Social Studies as Arena for Citizenship

- Narratives about the Norwegian Democracy, Norwegianness and Saminess

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Midway report for Ph.D. Project
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1 Presentation of Project: Social Studies as Arena for Citizenship: Narratives about the Norwegian Democracy, Norwegianness and Saminess

1.1 Introduction
This study is intended as a contribution to the growing request for citizenship education as suggested antidote to promote resilience to current challenges of growing xenophobia, racism and democratic recession. In spite of good intentions, much education under the labels democratic, multicultural or intercultural in practice actually reproduces, rather than challenges, dominant hegemony (Gorski, 2008). Violence is part of the fabric of the daily functioning of social life where systemic and symbolic violence pass as “natural” (Leonardo & Porter, 2010). This is true also of the alleged democratic classroom: The classroom is never a safe-space for all students on equal terms. A key ambition of the study is to challenge the current epistemological underpinnings of educational practices and discourses, and provide challenging and complementary perspectives missing from the current efforts and debates (Andreotti, 2011b). A key premise for transcending an unjust education is uncovering and acknowledging the continuing coloniality in social life and knowledge production, through ongoing processes of globalization, structural inequalities and epistemic violence (Maldonado-Torres, 2004; Mignolo, 2005). Ejecting colonialism at the levels of epistemology, values and subjectivities is as much a part of decolonization as material redistribution (Leonardo & Porter, 2010, p. 141). A socially just democratic education must acknowledge systemic oppression in order to fight against it.

1.2 Research Questions
This study is epistemologically positioned within critical theory and critical pedagogy, upholding that education should be a practice of freedom and demanding critique of, and intervention in, social problems and structures of oppression (Apple, Au, & Gandin, 2009; Fujino et al., 2018, p. 69). The “political-intellectual work” these fields aspire to stretches across established academic disciplines (Svendsen, 2014). Rather than engage on a quest for “naïve realism,” the study involves theoretically informed interpretations (Kincheloe, Maclaren, & Steinberg, 2011; Å Røthing, 2017). Approaching discourses and narratives in the classroom practices where they are constructed, negotiated and reproduced, the study explores how narratives about national identity, multiculturalism and citizenship are
constructed, negotiated and resisted in Social Studies at primary level. The key research questions guiding the study are hereunder:

- **What narratives about the Norwegian democracy, national identity and Saminess are constructed within primary level Social Studies education?**
- **How can critical and decolonial theoretical perspectives contribute to new epistemological and didactical perspectives for Social Studies as arena for citizenship?**

When engaging in critical studies of the social, the aim is to produce knowledge that can contribute to education for social justice. Hence, the ambition is to be critical as well as constructive in informing educational practice (Kalleberg, 2009). A central aim with the study is therefore to inform practice and not restrict itself to critical analysis. The study is a contribution to the teaching and practice of Social Studies in primary education as well as in teacher training, offering insights on new and challenging knowledge and didactical approaches. Specific attention is paid to the central ethical principle of research and knowledge as a common good that should be disseminated in understandable and practical ways (NESH, 2016). Working for the interests of the field of teaching and learning, the development and exploration of didactical strategies with participation from teachers and students is an important mode of exploring the research questions.

### 1.3 Context and Relevance

In Norway, the currently ongoing national curriculum reform has declared “Democracy and citizenship”\(^1\) to be one of three core headlines permeating all educational practice at all levels of compulsory education (Norwegian Directory of Education and Training [UDIR], 2017), and the topic is given particular emphasis in Social Studies. Historically, the mandatory subject of Social Studies has been the main vehicle for citizenship education in Norway. The legacy of the subject epitomizes the tension in the interface between sustaining key values in society and educating each new generation to be critical and change oriented (Apple et al., 2009). Historically, the need to legitimize national interests has been the core focus (Børhaug, 2014; S. Lorentzen, 2005). Social studies is the fourth most extensive subject in Norway in terms of

