

## **Extended Essay for the QUINT Summer Institute/Conference 2021**

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### **Examining Practices of Citizenship Education across Scandinavian Social Studies Classrooms**

There is a need for cross-national observational studies of social studies teaching and learning (Löftöm & Grammes, 2020; Hahn, 2016), and therefore approaches to systematically analyze the teaching across different classroom and national contexts. The aim of this presentation is to discuss benefits and challenges of combining various observation approaches to examine citizenship-oriented social studies education across contexts. The presentation is related to a doctoral project within the overarching Quality in Nordic Teaching (QUINT) project, the sub-project Quality in Social Science Teaching (QUISST), and LISA Nordic study (Klette, Blikstad-Balas & Roe, 2017).

Citizenship education is about strengthening democracy (Osler & Starkey, 2005), an important aim schooling in the Scandinavian countries (Antikainen, 2006). In this study citizenship education is understood as educative efforts to encourage knowledge, skills, and attitudes important for young people's participation in the different democratic societies and communities they are a part of, as youths and later in life, aligning with contemporary understandings of citizenship education (Audigier, 2000; Johnson & Morris, 2010).

The Scandinavian countries share many features making comparison possible (Biseth, Hoskins & Huang., 2021), for example similar comprehensive educational systems that brings together students from different backgrounds and focus on democratic ideals. Still, there are differences that can be sources of variability, for example different social studies subjects and curricula. Against this backdrop, the Scandinavian citizenship has been proposed as: "an example (...) that many countries may be interested to learn from" (Biseth et al., 2021, p. 2).

While many subjects are relevant for citizenship education, social studies are arguably the main subject for educating for citizenship in Scandinavia (Eurydice 2017). Observing Scandinavian social studies classrooms in a systematic way can contribute with empirical examples to discuss important practices of citizenship education, and how they are incorporated in everyday teaching within Scandinavian contexts.

As noted by Kahne and Sporte (2008) practices such as high-quality classroom discussions, contextualization of teaching content and social relatedness, play a significant role in citizenship education. To examine teaching practices related to citizenship education in Scandinavian social studies classes, I combined rubrics from two of the observational systems. Rubrics from the Protocol for Language Arts Teaching Observation (PLATO; Grossman et al., 2015) and Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW; Newmann et al., 2016) were combined with thematic analysis. From PLATO, I used the rubrics representation of content (ROC), classroom discourse (CD) and intellectual challenge (IC) as analytical lenses because of their relatedness with recognized practices of citizenship education (Kahne & Sporte, 2018, Wood et al., 2018). For the same reason, I used the connectedness to real world and public issues (CRW) rubric from AIW. Thematic analysis (Clarke & Brown, 2014) provided further insight into the different teaching practices, and their possible implications for social studies and citizenship education.

Combining the two different observation systems with more in-depth qualitative analysis allowed for a systematic and flexible way to study diverse teaching associated with citizenship education. It was, for example, possible to get detailed insight into how social studies teachers enact different practices of citizenship education. However, a challenge was that teaching of explicit social studies content related to citizenship was captured to a little degree, for example teaching content related to cultural diversity and power inequalities (Osler & Starkey, 2005). Investigating content-related aspects of social studies and citizenship education might require more subject-specific observational frameworks.

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