. Leading the ethnic coalition in the 1960s and 1970s community leaders collaborated with leaders and organizations in other ethnic enclaves to challenge the Bilingualism and Biculturalism commission and acknowledge the “other third” of Canada’s population (Lupul, 2007; Prokop, 2009; Petryshyn & Bilash, 2014). This initiative paved the way for a change in Alberta’s School Act to permit instruction in a language other than English and bilingual education was born. It is currently offered in eight languages. However, declining enrollments in Ukrainian language programs across the country and from K-16 have rendered publicly funded and supported language programs at risk, despite the generosity of the community to support language programs to cover the deficit. In fact, in 2013 one of the last acts of the former Superintendent of Edmonton Public Schools was to cancel the Ukrainian Bilingual Program (UBP) and in 2014 the Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta introduced a quota system of class approval and several Ukrainian courses were cancelled due to insufficient enrollment, thus rendering it almost impossible to complete a Ukrainian major in education and continue to replenish teachers for the UBP.

Research Paper focus: This paper reports results of five studies that collectively sought the voices of parents, teachers, administrators, community members and academics to explore perspectives on
this changing multicultural landscape and generate a vision for the survival of Ukrainian language education in Canada.

The study included an environmental scan (e.g. Foot, 1999; Alberta Education policy initiatives, Inspiring Education, 2010 and Setting the Direction 2009; Alberta’s new Education Act, 2012; ), on-line questionnaires and focus groups. All studies passed ethics requirements.

Findings/Implications: The data collected in the studies offer an example of community-university engagement (Boyer, 1996; Barker, 2004; Sandmann 2008, 2009; Nedashkivska & Bilash, 2015) as well as a glimpse into the decision-making processes of XXI c parents (Bossetti, 2004; Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013). Urie Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory provides a theoretical lens to shed light on the complex interactions of multiple groups in decision and policy making.

Is language use a part of the social justice agenda? Canada was the first country to embrace and declare a multicultural policy. It has also had a long history of inclusive education with many lessons to share. Yet it faces challenges when discussing the use of non-official languages in public spaces other than schools, but sometimes even in schools. By examining an ethnic community that has over 120 years of history in Canada, renewed by four waves of immigration over that time, the audience will imagine the place of languages in education in their own countries in the next decade.

Success stories: multicultural teaching in monocultural environment. Projects ran at school and academic levels

Aleksandra Kurowska-Susdorf, University of Gdansk, PL
Multicultural education aims to stimulate curiosity towards dissimilarity. Tolerance or neutral indifference is not what we wish to accomplish. The aim of this paper is to present ongoing developmental projects happening at the Community Primary and Secondary School of Janusz Korczak, and at the university level with students participating the workshop at the University of Gdańsk (Social Studies, Pedagogy).

The project ran, since 2007 called 'Foreign Assistants curious about each other', at monocultural school (Community Primary and Secondary School of Janusz Korczak), is about inviting foreign students to lead workshops about their cultures. Pupils together with foreign assistants prepared various ventures: presentations, language workshops, cooking, sightseeing, etc. Home, school and community participation and cooperation were vital elements of this project. The project is an attempt of transition of learning about multicultural education to effective multicultural classroom practice. Despite numerous obstacles the project is being repeated as pupils and parents appreciate active learning imbedded in cooperation.

The project ran at the University of Gdańsk – called: ‘Place, Identity, Culture; Pedagogical Perspectives and Borderland as a Living Space, and Multicultural Perspectives.’ is based on theoretical background ‘pedagogy of place’ (Mendel), or ‘place-based multicultural education’. The city of Gdańsk or Danzig, through years changed its character from being Polish to German, back and forth, twice. The ‘Free City of Gdańsk’ has many times been characterized as a melting pot of different cultures: Kashubian, Jewish, Polish, German, Netherlands, English, Swedish etc. During seminars, using ‘memory pedagogy’ (Demetrio): biographical method, tools (interviews) we examine the approach and lifestyle of people who had a chance to live in a multicultural city of Gdańsk before WWII. Respondents aged 85 taught us through their biographies what a multicultural society meant, and how they coexisted in a world of diversity building up partnerships.
Students lead interviews with their grandparents, learning the good practices using the ‘family history studies’ from the times when Poland and Gdańsk were truly culturally diverse places. Additionally, we initiate meetings at the Mosque and the Synagogue in Gdańsk (the only left after the war out of four). The seminar provided motivation for multicultural education based on the place, individual history and identity. It also encouraged students to become curious of the difference, its history and relations, in the place of their lives.

The success stories from both projects run in Primary School and University of Gdańsk will be presented, including the challenges and obstacles. Moreover, findings form the students’ research will be discussed.

Room: Saga Film, Studio Symposium

Learning spaces for inclusion and social justice in Nordic Preschools; some key factors of success

Hildur Blöndal, Fríða B. Jónsdóttir, Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, Heini Paavola, Anette Hellman, Marina Hanawa and Eva Rohde and Kirsten Lauritsen

This symposium will present key findings from Nordic Preschools. The presentation is part of the project, Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice: Success Stories from Immigrant Students and School Communities in Four Nordic Countries 2013 - 2015.

Educational research has documented the inequalities and marginalization of immigrant students in schools in the Nordic countries (Holm & Londen, 2010; Horst & Gitz-Johansen, 2010; Paavola & Talib, 2010; Ragnarsdóttir, 2008). However, findings from recent research have indicated that particular schools have succeeded in their quest for inclusion, equality and social justice (Ragnarsdóttir & Schmidt, 2014). But how is the situation for the youngest children in the educational system in Preschool and Preschool class/divisions?

Questions of belonging, of democracy, citizenship and social justice for all children, begin in preschool and questions on how preschools can work for equity and social justice for all children are essential questions to investigate across the Nordic countries. Preschool in the Nordic countries is an institution on the first level in the educational system and this institution have had a huge impact on the way the Nordic welfare systems were constructed and are considered to play important roles in providing successful environments for social justice and equal opportunities. There are however differences and similarities both across and within each of the Nordic countries, that will be addressed in this presentation.

According to Fazal Rizvi (2009), diversity is the new norm, but how are perceptions of diversity, inclusion and exclusion negotiated? Who is excluded from/included in children’s relations in preschool? What kind of “we” groups is constructed in preschools and how do children, teachers, principals and parents relate to them? How are norms about nationality and “proper” national behavior made extra relevant in certain situations/contexts and less relevant in others? How are inclusion and exclusion negotiated among children themselves? How do children categorize and relate to processes of inclusion, exclusion and social justice.
Socially just learning spaces: Success and participation in Icelandic preschools

Hildur Blöndal, Fríða B. Jónsdóttir, Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

The paper presents findings from the Icelandic part of the research project Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice: Success Stories from Immigrant Students and School Communities in Four Nordic Countries (2013-2015).

The aim of the paper is to explore how parents, teachers and leaders in three preschools in Iceland experience inclusion and social justice and what learning environments and practices seem to be instrumental for children’s participation and success in their preschools.

Theoretical and conceptual framework includes culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2000), critical multicultural education (Banks, 2007; May & Sleeter, 2010) and research on language, communication and expectations (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012; Cummins, 2004; Nieto, 2010; Siraj-Blatchford & Clarke, 2000; Noddings, 2008). Sampling is purposive and schools chosen for data collection were ethnically diverse and had a history of multicultural and inclusive practices. Data collection included semi-structured interviews with leaders, teachers and parents and observations.

Findings indicate that the participating preschools in Iceland have developed successful inclusive practices, facilitate social justice and provide diverse groups of children with inclusive learning spaces while forming a collaborative relationship with parents. One of the possible reasons for success can be found in what Jones has (1998) claimed to be key elements to student success, e.g. the schools ‘or teachers ‘refusal to use the social contexts of children as excuses for failure. However, some challenges have been detected, mostly related to the lack of bridge-building between home and school as well as some lack of knowledge among teachers on how to scaffold and support the linguistic development of bilingual children.

In addition to being an important contribution to the discussion on educational research, policy-making and practice in Icelandic society, the research also contributes to educational research in multicultural societies generally.

Successful preschool – cases from Finland

Heini Paavola, University of Helsinki, FI

Finland is known worldwide for its educational achievement (Sahlberg, 2010). However, the recent influx of immigrants since the 1990s has strongly affected on the pedagogy used in pre-schools and schools (Paavola & Talib, 2010). A lot of effort has been placed on equality, equity and social justice. It has been proved in studies in Finland that many immigrant students are left aside and are unsuccessful in their studies (Ritaoja, 2013; Holm & Londen, 2010).

In this study I concentrate on two questions “How do a successful preschool look like and what are the good practices used in pre-schools?” The purpose is to investigate the good methods and everyday practices used in multicultural preschool groups and the factors that affect the work done by staff. On the other hand this paper explores what kinds of opinions parents have on education in so called multicultural preschool. Theoretical framework is based on the culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2000), and critical multicultural pedagogy by Giroux (2009), Nieto (2006) Banks (2008) and May & Sleeter (2010).

The results indicate that the most important factor towards success is openness between parents and staff. In daily teaching/learning situations differentiation proves to be crucial as well as various
small group learning activities and a systematic learning of Finnish as a second language. The results also show that education was highly appreciated by the parents. Parents brought up that the preschool staff mastered their work well, were knowledgeable and they could rely on the staff.

Findings of the study are based on the qualitative data which consists of interviews with five teachers and two principals who have been working in two successful multicultural preschools in Helsinki, and interviews with six parents whose children take part in preschool education in a multicultural preschool group. The data was collected during autumn 2013.

The research contributes to educational research in multicultural schools, and especially to the question of social justice in education.

**Building a learning and caring preschool organization: Swedish Preschools**

Anette Hellman, Marina Hanawa and Eva Rohde, University of Gothenburg, SE

Swedish preschool have a tradition of combining education and care (Edu Care), where care is seen as essential for learning processes. However, since the last revision of the policy documents for preschool (Skolverket, 2010) the concept of care has become more vague in relation to the concept of learning. This presentation reveals the crucial importance of reflective and ethic care practices in order to create learning spaces of inclusion and social justice.

The paper builds on data from two preschools, in a rural respectively in a city area, with children 2-5 years old. All pedagogues where female and had relevant education according to preschool regulations (Nursery teacher/Preschool teacher). We conducted interviews (with children, leaders, and teachers) as well as 4 weeks of participant observations of everyday life. The data is analyzed through concepts about justice, inclusion and exclusion (Fraser, 2003; 2011) and ethics of care (Noddings, 1999).

We will in this presentation discuss two key factors for success in order to promote inclusion and social justice. For the first, it seems to be central to build knowledge about inclusion and social justice in to a learning organization, where these issues are seen as part of all teachers’ obligations rather than to build on individual “visionary” teachers. For the second, it also seems to be important that pedagogues work with an extended leaning concept where care, trust and social learning are essential. This could be done in relation to the preschool space, in relation to parents and in relation to the children. To conclude we will highlight the importance to make care – as well as learning – a reflective practice.
“Learning Spaces” — kindergartens in Norway

Kirsten Lauritsen, University College of Nord-Trøndelag, NO

This presentation will focus on teachers’ experiences with the kindergarten as an arena for inclusion and social justice, with a particular focus on the kindergartens’ educational work with minority language children. Our research aimed at describing some conditions for a positive development («success») for minority language children, academically and socially in the kindergarten. Former research and theoretical influences are James Banks, Sonja Nieto, Johannes Lunneblad, Charlotte Palludan and Geert Biesta, in addition to my own previous research of cultural complexity in the kindergarten. The theoretical and conceptual framework of the study is inspired by critical multiculturalism (May, 1999) and the development of multicultural learning communities (Banks, 2007; Nieto, 2010) will be applied in order to understand both challenges to and success with educational work for inclusion and social justice in the kindergarten communities. The data has been collected through a combination of observations, interviews and study of presentations on the internet.

Keywords: Kindergarten, cultural diversity, social justice, inclusion, teachers

15:30 – 16:30  Panel: Policy makers and academics, Room: Saga Film, Studio

Day 2:  16 October

9:00 – 10:30  Parallel session III

Room: Borgartún 30, 6th floor, Room A

Human Rights versus Educational Rights: perspectives from Georgia and Armenia

Fiona Hallett and Dave Allen, Edge Hill University, UK

This research stems from a collaborative project, funded by EACEA, which aimed to address the human rights of individuals with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN/D) in Georgia and Armenia. The governments of each country have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and have produced statements of commitment to social integration in accordance with the Bologna Process and United Nations criteria. In order to understand the perspectives of student and serving teachers, a series of vignettes were designed and each group was asked ‘what human rights does this person have?’, ‘Where should they be educated?’ and ‘what kind of job should they aim for’? This presentation will highlight disability specific responses to these questions.

Theoretical framework When attempting to analyse a causal link between society and disability, academics from those countries that might be termed ‘developed’ (i.e. those that have high level of literacy and education, high level of human development in terms of health and health facilities, civic services, high longevity of people, low infant mortality and have a high degree of freedom and liberty for the common citizen) often dominate the intellectual debate. That academics from the most ‘developed’ nations can often publish their work in English, in international journals, is without question. However, a troubling corollary of this is that debates around the ‘dilemma of difference’
Young people’s attitudes towards immigrants’ human rights: The role of civic justice feelings and democratic classroom discussion

Sigrún Aðalbjarnardóttir, University of Iceland, IS

Interest is growing in understanding young peoples’ concerns about different social and cultural groups, including their attitudes towards immigrants (e.g., Torney-Purta, Wilkenfeld, & Barber, 2008). The aim of this study is to explore adolescents’ attitudes towards human rights with a special focus on immigrants’ rights (e.g., “Immigrants’ children should have the same opportunities for education as other children in the country”; “Immigrants should have the opportunity to keep their own customs and lifestyle”). A special focus is on how adolescents’ feelings about civic justice and their experience of democratic classroom discussions relate to their attitudes towards immigrants’ rights.

The theoretical framework is based on the social-constructivist perspective that individuals are active agents in the process of making meaning of social issues (Dewey, 1944/1916; Mead, 1934; Piaget, 1965/1932; Vygotsky, 1978/1930). They give meaning to their own experiences through interactions and dialogue with others in various historical and cultural contexts.

More precisely, this mixed-method study explores the adolescents’ attitudes towards immigrants in relation to the opportunities they feel they have at school to discuss social issues in a democratic classroom atmosphere (e.g., “Teachers encourage the students to express different opinions”; “Teachers present several sides of an issue when explaining it in class”). It also examines their civic justice feelings (e.g. “I become angry when thinking about the conditions that some people have to live with”; “I want to fight against injustice in my society”) with regard to whether these justice feelings may, at least partly, mediate the relationship between their experience of open democratic classroom discussions and their concerns for immigrants’ rights. These relationships are also explored according to age, gender, and parents’ education.

The participants are about 1000 students, age 14 and 18, from three districts in Iceland. This study uses both quantitative methods (questionnaires) and qualitative methods (interviews with 24 adolescents) in data collection and analysis. Preliminary findings indicate that those students who feel they have more opportunities to explore issues from various perspectives in the classroom have stronger feelings about civic justice; they also have a more positive attitude towards immigrants’ rights.

Results from both data sets will be integrated and discussed with regard to the possible implications for effective and responsible education in multicultural societies.

The study should be relevant to the theme of the conference because it seeks approaches that may enhance students’ positive attitudes towards the human rights of different ethnic groups; in that sense it provides learning spaces for inclusion and social justice.
Inclusive education, democracy and justice

Ólafur Páll Jónsson, University of Iceland, IS

Inclusive education’ and ‘democracy’ refer to official educational policy in Iceland that can be traced back to the elementary school act in 1974, in which the primary objective of elementary education was to prepare students for life and work in an ever changing democratic society. Although the word “inclusion” did not appear until 20 years later, much of the 1974 school act was about inclusion, both organization and practices. Despite great controversies surrounding this progressive work, democracy as a school policy was widely accepted and although changes in the 1990s were in many was antagonistic to the democratic principles from the 70s and 80s, those principles were rarely explicitly challenged. The same cannot be said about inclusive education which has been more controversial, sometimes fuelling lively public debates where not only scholars take part but also both parents and politicians.

