

About Lone Krogsgaard Svarstad

Lone Krogsgaard Svarstad holds an MA in English and Geography from Roskilde University. She has written her PhD thesis at the Department of Educational Theory and Curriculum Studies in the research unit Intercultural Learning Processes. Her research is focused on the exploration and development of a theoretical and pedagogical foundation for the teaching of interculturality.

Date, time and place for the PhD defence

13 September 2016 from 13.30-16.30
Room D174, Aarhus University, DPU, Tuborgvej 164,
2400 Copenhagen

Contact

Lone Krogsgaard Svarstad
E-mail: losv@phmetropol.dk
Tel.: +0045 72487203



DEFENCE

TEACHING INTERCULTURALITY

DEVELOPING AND
ENGAGING IN
PLURALISTIC DISCOURSES
IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
TEACHING



PhD thesis by Lone Krogsgaard Svarstad

TEACHING INTERCULTURALITY: DEVELOPING AND ENGAGING IN PLURALISTIC DISCOURSES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Main points from the PhD thesis Teaching Interculturality: Developing and Engaging in Pluralistic Discourses in English Language Teaching, Department of Educational Theory and Curriculum Studies , Graduate School of Arts, Aarhus University

The thesis explores and develops a theoretical and pedagogical foundation for the teaching of interculturality in English as a foreign language in lower secondary school.

Theoretical contribution

The present study comprises a re-interpretation of the knowledge- and skills dimensions of teaching interculturality.

The study contributes to a knowledge dimension based on a combination of Cultural Studies and critical intercultural communication, and for a skills dimension based on critical media literacy. Three key concepts emerged from the participatory action research and the subsequent analysis: Intersectionality, as an aspect of Cultural Studies, Othering, as an aspect of critical intercultural communication and Subtextuality, as an aspect of critical media literacy.

Empirical contribution:

The study revealed a need for the development of a meta-language to talk about cultural texts and media and raised the question: What kind of knowledge and skills do teachers need to contest essentialism and culturalism in their teaching?

Knowledge of Cultural Studies, an intersectional lens and Othering supported the participating teachers' development of a subject-based meta-language, which qualified the teachers'

decisions concerning learning objectives, their selection criteria for texts and media as well as critical reflections. Critical media literacy skills and critical discourse analysis helped the teachers to scaffold intercultural learning processes and pluralistic discourses, and to work consciously with judgemental language use, categorisations, and stereotypes, and to question intersectional identities.

Conclusion

The study shows that the development of pluralistic discourses as a means for teachers and students to engage in interculturality is effective for the teachers to overcome simplistic understandings of culture as explanation, and to avoid essentialism and culturalism. Knowledge of intersectionality and Othering, and skills that support critical reading and subtextuality, empower students to engage in an increasingly globalised world and to learn the English language.

Implications for teacher education

The findings suggest that teacher educators and student teachers would benefit from studying Cultural Studies and sociological analyses of cultural phenomena as a foundation for teaching interculturality.

Facts about the field of study

The reason for the study is the increasing Danish and international orientation of the curriculum towards intercultural competence and interculturality as a central part of the field of language and culture pedagogy.

Facts about the empirical basis of the dissertation

The empirical study employs a critical participatory action research methodology. The data includes:

- Three year 8 classes in two Danish schools, one North and one West of Copenhagen.
- A pre-intervention and two interventions.
- 66 observations of English lessons.
- Two professional development seminars.
- Six pre- and post-intervention interviews with three teacher participants.
- Two teacher participant reflection meetings
- Three teacher participant logbooks.
- Two pre- and post-intervention focus group interviews with four students from each class.
- Students' own productions.