\(^1\) The other two core areas are Sustainable Development and Life Skills.
number of hours in primary school (UDIR, 2015). Despite this, the subject has not been given political priority over the recent years (Børhaug, Hunnes, & Samnøy, 2015). International test-regimes and standardization has led to increased focus on so-called “hard” sciences. A related explanation for this might be the fact that Norway usually do well on the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS), resonating well with the national self-image of being a democratic champion. Thus, research on Social Studies didactics is a small, albeit growing, field in Norway. Current research on Social Studies in the Norwegian context is commonly restricted to focus on policy (Osler & Lybaek, 2014; Solhaug, 2013; Stray, 2010) textbooks (Børhaug, 2014; G. Lorentzen & Røthing, 2017; Midtbøen, Oruapabou, & Røthing, 2014) or teachers’ or students’ perceptions (H. Biseth, 2012; Børhaug, 2007; Mathe, 2016). Studies exploring classroom practices and discourses are more rare, and most often look at secondary or upper secondary level (Stray & Sætra, 2016; Svendsen, 2014a). This study hence offers a much-needed contribution to knowledge in the field in order for the bold ambitions in policy documents to pan out.

Of the core insights guiding this study, is that diversity is a prerequisite for, or better the condition of, democracy (H. Biseth, 2014; Parker, 2003), and thus any conceptualization of citizenship education cannot separate the two aspects. In spite of alleged good intentions expressed through current policy documents embracing pluralism, a substantial body of research indicates a Norwegian school still highly invested in monoculturalism (H. Biseth, 2012; G. Lorentzen & Røthing, 2017; Osler & Lybaek, 2014; Svendsen, 2014a). The idea of “equality as sameness” characteristic of Norwegian national identity throughout the 20th century (Gullestad, 2006), might serve to obscure more tacit ongoing processes of structural dominance and power as well as racism (Bangstad, 2015; Osler & Lindquist, 2016). Subtle processes of racialization and epistemic violence hidden in hegemonic discourses accentuate this (Kuokkonen, 2008; Røthing, 2015). Racism as concept remains elusive in public debate (Bangstad, 2015; McIntosh, 2015) as well as educational research (Osler & Lindquist, 2016) and practice (Å. Røthing, 2015; Svendsen, 2014a) in Norway. This reflects a Norwegian national imaginary invested in Whiteness and monoculturalism, obscured by an ideology of colorblindness underpinning the ethnification of national identity (Gullestad, 2002; Svendsen, 2014b). Such discursive patterns might also function as channeling affect, where negative elements are externalized (Ahmed, 2000). In the educational sector, this affective dimension comes to the fore through the frequent use of the concept “diversity” as a depolitized term
signaling positive celebration of differences, while all the same rendering the uncomfortable presence of structural injustice invisible (Westrheim & Hagatun, 2015). Importantly, there is here a gap between symbolic commitments to diversity and those who embody diversity in everyday life (Ahmed, 2012).

1.4 Contribution to the Field

Critiques of citizenship education both nationally and internationally commonly point out that it is not critical enough (Biesta, 2009; Børhaug, 2014; G. Lorentzen & Røthing, 2017; Westheimer, 2015), but are more vague when it comes to suggestions for what this criticality could look like. With this study, an aim is to provide new insights for such requested, critical perspectives. Positioned among the growing number of post- and decolonial critiques of mainstream approaches to citizenship education, I argue that these perspectives are imperative for furthering social justice in and through education. Social Studies and Citizenship education are highly politicized fields characterized by pedagogical as well as epistemological and scientific oppositions (Solhaug, 2013). Thus, the complexity of citizenship education cannot be captured by a single approach (Andreotti, 2011b), and this study can only amount to one among many contributions to the topic. However, the significance of the perspectives in this study lie exactly in the ability to challenge and question universalism, depolitization and ahistoricism, and open for diversity, difference and epistemological plurality (Andreotti, 2011b). The belief in a neutral speaking point might lead to blindness in relation to non-European ways of thinking, described as an epistemic blindness (Maldonado-Torres, 2004). The study also brings in theoretical insights from the “affective turn” as notably translated for the field of education by Sara Ahmed (2000, 2012) and the idea of discomforting pedagogy (Boler & Zembylas, 2003; Leonardo & Porter, 2010). This sheds light to the challenge with much critical pedagogy in overemphasizing the cognitive at the expense of the “sensual and imaginative” in education (Fujino et al., 2018, p. 73). The contributions of this study thus lie both within the empirical realm in producing new knowledge, but also within the appliance and development of new theoretical perspectives. I here agree with Andreotti (2011b, p. 381), that walking and pushing the edges of a theory’s limit is part of a researcher’s ethical responsibility.