In the public debate on inclusive education one can discern certain understandings or discursive patterns concerning both the role of schools in general and their “proper role” for inclusion in particular. These discursive patterns, which are reflected in some of the policy documents that came from the Ministry of Education in the 1990s, do not form an explicitly stated and defended view of inclusive education, but figure rather as an ideological background to many of the claims on schools, teachers, students and educational practices in general. I will discuss four discursive patterns and then relate them to a view of democratic education. The patterns are:

(1) Individualistic understanding: Difficulties that students face are usually viewed as their difficulties; the source of the difficulty is located in the individual students and the remedies proposed focus primarily on the individuals. (2) Medical model: Much of the discussion of inclusive education operates not only with a vocabulary of various learning difficulties, mental and physical defects, social and emotional disturbances etc., but from such a vocabulary. The difficulties are the starting point, often in the form a diagnosis, and the means taken are seen as remedies for whatever defect has been detected. (3) Technical approach: In order to address the problems which are the concern of inclusive education (largely based on the individualistic and medical view) what is seen to be needed are appropriate methods or technique. (4) Market commodity view of education: All this is set against a background condition of schools where students compete with each other for rank and opportunity – and where the schools themselves (from primary schools up to universities) compete with each other for rank and funding – in an environment where education is by and large defined as any other market commodity.

One can discern a somewhat similar discursive patterns relating democracy in education. Individual preferences are taken to be the ultimate unit of analysis (thus ‘individualistic’), democracy is thought of as a means for advancing such preferences (thus ‘technical’) and its basic function is thought to regulate a free competition of individual opinions and preferences (thus ‘market commodity view’).

However, what falls under the headings “democratic education” on the one hand and “inclusive education” on the other, has little to do with one another. These are considered more or less distinct fields. Moreover, neither field seems to be thought of has having much to do with character, virtue, values or other moral qualities. In the case of democracy, moral values become relevant simply as fixed preconditions for the appropriate systems and procedures. In the case of inclusion such values are often thought of as lying beyond the scope of professional practice.

Drawing on work by Roger Slee and Julie Allan on inclusive education and John Dewey, Gert Biesta and others on democracy I criticize the above conceptions of inclusion and democracy as
foundational for educational systems. I argue further, drawing on recent work in character education and virtue ethics, that acceptable concepts of inclusive and democratic education must place individual character, values and virtues at the centre; it must be education that promotes the development of virtuous character as part of the good life. This contrasts sharply with the conceptions of inclusion and democracy outlined above which, by and large, view preferences and values as unchanging preconditions and not as fundamental defining concepts for professional practice in education.

Room: Borgartún 30, 6th floor, Room B.

“I could have learned so much more” Reflecting on life and learning as a gifted student

Kristín Lilliendahl, University of Iceland, IS

This talk presents findings of a study conducted in the period of 2011 - 2015. It shows how a group of gifted students view themselves as learners and their experience of being high achievers during their primary school years. The study is qualitative and based on interviews with eight participants, four females and four males who were first year graduate students when the interviews were conducted. The theoretical perspective taken is postmodern, a social-constructional perspective relying on the participants’ interpretation of their own story as told during the interviews. The aim of the study is to get a deeper understanding of the learning experiences of gifted students in our Icelandic primary schools and to spot possible risk factors and protective factors concerning these students’ social and emotional well-being and motivation to learn.

Three key elements are emphasized in the study. These are participants’ views on learning and teaching, factors affecting self-worth and emotional health, and factors concerning social adjustment. Findings show that despite their exceptional learning ability, participants do not feel that they were given much attention in the primary school classroom and perceive that unfair. They also indicate that being a gifted learner affected greatly their social and emotional life.

The findings might suggest that the primary school system needs to take this group of students into more consideration in the discussions and interventions that aim for an educational system for all.


**Developing intercultural competence through an “I-Thou” relationship in Japanese schools**

Olenka Bilash, University of Alberta, CA

Japanese youth experience English as a compulsory subject from grades 5-12. It has high stakes exams that influence admission to schools and post secondary institutions and mobility in the workplace. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Technology (MEXT) has invested heavily in English education through revised mandates, new textbooks, teacher training, and native speaking assistant language teachers (ALTs) in order to give their youth contact with “foreigners” through team teaching (TT) with Japanese Teachers of English (JTEs). The experiences of ALTs have been addressed in the literature, noting many of the same challenges such as lack of time and poor communication between ALTs and JTEs (Goetz, 2000) and cross cultural differences in expectations (Mahoney, 2004). Workshops are offered annually to help ALTs and JTEs understand one another’s cultures and improve TT. Yet knowing about one another’s culture alone has not reduced the challenges reported by the newest ALT recruits.

In 2009 a new approach began with JTEs and ALTs in Hokkaido based on a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Alberta and the Hokkaido Board of Education (equivalent to Canada’s provincial ministry of education).

Research Paper focus: This paper presents results of a five-year action research study that focuses on improving TT through enhanced communication and the development of more common expectations between JTEs and ALTs.

The five year study followed an action research methodology that included meetings, discussions and collaborative tasks between ALTs, JTEs and officials of the boards of education. After a list of challenges in TT were generated by the JTEs and ALTs separately it was necessary to convey concerns to one another. This evolved from sharing stories and examples to creating collaborative role plays and graphic novels (akin to photovoice (Wang and Burris, 1994;1997)).

Knowledge about a culture will not pave the way for successful communication and team teaching. Rather, TT requires an “I-Thou” relationship (Buber); the role of relationship building is crucial. This paper reveals lessons learned over five years as to how to enhance English instruction in Japanese schools through making explicit the feelings of the “Thou” in common challenging situations.

For social justice to prevail, all persons engaged must enter into an “I-thou” relationship. This paper reveals lessons learned over five years as to how to build such “I-Thou” relationships.
".. this is not just babysitting and we do not do anything": Parental and teachers successful experiences of immigrant children's

Guðný Ósk Eyólfsdóttir and Brynja Elísabeth Halldórsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

Multicultural education is currently an important factor in pre-school education in Iceland. In the past 15 years, the number of preschool children, who speak a language other than Icelandic at home, has steadily increased. The exploration of successful programs that help children and parents enter the Icelandic education system is beneficial to our understanding of the education process. Thus, as pre-school is the first step in lifelong learning for many students, it is important that all students and their families have a positive experience from the beginning. Focussing on how parents and teachers experience immigrant children's reception in pre-school this phenomenological study, consists of three interviews with a parent, a pre-school teacher and the principal of the pre-school.

The results showed that it is important that the people who work with children have an understanding and the knowledge about multiculturalism, cultural diversity, effective cross cultural communication in order to support the child's adjustment to the pre-school setting. My analysis revealed three primary themes: well-being, language enrichment and cross-cultural understanding. In relation to well-being it was important that parents have a good cooperation with the schools, because then they can easily support their children, get involved in and have a voice within the school. A focus on language enrichment was found to be important as the students in the school were often multilingual and benefited from various activities the school provided. Finally, the data indicated that a mutual understanding of cultural communication helped both the teachers and the parents create a supportive learning environment for the children. The data also indicated that the participants felt it was important that bilingual or plurilingual individuals speak and learn both languages.

Room: Saga Film, Room B.

Icelandic student-teachers’ views and thoughts about issues on inclusive education - Relevance and usefulness of inclusive education

Hermína Gunnþórsdóttir, University of Akureyri, IS

In this paper, I will explore how Icelandic student teachers perceive the usefulness of ideas on inclusive education as a factor in their future work in schools. One of the critique on inclusive education is directed at the implementation at an institutional level as well as in teacher education (Armstrong, Armstrong and Spandagou, 2011). A key element for a successful implementation is to make inclusive issues inherent in teachers professional practices (Bartolo, 2007; European Commision, 2013; Karlsdóttir and Guðjónsdóttir, 2010). The teacher education must be the foundation for creating such a base.

Data were gathered by reflective diaries through two term in a course (fourth year/master) in teacher education programme at the University of Akureyri in Iceland. To become a teacher in Iceland (Kindergarten, primary and secondary schools) a five year master is required. The students who attended the course were required to hand in (four times) a reflective diary (1-3 A4 pages)
based on the course reading material which was mainly based on inclusive education (international as well as Icelandic focus), bilingualism, multicultural education, social justice and democracy. The data consist of total 320 diaries from 80 students. The data were analysed according to qualitative approach (Lichtman, 2013; Silverman, 2000) by coding and generating themes in order to understand the reasons behind students’ teachers’ ideas about the role of inclusive education and pedagogy in their future work in schools. The data were moreover analysed according to student’s registration, that is if they planned to work in Kindergartens, primary or secondary schools.

The theoretical focus is based on ideas on teachers’ professional theory and practices that are based in theories on teachers’ professionalism. Teachers´ professional theory is here taken to be the main pillar in building teachers´ professionalism. It refers to theories about how teachers build a personal theory of learning and teaching through learning and practice. It can be both conscious and unconscious, and is the foundation for the professional teacher (Bjarnadóttir, 2008; Ingvarsdóttir, 2004; Schön, 1991).

The findings indicate that most of the students had not thought critically about how students’ diversity will affect their teaching and future work with students in Icelandic schools. Issues related to inclusive education were thought to be the responsibility of special education teachers and most students were unfamiliar with issues of multiculturalism and multicultural education. There appears to be a difference among student teachers between school types, that is students who aimed at teaching at kindergarten and primary schools were more positive regarding students diversity than those who plan to teach in high schools (in Iceland age 16-20) and many of them said that inclusion were not an issue for them at all.

The paper provides an insight into the complexities of the topic on inclusive education, social justice and multicultural societies regarding teacher education. The educational system in the Nordic countries has been characterised by issues on social and educational inclusion, fairness, ethics and equal rights. The findings of this research give reason to ask how this is practiced in schools and what role teacher education has in the inclusionary process.

Preparing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Teachers for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Classrooms

Amy Johnson, Hunter College, US

In the United States most teachers are White and monolingual whereas the student population increasingly grows more culturally and linguistically diverse (e.g., Schulte, 2011; Zeichner, 2003). Due to such a demographic divide, teacher educators have embraced practices for preparing teacher candidates for increasingly multicultural and multilingual contexts. As a teacher educator in New York City, in the past two years I have taught 5 literacy methods courses across which only 3 per cent of candidates have been White and monolingual. Although the majority of candidates come from diverse and bilingual backgrounds (e.g., Latin American, South American, Caribbean, African American, Middle Eastern, Southeast Asian, and Asian), candidates often struggle with teaching diverse learners effectively. In response, I have posed these questions to guide a self-inquiry into my teaching:

• What challenges do I confront in preparing diverse candidates for their eventual students?

• What practices can I embrace to ensure that such candidates can effectively teach within multicultural settings?
To respond to these questions, I conducted a self study of my teaching of literacy methods courses to pre-service teacher candidates (Carter, 1993; Lyons & LaBoskey, 2002). From this vantage point, self-study is a form of reflection used to improve teacher education practice, as well as a research methodology. From the perspective of self-study, teaching practice is understood as shaped through interaction with personal, social, institutional, and cultural contexts (Clandinin, Huber, Steeves, & Li, 2011; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2010). To supplement this viewpoint, I also engaged with multicultural and social reconstructionist teacher education (e.g., Grant & Sleeter, 2008; Zeichner, 2003) and practice-based teacher education (e.g., Hollins, 2011). From a multicultural perspective preparing teachers for diverse classrooms is critical for the “making of a more just society” (Zeichner, 2003, p. 507). This stance has been criticized for overly focusing on White, monolingual teacher candidates overcoming their biases and addressing their privileges (through personal introspection and reflection) so they can effectively teach culturally and linguistically diverse learners. As such, this approach often elides a solid foundation in the instructional methods and practices required for effective beginning teaching, such as that found within practice-based approach, which is committed to strengthening the focus on practice through the engagement with a set of core teaching practices believed to be necessary for effective initial teaching.

I investigated how the integration of these two theoretical perspectives have supported and constrained me in preparing culturally and linguistically diverse teacher candidates for their eventual classrooms in New York City public schools. In this presentation, I share methods I have used (i.e., the use of culturally authentic children’s literature) to enhance candidates’ learning about instructional methods. I discuss the misconceptions that culturally and linguistically diverse candidates often hold about children of color.

With its focus on teachers’ professional learning for teaching diverse populations this presentation relates to the conference strand: Teachers: Professionalism and Education. Participants will gain insight into methods for effective teacher preparation.

Research Weds Practice Makes Perfect? Review of three Icelandic developmental projects

Hulda Karen Daníelsdóttir, Municipality of Reykjavík, IS

In accordance with law no. 92 regarding primary schools which took effect in 2008, Icelandic schools should implement a policy of inclusion. Following this, some receiving departments for students with Icelandic as a second language were closed down. In many cases, it was expected that homeroom and subject teachers would assume the work which receiving departments and special education teachers had previously shouldered.

Before 2008, those departments and special education teachers were mostly responsible for the students, though they most often attended art and crafts with their classmates. It was also the case that they attended most classes, but were pulled out for Icelandic as a Second Language. (Hulda Karen Daníelsdóttir, 2008) and (Hulda Karen Daníelsdóttir ofl., 2010).

Because of these changes, it became apparent that many teachers lacked the tools necessary to meet the needs of a diverse body of students – least of all those with Icelandic as a second language. This need for tools was the impetus for the SÍSL developmental project.

SÍSL is an Icelandic acronym for what translates as Specialist Team in a Society that Learns. It was set into motion in 2008, with the aim of implementing best practices fort Icelandic students in the spirit
of inclusion; with the particular needs of second language learners in mind. Addressing this aim is still an urgent matter: recent studies indicate that teachers are still insecure when it comes to teaching students with Icelandic as a second language. (Gerður G. Óskarsdóttir, 2014).

With the goal of helping teachers accommodate diverse learners and promote their academic success; the project manager looked for methods which had, according to studies, proven successful. Those which emerged strong were PALS (Peer Assisted Learning Strategies), 6+1 Traits of Writing, and SIOP (the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol).

This configuration of tools was then branded as SÍSL in order to make them accessible to teachers: a well-defined theoretical and methodological framework as a background to effective, well-researched best practices. SÍSL has, to date, trained over a thousand teachers in PALS, 6+1 Traits of Writing and Academic Vocabulary. These methods have since taken root in many Icelandic schools. Studies on K-PALS in Iceland show good progress (Kristín Helga Guðjónsdóttir, 2014; and Kristín Svanhildur Ólafsdóttir and Anna-Lind Pétursdóttir, 2014).

In addition to SÍSL, the projects the Travelling Teacher en Route and Welcome will be introduced. They have the common goal of supporting multicultural education; inclusion; partnership between homes, schools and community; and language learning and teaching. Each project is relatable directly to the theme of the conference.

The teaching methods supported by the SÍSL project (PALS reading and math, 6+1 Traits of Writing, and training in academic vocabulary) were chosen according to the needs of students learning Icelandic as a second language, while also meeting the needs of a broader group of students in inclusive schools.

PALS, or Peer Assisted Learning Strategies, is based on social teaching: students work in pairs, partnered with students according to a particular system. In PALS, all students are active in the teaching space, working together. Students learning Icelandic as a second language, and other students with special requirements, are not removed from class and sent to special needs teachers.

The learning strategies taught in the SÍSL project, then, are almost the definition of ‘Learning Spaces of Inclusion’, and take real steps towards social justice. The same ideology lies behind the ‘Velkomin’ project and ‘Travelling Teacher’.

Through the SÍSL project, 62 workshops have been held since 2011, with attendance ranging from 20 to 70 participants at each. SÍSL has been an important player in continuing education for Icelandic teachers.

Eight schools have taken part in ‘Travelling Teacher’ – and many more schools have been introduced to the ‘Velkomin’ or ‘Welcome’ project, and use it as a receiving tool for students with Icelandic as a second language and their parents: http://tungumalatorg.is/velkomin/

Room: Saga Film, Studio  Symposium
Organizational structure and leadership in immigrant education.

Organizers: Lars Anders Kulbrandstad, Hedmark University College, Börkur Hansen and Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, School of Education, UI

In the research literature on ways of organizing the education of immigrant students in need of adapted tuition, two main positions are easily identified: 1. Direct insertion into the mainstream classroom with pedagogical differentiation 2. Pedagogical and organizational differentiation in separate groups or classes until the students are considered to be ready to exit the special program and be referred to ordinary instruction. In practice, there are a number of variants of these basic paradigms, linked for instance to the kind and extent of pedagogical differentiation with the first model and to the academic content, the choice of language or languages of instruction, and the duration of separate program in the second model. Different combinations of the two models are quite common (Baker, 2011; Carrasquillo & Rodríguez, 2002; Thomas & Collier, 2002).

