

Dear Reader,

*Educare* is a peer-reviewed journal published regularly at the Faculty of Education and Society, Malmö University, Sweden since 2005. *Educare* publishes a wide range of research in education and educational sciences and has long been considered a research forum for faculty, practitioners and policy makers in Sweden. The journal strives to be of relevance to these stakeholders not only through its choice of the published topics, but also through the clarity of presentation (see Author Guidelines). The journal accepts original submissions in Swedish, Danish, Norwegian and English. We welcome both experienced and young researchers to contribute to the journal. All articles are first reviewed by the editor-in-chief or the editorial board. In the next step, articles are subjected to a double-blind review by two external reviewers. All submissions are judged on the basis of their relevance from a professional and educational perspective, theoretical and methodological contribution, critical insights and rhetorical quality. The journal is currently registered in *The Norwegian Register for Scientific Journals, Series and Publishers* as a national peer-reviewed journal within the field of education and educational research with scientific level 1.

This special issue stems from the biannual conference affiliated with *The National Forum of English Studies* (<http://swesse.se>), which organizes university teachers of English throughout Sweden, convened at Malmö University 10-12 April, 2019\*. The conference theme, “English in Transformation,” identified the challenges that have characterized the academic study of English in Sweden in recent years. In accordance with this theme, some of the papers discussed the perceived weakening of English as an independent, well-defined discipline. In support of this view, data were presented on student numbers, program profiles, courses offered on graduate level and positions. Other presenters offered a more optimistic outlook, stressing that English is nearly ubiquitous within the academy and that this opens up many opportunities, especially with regard to vocational programs. Certainly, the comparative approach offered by the shifting perspectives and situations in different seats of learning in Sweden provided an invaluable cross-section of the subject as it stands in Sweden today, not least in relation to teacher education.

The invited keynote-speakers gave inspiration on three separate, but equally important, subjects for research into English. Otto Kruse and Christian Rapp (Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland)

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talked about the new affordances of technology for supporting teaching and learning of academic writing in higher education. Robert O'Dowd (Léon University, Spain) pointed to the opportunities and challenges involved in virtual exchange and telecollaboration, not least with regard to the intercultural dimension. Phil Nel (Kansas State University), Lissa Paul (Brock University, Canada) and Nina Christensen (Aarhus University) demonstrated the critical potential in Children's and Young Adult literature and its place in language education. These lectures were inspiring and very well received. However, the greatest impact was through the follow-up workshops, where the speakers interacted and discussed budding project ideas and potential collaborative work with the conference attendees. We hope to be able to concretize some of these ideas in the form of national and international research collaborations and projects in the future.

One "concretization" is through this publication. It is our pleasure to offer a themed issue of *Educare* (Open Access journal published by Malmö University) with five critical articles that adhere to the theme of the conference. Two of them are language-oriented, while three deal with literary subjects. Another way of looking at it is to say that all five of them are about English education. Or, finally, one could claim that one is on language assessment, one on the (inter)cultural aspects of language education, one about the teaching of literature, and one on literary translation and the classics. We believe that these multiple ways of regarding the five articles presented here exemplify some of the many "transformations" the subject of English is capable of, as well as its transformative potential.

The first article is by Torsten Schröter and Agnieszka Jablonska-Eklöf, and is entitled "Assessment in English for Young Learners in Sweden: Guidelines, Challenges and Coping Strategies". The authors have interviewed a number of Swedish primary school teachers about their opinions regarding the curriculum and other official documents regulating English education in Sweden. Their key finding is that teachers experience English instruction in primary school as not very well regulated, thus leaving them with some uncertainty as to how they should organize it and, in particular, how the students' performance should be assessed.

In the next article, "Fiction as a Means to Understanding the Dynamics of Empathy: A 3-year Empirical Study with Students", Anna Fåhraeus discusses "reflective reading" and empathic engagement with fictional texts.

The third article, by Lars Liljegren, can be characterized as a translation study. It is called "A 'Shocking' or a 'Moving' Scene? The Need for a More Critical Approach to Teaching Literature in Translation", and it focuses on some English (mis)translations of August Strindberg's *Giftas* and *I havsbandet* (1890). The article demonstrates the extent to which translations of books whose content clashed with the British Obscene Publications Act 1857 deviated from their source texts, often on the very points that made these books and their author famous.

The fourth article has the title "'That's not proper English!': Using cross-cultural matched-guise experiments to raise teacher/teacher-trainees' awareness of attitudes surrounding inner and outer circle English accents". It addresses the issue of dialect status and sociolinguistic awareness in relation to English

education, and has been authored by Mats Deutschmann, Anders Steinvall and Mattias Östling.

Finally, we have Katherina Dodou's "What Are Literary Studies For? A Review of English Teacher Education in Sweden". The article addresses the nature and purposes of literary studies in secondary- and upper-secondary English teacher education programmes in Sweden. It situates literary studies in the context of the steering documents for English teacher education; and it shows that, whilst literary studies were a given part of English teacher education in the studied period, they relied on a narrow conception of the discipline. Dodou's results prompt a discussion about the knowledge repertoires that student teachers need as part of their higher education and as preparation for professional practice.

Sincerely,

*Björn Sundmark and Anna Wärnsby*