The first paper from the study, *Teaching About the Other in Primary Level Social Studies: The Sami in Norwegian Textbooks*, is a critical discourse analysis of textbooks and
The Norwegian constitution declares that Norway is situated on the land of two peoples, the Norwegian and the Sami, and the key curriculum document *The Overarching Curriculum* sets out that “indigenous perspectives is part of any perspective on democracy” (Norwegian Directory of Education and Training [UDIR], 2017, p. 10). In the paper, I discuss to what extent and in what ways the indigenous Sami people are included in national imaginary in textbooks. The article explores what opportunities textbooks provide for promoting anti-oppressive education and pedagogical subjectification. I argue that the Sami are essentialized and actively constructed as the Other through the structure and content of narratives. This corresponds to the strategy described in anti-oppressive education as education for the Other (Kumashiro, 2002). Externalization of the Sami from the story of the Norwegian national day and in particular, treatment of the discriminatory Norwegianization politics, reinforce a national self-image of Norwegian exceptionalism (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). Potential for education that promotes social change and subjectification through disrupting hegemonic discourses are located. A core contribution from the paper is the emphasis on how problematic narratives also might hold pedagogical opportunities, if challenged in the classroom.

The second paper, *Education for Sustainable Development and Narratives of Nordic Exceptionalism: The Contributions of Decolonialism*, explores the possible contributions of decolonial perspectives in providing interruptions of the hegemonic narratives in the classroom, and fostering transformation. Through examples from fieldwork in a 7th grade classroom, the paper shows how current practices of education for sustainable development (ESD) can serve to sustain rather than change the global economic and political systems. It is argued that decolonial perspectives can be potential tools for disrupting mainstream ESD. A central argument from the paper is that hegemonic narratives are tenacious and sometimes invisible, and must be uncovered and challenged in order to create space for thinking differently and enabling social change. Even in a classroom that fulfills many of the common standards of the “democratic classroom”, such as student participation and deliberation, the knowledge production can reproduce structural inequality. The importance of answering and following up the counterhegemonic ideas and comments from students are emphasized in the paper. An additional contribution from this paper is the discussion of the role and position of the teacher in Social Studies, and the challenges with taking an alleged “neutral” standing, as many teachers commonly does.
In the third paper, holding the tentative title *Navigating the Discomfort of Race and Whiteness in Citizenship Education*, I illustrate how race and racism emerged as central categories structuring the narratives and conversations made possible in classrooms during a teaching intervention focusing on national identity and citizenship. The patterns of appearance included several aspects, such as the denial of racism while making clearly racist comments, externalizing racism as individualized and violent rather than structural, the implicit centering of Whiteness as a key factor within images of Norwegianness, and racist attitudes as an important marker of the external boundaries of accepted behavior as a “good” citizen. Another layer also appeared through how the racialized students navigated the stereotypes in order to position themselves as culturally readable subjects. Through the appliance of insights from affect theory (Ahmed, 2012), I point out how discomfort (Boler & Zembylas, 2003) is a key concept in understanding and managing the classroom discussions on controversial topics such as racism. Inspired by the ideas of decolonial violence as epistemological violence as set forward by Fanon (2002; 2008 [1952]), and further discussed by Leonard & Porter (Leonardo & Porter, 2010), I illustrate how the classroom is never a “safe space”. I also discuss the ethical and epistemological dilemmas appearing when the roles between teacher and researcher are blurred, and the conversations in class take on a racist turn.