A number of studies have found that school leadership is a critical factor for the quality of education offered to students with an immigrant background (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Kenji & August, 1998; Vedey, 2012). This has to with the role of the leaders’ in fostering an appraisal of diversity in the school community and creating an open and inclusive atmosphere. It is also linked to their central role in decisions on instructional models, staff recruitment and development, assessment routines and instruments, home and parent involvement, together with the general attention given to the special needs of students whose linguistic and cultural background are different from that of the mainstream students. Given the importance of leadership, succession of leaders is a decisive event for the sustainability and further development of school quality (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006).

In the NordForsk funded project Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice – Success Stories from Immigrant Students and School Communities in Four Nordic Countries (2013-2015) researchers from Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden have studied institutions from preschool to upper secondary level that seem to have be able to offer good educational opportunities to students from immigrant ethno-linguistic groups which often struggle. The students and the institutions succeed contrary to expectations. Among the sub-themes in the project are the pedagogy, teaching practices, including organizational solutions, and leadership, collaboration and school cultures.

In this symposium, findings from the project relating to the abovementioned topics will be presented and discussed. There will be the following contributions:

1. Hanna Ragnarsdóttir (presenting author), Helgi Porbjörn Svavarsson, Friða B. Jónsdóttir, and Hildur Blöndal, School of Education, University of Iceland: Leader profiles in successful preschools
2. Kirsten Lauritsen, Nord-Trøndelag University College: When engaged preschool leaders leave
3. Börkur Hansen, School of Education, University of Iceland (presenting author), Sigurlaug H. Svavarsson, Principal in Reykjavik, and Helgi Þ. Svavarsson, School of Education, University of Iceland: Leader succession in ethnically diverse schools: Examples from three compulsory schools in Iceland
4. Helgi Þ. Svavarsson (presenting author), Börkur Hansen and Edda Óskarsdóttir, School of Education, University of Iceland: Democratic leadership practices in Icelandic compulsory schools
5. Lars Anders Kulbrandstad, Hedmark University College: Organizational models and school success in the Learning Spaces Project - a synthesis of findings
Leader profiles in successful preschools

Hanna Ragnarsdóttir (presenting author), Helgi Þorbjörn Svavarsson, Fríða B. Jónsdóttir and Hildur Blöndal, School of Education, University of Iceland, IS

Linguistic, cultural and religious diversity among preschool children and their families in Iceland has been steadily growing in the last decades. Currently around 10% of all preschool children have mother languages other than Icelandic (Statistics Iceland, 2015). The majority of all children in Iceland, 97% go to preschool (at the age of 3-4) while fewer children in the youngest and oldest age groups attend preschool.

According to research (Coleman, 2012; Ryan, 2006), leadership is important in developing inclusive and socially just learning communities for diverse groups of children. Democratic leadership practices have been considered to be more effective than more traditional leadership practices in diverse school settings (Coleman, 2012; Woods, 2005). Advocating for and implementing a vision of social justice and democratic practices is a big part of leaders tasks (Ryan, 2006; Woods, 2005; Wrigley, 2003). How the leaders approach this task needs to be in accordance with the situation the school finds it in (Duke, 2010).

In this paper we introduce and discuss findings from case studies in three Icelandic preschools that are part of the Nordic research project; Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice: Success Stories from Immigrant Students and School Communities in Four Nordic Countries. The aims of the research were to 1) to understand and learn from the experiences of immigrant students who have succeeded academically and socially; and 2) explore and understand how social justice is implemented in equitable and successful diverse Nordic school contexts and other learning spaces. Research methods included semi-structured interviews with principals, teachers and parents of immigrant backgrounds as well as observations.

The research is grounded within theories of critical multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy (Banks, 2010; Nieto, 2010) and the focus is also on education and care where cultural and linguistic diversity within the group of children and families is met with inclusive and empowering strategies (Banks, 2010; Brooker, 2002; Noddings, 2008).
The paper presents leader profiles in the three preschools. All preschools have succeeded in creating inclusive and welcoming communities, while emphasizing democracy, equality and diversity in their daily practices and communication. However, leadership and approaches towards democracy differ in the three preschools. In the paper we introduce the different approaches and leadership styles in the preschools and the implications of these. Findings from interviews with the parent indicate that they highly appreciate being active participants in the preschool communities and consider caring and warm preschool contexts as being most important for their children.


When engaged preschool leaders leave ....

Kirsten Lauritsen, Nord-Trøndelag University College, NO

The project «Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice» has been searching for schools and preschools that have success in their work with all children. According to Biesta, having success in the art of education is about finding a balance between the three dimensions qualification, socialisation and subjectification. He stresses that without such a focus, we risk that education only contributes to social reproduction and not to a democratic, inclusive education. Leadership is among the important foundations for such a development. At a joint presentation held by representatives from the four countries in this project, we concluded on some common findings on what we saw as good leadership. Among these were the importance of educational and brave leadership, proactivity, visions, and focus on what is important, hiring, and good management of multilingual staff. We also pointed to continuity in the job, that it takes time to build up trust and acquiring a position where administrative and educational leadership can be put into practice. Educational work with cultural and linguistic diversity is an area of competence that in some cases are not at the centre of preschools’ priorities. In this presentation, I will present findings from two Norwegian preschools, where the leaders left just before the research project started, and of the initial frustration the researcher felt: These preschools were chosen as sites for study in part because of the reputation of the leaders as having particular interest in and focus on cultural and linguistic diversity. The
researcher’s focus soon shifted, however, to the possibility this change might provide for studying what happens to the organisation and educational priorities of issues connected to cultural diversity when ‘brave leaders’ disappear. Asking such questions led the research into findings that illustrate the importance of brave leadership, but also point to what could be done in order to prevent former work with cultural and linguistic diversity to become less systematic, when changes in leadership do occur, as it inevitably does.

**Leader succession in ethnically diverse schools: Examples from three compulsory schools in Iceland**

Börkur Hansen and Helgi Þ. Svavarsson, University of Iceland, Sigurlaug H. Svavarsdóttir, Principal in Reykjavík

In this presentation, the issue of succession is explored, i.e. the process of preparing for the departure of key leaders and the entry of their successors. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) stress that the concept of sustainability is „concerned with developing and preserving what matters, spreads, and lasts ... (p.17).“

Data was collected with interviews with school principals, lead-teachers and teachers in the three compulsory schools identified with exemplary practices concerning ethnically diverse students. The interviews focused on how succession was realized in the given context.

The findings generate three pictures. In the first school, succession can be seen as an inherent part of the schools practices. The lead-teacher provides strong leadership in the area of working with ethnically diverse students by empowering most of the teachers in the school in discussions and strategic work. The leadership of the lead-teacher is strongly supported by the principal and the teachers.

In the second school, the picture is different. During the last five years, this school has experienced four principals. Also, the lead-teacher in the area was replaced seven years ago. Furthermore, the empowering of general teachers concerning the issue seems partial. In this school there seems to be a lack of strategic leadership, coherence and succession.

In the third school, one more picture emerges. During the last decade the leadership seems to have been strategic concerning the issue of working with ethnically diverse students by empowering teachers. However, today, a large section of staff is close to retirement and it is unclear what measures have been taken to ensure succession.

The presentation concludes with reflections on the importance of purposeful planning for “leading across and beyond individual leaders over time” (Hargreaves and Fink (2006, p. 19).


**Democratic leadership practices in Icelandic compulsory schools**

Helgi Þ. Svavarsson, Börkur Hansen and Edda Óskarsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

Cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity is increasing in Iceland (Hagstofa Íslands). The same applies to Icelandic compulsory schools (Hagstofa Íslands). Scholars have pointed out that this development can have both positive and negative effect on societies. Parekh (2006) states that the negative effects are
increased marginalization of people of immigrant background and Putnam (2007) that it can result in distrust between different social groups.

The way school leaders respond to increased diversity is of great significance, as it can determine whether minority groups will be marginalized or not. In order to prevent marginalization of minority groups, democratic leadership practices are considered to be more effective than traditional leadership practices (Colemann, 2012; Woods, 2005)

Accordingly, in the study project Learning spaces for inclusion and social justice – Success stories, good practices the focus was put on exploring how democracy shows itself in exemplary leadership practices while fostering inclusion and social justice. This paper describes the findings in three compulsory schools in Iceland. Data was collected with semi-structured interviews with principals, teachers, and parents.

According to Woods (2005), the level of democratic practices are reflected in how actively the pupils of immigrant background and their families are included in the school community. Three different types of democratic leadership were identified. These types are liberal minimalism, with the main focus on protecting rights and interest of minority groups, civic republicanism that emphasizes concern beyond the individual or family, and some signs of deliberative democracy, which is constantly seeking for common human good. In addition to this evidence of democratic practices, the findings show that directedness as defined by Duke (2010) has a significant effect in conducting the democratic practices identified in these schools.

The findings indicate that the more the leadership emphasis is towards developmental democracy and a directive leadership style, the more involved immigrant families are. This paper concludes with reflections on how different leadership styles can contribute to the creation of a learning space that enhances inclusion and social justice in the school community.


Organizational models and school success in the Learning Spaces Project - a synthesis of findings

Lars Anders Kulbrandstad, Hedmark University College, NO

In the NordForsk funded project Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice – Success Stories from Immigrant Students and School Communities in Four Nordic Countries (LSP) (2013-2015) approximately 30 institutions from preschool to upper secondary level in Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden are examined by the researchers. What these schools have in common is that they appear to succeed in providing just and inclusive education, academically and socially, also to students from immigrant groups that experience particular challenges in the school system. But at the same time, the schools are different in many respects, which is concordant with findings in much international research on “successful schools” (Biesta, 2010; Cuban, 2003; Jansen, 1995; Sahlberg, 2011).

One of the aspects of that is studied in the LSP project is how the teaching and learning activities is structured for students with an immigrant background. This includes different forms of organizational differentiation, which could be defined as “a division of a school’s student-body into subgroups (classes, groups, streams) of a relatively permanent character for instructional purposes” (Sørensen, 1970, p. 355). The pro and cons of this way of arranging immigrant education compared to direct mainstreaming of the students has been a hot topic of debate in the literature (Carrasquillo & Rodríguez, 2002; James & Schecter, 2000; McKay & Freedman, 1990).

The LSP researchers have found a great variety of organizational patterns in the adaptation of the education to suit the needs of immigrant students. The variation is connected to such factors as age and school level, linguistic and cultural composition of the student groups, the pedagogical strategies adopted by the institution etc.

In this paper, findings from different schools and school levels in the four countries in the project will be presented in a comparative perspective and the question whether organizational solution is a crucial factor for school success will be discussed.


Diverse methodologies for diverse research: Reinventing the role of an educational researcher and her relationship with participants and communities.

Hafdís Guðjónsdóttir, Anna Katarzyna Wozniczka, Edda Óskarsdóttir, Karen Rut Gísladóttir and Megumi Nishida

The purpose of this roundtable is to create a space for a focused discussion on diverse educational research with an emphasis on exploring key issues and challenges for educational researchers. The aim is to increase understanding of factors influencing the research process and the relationship between researchers, participants and communities, as well as to learn about strategies developed by diverse, novice and experienced researchers. The overall research question for this roundtable is: How does a researcher develop her identity and build relationships with participants and communities in different contexts?

With new methods and approaches on the one hand and growing expectations, needs and pressures from the academia, policy makers and society on the other hand, educational researchers may encounter various challenges. One of them is to constantly negotiate power dynamics in relationships between researchers, participants and the others. By taking ethical symmetry as a starting point and acknowledging particular social relations and cultural contexts, a researcher can ensure that the participants’ accounts are presented and understood in the fullest way. Moreover, a researcher may be confronted with array of roles, such as a practitioner-researcher or a student-researcher, which may influence the interactions with participants. This requires from a researcher a use of different strategies for communication with participants during and post research process, as well as a dialogue with other researchers and own reflection. Finally, the ultimate challenge that each educational researcher encounters is development of the identity of an agent of change and building relationships between researchers and participants that are mutually beneficial (Christensen & Prout, 2002; Nelson, London & Strobel, 2015; Nolen & Putten, 2007).

Diverse qualitative methods, including the use of observations, interviews and personal diaries, were applied in each of the presented research. The projects ranged from an individual self-study to a team research and collectively shared research experiences; and from being an insider researcher to a complete stranger (Adler & Adler, 1994). All of the studies were conducted in educational settings of different school levels in Iceland.


Research with immigrant children – importance of revealing linguistic and cultural resources

Anna Katarzyna Wozniczka and Karen Rut Gísladóttir, University of Iceland, IS

The rapid growth of immigration to Iceland in the past two decades has led to increased diversity in schools. Together with the shift in demographics a growing interest in the area of educational research in multiculturalism and translingualism is being observed.

The idea for the paper emerged as a result of authors’ participation in a Nordic research Learning spaces for inclusion and social justice, that aims at mapping, describing and analyzing successful stories of immigrant students and good practices in several schools in Iceland, Sweden, Norway and Finland.

The purpose of the paper is twofold, firstly to explore key issues researchers should bear in mind while preparing, doing and presenting a research with immigrant students to capture their resources; and secondly, to describe strategies used by the researchers and challenges that they have been experiencing throughout the process. The aim is to increase understanding of factors influencing the research process, which allow us as researchers in multicultural context to better capitalize on students’ linguistic and cultural resources. The research question guiding this study was: How do we as researchers reveal the linguistic and cultural resources that immigrant children bring to educational setting?

The paper is built on a qualitative research, which spans observations, formal interviews and informal conversations with students with a multicultural background in three primary schools in Iceland. It represents the path of the researchers coming together, from the moment of preparation of school visits and interviews, through the actual process of collecting data and analyzing it to various forms of dissemination of findings.

One way of empowering children, not only through education, but also through educational research, is by noticing and making use of their resources. Rodriguez (2007) characterises resources as personal strengths and qualities, which emerge from and shape life experiences. Similarly, Wertch (1998) considers cultural resources as mediational tools for people to make meaning and act in the world. Further, language and culture are seen by Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti (2005) as ‘funds of knowledge’ or in other words, resources to draw upon in the process of learning and empowering of students.

Findings illuminate how the interactions between researchers’ of diverse cultural background gives a greater opportunity to explore how students draw on their linguistic and cultural resources in the process of becoming multilingual.

A Way to Empowerment: Immigrant Educational Personnel and Self-Study

Megumi Nishida and Hafdis Guðjónsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

Working at an Icelandic preschool may be a simple choice for immigrant women since it is allowed to work without a teaching license (Preschool Act No. 90, 2008). Although being qualified as a compulsory school teacher both in Japan and Iceland, I decided to take this path to enhance my knowledge and experience in early childhood education as well as Icelandic language comprehension. The preschool I began to work at practices a unique methodology called Hjallastefnan and one of their educational focuses is positive discipline. As a teacher of Japanese origin, discipline is extremely important so that I thought I would enjoy working as an educational personnel there. But I realized that my cultural identity as a Japanese interferes with my overall performances. I fell into a teacher-identity crisis. This experience encourages me to explore my challenges and successes through self-study to reflect on myself as an immigrant educational personnel.

Because of the nature of self-study, I use narrative inquiry as my methodology. For data collection, I keep my journal and take photos of activities that I find interesting. I also save sample art works which I have done with children. I use these to discuss with my critical friend to analyze my work from different point of view.

During preliminary research, I noticed potential ethical issues as follows:

• Self-study may reveal my colleagues and students’ identity;
• Protecting children’s rights to decline participation;
• Keeping a balance between subjectivity and objectivity through narrative inquiry.

The purpose of this paper is to explore potential ethical issues associated with self-study and help me generate effective research questions to explore both challenges and successes through my critical reflections for empowerment as an immigrant educational personnel.

Pre School Act no. 90/2008.

Being self-reflexive in researching with children

Edda Óskarsdóttir and Hafdis Guðjónsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

Researchers have been motivated to find effective ways to create a space for children in educational research. Emphasis in the literature has been on the various approaches in creating a space for children (Allison, 2007; Cook-Sather, 2014; Einarsson, 2012) and finding solutions in ensuring their voices are heard in ethical ways (Christensen, 2004; Hohti & Karlsson, 2013; Morgan, Gibbs, Maxwell, & Britten, 2002). While these methodologies are important, few have however focused on the role of the researchers in creating a space for children in research; on the knowledge or resources they bring and employ in capturing and eliciting children’s voices.

