

How do teachers understand the strategies and didactic principles in inquiry-based literature education? A comparative study validating QUALE across three countries

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The concept of inquiry-oriented literature education has been developed, designed, and tried out as a large-scale intervention in the Danish lower secondary school (Hansen et al., 2029). The intervention found, among other things, increased participation in literacy conversations and increased interpretive competence for all student groups (Hansen, Elf, Misfeldt, Gissel, & Lindhardt, 2020). Furthermore, it revealed the changing role of both teachers and students and the opportunities and challenges associated with this (Christensen & Høegh, 2021).

In this presentation, we focus on two aspects of the inquiry-based literature education, more specifically eight 'didactic principles' and seven inquiry-oriented 'strategies' informing the concept, asking: How do teachers in Sweden, Norway and Denmark enact, adapt and understand inquiry-based literature teaching?

The study is conducted as a holistic multiple case study (Yin, 2012) conducted as a small-scale experiment in a Norwegian, a Swedish and two Danish schools. The interventions in the classes were guided by a digital teaching material and afterwards, the participating eight teachers and eight researchers met at a two-day seminar and discussed the experience, understanding, and practicing of inquiry-based literature education. The seminar established a communicative space (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005) for investigating the initiative from the perspective of practitioners and researchers. Data for this presentation comprises two group dialogues on the experiences with the strategies and two group dialogues on the experiences with the didactic principles. All dialogues were guided by open-ended questions. In total, the data consists of 190 minutes of conversation. In time of writing, we just finished the seminar, but plan to analyze the data with respect

to four categories: teacher understandings, adaptations, possibilities and limitations.

The preliminary findings indicate a validation of the findings of the large-scale Danish intervention project, while also offering new contextually shaped understandings and adaptations. The so-called 'experience strategy' emphasizing bodily experience and first-order knowledge is found to be central amongst teachers and is in opposition to the usual practice, which is characterized by secondary knowledge before reading (Hansen 2023). The choice of texts and the open and curious dialogue on the meaning of the text is pivotal and challenging for the teachers. The strategies Discovery, Metacognition and Elaboration seem difficult to distinguish, yet can be made meaningful in practice. In two areas differences emerge: 1) The use of technology varies as some classes read on screen, while others read only printed texts; 2) the form of the exam seems to have an influence on the teaching and thus also the difference between the usual teaching and the inquiry-based teaching. This relationship calls for further investigation.

The inquiry-based literature education supplements the existing knowledge about reading and reading comprehension in general with knowledge on strategies for reading and interpreting aesthetic texts. Furthermore, it represents an alternative literature didactics that seem to benefit all groups of students, regardless of their academic, social background and ethnic background. In a wider perspective, it could be argued to support students' Bildung processes through literature reading. As such, it represents a common Nordic understanding of the purpose of the compulsory school.