1.5 References


Fanon, F. (2008 [1952]). *Black Skin, White Masks*: Grove/Atlantic, Inc.


## 2 Progress Plan

### 2.1 Completed Work and Planned Progress

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<td>Planning and preparing the synopsis (“kappe”)&lt;br&gt;June (tentatively): Final seminar (90 percent)</td>
<td>September (tentatively): Final submission&lt;br&gt;<strong>Text (papers and synopsis)</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 articles accepted/published&lt;br&gt;1 article draft finished</strong>&lt;br&gt;Paper 3: Review/Publish&lt;br&gt;Paper 4: Draft finished</td>
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2.2 Overview of Coursework

**Total requirement 30 ECTS credits. Mandatory courses in bold.**

**Completed Courses**

- **USN University of South-Eastern Norway:** PH-PRL9100, Pedagogiske ressurser og lærerprosesser [Pedagogical Resources and Learning Processes], 10 credits
- **UiT The Arctic University of Norway:** SV-8059, Theorizing and Applying Critical Indigenous Philosophies, 10 credits
- **Oslo Metropolitan University:** PHUV9220, International Education, 10 credits
- **USN University of South-Eastern Norway:** PH-EDU9900, *Education for social justice in education: Human Rights and Intersectionality,* *attendance without paper/credits*
- **UiB University of Bergen:** AORG905, Democracy and Citizenship in Education, 2 credits
- **UiO University of Oslo, Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM):** Sustainability and the Good Life, 10 credits

*In total 42 ECTS credits.*

**Planned Courses**

- **USN University of South-Eastern Norway:** PHDTSRE, Theory of Science and Research Ethics, 7.5 credits. *Planned autumn 2019*

2.3 Overview of Publications

**Scientific Papers**


**Conference Presentations**


² Paper based on work from this project, not to be included in the final synopsis submission.


**Popular Dissemination**

- Rasisme usynliggjøres. [Racism is Made Invisible.] *Dagbladet* Newspaper, November 2, 2018.


- Lær deg begrepet urfolk! [Yes, You Do Have to Learn the Term Indigenous!]. *Dagsavisen* Newspaper, December 5, 2017.

3 Research Methods and Material

3.1 Introduction

This study is positioned among the so-called “post-disciplines” which have emerged through and by critique of established disciplinary canons and methodologies. It thus stretches across established academic disciplines, and is largely guided by the transformative aims of the inquiry. As the study is embedded in critical theory, core validity concerns can be described by terms such as *pragmatic* and *catalytic*, referring to the reality-altering impact of the research towards social justice (Kincheloe et al., 2011; Kvale, Brinkmann, Anderssen, & Rygge, 2015; Lather, 1986). Thus neither object of study, theoretical perspectives nor methodology follows from the field itself (Svendsen, 2014a, p. 28). The main phenomena under study are narratives and discourses about Norway, Norwegianness and Saminess, tracked across several scales (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017), such as classroom observations, textbooks, interviews with teachers and pupils and teaching interventions.

Although narratives and discourses are the main levels of study, it has been a central guiding principle for the study to look at these from the level of the students and their ways of engaging in construction of and negotiation with these narratives. Working as a teacher trainer for five years before starting the project, I have experienced the scarce amount of research that lifts the student perspective, especially regarding the youngest students. Also, in research with explicit transformative goals, collaboration with participants and the implicated groups is key (Dei, 2005). In my research, the main stakeholders are the students, and as part of the study I also talked extensively with the students about their motivations and ideas about Social Studies education, and they also took part in evaluating the teaching interventions. This approach was partly inspired by the idea of “pedagogical research”, enabling the students to contribute to the research process, while providing opportunities for them to develop their thinking about their role in society and formulate political perspectives and judgements (Starkey, Akar, Jerome, & Osler, 2014).