Reflexivity in researching with children is stressed as important in various literatures at every stage of the research project and for various reasons, such as methodological or ethical (Morgan, Gibbs, Maxwell, & Britten, 2002; Phelan & Kinsella, 2013). Spyrou (2011) and Finlay (2002) however, call for a reflexive self-awareness of the researcher status as an adult and as a researcher in the research process. This paper can be constructed as a response to this call as it reports on a self-study of the practice of researching with children. The aim of the paper is to give an account of how a self-study
researcher, with the assistance of a critical friend, looked at herself in the practice of researching with children to understand and make visible the roles, funds of knowledge and resources she brought to and employed in the research situations.

The paper builds on data from a self-study research on inclusive practice, where pupils were invited to discuss and draw how they see inclusive practice in their school. The purpose of the pupil participation was to shed a light on how they perceived inclusion in their school. The data analysed for this paper comes from group and individual discussions with pupils. The aim was not to analyse what the pupils had to say about inclusion but rather to focus on the learning of the researcher about her role in researching with children.

Reflexivity was used together with a critical friend to bring forward the role of the practitioner researcher in capturing and eliciting children’s voice in the research.

Findings include discussions on power, staying in the researcher role and questions about the choice of methods. Employing reflexivity and working with a critical friend provided an insight into how diverse knowledge and resources of practice were applied in creating a space for children in research.


11:00 – 11:45  Keynote II: Gert Biesta, Room: Saga Film, Studio

12:45 – 14:45  Invited symposium I. Organizer: Jim Cummins, Room: Saga Film, Studio

15:15 – 16:45  Parallel session IV

Room: Borgartún 30, 6th floor, Room A

Conformity and Critique: “Dangerous” Pedagogies and the Teaching of Volunteerism in a University EAP Course

Brian Morgan, Glendon College, York University, CA

In the “Genealogy of Ethics,” Foucault (1997) stakes out a critical stance that may be essential for social justice work in education: “My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to a hyper- and pessimistic activism” (p. 256). This sense of “danger” and the intensified activism it suggests, I believe, are especially relevant for the teaching of volunteerism in a university English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course. For numerous reasons, the teaching of volunteerism—within a larger focus on social justice and active/critical citizenship—can be depicted as curricular content precariously positioned between conformity and critique.

In the context of internationalized EAP programs, volunteering and community engagement (re)introduces privileged EAP students—who Vandrick (2011) has called SONGE’s (Students of the New Global Elite)—to issues of inequality, difference, and inclusion. In researching local practices, these same students—if encouraged as critical ethnographers—may generate comparative insights no longer apparent to longstanding and habituated citizens. Volunteerism, thus, might be seen as a counter-strategy to youth apathy and a disengaged “clicktivism”, in respect to politics. Yet, the “dangers” are many: in the form of post-altruistic volunteering and the fashioning of “cool” cosmopolitan lifestyles (Jeffreess, 2012), or as CV-enhancement for elite MBA program applications. Such developments also align volunteerism with neoliberal discourses of self-reliance and a reduced role for government in addressing social justice concerns (Clarke & Morgan, 2011).

In the second part of my paper, I will describe a specific treatment of “volunteerism” through a project-based assignment in an EAP course at Glendon College in Toronto. The group oral presentation assignment, titled “Get Involved”, requires students to research and analyze a Non-Governmental Organization doing development work in Toronto (e.g. poverty, environment, multiculturalism, arts and culture). I will discuss several of the students’ projects to illustrate the ways in which they corroborate the “dangerous” (cf. Foucault) aspects of volunteerism noted above. I will also demonstrate how this assignment serves the dual purposes of a critical EAP (Benesch, 2001), which promotes both conventional academic language skills (oral academic presentations, multimodal texts, research and documentation) as well as critical awareness of language, power, and identity within and beyond the university. (387 words)
"She may be the skipper but...": Icelandic and immigrant fathers’ voices on disability in the family

Dóra Bjarnason, University of Iceland, IS

The paper is based on the findings of two research projects, into how families perceive the birth and/or care of a disabled child in Iceland, and how early experiences, support and perceptions affect family life and choices on behalf of the child and family. The first study was conducted before the economic crisis in Iceland in 2008 and included only the experiences and perspectives of Icelandic families (Dóra S. Bjarnason, 2010). The second study is in process and looks at experiences of native and immigrant parents with disabled children after 2011 when the economic situation was beginning to recover. Immigrants are here all research participants who are neither born in Iceland nor with Icelandic parent(s). Both studies are qualitative (Bogdan & Biklen 2003; Wolcot 1995). The second study, and the one reported on here, is in process and involves 15 Icelandic families who also participated in the previous study and 15 immigrant families. Schools, associations for disabled people and private contacts helped me to find willing research participants. Both studies are placed within the interpretivist paradigm (Ferguson & Ferguson 1995), but social capital theories (Allan, Buckel, Catts, Doherty et al 2005), post structuralism (Foucault 1975; Schwandt 2001) and critical theory (Allan 2008) provide tools for analysis and interpretation.

The research focus is on perspectives of the families of disabled children in a changing welfare climate. But this paper focuses primarily on the perspectives of fathers.

The purpose of this paper is to describe, explore and interpret fathers’/husbands’ perspectives on having a disabled child in a time of significant societal changes; including changes in social policy, professional practice, and parental and gender roles. How do fathers of disabled (Icelandic and immigrant) children with disability born 2000 and 2014, experience disability in their families? How do they perceive the (predominantly female) support available to their child and family - and to what extent have changes in policy and practice impacted the fathers’/husbands’ roles and needs? How does language proficiency (Chumak-Horbatch 2012) and cultural background (Ragnarsdóttir, 2008) intersect these experiences?

My questions in this paper relate especially to how, and with what support, native and immigrant fathers of disabled children experience their family roles and tasks, and if and how variations in cultural background, and changes in formal support and social policy has affected their perception and choices of schooling and other services for disabled children.

Findings so far suggest that fathers have different tasks and perspectives on disability than do mothers, that fathers of foreign origin share some common concerns due to language problems, but their cultural and religious backgrounds impact their roles, tasks and choices. Some fathers, both native and non-natives experience that their roles as fathers and husbands are disenfranchised by formal support systems, manned largely by female staff, and aimed at supporting the disabled child rather than the family unit.

Can you make sense of global mobility? Exploring lived experiences

Hildur Blöndal, PhD student, University of Iceland, IS

The aim of the paper is to define and discuss how and if students can make sense of their global mobility. The paper puts focus on the positive aspects of mobility, linking it to the experience of living and studying outside of one’s passport country. The main objectives of this research is to seek
knowledge on how students with an international background have found their own unique way to make sense of their global mobility and gaining a better understanding on how mobility shapes the person’s life. This is done by bringing together two distinctive groups, students with immigrant background and native Icelandic students that have lived abroad. The main research question is: How do students make sense of their global mobility and how does it manifest itself in key competences and frames of mind, experiences and worldviews and what are some of the positive outcomes of global mobility? Theoretical underpinnings are from critical pedagogy, globalization, international education and critical multicultural education. Spariosu (2004) claims that there is a need for re-negotiations between the global and the local. Societal changes do not only affect the realities of those who are mobile but also for those who stay in place (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hillard, 2004). Vertovec (2009) has defined transcultural competence as the ability to engage in meaningful cross-cultural communication, and these competences are a result of a transnational life. The importance of a positive approach towards diversity and mobility becomes very clear after examining existing literature that has mostly focused on the negative aspects of high mobility and relocation (Fail, Thomson & Walker 2004, Gaw, 2007, Hoersting and Jenkins, 2011). The research is a qualitative interview study and the data collection was carried out 2013 – 2015, with in-depth interviews. Participants are students in upper secondary school and university (17 and up) that have resided out side of their passport country for more then three years and are currently living in Iceland. The data was analyzed by using thematic coding, distracting themes from a data set, derived from for example, in-depth interviews or dialogue (Weathington, Cunningham & Pittenge, 2010). Preliminary findings indicate that the participants being from two distinctive groups have a lot in common which becomes evident in their cultural sensitivity, world mindedness and adaptability. Many of them draw parallels to them selves and the chameleon that has a unique way of adapting to new environment by changing colors not to be mistaken for a camouflage, but rather due to a sensitivity and heightened awareness to their surroundings. The focus of this paper fit well with the conference them as it brings together a diverse group of students whose lives have been influenced by mobility and migration and has the positive aspects of mobility and change as its focal point.

The ‘Immigrant Corner’: A Place for Identification and Resistance

Signild Risenfors and Kerstin von Brömssen, University West, SE

This article shows how young people in a Swedish upper-secondary school negotiate identities through social relations in a particular part of a school corridor that they call the ‘immigrant corner’. This place offers subject positions determined by ethnicity, but the young people also legitimise various forms of intersections of gender, class and generation. However, the ‘immigrant corner’ is not only a place where identifications are performed, it is also a place that gives rise to discussions and challenges of the school’s official integration policy. Thus, the place affects those who usually sit there as well as those who do not, and is therefore important for discussions on integration issues on a local, national, European and global level. The theoretical components of this article concern spatial theories according to the concepts of place and space. With regard to place and space, the article outlines and applies the young people’s identity formations, as well as their discussions about integration issues with help from the concept of power geometry — that is, networks of social/power relations.

Data is collected through observations made over a one-year period in a multicultural school in Sweden, where the activities related to the “immigrant corner” are followed. At the end of the year, follow-up interviews were accomplished with 29 of the young people, aged 18-19. The interviews provided opportunities to discuss the activities in the “immigrant corner”. Data production is carried out in accordance with the Swedish Research Council’s rules and guidelines for research.

Conquering obstacles: Supporting first generation immigrants through an Icelandic upper secondary school.

Valgerður Garðarsdóttir, Teacher, IS

The developmental project has been in operation for the last seven years, supporting immigrants in academic studies at an Icelandic upper secondary school, Menntaskólinn við Hamrahlíð. Despite the focus group not being large the selection of support service has grown over the years. Those supported by the program are mostly first generation immigrants and come from various distant parts of the world, from Latin America, South-East Asia and East Europe and have usually been in Iceland for three to five years when they enrol at Menntaskólinn við Hamrahlíð. The students in question are usually the ones that have the best knowledge of Icelandic in their family and therefore they need to get support for their studies in the school. They attend the same classes as any other students, and there are no special classes made available to them, except for Icelandic as a second language. The regular teachers deliver the materials to the immigrant students just as they would do for other students. During gaps in their daily timetables however immigrants can get support with their homework at the support service. These homework support classes are open and flexible and aim to create a friendly atmosphere to make the students feel welcome. The immigrants usually search for support with Icelandic, the main language of the materials in most subjects, and understanding Icelandic culture as they lack the same background information and experiences as their classmates.
This project which has been under development since 2008, is an enquiry into the support system in one upper secondary school in Iceland, and is built on an action research model. The paper’s approach is based on Lev Vygotsky’s work in which he talks about scaffolds that are built around students to support them during their studies and then removed when they have reached the required skills. Multiplicity, justice and democracy are the keywords.

The immigrant group supported at Menntaskólinn við Hamrahlið experiences very few dropouts. Some of the immigrants have already graduated and for the most part they graduate at the normal speed (4 years) and move on to university studies. Although Icelandic is often the most difficult obstacle for the immigrants, English is also a barrier to some.

The developmental project is an attempt to provide immigrant students with the same study opportunities as their Icelandic peers.

Graduated students of first generation immigrants have been studying in our Icelandic upper secondary school. They can conquer obstacles, study successfully and get their degree with the right support.

Exploring Limited Participation in Lifelong Learning Courses in Iceland: Voices of Women from the Middle East

Susan Rafik Hama and Hróbjartur Árnason, University of Iceland, IS

The increased number of adult immigrants entering Iceland led to many qualitative studies that attempt to understand the demographics of this population. A small number of those focus on the experience of adults who enrol in lifelong learning courses in Iceland.

This study highlights factors that impede participation and successful completion of lifelong learning courses among women from the Middle East in Iceland and investigates how best to meet these women’s needs. The investigation is qualitative and is based on data gleaned from interviews with eight immigrant women aged 30-51 and from public documents.


The findings suggest that social networking; levels of education and income problems are among the factors that affect immigrants’ access to lifelong learning. The result suggests that in order to help these and other immigrant women move forward and engage in lifelong learning activities, equal opportunities and equal access to courses need to be secured to all refugees and immigrants in Iceland. This would allow them to be more competitive in the labour market and give them access to a wider range of jobs in Icelandic society.


Room: Saga Film, Room B.

Community of Inquiry – Research-based Teaching and Learning for Inclusive Practice

Heike de Boer, Benjamin Brass and Catharina Fuhrmann, University Koblenz-Landau, DE

Within the “Koblenzer Network Campus, schools and study seminars” (KONECS) primary school teachers, university teachers, postgraduate teachers and students work together in order to professionalize future teachers for inclusive practice. The foundation of the cooperative work is formed by the approach of research-based teaching and learning: Students investigate their own teaching, analyze the consequences of their communicative actions and discuss those with teachers.

One integral field of action within this project is the enactment and research on philosophical dialogues with primary school children. The aim is an open conversation about a philosophical topic like ‘what is truth?’, in which multiple perspectives can be formulated and related to each other. Because of this, (emerging) teachers face the challenge of including all children into the conversation, giving them the opportunity to articulate their own ideas as well as opening up collaborative thinking and learning spaces irrespective of the learners’ linguistic competences or a lack thereof. The aim is the formation of a community of inquiry (Lipman 1991) in which a multi-perspectival confrontation with the ‘other’ and the ‘foreign’ may take place.

Following an understanding of learning as joint meaning making (Littleton & Mercier 2010) we analyze these transcripts with the methods of participation analysis (Brandt 2015), which focuses on the forms of talk and the structures of participation in classroom discourses. Early findings suggest that the participants not only overcome dualistic thinking, but also that interrelations and new questions emerge within their conversation. For this to happen it is regarded as necessary to slow down the dialogue. Furthermore, the analysis of philosophical dialogues at German schools shows that it poses a formidable challenge for future teachers to generate symmetrical and reciprocal conversation in which children can introduce own questions and new topics. Because of this we want to put the following question up for discussion in the Nordic education network for inclusion and social justice: In how far does slowing down and open thinking in classroom discourses clash with a logic of utilization and measurability that is a part of the institutional framework of schooling?


Research-based learning in German teacher education – Space for experimental research on school development

Anke Spies, Carl-von-Ossietzky University, DE

In Germany, chances of research-based teacher education are discussed with the expectation to develop schools in a highly innovative way. More specifically, teacher-students should be educated to use research-based evaluation in their future teaching and conceptual work at school. But there
are different problems to solve before teacher-students can apply a research-based approach to do qualitative research on problems of school development and obtain relevant results. First, most teacher-students aren’t interested in learning how to do evaluation-research on school-development issues. Second, they are not used to investigate their profession or the school system. And third, the peer-to-peer experience as an important part of research-based learning settings is different from individual competition but essential for the involvement of the teacher-students.

The presentation discusses one way of a research based setting in teacher education, developed to create new learning spaces for teacher education as well as to design new ways of methods to evaluate school development. I developed this setting to make teacher-students more sensitive for school development as a permanent process that involves team-working teachers, principals and other professionals. In my project the teacher-students specifically work with two current issues: migration and inclusion. These issues are of interest teacher-students. They do the evaluation-research in a particular school that continuously uses preliminary results to improve its development and to give teacher-students an insight into practice.

The experimental setup requires the student-teachers to reflect upon that development but not their own teaching. They ‘just’ look at teaching practices, as well as personal and organizational processes from an academic perspective. They also reflect on the progress of their research. The setting is mainly based on research independently done yet successively passed on to other teacher-students in a peer-to-peer exchange (Spies 2015).

The setting uses the ideas of “learning by inquiry” and “learning through research” as defined by Healey & Jenkins (2009, 7) and has been evaluated for four years by a mixed method evaluation. The evaluation uses a qualitative analysis (Mayring 2000) of the following four data sets: two group discussions and one problem-based interview with teacher students after their completion of the course; three reflections written in a team process and several individually written reflections on the process of research based learning. In addition to this, the reports of 27 Master’s Theses are also part of the evaluation.

The findings show that there is a challenge to improve research-based teacher education both to develop the individual progression and to initiate a dynamic group process. The teacher-students can do their research training with surprising results for their interests in school development. But they need specific advice, to guide them through (a group dynamic) process to be successful in their research and profit from the peer-to-peer-experience. What the teacher-students have learned makes them modify their attitudes toward being a teacher. However the progress of research based learning is vulnerable.

In addition the school’s profit as well: It is using results and feedback in its own way to contribute new issues for by student’s research.


