

Abstract:

Teachers' mission, beliefs and knowledge in intersubjective teaching practice

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Waldorfeducation is an almost hundred-year-old youth, still learning the practices of life! This is a point of departure for an empirical investigation concerning waldorf teacher's view of identity, knowledge, learning and the role of the school in young peoples lives, in a waldorf schools today. An assumption behind the project aims is that the pedagogical practice in Waldorf schools around the world has developed within a rather homogeneous and convergent pedagogical culture. Therefore, the mostly tacit, un-verbalized beliefs, knowledge and pedagogical mastership's that the successfulness' of waldorf education rests upon, would be an important contribution to education, if elucidated and where made explicit.

Background perspectives, central for this work, are the historical and current controversies on the view of teacher competencies (Colnerud, 1997; Pitkäniemi, 2010). Are they originating from rational, cognitive deliberations (Sternberg, & Horvath. 1995), or are they expressions of inner ethical and moral development, as argued from Van Manen (1995), using terms as, pedagogical tact and tactful action to picture this. A way to overcome these positions is offered from Korthagen (2004), proposing a model that interrelates the teacher's inner ethical and moral considerations with performative skills. The model from Korhagen suggests behaviour as interaction with environment, at the model periphery. At level above we find competencies, informing, directing behaviour. Inwardly, in the model, levels as identity, beliefs and mission, constituting the teachers inner moral and ethical operational modus (p. 80). Theoretical framework builds further from perspectives on teaching and teacher's knowledge from the concepts making up this model. The project aligns with, as well as aims at contribute to, theoretical and methodological, knowledge accumulated from domains of research as teacher thinking (Colnerud, 1997) and teachers beliefs and knowlege (Nespor, 1985) (Pitkäniemi, 2010).

A focus-group consisted of four experienced waldorf teachers, employing Stimulated Recall Interviews(SRI) builds the projects methodological framework(Reitano, 2006; Rowe V. C., 2009; Stough, 2001). The paper presented will discuss the methodological approaches that seeks to explore how the teachers identity, beliefs and mission, as well as pedagogical skills and competencies interconnects and constitutes within the pedagogical culture and it's view on man, knowledge, spirituality and learning, offered from waldorf education. One of the project overall purpose is to explore, expose and understand how the pedagogical intentions, given by Dr. Rudolf Steiner, is influencing the teachers modus of interacting with pupils in waldorf school classroom today.

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