The project was approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) and conducted sensitive to the National Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Humanities, Law and Technology (NESH, 2016). These will also be explicitly discussed through the project, and a secondary aim for the project is to provide insight and reflection on central aspects of the role of ethics when doing critical and transformative research.
3.2 Phase 1: Exploratory, Small-scale Fieldwork. August 2017 - March 2018

In this phase, I conducted observations of Social Studies lectures at level 5-7 in five classrooms at five different schools. This phase was partly exploratory, and worked as a way for me to get to know the routines and organization of Social Studies education, as well as defining my own position as a researcher in the classroom. I initially wanted to observe classes at all levels of Norwegian primary schools from 1-7, but only teachers at level 5-7 agreed to participate in the study. There might be several reasons for this, a central one being that because the Social Studies curriculum is organized with the first learning outcomes described after level 4, not all schools offer the subject at the lowest levels. All Norwegian public schools follow the same mandatory curriculum, but the schools have some freedom in organizing subjects. All the schools I visited had two or three lectures per week in Social Studies. The length of the observation period varied from just a few lectures, to several weeks of observation. At two of the schools (Schools A and D), I visited the same class for several periods during the entire school year. The choice to visit some classes more frequent and for a longer time than others, had several explanations. Firstly, it was an important factor that I managed to establish a good relation with the teacher and students, ensuring that my presence in class was as little intrusive as possible. Secondly, Social Studies is a subject encompassing a wide variety of topics, not all of which were relevant to my study. During my observations, I observed lectures on as different topics as maps, landscape and topography, the Viking era, the European renaissance, the Norwegian electoral system and political parties, Sami culture and history, Colonialism and Sustainable development. Thus, I realized the need for being more particular about which topics I wanted to see in order to make the amount of data manageable.

During the observations, I wrote substantial notes, paying attention to the content of the conversations in class. I conducted semi-structures interviews with some of the teachers, but experienced that the more spontaneous conversations with teachers had much more value as rich material. These spontaneous conversations about my initial ideas and observations was also important in establishing the credibility and trustworthiness of the study, notably by confronting the teacher with experiences and understandings from the observations (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). I also conducted group interviews with students on the topics citizenship, national identity and their views on and experiences with

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3 All schools included in the study are public schools. The amount of public schools at primary and secondary levels in Norway is 91%, according to Statistics Norway (2018).
Social Studies as subject. These interviews were done with informed, written consent from both students and their parents/legal guardians. The interviews were semi-structured, lasted for approximately 45 minutes, and were recorded and transcribed.

3.3 Phase 2: Teaching Intervention Round 1. April/ May 2018

A fitting description for the research process in this study, is the image of the *bricolage* as emancipatory construct (Kincheloe et al., 2011). Rather than following a quest for “naïve realism”, the researcher as *bricoleur* has to be continuously focused on clarification and reflection upon her social positioning and the limitations of knowledge. During the first phase, I had an experience that made me reconsider my possible position in the process. Set out to observe a lecture on school F focusing on the history of the Sami peoples’ day, the teacher planned to show a short educational movie off the internet on this topic. However, as the internet connection suddenly became unavailable, the teacher became visibly insecure; she acknowledged that she did not really have the knowledge on the topic to teach it without the visual aid. As I hold extensive knowledge about the topic, I offered to conduct the lecture. This made me realize that in an authentic learning situation in class, it was much easier to gain access to the students’ thoughts and discussions on the relevant topics than during the more formal group interview setting. In the classroom, there is a dynamic communication inherent in the nature of a citizenship lesson which lends itself to quick exchanges, building on previous ideas and the reviewing of one’s thoughts. This is not always easy to achieve with especially young children in more formal research settings (Starkey et al., 2014). Additionally, in the conversation with the teacher after class, she told me that she really appreciated getting the opportunity to get some insight on how to teach this topic, and explained that the teachers sought more teaching materials on this as well related topics. For me, this also plays onto the ethical responsibility central to the Norwegian national guidelines on research ethics to disseminate the knowledge in non-academic ways (NESH, 2016). Hence, the decision to design a lecture for a teaching intervention in the second phase was made based on this experience. A second reason was to be able to have some of the topics most relevant for my research questions thematized in several classes.