Untouchable gobbledygook in assessment: A student perspective on learning and assessment language.
Jennie Sivenbring, University of Gothenburg, SE

In this paper it is argued, that the assessment techniques used in Swedish schools can be potent tools for making student aware of their own learning. However, the pedagogic assessment language used by teachers sometimes obstructs this opportunity, in particularly for students that are already marginalized by language practices.

Swedish, students in compulsory school are increasingly being assessed and graded. The motif according to the education policies is to enhance results and to make students more focused on target achievement. The purpose of this paper is to enlighten how the assessment language used by the teachers, contribute in the subjectification of students.

This paper is based on an interview study with 28 students in ninth grade. The study focuses on: how students speak about being assessed, and on how assessments are conditioning their performance and possible behaviour in school. The interviews were analysed using a discourse analytical approach, based on Michel Foucault’s theoretical framework. The students’ narratives are thus regarded as dependant on the educational and assessment discourses that are both constructing, and constructed by, the practice. It is also in these discourses that the students are subjectified as good or bad students.

The result shows that the students are aware of, and very attentive to the assessments given on their performances in school. However when teachers assess and communicate the formal expectations and goal related criteria to their students; they are using a professionally oriented language that students find remote and unavailable. The "untouchable gobbledygook" in the assessment language are particularly unavailable to the students that are all ready excluded by the special needs discourse or by their inefficiency in the Swedish language. In order to navigate and cope with the expectations and to compensate for not understanding the teachers’ expectations the students use their understanding and knowledge of behavioural rules as guidelines.

In conclusion, the assessment discourse contributes in constructing learning- subjects that focus on performing as “good students” that behave and adjust to the teachers’ expectations, in exchange for positive assessment and better grades. The result suggest that to accomplish equality according to the target achievement stipulated by the Swedish National Agency for Education, it is important for teachers to use a language that is adjusted to the students’ age, language skills and understanding.

Room: Saga Film, Studio  Symposium

The story of my teaching: Constructing learning spaces in multicultural contexts

Hafdís Guðjónsdóttir, Thor-André Skrefsrud, Johannes Lunneblad, Karen Rut Gísladóttir and Hille Janhonen-Abruquah

The purpose of this symposium is to give teachers in grades 1-10 in compulsory schools an opportunity to have a voice in the educational discourse. Our goal is to paint a picture of teachers’ experiences and practices that are responsive to students of multicultural background in multicultural contexts. Research question is: How do teachers construct learning spaces that are responsive to students of multicultural background? This Symposium is a part of a larger Nordic project called Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice, funded by NordForsk (2013-2015), which aims at contributing to the development of more inclusive practices in schools. To answer the
research question of this symposium we will present teachers’ stories from four Nordic countries: Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

In this study we use pedagogical and sociological framework for culturally responsive teaching to explore how teachers draw on the linguistic and cultural resources of students of multicultural background. This allows us to explore the human intervention teachers use in creating learning spaces that accommodate for diversity they negotiate. Furthermore, it gives attention to how they negotiate the historical, institutional and political constraints embedded in the spaces they work within. We use critical pedagogy to understand how they employ lived experience of empowerment to transform education and stimulate critical reflection (Freire, 2008; Giroux, 1996).

Many learning spaces are developed within the school and in each classroom. These spaces are created or opened up both by teachers and students.

The concept of learning spaces allows us to explore how the issues of social justice, equality, democracy, and human rights are embedded in the learning process (Banks, 2007; Gee, 2004). Thus, spaces of learning include social contexts, networks and resources that encourage, develop and nurture learning supporting students to become agents of their lifelong learning and active participants in society.

Qualitative and innovative methods were applied to gain a deep understanding of teachers’ experiences and practices in responding to students of multicultural background. Each country research group collected data according to a similar research model. These included a variety of methods, such as semi-structured in-depth interviews and informal discussions, participant observation, audio and video recordings and photographs. For selecting the schools, indicators such as emphasis on social justice and inclusive practices, average grades and test scores and external evaluation of school authorities were used. Administrators pointed out teachers they perceived as working successfully with these students population.

The analytical process took place concurrently through the research period using qualitative procedures of content analysis, coding and constant comparison.


**Creating Cultural and Linguistic Resistance – Stories from Norwegian Teachers**

**Joke Dewilde and Thor-André Skrefsrud, Hedmark University College, NO**

In this paper we present stories from teachers who engage with newly arrived students’ identity work in ways that create cultural resistance against dominant discourses in school and society. Two selected stories are presented. The first illustrates how the teacher embraces linguistic diversity as a resource in subject-based teaching. This is done in opposition to a mono-linguistic discourse which reduces language to “speech communities”, as bounded entities shared identically among all its members. The second illustrates how a student’s experiences of translocalisation are made relevant
by the teacher, who allows for a wider conception of the student’s identity in opposition to the school and the parents’ way of restricting the student’s cultural background.

Methodologically the stories are collected and documented through qualitative interviews, participant observation and document analysis (Denzin & Lincoln 2011; Hammersley & Atkinson 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann 2009). Accordingly, the material includes transcripts from interviews and field conversations with teachers and students, fieldnotes on the basis of participant observations in schools, in addition to students’ written assignments.

Theoretically, the stories are interpreted in light of Pratts’ notion of “autoethnographical texts”. Following Pratt, the concept of autoethnography constitutes a marginalized group’s interaction with the dominant culture in which “people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them” (Pratt 1991, 35). Unlike ethnographic texts and autochthonous texts, autoethnographical texts involve a selective collaboration with motives from the dominant culture. It is a way for the marginalized to create cultural resistance by apparently adopting practices and mindsets from the dominant culture. However, the adopted motives are merged with indigenous idioms to form a self-representation which serve as a protest against dominant modes of understanding. Autoethnography is thus a contextual way of situating oneself and negotiating self-identity in a new environment.

The findings indicate that the teachers’ cultural and linguistic awareness may help the students to negotiate identity in ways that form a protest against dominant oppressive discourses in the wider society which threatens to devaluate students’ languages, cultures and identities.


Spaces of learning and collaborative relations: bridging projects for inclusive education.

Johannes Lunneblad, Annette Hellman and Ylva Odenbring, University of Gothenburg, SE

The aim of this paper is to explore teachers’ narratives about their efforts to form school cultures for learning and inclusion. Specifically, we examine the teachers’ narratives of inclusion. These narratives are analysed through how they enable teachers and students to work on themselves, produce themselves in terms of what it means to be part of the school (Ball et al 2012). Teachers’ narratives are considered as events in talk, for example emphasizing certain aspects of an event. When people construct narratives it also outline different identities (Billing, 1996). Speech can here be understood as identity work, through which, teachers position the school, themselves and each other during the conversation. The multiple positions in the narratives are, however, not the outcome of shifting signs alone, but the result of the variation of sites, contexts, and social relationships in interaction trough time and space.
Employing qualitative methods in this paper we focus on how the narratives enables inclusive school cultures (Wodak & Krzyzanowski, 2008). The paper draws on data from two compulsory schools located in a metropolitan area respectively a smaller town in Sweden. Both schools are located in disadvantaged and multi-ethnic areas. Our primary methods include interviews with school leaders, teachers and students, and field observations in classrooms and hallways as well as documentary analysis of school policy. The interviews analysed in this paper include two individual, semi-structured interviews with six teachers at each school.

The result reveals, that teachers at both schools interpret diversity as a resource for successful learning. In these narratives, inclusion is articulated as way of showing respect for cultural differences, finding ways of communicating between cultures and people. Teachers also highlight importance of common projects in order to create an inclusive school culture. Those common projects work as bridging between ethnicity, gender and age and enable positive spaces of learning and collaborative relations (Giroux, 1996).


Learning spaces as an arena for inclusion and responsive pedagogy in multicultural contexts. Teachers’ stories.

Anna Katarzyna Wozniczka, Karen Rut Gísladóttir and Hafdís Guðjónsdóttir, University of Iceland, iS

The rapid growth of immigration to Iceland in the past two decades has led to increased diversity in schools. This shift calls for renegotiation of the ideas of inclusion and culturally responsive pedagogy that empowers all students and enhances their learning and achievement.

The purpose of this study was to explore learning spaces through the eyes of teachers working with students with multicultural background. The goal was to develop a better understanding of how do teachers support construction of learning spaces that are responsive to students of multicultural background. The research question guiding the study was: How do teacher use their agency in creating successful learning spaces for student of multicultural background?

The theoretical framework builds on the ideas of inclusion and learning spaces. Inclusion here is seen as an ongoing process affecting everyone as it focuses on diversity and how schools respond to and value a diverse group of students. It is aimed at creating learning spaces that allow teachers to recognize and disrupt inequalities presented in exclusion and discrimination against diversities such as social and ethnic circumstances, religion, gender and ability of students and their families.
Learning spaces suggest social contexts, networks and resources that encourage, develop and nurture learning in a culturally responsive way. These spaces encourage teachers to use their agency
to increase students’ participation and sense of belonging in school and society (Banks, 2007; Booth, 2010; Gee, 2004).

The qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews, informal conversations and field observations in three primary schools in southwest Iceland.

Preliminary findings show that through employing inclusive practices teachers create spaces that are culturally responsive to students’ learning. It further indicates that interactions within these spaces encourage hybrid use of language practices in the meaning making process. The teachers’ practices include a long-term vision for their students and a use of critical reflection and innovation to empower students and increase their feeling of belonging within the school and society.


A good teacher but a bit more – “I worked for a year in an easier school, where everyone could understand Finnish, but I got bored, this is where strong teachers like me are needed”

Hille Janhonen-Abruquah and Heidi Layne, University of Helsinki, FI

OECD (2010) reports that on the average, pupils of immigrant background have weaker educational outcome at all levels. The report explains this with language barriers and socio-economics differences. Research also shows (Goodwin, 2002) that many immigrant children arrive in their host countries highly educated. However, a new and unfamiliar school environment may inhibit children from demonstrating their full potential. This paper investigates the teachers who we have identified as visionaries for applying culturally responsive pedagogy. Culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2005) claims that all teachers are able to work with students who are from culturally different backgrounds to their own. However, it requires that one is able to identify internalized biases and to accommodate the rich variety of students’ cultural experiences into teaching.

The data was collected from 7 different schools in Finland, two kindergartens, three compulsory schools and two secondary schools. Through reflective qualitative inquiry process (Agee, 2009) the research questions were developed further with respondents. By using theme identification (Ryan & Russell Bernard, 2003) as the basis for content analyses, qualitative data analyses was carried out. The results show that a visionary teacher is a developer, looking for challenges, constantly learning and sharing expertise.


**Room: Borgartún 30, 3d floor    Roundtable**

**Action for sustainability in higher education: creative assessment in student-driven initiatives in Nordic higher education institutions**

**Organizing author: Jan Van Boeckel, ActSHEN partners**

Susan Gollifer, Allyson Macdonald, Caitlin Melaney Wilson, Auður Palsdottir, Ásthildur Björg Jónsdóttir and Julia Vol, University of Iceland, IS; Sakari Tolppanen and Jaana Herranen University of Helsinki, FI; Veli-Matti Vesterinen, Stockholm University, SE; Jakob Grandin and Isak Stoddard, University of Uppsala, SE; Per Ingvar Haukeland, Telemark Research Institute, NO; Jan Van Boeckel, Academy of Arts, IS

Education and sustainability are key concerns that are inextricably linked and promoted as key determinants of the present and future, as reflected in 21st century education policy making. Promoting principles of sustainability in higher education is underpinned by a social justice agenda that aims for increased social, economic and ecological wellbeing. These are goals that demand increased attention to issues of diversity, inclusion and creativity in educational processes, outcomes and *assessment approaches*, the focus of our roundtable workshop.

We represent six institutions across the Nordic countries participating in a threeyear project ActSHEN—Action for Sustainability in Higher Education in the Nordic region. Sustainability education requires transdisciplinary knowledge, critical thinking skills, and understanding of shared responsibility. The goal of the project is to develop guiding principles that strengthen student-driven pedagogy when working with sustainability in higher education (HE). Student-driven HE puts the student at the center of the teaching and learning process, with students guided to see themselves as both producers and consumers of knowledge. Through carefully audited continuous discussion and collaboration with peers, students are encouraged to actively engage in the acquisition of knowledge, teaching approaches and application of what they have learned. The egalitarian organisational structure encourages active involvement. Students are understood as agents of and coresponsible for their learning process including appropriate assessment approaches.

We are currently in phase 2 of the project, which involves: piloting a set of guiding principles for supporting student-driven sustainability in HE developed during phase 1; and investigating ways in which participatory and collaborative education for sustainability can be strengthened in universities. We propose a workshop to engage participants in critical discussion on assessment processes and tools that we use in the context of student-centered methodology. These processes and tools are underpinned by student participation in the continuous development of assessment. We aim to...
present the challenges, the rewards and the next steps in working towards creative assessment that responds to wicked problems associated with sustainability.

By drawing on our experiences as instructors and students, we anticipate that the proposed workshop will generate deliberative dialogue on the role of assessment in the context of HE sustainability education. Such discussions will inform our own work around sustainability, but will also promote the relevance of student-driven HE initiatives as a social justice concern in education in multiple contexts, and across the Nordic region and beyond.

Applying a relational assessment system in the context of a human rights and visual arts course

Ásthildur Björg Jónsdóttir and Sue Gollifer, University of Iceland, IS

The Iceland Academy of the Arts will run a summer workshop in August 2015 on human rights and visual arts. We aim to use the course to pilot a relational assessment system that the Academy has been using since 2013 as part of its MA Design Programme in the Department for Design and Architecture. The workshop has been organized for pre-service teachers and art education scholars from different Nordic teacher education institutions as part of the EDDA network. Participants will explore pedagogical practices in the context of diverse artistic activities whilst applying a human rights lens. Social activism and community engagement form the core of the workshop’s focus on social justice and human rights. The course provides opportunities for students to explore the politics of working in local, national and global contexts from a rights-based perspective, and they draw on the course content and processes to develop a creation that they will be exhibited in a public/private location.

Applying the relational assessment tool provides an opportunity to address one of the most challenging aspects of working with student-driven courses in a credit-driven Higher Education context, where stakeholder expectations are pinned on competence-based or graded learning outcomes. The heutagogic (self-determined) learning and assessment tool offers an innovative framework that presents assessment as a self-managed learning process that fosters student responsibility, creativity and potential social activism. Four interdependent factors guide the assessment process: the student’s self-identity & effectiveness (etc.) as artists; the student’s ideas, research, studio output and essays; the student’s nominated (or potential) mentor/s, collaborator/s, stakeholder/s, funder/s or employers; and what the student deems to be the philosophical, ethical, environmental and professional context behind the interdependent factors.

Drawing on the concepts of “praxis” (Freire, 1997; Arendt, 1999) and “activism” (Roth, 2010) as inherent components of human rights and sustainability education, we intend to apply the tool to assess the extent to which these concepts are reflected in student responses to each of the four interdependent factors. We then intend to use our assessment to reflect on three questions posed by Biesta (2006): How much action is possible in our institutions? How much action is possible in society? What can be learned from being/having been a subject?
Student influence on what and how they learn

Auður Pálsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

In universities, as in other educational settings, power relations between students and instructors are usually not in favor of the students. In student-led or student-driven education these power relations are subject to scrutiny when the appropriate nature and level of influence are considered. Thus student-driven education does not only aim at increased student participation in decision-making but also that students are able to determine what and where to have a say in terms of assessment.

In discussing participation in learning, Læssøe (2010) distinguishes between token and genuine participation, pointing out that power and dominance exist in participatory educational thinking. The distinction between token and genuine participation is sometimes likened to the distinction between top-down versus bottom-up participation. In the former, the instructor takes all-important decisions giving students limited influence on his/her learning. In the latter, the student interest would be leading. Læssøe (2010) explains that although there are good reasons for this distinction, there is a risk of the simplistic conclusion that top-down is bad and thus bottom-up is good. When enhancing student participation the goal is not to hand the entire responsibility over to students but rather the value of decisions shared between teachers and learners should be assessed and strengthened.

In this presentation, student views from two courses in the School of Education at the University of Iceland are subjected to critical scrutiny. The first is part of the teacher education programme and focuses on social science teaching in compulsory school. The second is a course on professionalism in education in the international studies in education programme. Both courses are based on defined learning outcomes in the university course catalogue and are allocated a defined number of lessons. Both courses are designed to be interdisciplinary. The response of both groups of students to the challenge of influencing what and how they learned is analysed. The purpose of this paper is to highlight some of the constraints and contributors experienced by students and teachers in these courses through a focus on assessment in relation to learning outcomes.

