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Abstract (to presentation), 'Mötesplats CUL 2019'

Policy constructions of 'school on a scientific base' at the website of the Swedish National Agency of Education

My dissertation project sets out to examine discursive implementations of the Swedish Education Acts formulations regarding education resting on scientific basis (SFS 2010:800). My research departs from a music teacher perspective and the overall aim of the project is to investigate how policy work related to 'education on scientific basis' enacts or influence distribution of power and control and how music teacher profession is constructed as a result of policy. The dissertation will be in the form of a compilation thesis consisting of four articles and a summary chapter (*kappa*). The first of these articles is currently in progress, and will be the focus of my presentation at 'Mötesplats CUL 2019', where I aim to present and discuss the design and (preliminary) results of the article.

Article 1 focuses on policy work in texts and videos on the website of the Swedish National Agency of Education, i.e. how education on a scientific basis is constructed in a Swedish compulsory and upper secondary school discourse. Policy constructions of (ideal) teachers is a related focus in the study and although my dissertation project as a whole focuses music teacher profession, the first study examines the construction of teacher profession from an overarching point of view with no specific focus on music teachers.

The study is based on the following questions:

- How is policy of 'education resting on [a] scientific basis' constructed at the website of the Swedish National Agency of Education?
- How does such policy work construct teachers' professional identities?
- Which (representations of) problems are described or implied, and what (if anything) is incongruent or neglected in this regard.

The article takes a social constructionistic and Foucault-inspired point of departure, resting on Stephen J Ball's (1993) conceptualization of policy as both text and discourse. The study also deploys Carol Bacchi's 'What's the problem?' approach (1999, 2009) to problematize the representations of problems-to-be-solved by policy. This aspect of the analysis includes highlighting inconsistencies or contradictions in the data material as well as bringing forward alternative perspectives that's either invisible or concealed.

One part of the result concerns the construction of a policy apparatus for 'schools on a scientific basis'. As shown in the model to the right (Skolverket, 2019), the Swedish National Agency of Education constructs such an apparatus by deploying four central concepts. The way that this policy apparatus is constructed and communicated is problematized in the article. Another part of the result shows how teachers' professional identities are constructed in texts and videos at the website.



References

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