The teaching intervention consisted of a lecture on the topic “What does it mean to be Norwegian?” focusing on national identity and culture. This was conducted in a total of 6 classes on 4 different schools around the time of the Norwegian national day, a period when
discussions on national belonging, culture and ethnic borders usually flourish in popular media. Also, the national day is commonly considered a “children’s holiday”. Some of these issues are rarely discussed in the classroom at this level, not least because they are often considered too mature, controversial or sensitive, and several of the teachers expressed a wish for more knowledge and relevant approaches. The teaching interventions involved me entering the classroom as “teacher-researcher”, structuring and leading conversations on the given topics. The position as teacher-researcher posed advantages as well as challenges. The openly ideological endeavor of the study entails actively tracking social interactions where the suspected injustice might come to the fore. In a methodological approach involving teaching interventions, such intimacy with production of knowledge might pose ethical dilemmas. Some relevant dilemmas were for example: In what ways should the researcher manage her responsibilities when she finds herself as co-constructive in educational settings where present racist ideas are allowed to be exposed? How to deal with the vulnerable identity struggles of a pupil with an immigrant background, actualized by discussions about citizenship identity in the classroom? What should be the response when epistemological violence towards an indigenous group are reproduced in educational discourse? When conducting research with implications for a profession such as teachers, it proved valuable for my understanding of the teacher positionality to take the role as an insider in this manner. When the lines between the hermeneutical search for truth and the concern with social justice become dissolved, demands for critical subjectivity are high (Lincoln, 2005). Within a critical methodological approach, epistemology, ethics and practice are deeply interconnected. Facts can never be isolated from values or ideological inscription. This acknowledgement demands a radical ethics that “is always/already concerned about power and oppression even as it avoids constructing power as a new truth” (Cannella & Lincoln, 2011, p. 81). However, the discomfort posed by ethical challenges in practice when researching in the role of teacher added to my reflexivity around my own criticality, and raised the demand for also providing knowledge that is constructive for the field of practice I am researching with, and for.

3.4 Phase 3: Teaching Intervention Round 2. October/ November 2018 (see Attachment 1)
This phase consisted of a teaching intervention thematizing citizenship, national identity and racism. The teaching intervention was comprised of two lectures designed by me. The teaching intervention was conducted in collaboration with a colleague and her class of pre-
service teachers specializing in Social Studies. The cooperation with my colleague provided a valuable opportunity to have a partner through the research process, and enabled peer debriefing adding to the validity of the study (J. Creswell, 2015, p. 202). The course of specialization in Social Studies is organized during the last year of teacher education, and thus the pre-service teachers had already completed all the compulsory subjects and practice required for becoming approved teachers. The pre-service teachers worked as partners in the teaching interventions in several ways. They were involved in planning and developing the lectures, they conducted the lectures in the role of teachers, and gave their views on and evaluations of the lectures in interviews after the lectures were finished. This process gave access to more professional perspectives on the lectures than my own, and allowed for me to concentrate on making extensive notes while observing the lectures. As part of their course assessment, the pre-service teachers also held oral presentations for their peers about their experiences. In this, they were explicitly encouraged to be critical and point towards challenges and pitfalls with the teaching intervention. The interviews as well as presentations were recorded with informed, written consent, and will be transcribed and further analyzed. During the lectures, conversations between students and teachers where recorded where possible. Due to the recently developed General Data Protection Regulation, all students including their parents/legal guardians need to provide written consent in order to do recordings in the classroom. This was obtained in four of seven classes.