Participatory values

Allyson Macdonald, University of Iceland, IS

Over the last six years a group of instructors at the School of Education in the University of Iceland have been testing various approaches in three courses called Sustainability I, II and III (SEI, SEII and SEIII). SEI is an introductory course at graduate level and is taught in the fall. We build on the concept of “action competence”. SII and SIII are taught in alternate years in the spring, addressing issues of learning and teaching sustainability in SII and tackling issues of systemic or organisational change in SIII. We place an emphasis on a wide range of material to be read and discussed, and students make oral presentations during and at the end of the course. The manner of presentation is their own choice.

There are three or four written assignments in each course. Assessment is always tricky and so far we have only given students pass, fail or incomplete. We realise though that we should be more creative and demanding with regard to assessment and facilitate conversations with students through feedback. In this contribution to the roundtable, I reflect on a two-part assignment in spring 2015 when each student had to choose and work with four readings from a set of seven ranging from university policy to business practice, and write short traditional summaries. Then they had to choose two other ways to communicate the same material, including a journal entry, a persuasive
piece or a literary approach in the form of a poem. Three students submitted poems and were anxious for feedback. In the final assignment of the semester the same students are working on the development of an assessment tool working from a critical analysis of contemporary assessment practices. The notion of ‘participatory’ virtues as proposed by Ferkany and Whyte (2012) underlies the approach to constructing knowledge.

In this presentation we discuss the response of the instructor, a contribution from outside commentators and the reaction of the students. This critical incident highlights the complexity of working with issues of sustainability, the need to support and structure the teacher-student relationship and the potential value of assessment to open up diverse understandings.

**Student responses: Experienced reality and wishful conjecture**

**Student representatives**

Macdonald (2013) states: “By assessing what learners receive in their education, how this knowledge is transformed by assessment and how it is returned or given to society, we can begin to educate for sustainability”. In her paper on “How and why does education for a sustainable future call for new views of assessment?” Macdonald introduces four assertions made about assessment practices currently found in schools:

1. Existing forms of assessment promote static, not dynamic, views of learning.
2. Current assessment privileges certain types of knowledge.
3. Common approaches to assessment assume that scientific knowledge is culture free.
4. Assessment often concerns individuals, not communities (of practice).

In this third presentation, students from the institutions involved in the ActSHEN project challenge these assertions in order to generate new knowledge that can collectively move us towards new practices. They present their responses to conventional higher education assessment and introduce their ideas and proposals for an improved approach to assessment that emphasises the principles and characteristics of student-driven learning.

Students draw on course work and final assignments from pilot programmes being run as part of the ActSHEN project. Their reflections and observations are discussed in relation to the role of assessment in epistemic productivity (Ferkany and Whyte, 2012), understood as a crucial dimension of group deliberation based on collaborative critical dialogue and supported by the virtues of inclusiveness and engagement.

The purpose of this final paper is to provide thought provoking insights and suggestions to some of the questions that are being asked about assessment in the context of HE student-driven initiatives to promote sustainability. These include how to work with assessment that responds to interdisciplinary and holistic learning rather than subject-based learning; to values-based learning; to critical thinking rather than memorizing; to multi-method approaches: word, art, drama, debate; to participatory decision-making; and to locally, rather than nationally, relevant information (UNESCO, 2009). In particular, this final presentation aims to generate a process of deliberative dialogue on the role of assessment to respond to wicked problems associated with sustainability.
Day 3: 17 October

10:00 –11:30 Parallel session V

Room: H-209

The role of children’s literature and popular culture in peer-groups: Respectability in two Reykjavik preschools

Þórdís Þórðardóttir, University of Iceland, IS

Much like adults, children engage in task of situating themselves in their environment. Relying on data related to preschool children’s cultural literacy from my doctoral thesis (2012), this presentation focuses on the role of children’s literature and popular culture during the children’s play and conversations in their daily activities in peer groups. The aim of the study was to critically examine how 4 and 5 year old preschool-children’s differing knowledge of literature and popular culture, was related to their gender, ethnicity and parents’ education and how it affected their social status and their respectability within peer- groups in two Reykjavík preschools.

Using Bourdieu’s (1984, 1993a) concept of cultural capital to analyse how cultural factors such as knowledge of classical literature, art and popular culture affect people’s ability to gain respect in schools and other fields, the lens was pointed at the role of children’s literature and popular culture in the children’s conversations and play.

Data were collected from fourteen 4—5 year old children, who were videotaped during playtime. The video data was then content- analysed by examining frequency of registered confirmations, brush-offs and rejections from peer groups, when the participants used citations from children’s literature and popular culture during play and creative work.

In addition, the children’s teachers were interviewed regarding the children’s knowledge of literature and popular culture, and their evaluation of access to such materials in the children’s homes. The findings were supported with a parental survey and intertwined with observations of the children’s taste of this material.

Of the fourteen children nine gained enough peer-group confirmation, to be evaluated as respectable pre-schoolers. The other five children did not display sufficient knowledge or skills during the observations and videotaping to be considered respectable. These results were supported by the teachers’ descriptions were congruous with the respectability highlighted in the peer-group confirmations. These findings shed light on how varied access to children’s literature and popular culture at home, along with opportunities to express this knowledge at preschool, can contribute to gender and cultural stereotypes at the preschool level.

Despite the teachers’ aspirations for social justice and, the findings imply that cultural discrimination happened in the preschool in context of what was considered as appropriate knowledge of literature and popular culture in the classrooms.
Diversity of values in a Norwegian kindergarten?

Kathrine Moen, Nord-Trøndelag University College, NO

Kindergartens in Norway have traditionally been a place for teaching a normative set of values. The aim of my research is to find out what employees and minority parents think about values in the setting of a multicultural kindergarten. The research question is: How do the employees think about values and values education in a multicultural kindergarten, and how do parents experience values and values education in the same kindergarten?

Methodological and theoretical framework

The method is qualitative. I have conducted three semi-structured interviews with employees and two semi-structured interviews with parents in one multicultural kindergarten in Norway. I asked the employees for some minority-parents to interview, and the kindergarten staff suggested these parents. Both parents have African and Muslim background, and hence, religion are thematised as well as other values.

The concepts of multiculturality and minority are in this presentation limited to religious and cultural traditions. As a theoretical base, I use Sagbergs book about different values in kindergarten (2012). When writing about values in a multicultural society, it is necessary to have a critical look at the concept of multiculturality and discuss power regarding who’s values is important and who’s voices is being heard. For this discussion, I will among other use Vetlesen (2005), Andreassen Becher (2006) and Lauritsen (2011).

Findings and discussion

In the analysis of three interviews with the employees, they all expressed that diversity was the most natural and normal and regarded as a resource in this kindergarten. They expressed an openness and appreciation towards some of the minority-families’ values. Nevertheless, they put a guard around values as democracy, equal status and nonviolent child-raising, which they did not consider changing no matter what new families in the kindergarten wanted.

In the interviews with the two minority-parents, I found that categories as respect, religion and adaption were thematised. They both experienced that the kindergarten staff showed respect. Both of them wanted more of their Islamic values in the kindergarten. Nevertheless, their fear of being a “difficult, demanding parent”, led them to different solutions: One of them chose adaption as a stronger value. The other emphasized the religious values stronger, and he therefore moved his children to an Islamic school.

I want to use my empiric findings to discuss diversity or normativity of values in kindergartens in the multicultural society. What happens when parents and employees disagree? What characterizes this discourse of values?

The presentation is relevant to the conference theme because when it comes to social justice and inclusion, I think that very much depends on our values. Hence, it is interesting to study what values is actually important in kindergarten practice, and how minority parents, and in my case, African Muslim parents, experience these values in one Norwegian kindergarten.


The structural and cultural shaping of the competent habitus: East-European middle-class mothering in the Icelandic context

Aase Vivaas, Teacher, NO and Berglind Rós Magnúsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

"In most countries, there are strong links between the socio-economic and immigrant status of students, and their performance in standardized educational assessments. These gaps have been less visible in Iceland than in other countries, but in recent years they have become more noticeable (Halldorsson, Ólafsson and Björnsson, 2013). Recent research in Iceland has found that these groups of children do worse academically than their peers, and are more likely to experience educational and social exclusion. However, by utilizing intersectional analysis it is clear that great variations exist within the group of immigrants that sharpened our research focus towards first-generation immigrant students at the higher end of school achievement.

Concurrently, policy makers and school authorities increase demands on parents, in the form of volunteer work for the school, and parental strategies to secure their child's private good that can further challenge equity (Berglind Rós Magnúsdóttir 2013). Despite the use of the gender-neutral concept; parents, mothers often bear the brunt of this workload. Thus, we decided to interview mothers of successful immigrant children.

This study seeks to understand what factors related to background and mothering practices contribute to educational and social success of children of Eastern-European origin, in the Icelandic school system. The study is based on qualitative interviews with five mothers, who have elementary-school-aged children. Their children, according to normative school standards, are very successful both socially and academically. Analysis and interpretation of the data is based on Bourdieu’s conceptual framework of field, capital and habitus.

An analysis of the interviews revealed that the cultural capital that has shaped the mothers’ habitus, was effectively activated in overcoming obstacles that are well-known among parents of foreign origin. They were not afraid to make demands and propose the school professionals. They found an effective way to learn Icelandic through university courses and their social network was wide and reached outside the family and their ethnic cultural group. It turned out that all of these mothers had original and contemporary middle-class status. They had experienced success in the field of education in their own countries, and reproduced their parents’ construction of the “competent child” in another field of language, culture and schooling. This is in accordance to Reay (2004) and Lareau (2003) where middle-class background and positive experience with education of the mothers encourages a more active and effective participation in the education of their children, even when intersected with ethnicity and race.

Room: H-101

Standardized testing and social justice

Marte Monsen, Hedmark University College, NO

In this paper I investigate the concept of bias in standardized reading tests in Norwegian schools. Hopewell and Escamilla (2014) describe what they call two different paradigms when it comes to
assessing bilingual students’ competencies, namely whether they should be compared with monolingual speakers of either language or should be considered “a fundamentally distinct whole, whose language capacities are distinct yet normal” (Hopewell & Escamilla, 2014, pp. 68-69). Hopewell and Escamilla advocate the need for assessing bilingual students’ reading abilities in both their languages. Although it is widely acknowledged that standardized testing in diverse settings brings about several threats to the validity of test results and test consequences, school authorities base politics and pedagogy on standardized tests issued in the majority language for all students. In Norway, the use of national reading tests is an example of such practice. I investigate this practice based on data from a case study of three teacher teams and on an analysis of test materials. The data materials for the case study consist of individual interviews, focus group interviews and documents from school authorities.

Not surprisingly, test results and analyses of the tests indicate that they do in fact favour majority students. Findings from the case study also show that the teachers have limited knowledge about what the reading tests measure, and about the threats to validity when the tests are used on diverse groups of students. Two of the teacher teams in my study in particular report that they experience unintended consequences of test use that are considered negative. Based on these findings, I discuss conceptualizations of bias, and highlight the need for increased awareness of the dangers related to standardized test use.

Bias in standardized testing is a major challenge to social justice in education, and this investigation is therefore relevant for the topic of this conference.

English among immigrant students in Iceland: implications for self-identity

Samúel Lefever and Robert Berman, University of Iceland, IS

English is used widely in Iceland, as it is in Europe, in a variety of personal, academic and business interactions, functioning as a lingua franca for many people who share no other language (Meierkord, 2012). Newly arrived immigrants to and within Europe may use English for important, immediate communication until proficiency in the local language is attained, as well as by some immigrants attending universities (ibid.) – many of whose courses are offered in English (the Guardian, 2012).

To understand the role of English in the lives of immigrant students in Iceland, we collected data from 44 upper-secondary students of immigrant background, recent graduates and early-leavers of secondary school regarding their language learning and use, probing the place of the mother-tongue, Icelandic and English in their lives. We found a great range in English use and (reported) skill, which varied to some extent according to students’ pre-immigration English skills, their age upon arriving in Iceland, and their and their family’s plans for the future. For some of the students, knowing English increased their social status in their interaction with peers and may have accelerated their use of English for social interaction. For although English is a third language for many of these students, it is the language that many of them frequently use in their social lives.

Moreover, English is also widely used for both study and work. When still newly arrived in Iceland – particularly among those who arrived as teens – many students relied on English for communication, and to some extent for learning at school. In fact, they reported teachers not only communicating but often teaching in English. In addition, just like many Icelandic students, these students often worked at least part-time – often in the service industry – and often spoke English with both
coworkers and clients. We encountered cases in which students actually leapfrogged the official language, Icelandic, using it only infrequently in comparison with English.

Our findings cast light on the role of language in the self-identity of young immigrants. Moreover, practical implications abound regarding the educational choices that may be made available to teens arriving in countries like Iceland where they do not speak the local language.

**Story sacks**

Drífa Þórarinsdóttir, Headteacher, IS

In the year 2013-2014 our kindergarten Krílakot and Kátakot in Dalvík worked on a project „Story sacks“ and all parents was invited to participate. The project was based on making Story sacks, creation of diverse learning materials in large cloth sacks, with a connection to children’s books in Icelandic. The goal was to involve parents to the project to create entertaining learning materials for children, to give parents opportunity to familiarize themselves with the materials and use it with their children, to give parents an opportunity to meet and get to know one another, as well as an opportunity for those who do not speak Icelandic to learn some of the language and make new friends.

All parents, both fathers, mothers, was invited and they did not need any special skills to participate. The project exceeded all expectations and over 20 parents worked on making the Story sacks in the afternoon and weekends. While they were working on making the materials the school invited free babysitting. Parents made 8 Story sacks with support from teachers and teaching consultant and they were all magnificent.

The project changed the relation between parents and teachers and also between parents. Parents are now much more secure in relation with other parents and teachers. They are more conscious about that the school is open for every child and every parent and the most important thing is that every child feel secure and succeed in school and live.

The Story sacks are now used in the kindergarten in order to promote children’s interest in books and to enhance their language development. The Story sacks are also available for parents to take home for one week to work with their children.

The parents and schools got two awards for the project, from the organization Home and school (Heimili og skóli) and for innovation in public services (Viðurkenning fyrir nýsköpun í opinberri þjónustu 2014)

Helga Björt, the teaching consultant in Dalvík, went to Netherland to familiarize the approach and how to use it in work with parents in multicultural context. Helga Björt and Drífa where the project leaders.

**Room: H-201**

**Multi-cultural education or multi-educational culture? A reflection on an impasse faced by modern education**

Jón Torfi Jónasson, University of Iceland, IS

The paper is a cursory analysis of some of the modern discourse on education, which by its phrasing and character, presents a host of unnecessary problems for modern education. The principal critique is that this discourse overwhelmingly presents education as a monolithic endeavour, devoid of
culture. Furthermore, it argues that the way forward is to reinstate some of the “older” ideals and rationale for schools and education. The paper is in three parts.

The first part of the paper briefly characterises modern education as being preoccupied with transmission-oriented knowledge and skill based curriculum geared to today’s and yesterday’s workplace and with ingredients that can be measured by global criteria. It assumes that everybody is essentially the same and should receive the same: mastering a particular universal content is of the essence. Furthermore, the discourse is on operational and technical issues and not on the ingredients of education. Enculturation of people, fostering of virtues and community building are shunned or marginalized.

The second part of the paper briefly retraces some of the roots of modern education and schooling. One root is in the old Greek and Roman curriculum that was partly revived by the humanists and neo-humanists, but it also lived in several guises through the 19th and 20th century liberal arts curricula. The second root is the somewhat elitist influence of the 18th century encyclopaedist, such as Rousseau, emphasising the grasp of knowledge but indeed also the social aspect of education. The third root is in the protestant influence on education, emphasising systematic inculcation of literacy for the sake of personal religious understanding. The fourth root was the emphasis on culture, national identity and nation building. The last two, in combination, were in many ways the rationales behind the establishment of compulsory school in the 18th century. Thus education and in particular school education as it developed had quite a strong social, national and even a general cultural agenda; an agenda that in an interesting way seems to have been lost.

We will also argue that until the late 19th century there was place for virtue, culture, the individual, for the mind, body and heart (as Pestalozzi put it). Thus, we develop the idea that education used to have and should have many strands. But, these were gradually pushed aside by the characteristics of 20th century education described above.

