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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 policymakers 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. 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 and the editorial board. In the next step, articles are subjected to a double-blind review by two external reviewers. All submissions are judged based on their relevance from a professional and educational perspective, theoretical and methodological contribution, critical insights and rhetorical quality. The journal is indexed by The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and is included 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. All articles are published Open Access. Publication with *Educare* is free of charge at any stage.

The current issue consists of eight articles covering diverse aspects of educational issues such as mother tongue teachers' perspectives on interdisciplinary collaboration with mainstream and special educational needs teachers, how mothers support their children's literacy development during the first year in primary school, how students in preschool teacher education perceive the role of popular culture in preschool education, the effects of implementing a model for analysis of multimodal texts, a deeper understanding of conditions for students' subject-specific reading comprehension in civic education, the potential to encompass questions about transgender and gender fluid identity in the school subject visual art in compulsory years 7-9, how courses in teaching and learning of mathematics create conditions for preservice teachers

to develop professional knowledge relating to mathematical subject knowledge and pedagogical mathematical knowledge in preschool and primary teacher education and how assessment of the English subject is presented in curricula from Sweden and Finland at the lower and upper secondary levels.

Christa Roux Sparreskog has conducted an interview study with 13 mother tongue teacher focusing on interdisciplinary collaboration with two groups of teachers, namely main stream teachers and special educational needs teachers. In the study, Bronstein's theoretical model for interdisciplinary collaboration is used. Roux Sparreskog finds that mother tongue teachers mostly collaborate with mainstream teachers and special educational needs teachers regarding structural and administrative issues and regarding sharing competence and knowledge. Another finding is that structural characteristics, such as common workspaces and limited informal contact, hinder naturally occurring collaboration.

How mothers support their children in developing literacy skills during the first year of primary school is the target of Annika Axelsson's article. In the study, 11 mothers have been interviewed concerning how they support their children generally as well as more specifically in reading and writing. She finds that there are six areas where this support is visible: by talking with their children about school, by handling school-related problems, by providing a positive attitude towards school, by guiding children's reading and writing, by coaching specific training, and by collaborating with school staff about their child's homework.

In a study on how students in preschool teacher education perceive the role and function of popular culture in preschool education, Helene Dahlström has conducted focus group discussion with 67 preschool teacher students and individual interviews with 7 preschool teacher students. In this study, Dahlström finds that the students see advantages and challenges in terms of equity in education when popular culture is used. Popular culture functions as a source of increased equity, learning and critical literacy as it creates motivation, engagement and interest, at the same time as it can create a sense of inequality and exclusion since not all children have access to popular culture to the same extent. Even so, the teacher students experience that together with a pedagogical idea, popular culture can be a useful resource for learning and

developing social competencies. However, the students highlighted preschool teachers' competencies in relation to creating possibilities for critical reflections concerning popular culture that challenges democratic values.

Malin Norberg and Helen Dahlström have developed and implemented a model for analysis of multimodal texts. In a design-based research approach, they have collaborated with students in multimodal text analyses. Three different groups of students participated in the study where video recordings and participatory observations were used. Throughout the three design cycles, the model was developed in collaboration between teachers and students. The study also investigated how the design process could be understood in relation to student agency and to the understanding of theory. The results show that the model offers students a sense of agency and a role as co-creator, which in turn offers a possibility for understanding the content; the function of theory in essay writing.

In a study that aims to deepen the understanding of conditions for students' subject-specific reading comprehension in civic education, Åsa af Geijerstam, Jenny Wiksten Folkeryd, Yvonne Hallesson and Pia Raattamaa Visén have analysed video recordings from lessons in three different schools and six different classes focusing on grades 5 and 8. The schools used various approaches to working with reading. One school did not use any particular model, while two schools worked with one specific model each: Reading to Learn and a specific programme for reading within Social Studies developed by the Swedish National Agency for Education. The results of the study show that in classrooms where a specific model is used, the students are provided with clearer support to read and comprehend longer verbal texts. They also use a variety of reading activities both general activities, that are used in other subjects as well, and activities more specifically connected to social studies.

The potential to encompass questions about transgender and gender fluid identity in the school subject visual art in compulsory years 7-9 is the target of Katarina Jansson Hydén's study. She has conducted semi-structured focus group interviews with five visual art teachers focusing on possibilities to support students' personal development as well as their exploration of identity and gender orientation in art education. The article discusses in what way visual art as a school

subject can function as communicative support for pupils with gender fluid identity and in what way transgender individuals and individuals with gender fluid identity can be included in the art education in school. Jansson Hydén finds that according to the visual art teachers, the subject offers significant tools for communicating an inner dialogue to the external world. Another finding is that multimodal methods provide students with an opportunity to explore and communicate that which is unsaid or unwritten when exploring changes in gender identities. Jansson Hydén concludes that visual art can function as a democratic forum which counteracts exclusion, where students can discuss questions concerning transgender and gender fluid identification.

How courses in teaching and learning of mathematics in preschool and primary teacher education create conditions for preservice teachers to develop professional knowledge relating to mathematical subject knowledge and pedagogical mathematical knowledge has been the focus of Karin Forslund Frykedal's study. After having analysed 20 course documents and conducted 8 focus group interviews with teacher students, she finds that the intentions in the course documents create conditions for the students to develop mathematical subject knowledge, but less so for pedagogical mathematical knowledge. In the educational context, however, the view of mathematics changed from an abstract theoretical subject to a focus on more practical exercises and activities, according to the participants in the focus group interviews. Forslund Frykedal concludes that it is important that preservice teachers participate in core practices, which facilitate integration of professional knowledge and skills into their education, to bridge the gap between theoretical and practical knowledge in teacher education.

Anne Dragemark Oscarson, Birgitta Fröjdendahl and Raili Hildén have analysed how assessment of the subject English is presented in curricula from Sweden and Finland at the lower and upper secondary levels. The comparative case study combines qualitative and quantitative methods as it focuses on how much space is given to assessment in the texts, the types of expectations on school staff the texts generate, and the competences required to meet these expectations, while considering the predominant curriculum theories reflected in these texts. The authors find that there is an imbalance between the two countries concerning how much space is allocated to assessment as the Finnish curriculum is more extensive and distinct

compared to the Swedish one. They further find that while systematic and deliberative curriculum theory permeates both curricula, the shorter Swedish general guidelines give more space for local interpretation than the more detailed Finnish guidelines. There are, however, several issues in both curricula that can cause ambiguity, and the authors conclude by emphasizing the importance of more distinct and transparent guidelines.

I hope you find this collection of articles exciting to read!

*Anette Svensson*

(Editor-in-chief)