In the third part of the paper we then argue that if modern school education respected its roots and some of its earlier raison d’être and aims it would eschew many of its contentious problems. It would also move the tenets of multicultural education to the centre of mainstream educational discourse.

Compared to the monolithic aim to prepare the young for the economy of the 21st century (most of which turns in fact out to be for 20th century) the earlier aims are relatively multifaceted. The paper suggests that the term multi-educational culture might fruitfully be used to characterise education.

Democratic curriculum design in Aotearoa/New Zealand: Blurring discipline boundaries to create student-centred learning contexts

Tony Dowden and Chris Brough, University of Southern Queensland, AU

The aim of this research study is to demonstrate how democratic curriculum designs enhance students’ learning experiences in terms of promoting citizenship and emancipatory outcomes. A hallmark of such designs is that they confer agency to students and teach them to ‘make a difference’ within their communities. The study is situated in the multicultural context of the New Zealand state school system.

The study draws from democratic models of curriculum design developed in the USA, particularly Beane’s (1997) model of student-centred curriculum integration that specifically addresses issues of democracy, personal dignity and diversity. The study highlights a number of historical and
contemporary case studies of innovatory curricula in New Zealand classrooms that have adapted from theory to suit practical purposes. Using a mixed theoretical and historical methodology, it explains how each teacher implemented a local curriculum design that was relevant and meaningful to their students. One example shows how a holistic approach to caring for a grieving immigrant child, following a tsunami in her home country, conceived a remarkable classroom curriculum that ‘made a (highly significant) difference’ by rebuilding a school in her home village in the nation of Samoa.

While teachers and schools have a moral and ethical responsibility to address issues pertaining to social justice and inclusion, they must be equipped to do so. The Nordic countries have a well-deserved reputation for egalitarian values, resulting in an enviable commitment to equity and social justice. This strong streak of egalitarianism might be expected to extend to multiculturalism but, as Horst and Pihl (2010) have explained, multiculturalism is a contested notion and is interpreted in different ways. Accordingly, responses to multicultural education policy by the different Nordic governments have been mixed. This research study demonstrates how focused curriculum designs in local contexts can tackle the issues of social justice, inclusion and multiculturalism. It is submitted to this conference firstly, because of the similarities New Zealand has to the Nordic countries in terms of egalitarian values, an effective state school system, and a humanitarian heritage; and secondly, because the study shows that democratic curriculum design has the potential to lead to genuinely emancipatory learning outcomes which ably support the goals of inclusion and multiculturalism.

**Educational Policy Documents and Immigrant Students’ School Success**

Lars Anders Kulbrandstad, Hedmark University College, NO

In the NordForsk funded project Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice – Success Stories from Immigrant Students and School Communities in Four Nordic Countries (2013-2015) researchers from Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden have studied institutions from preschool to upper secondary level that seem to be able to offer good educational opportunities to students from immigrant ethno-linguistic groups which often struggle. The students and the institutions succeed contrary to expectations.

Among the sub-themes in the project is how the main criteria relating to equity inclusion, democracy and social justice expressed in policy documents for the schools in the study as well as in national educational policies and national curriculum guidelines.

In Kulbrandstad et al (forthcoming), special provisions in Nordic Education Acts and Regulations concerning children with an immigrant background are analyzed: preparatory programs, instruction in majority or official language as second language, mother tongue education, bilingual subject teaching and religious instruction. Interesting similarities and differences are identified and these are interpreted against a backdrop of the demographic and political situation in the countries.

Kulbrandstad et al (in progress) compares the special for curricula immigrant students in the Nordic countries and demonstrates that whereas some countries have opted for a rapid mainstreaming of immigrant students other countries to a larger degree offer a pedagogical and organizational differentiation of the tuition for students who live in a bilingual situation.

In the present paper the impact of central policy documents on the educational outcome of students with an immigrant background will be discussed with the findings reported in the two previous papers as a starting point.
Successful upper secondary school students with immigrant backgrounds: Beating the odds

Organizer: Robert Berman, Associate Professor, University of Iceland

Discussant: Gestur Guðmunsdsson, Professor, University of Iceland

This symposium stems from the Nordic research project, Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice: Success Stories from Immigrant Students and School Communities in Four Nordic Countries (2013-2015), the main objective of which has been to draw lessons from success stories of individual immigrant students, school communities as well as other learning environments and practices. At an intellectual level, the symposium stems from the mismatch between shared fundamental values in the Nordic countries, such as democracy, social justice and inclusion, which are frequently stated in educational policy documents, and the reality in many upper secondary schools in these countries. Fundamental Nordic values may be seen as imaginaries, for educational research has revealed inequalities and marginalisation of students in many Nordic schools.

We map the current situation in Finland and Iceland. However, instead of focusing on the failures of either students or schools, we highlight the successes of individual upper secondary school students and graduates of immigrant background. We further focus on good practices we have found in some schools, which seem to have contributed to these students’ successes – contrary to expectations.

We are fully aware that research findings in Nordic countries have revealed the marginalization and exclusion of students with immigrant backgrounds. However, research has also shown that there are examples of students who have succeeded despite expectations, given their ethnic and socio-economic background. We explored such success stories with a view to determining what factors contributed towards their apparent success. Our objective has been not only to understand what underlies success at the upper secondary school level among students of immigrant background, but to produce guidelines for teaching and school policy that will contribute to the success of more such students.

We are under no illusion that success is a simple construct to define, and we understand that what constitutes success may vary between and within countries. Such issues will be discussed. Moreover, we are cognizant that success may be ephemeral: it may wax and wane in the life of any individual and school. For that reason, we will discuss how we dealt with these conundra in our research methodology.

Our ultimate goal is to become better equipped to map good practices that will contribute to the improved success of upper secondary schools in our societies in the 21st century.

Subjective projections of success: A look at upper secondary students’ explicit and implicit perspectives in Finland
Mbu Waye, Fred Dervin and Heidi Layne, University of Helsinki, FI

Success in schools and the recognition of successful school systems have become even more central to educational discourses in recent years. Finland’s education system has been praised worldwide as a model of success. As such the Nordic country ranks third in the world for competitiveness thanks to the strength of its schooling (World Economic Forum, 2013). Despite Finland’s strong performance in PISA, it isn’t all perfect since PISA does not tell us about ‘real’ educational success. Too little emphasis is placed on problematizing the fact that success is a very unstable notion that needs to be tackled carefully by researchers. And when it comes to so-called immigrant students, it is even more problematic. What is success? Whose success? Who decides who is successful? Invoking the work of Mary Louise Pratt (1991, 2007), this paper examines what success has to offer by way of alternatives of an individual experience of success from implicit/explicit-subjective perspectives. Through the analysis of interviews with upper secondary school students in Finland co-constructions of students’ discourses on success are considered and examined. I argue that Finland’s population is diverse and must set a good example when it comes to educating its immigrants. Yet the idea of success should be introduced more systematically in teaching and teacher education in discussions around social justice and inequality.

Young immigrants’ success in upper secondary schools, at work and in everyday life

Susan Rafik Hama, Renata Emilsson Peskova, Anh-Dao Tran, Samuel Lefever, Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, Robert Berman, University of Iceland, IS

Keywords: “secondary school(s)”; “immigrant students”; “formal, non-formal and informal learning”; “success”; “critical pedagogy”

This study presents a framework that encompasses young immigrants’ success in three different settings in Iceland – school, work, and everyday life – where learning takes place. Students’ success is explored from both social and academic dimensions. The theoretical framework that guides this study is critical multicultural education, underpinned by critical pedagogy. Critical educators adopt a pedagogical practice that is culturally responsive to their students, and teachers and students form reciprocal learning partnerships through dialogues (Freire, 2000; Nieto, 2000). Teachers value the heritage language of the students, cognisant of students’ need to transfer their conceptual knowledge (Cummins, 1996). They make their students’ social and cultural background relevant, have high expectations of them and are devoted to inclusive teaching methods (Gay 2001; Nieto 2000). The study’s data are derived from semi-structured interviews with twenty-five students with immigrant backgrounds who had been purposefully identified and selected, and their nine teachers, from three upper-secondary schools in Iceland. The overall findings of the study show that there are various dimensions of young immigrants’ success, although they are often unseen and unacknowledged. A great part of students’ success can be related to formal school settings, facilitated by community-based agencies such as the Red Cross, City Library, cultural, language and religious communities. Finally, incidental opportunities help them achieve success through unforeseen ways. The value of this study is in pointing out that students do not enter classrooms as empty slates. Rather, their previous experiences and knowledge, as well as their engagement with work and community settings, can expand their learning experience and contribute directly or indirectly to their objective and subjective success. It is crucial that young immigrants grasp every
opportunity to enhance their learning and thus increase their chances of achieving success in school, work and their lives.

The impact of social interaction on young immigrants’ well-being and academic success in their new learning spaces in Iceland

Anh-Dao Tran, Susan Rafik Hama, Renata Emilsson Peskova, Samuel Lefever, Hanna Ragnarsdóttir and Robert Berman, University of Iceland, IS

Keywords: Young immigrants, social networking, well-being, academic success, learning spaces

This paper explores the social dimensions of immigrant students’ success. Research has been undertaken on academic success, but little has been written about the social aspects that influence the success of immigrant students. When success is mentioned, academic success most often comes into mind. However, social connections, networks and peer-support are equally important facets of youths’ well-being in the academic environment (Ragnarsdóttir, 2011), for a sense of belonging to the larger community influences students’ well-being, as well as their drop-out rates from upper secondary schools (Ragnarsdóttir, 2008; Magnúsdóttir, 2010). The main objective of the project as a whole has been to draw lessons from success stories of individual immigrant students and whole school communities, as well as from other learning environments, as well as other equitable and socially just learning environments. Working from Bourdieu’s concept of social capital (Bourdieu, 1997), many scholars have differentiated between “bonding” social capital and “bridging” social capital (Putnam, 2000). Through bonding capital immigrant students coming to school find their motivation, their sense of well-being, inclusion, trust and equality (Steen-Olsen, 2013). Purposeful sampling was employed for the selection of the schools and students. Semi-structured interviews with 25 students of both sexes in three upper secondary schools were conducted. The findings show that young immigrants’ well-being and academic success can be attributed to various social factors such as language abilities facilitating communication, international and Icelandic friends and acquaintances, accessibility of jobs, colleagues at work, family relations and educational background of family members, religious communities, sport clubs, music groups or social media. These findings indicate that access to social networks strongly supports the confidence of immigrant students and that these connections directly influence the students’ academic learning, especially in terms of improved Icelandic skills.

Room: H-205 Structured Poster Session

Teaching and learning: Creating learning environments that respond to cultural and linguistic diverse students in creative ways

Hafdis Guðjónsdóttir, Jóhanna Karlsdóttir, Ása Ragnarsdóttir, Svanborg Jónsdóttir, Jónína Kristinsdóttir, Karen Gísladóttir, Renata Emilsson Peskova

In this structured poster session 7 presenters will report their investigation of multiple ways of teaching diverse groups of students, especially students of foreign backgrounds. The aim is to explore how teachers can make a difference for all students in the way they structure the teaching and
learning in their classrooms. This session will give an ideal opportunity to interrogate the work in schools from multiple perspectives and to participate in a critical dialogue.

The shift in demographics and the growth of migration is leading to increased diversity in Icelandic schools. The growing number of students with international backgrounds brings different resources to educational settings (Parekh, 2006). This shift calls for changes and a just and equitable multicultural education that helps students find personal happiness and fulfillment, develop curiosity, enjoy learning and practice critical thinking (Banks, 2007).

The purpose of this structured poster session is to bring together teachers and teacher educators that focus on creating learning environments that respond to the cultural and linguistic differences that can be found in Icelandic schools today. The intention is to explore learning spaces originated for students with an international background, various learning and teaching strategies, and the goal is to develop a better understanding of how teachers work with diverse groups of students in different subjects in an inclusive school (Gee, 2004).

The researchers participating in this session will report on how teachers draw on students’ linguistic, social and cultural resources. They will discuss different teaching methods, different subjects and different possibilities. The focus is on learning spaces for diverse students, the story line approach, how drama methods can enhance students’ vocabulary, how the teachers developed their teaching to enhance just and equitable multicultural mathematics education and how innovation and entrepreneurial education can create learning spaces effective for multicultural education.

The research questions leading this session are as follows:

- How do teachers create a learning environment that responds to diverse groups of students?
- How do they draw on students’ linguistic, social and cultural resources in different subjects?

Relevance to the conference theme

The theme of the conference is Learning Spaces for Inclusion and Social Justice: Education in multicultural societies and all these seven papers focus on learning spaces in multicultural environments and thus can open up for discussion on how we can rethink the approach to schooling in our countries, how we can better create education for all.

Organization

All projects will be presented both visually and orally. All participants will provide a poster to present their research or project, they will all introduce their poster orally and then there will be time for interaction between presenters and participants. We believe that structured poster sessions provide an ideal opportunity for researchers to discuss their research from multiple perspectives. This process encourages presenters and participants alike to situate their work and conclusions in a discourse that engages scholars and teachers in considering how we can create an educational environment that responds to all learners.

Responding to students’ cultural and linguistic resources in creating learning spaces for all

Hafðís Guðjónsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

This research is a part of the Nordic research Learning spaces for inclusion and social justice that aims at mapping, describing and analyzing successful stories of immigrant students and good practices in several schools in Iceland, Sweden, Norway and Finland. The purpose of this paper is to introduce findings from three compulsory schools in Iceland of how teachers can make a difference for all students in the way they structure the teaching and learning in their classrooms. The aim of the research was to learn about learning spaces created in schools for diverse groups of students and the role it plays in creating a school and learning environment that fosters social justice, equity and learning. Thus, the research question was: How are learning spaces that are responsive to students of multicultural background constructed?

The growing number of students with a foreign background in Iceland calls for various approaches in planning teaching and learning for diverse groups of students (Ainscow, 2007). One way of empowering children through education is by noticing and making use of their cultural and linguistic resources. Rodriguez (2007) characterises resources as personal strengths and qualities, which emerge from and shape life experiences. The theoretical framework builds on critical education and pedagogy that emphasize the importance of human intervention in transforming education (Freire, 2005). Further, it introduces critical reflection and constructing ideological and institutional conditions of empowerment for students. Finally, it explores the concept of learning spaces that allows us to investigate how the issues of social justice, equity, democracy, and human rights are embedded in the learning process (Parekh, 2006).

This was a qualitative research; conducted by observations, open interviews and informal conversations with teachers teaching students with a multicultural background in three primary schools in Iceland (Creswell, 2008; Taylor, & Bogdan, 1998).

Findings indicate that teachers use students’ resources as they plan teaching and learning. They create learning spaces that are supportive, innovative, and motivate and open up many opportunities of learning. They use different teaching and learning strategies to differentiate the learning according to students. They emphasize collaboration between students, students and teachers and with families. In the presentation we will further introduce these innovative practices.

Teaching and learning through Storyline in multicultural classrooms.

Jóhanna Karlsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

This is a qualitative research focusing on how student teachers meet a diverse group of pupils in inclusive compulsory schools in Iceland. A special emphasis is on immigrant pupils and good practices in a successful learning environment where the issues of social justice, equity, democracy, and human rights are embedded in the learning process. The purpose of the study was to gather information about how student teachers manage the challenge of inclusive practices in multicultural classrooms. The goal was to understand how they organize their teaching in an effective way by using Storyline as an approach. The research question was: How do student teachers respond to pupils’ cultural and linguistic resources using the storyline approach?

In multicultural society there is a growing number of pupils in primary schools from different cultures and with a foreign background. That calls for various approaches in planning teaching and learning for diverse groups of students (Guðjónsdóttir, 2000). The teaching method in focus is Storyline (The Scottish method) – an approach to effective teaching and learning in a diverse group of pupils with mixed ability needs. Student teachers are introduced to every step of the Storyline approach and process the method before they use it in their practice. The student teachers decide on a theme, find possible solutions to problems and come up with ideas to make innovations that could be a good example for others. They have to consider how to involve all pupils in the classroom in the learning process. The approach is learner centered and pupils’ ideas and experience used as a starting point for learning (Falkenberg and Håkonsson, 2005).

Data was collected by observations, open interviews, photos and informal conversations with student teachers in their practice in 25 primary schools in Iceland.

The findings indicate that responsive teaching was practiced by student teachers. They managed to involve all their pupils in the learning process and open up many opportunities for immigrant pupils to learn in different ways.

In the presentation I will share how Storyline can be an effective approach in teaching and learning in inclusive school where immigrant students participate.


Good things happen slowly: Can drama methods help increasing vocabulary skills among teenagers learning Icelandic as second language?

Ása Helga Ragnarsson and María Lovisa Magnúsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

Students with a mother language other than Icelandic have increased in primary schools in Reykjavik in recent years (Fræðslumiðstöð Reykjavíkur, 2000). Teachers have used a variety of teaching methods to explore which methods would be the most effective when teaching the bilingual children vocabulary. Furthermore they have reflected on their teaching practices in an effort to improve their students’ learning. Samaras (2002) stresses the importance of supportive structures for teachers and a culture that invites teachers into the community of the teaching profession, in the context of the
need to provide enough teachers of good quality. In this study the researcher looks into the use of teaching methods in the effort to enhance the vocabulary of bilingual teenagers. In a class of immigrant students a student teacher taught drama supervised by a teacher mentor who was at the same time learning drama methods. Furthermore a researcher, a teacher educator, observed how the drama methods were used in the practice. The main objective of this study is to understand and gain knowledge on if and how drama methods can influence the vocabulary of bilingual adolescents. The research setting is a classroom with immigrants and other bilingual students. Participants were four Asian teenage girls in the same elementary school, the fall semester 2014.

The study is a qualitative approach where the researcher is in the key role. It was an action research and was partly ethnographic. Data was collected by semi-open interviews, portfolio and video recordings on tabloid. The four Asian teenage girls were interviewed and asked questions about learning through drama, vocabulary and teaching methods. The researcher used portfolio and video recordings for data collection, looking at vocabulary and the body language of the students. Varaki (2007) points out that if researchers use a variety of data then they strengthen the reliability of the research.

The findings of the study showed that drama methods could enhance the vocabulary learning of bilingual students. All four students increased their vocabulary according to tests and other tasks they worked on. During the period of the research all the students also increased their confidence as they were more ready to participate. The findings of this study may be of interest of practising teachers, and encourage them to use drama in teaching bilingual students.


Creating an intermediate space in education: Innovation- and entrepreneurial education

Svanborg R. Jónsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

In the world today we need a holistic education that embraces all kinds of talents and attributes in people. In a multicultural society it is important to find ways to provide education that is truly inclusive for all. One area of learning innovation and entrepreneurial education (IEE) offers an emergent learning space for diverse learners to use their knowledge of life outside school, and of school subjects to be creative explorers and creators as they respond to needs and problems they have identified themselves.

The question I answer in this paper is: What kind of learning space does innovation and entrepreneurial education offer to celebrate and make use of various resources that diverse students carry with them? Innovation and entrepreneurial education (IEE) is a subject where learners apply creativity and knowledge to meet needs or solve problems that they identify and they find important. It is about inventing objects and processes to improve social life and aims to develop critical and creative thinking in design, technology, marketing and enterprise. The core pedagogy of IEE has been identified as emancipatory pedagogy (Jónsdóttir, 2011). IEE offers students ownership.
of their learning through creative work and connection with life outside school with emphasis on realizing their ideas and presenting to the world. I refer to my own experience of IEE as a compulsory schoolteacher and take examples from my research in this area of teaching and learning to display the potentials it offers. Finally I conclude about practical and professional requirements that help to make this kind of work effective and empowering for students. Collaboration within schools, working deliberately across subjects and across the space between school and society is helpful in order to design and make real the emergent space IEE offers. Teachers whose professional theories celebrate diversity, student ownership and creativity in learning adjust well to the pedagogy of IEE.

Teaching mathematics in diverse classrooms

Jónína Vala Kristinsdóttir, University of Iceland, IS

The aim of this poster is to discuss a collaborative research where classroom teachers and a teacher educator researched together their mathematics teaching in multicultural classrooms. The purpose was to learn to understand how teachers can meet new challenges in mathematics teaching in schools with diverse groups of students.

If teachers are expected to teach for diversity and understanding, they need opportunities to develop and enhance both their content and pedagogical knowledge. They need to experience their own mathematics learning in an environment that reflects the environment they are expected to create in their classrooms (Moore, 2005). The focus of the poster will be on how the teachers developed their teaching with the goal of enhancing just and equitable multicultural mathematics education.

This research is built on a co-learning partnership where seven primary school teachers from two neighboring schools with diverse groups of students researched their mathematics teaching together. The research focus was on the learning processes that emerge through collaborative inquiry (Jaworski, 2003) between classroom teachers and a teacher educator and how the teachers perceived that participation in the project was reflected in their teaching.

The data consist of video recordings from workshops, audio recordings of interviews, notes from classroom observations and copies of student work. From these data narratives emerged where the participants informed about their work (Clandinin, 2013) and findings from classroom observations and the teachers participation at workshops were intertwined.

Results of the study have revealed that all the teachers made progress in teaching mathematics in multicultural classrooms and have learned to approach mathematics in a way that supports them in helping their students gain confidence in their work with mathematics.


Developing habits and routines for reading and writing

Karen Rut Gísladóttir, University of Iceland, IS

Socio-cultural theories of teaching and learning (Gonzales, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; New London Group, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978) emphasize the importance of drawing on students’ linguistic and cultural resources in supporting their learning to read and write within school. The role of teachers working from a socio-cultural perspective is to create and preserve a space within the classroom for students to negotiate their identities as readers and writers. The purpose of this paper is to explore from a socio-cultural perspective what it means to create learning spaces for reading and writing that value students’ ownership in developing their reader and writer identities. The aim of this study is to develop an understanding of the underlying principles of such learning spaces. The research questions guiding this study were: 1) How do teachers develop learning spaces for reading and writing within their school setting that nurture students’ linguistic and cultural resources? This presentation is a part of a larger self-study the author conducted as she worked as an Icelandic teacher within an elementary school in Iceland. She collected the following data; research journal, participant observation, formal and informal interviews with parents and students, photographs and student assignments to understand the effect on establishing habits and routines around students’ reading and writing on students’ agency in their reading and writing processes.


Heritage Language Instruction with the help of technology: Teachers’ experience

Renata Emilsson Peskova, University of Iceland, IS

The subject of this study is long distance heritage language teaching with the use of Skype. It is the Icelandic reality today that classrooms are multicultural and plurilingual and in one classroom there can be plurilingual children with many different languages. Many Icelandic and international documents (Mennta- og menningarmálaráðuneytið, 2013; Mennta- og menningarráðuneyti, 2014; Skóla- og frístundasvið, 2014; United Nations, 1990) state that learning heritage languages and active bilingualism are important for the healthy development of bilingual children. Both Icelandic (Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2006) and international (Cummins, 2004) scholars agree that good knowledge of mother tongue is directly linked to identity, well-being, and academic success. However, in a country with the population of 329,100 (Statistics Iceland, 2015), with at least 93 languages (Tungumálatorg, 2014) present in elementary schools, it is hard to find language teachers for all of these languages.

The problem of qualified teachers can be solved with using IT tools, such as Skype. An excellent example of using IT for teaching is an experiment of Prof. Sugata Mitra - “The Granny in the Cloud”. In the Mother Tongue Association which is based in Reykjavik, there are at least two language groups that use Skype for heritage language instruction; in both cases the language teacher is based abroad and teaches a group of plurilingual children in a classroom in Reykjavik. Other heritage language groups are using heritage language programs that are put together and administered from the countries of origin and that follow national curricula and are guided by professional teachers.
The study is built on three semi-structured interviews with heritage language teachers who have experience with Skype-based instruction, analyzed with generic approach to coding (Lichtman, 2013).

The aim of this qualitative study is to describe the experience of heritage language teachers and to draw lessons from their experience which would help in establishing more Skype-based classes and possibly establishing international Skype-based networks of heritage language teachers.


**Minority Students and Special Education**

Anne-Kari Remøy, Hedmark Universiyt College, NO

Minority students who receive special education are overrepresented in the categories of students receiving special needs instruction both within the mainstream context and in segregated groups (Baker, 2011; Cummins, 2001; Nordahl & Hausstättér, 2009; Nordahl & Overland, 1998).

What characterizes special education for minority students? In what ways are linguistic and cultural preconditions of these students taken into account? How will the organization and the content of the teaching reflect these linguistic and cultural preconditions? Is the special education a part of an inclusive or exclusive practice?

Research on adapted education shows that most learners profit from being included in a learning community with the rest of the class (Nordahl, 2009). There are different processes and structures within the social community which contribute to inclusion and exclusion. It is argued in favor of participation in a social fellowship and inclusive practices in schools (Hausstättér, 2007). In addition, it is claimed that the expertise of the teacher is completely decisive for the outcome of the special education. When the quality of regular teaching is high, the need for special education is reduced (Bachmann & Haug, 2006).

My PhD-project is part of a research cooperation between Volda University College, Hedmark University College and the Norwegian Research Council (The Function of Special Education/ The SPEED project). The theoretical perspectives are taken from the multicultural field and from the field of special education. Here, theories related to identity, recognition, socialization, inclusion, language and multiculturalism are important. Based on this, the framework of my project is built upon an
exploratory and descriptive design which focus on the complex interplay between a contextual perspective, actor perspective and an individual perspective.

Through a case study approach, based on SPEED-material, I am carrying out document analysis of expert assessments and individual subject syllabus plans, as well as interviewing and observing students, parents, teachers, principals and the Educational and Psychological Counselling service.

The poster will present and discuss some of the findings:

(1) The understanding of the concept of special education and minority students

(2) The distance between what is articulated as the students’ academic challenge and the measures which are done.

These findings highlight the relationship, and the contradictions, between the individual level and the system level, and also the challenges of developing a school culture where these levels interact and where the perspective of inclusion influence the learning environment.

H-204 Symposium

Reykjavík’s Multicultural Educational policy and practice from the perspective of Sonia Nieto and Jim Cummins

This symposium will present and discuss the multicultural educational policy and multicultural practices in Reykjavik today from the perspective of theories of critical multicultural education, bilingualism and identity put forward by Jim Cummins and Sonia Nieto.

During the past few years, Icelandic society has changed from being more or less homogenic into a country with significant cultural and linguistic diversity. 18% of children in Reykjavik’s preschools and around 13% of compulsory students have an immigrant background. The department of education and youth is responsible for education and leisure in preschools, compulsory schools and leisure in the city. For the past three years the department has been developing the newly published policy of multicultural education and leisure in close cooperation with political leaders, teachers, and leaders of afterschool activities, immigrant parents, specialists in multicultural education and principals within the city. The theoretical framework of the policy draws on research and literature from Icelandic and international research within multicultural education and linguistic development (Banks, 2010; Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2008; Cummins, 2000; Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, 2007).

In relation to the multicultural focus in education in Reykjavik over the past years, very interesting developing projects have been promoted. Many of these draw from theories of critical multicultural education, such as the project Menningarmót (Intercultural encounters) that has been implemented by the Reykjavik City Library in preschools and compulsory schools during the last seven years. The main idea and goal of the project, also known as “The Flying Carpet”, is to provide all participants with the possibility of introducing their personal (home) culture and interests to others, within an encouraging environment, in order to strengthen the student’s identity and build up a confidence on common human values.
The city’s multicultural policy and the Intercultural encounters project have been analysed in the light of Nieto’s and Cummins’ theories on identity and educational development. The result is that their view on education and identity creates a very important focus and provides tools for the development and improvement of successful multicultural educational learning spaces within formal and informal education in preschools, compulsory schools and leisure in Reykjavík.

Being nice is not enough – how schools can motivate critical thinking, hope and justice for all students, based on the theories and ideas of Nieto and Cummins.

Oddný Sturludóttir, University of Iceland

This presentation will focus on the theories and ideas of Nieto and Cummins, and the value they might have for schools, teachers and students in Iceland. The presentation is based on a thesis where many of Nieto’s and Cummins’ ideas are discussed, from active bilingualism to important political issues such as racism, social justice, and the role of schools and education in society. Elements of Icelandic school practices, and to what extent they prove or disprove Cummins’ and Nieto’s ideas, will be discussed, such as the attitude and expectations of teachers towards diverse student groups, whether schools empower or disempower students of foreign descent, and whether or not multicultural education is approached in an inclusive way.

The ideology behind Menningarmót, a multicultural project for schools organized by the Reykjavík City Library, will also be compared to their ideas. Special attention will be paid to the strong connection behind the ideology of Menningarmót and the “identity texts” introduced by Cummins. Finally, some of the core principles of the Icelandic educational curriculum will be reflected upon in the light of the theories of Cummins and Nieto, especially the principles concerning democracy, human rights and equality.

The World is Here – Multicultural policy for Education and Youth in Reykjavík.

Fríða Bjarney Jónsdóttir municipality of Reykjavík IS

The aim of this presentation is to shed light on Reykjavík’s multicultural policy on education and leisure. The policy was published in the spring of 2014 and agreed upon by all political parties in the city council. The policy is to be implemented in steps in preschools, compulsory schools and leisure during the period 2014-2017, with extra funding made available for schools, for courses and consultation for teachers and staff, and to initiate/facilitate active cooperation with institutions and NGOs working with multicultural issues. The policy is progressive in that it creates space for the diverse cultures and languages within preschools, compulsory schools and after school activities. By addressing the whole spectrum of education and leisure within the city, the policy reaches the learning and social spaces of all children and youth between 1-16 years of age.

The policy is grounded in three main priorities: (1) creating diverse, multicultural and inclusive strategies within the daily curriculum and working plan in schools and leisure, (2) active multilingualism (supporting the mother language while developing Icelandic as a second language); and (3) creating an effective and educational partnership with parents. The guiding light of the policy is for all children to succeed both academically and socially, and to have the opportunity to take pride in their own background and culture. One of the goals is to provide after-school activities for all children new to the Icelandic language and culture at a low cost to parents, where after-school activities add an important space for social development and informal communication, for learning
and play among peers. One important part of the policy is a chapter on ideas, tools, strategies, developing projects and research in multicultural education. In this chapter, teachers and staff can find effective and useful tools to use in their own teaching and to work with children and families.

The theoretical framework of the policy draws from critical multicultural theories (Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2007; Banks, 2010; Cummins, 2004; Nieto, 1999; Ragnarsdóttir, 2007 & 2010) and is influenced by preliminary results from the research project, Learning spaces for inclusion and social justice within an Icelandic context. The policy is also based in the city’s policy of Human rights from 2006, the United Nations convention on the rights of the child, legalized in Iceland 2013, and the national curriculum for preschools and compulsory schools.

The Flying Carpet/Intercultural encounters in preschools, elementary schools and colleges – personal culture of children, youngsters and adults.
Kristín R. Vilhjálmsdóttir Municipality of Reykjavík IS

Kristín R. Vilhjálmsdóttir will provide an introduction to “The Flying Carpet – Intercultural Encounters” (is. Menningarmót). She created this project after having worked as a teacher in Denmark and brought it to Iceland in 2008. Since then it has been part of the multicultural programs of the Reykjavik City Library, and schools have been able to organize intercultural encounters under her guidance. To make the project more sustainable a home page has been created in co-operation with the Reykjavik Department of School and Leisure, with guidelines for teachers and others: www.menningarmot.is.

The method used here is a creative and practical tool to promote mutual respect and understanding between participants of all ages through different means of expressions, taking every individual’s personal culture and story as point of departure.

The Flying Carpet encounters can take place everywhere, but are most frequently used in preschools, elementary schools and colleges. All students take part and everyone involved is approached with respect for being who he or she is and not as a “representative” for a particular and predefined national culture. The cultural interaction, which takes place during the encounter, is intended to foster the view that cultural and linguistic diversity enriches life and society. Participants get the opportunity to introduce their culture and interests in a lively, enjoyable way and within an encouraging environment. During the encounter the participants have their own table/space where they tell and show others whatever makes them proud, what they are good at, talk about their favourite places and people and other things important to them.

The Flying Carpet aims to create:
- A forum for different cultures to meet in a context of mutual respect and understanding through multiple means of expression; interaction between all cultures and all languages.
- Enthusiasm and understanding of the differences and similarities in our cultures.
- A framework within which individual children can preserve their cultural identity while integrating into a new society.
- Awareness of the value of one’s own culture and life by introducing it to others.

The project should not be seen as an “island” or a single event but as an inspiration to implement
ways of celebrating diversity each and every day. Even the smallest moment can become big in the life of our pupils.

12:30 –14:30 Invited symposium II. Organizer: Ann Phoenix, Room: Skriða
15:00–15:45 Keynote III: James Banks, Room: Skriða
15:45–16:00 Closing remarks: Jóhanna Einarsdóttir, Dean of School of Education, UI, Room: Skriða