[Table 1. Overview of Material and Methods]

| Phase 1: Exploratory. Smallscale Fieldwork | Participants: 5 classes/ 5 schools  
| August 2017 - March 2018 | Material: Field notes (approximately 80 pages), transcribed interview data from interviews with teachers and group interviews with students, pictures of student work |
| Phase 2: Teaching intervention round 1 | Participants: 6 classes/ 4 schools  
| April/ May 2018 | Material: Observation notes, Transcribed classroom conversations and group conversations from all schools, 120 student “thinking sheets” (notes from groupwork) |
| Phase 3: Teaching intervention round 2 | Participants: 7 classes/ 7 schools, 16 pre-service teachers, 4 practice teachers, 1 teacher trainer  
| October/ November 2018 | Material: Observation notes, transcribed classroom conversations, 6 group interviews with pre-service teachers and practice teachers, pre-service teachers’ presentations |
3.5 Participant Schools

Participant schools were pragmatically selected due to potential challenges in gaining access, and all except one of the participant schools have a partnership with the University of South-Eastern Norway in training of pre-service teachers. This partnership also entails that the schools should make themselves available for research. At schools D and E, pre-service teachers were in training in the class during parts of the observation period, and they were included in the interviews with the class teachers. In phase 3/Teaching intervention 2, all the pre-service teachers as well as the responsible teachers at the participant schools participated in interviews. All interviews and conversations were conducted with informed and written consent.

The classes participating in the study were all level 5-7, in Norway known as “middle school”, denoting students aged 10-13. As the Norwegian state abstains from doing statistics on the racial or ethnic backgrounds of its residents, I cannot provide overview of the classes in the study in this regard. Commonly, discourses on the “multicultural Norway” refer to the number of persons with immigrant backgrounds, denoting individuals that have immigrated as well as children born of at least one foreign-born parent. At present, the total amount of “immigrants” in Norway based on this definition is 17 per cent (Norway, 2018). Of course, the racial and ethnic grammar is much more complex than these numbers indicate, overlooking for instance the indigenous Sami and the national minorities. Approximately half of the schools in my study were located in proximity to a major city, where the diversity in this sense generally is greater, and the number of students of immigrant backgrounds at the schools varied from around the national mean to substantially higher. The same is the case for socio-economic backgrounds; most schools were heterogeneous. The other half of the schools were located in more rural areas, where the descriptive diversity related to immigration, cultural differences and class are generally much smaller. I thematize the composition of students and their backgrounds in the classes in my analysis in the cases it is actualized by either students or teachers through conversations and discussions, but I do not see it as relevant for my study to provide detailed overviews or statistics regarding this.

Because an important principle of the research was not to be of any unnecessary inconvenience to the teachers and groups studied, practical considerations indicated that not all the schools could arrange for both observations, teacher interviews, student interviews and teaching interventions (see the table below for overview).
Table 2. Overview of Participant Schools

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3.6 Analytical Approaches

Analytically, this study draws upon approaches from critical discourse analysis (Dijk, 1998; Fairclough, 2010) narrative analysis (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009; Bazeley, 2013) and colonial discourse studies (Andreotti, 2011a, p. 85). Common for the approaches applied is the emphasis on ideology more than semantics. The colonial discourse analysis challenge the neutrality and objectivity of academia and its role in constructing knowledge of subjects and cultures, which legitimize forms of power and control (Andreotti, 2011a). A narrative analysis involves a double hermeneutic, applying an interpretivist approach to the construction of
meaning by the narrator (Bazeley, 2013, p. 204). The significance of locating narratives, is that it permits an exploration of the way in which meaningful totalities are constructed from scattered events. The narratives communicated by the teachers and students and constructed through classroom interaction and in learning materials can serve as “windows to the contradictory and shifting nature of hegemonic discourses, which we tend to take for granted as stable monolithic forces” (Chase, 2011, p. 422). Importantly, in narrative analysis, the researcher is both a “story-finder” and a “storyteller” (Johannessen, Christoffersen, & Tufte, 2010, p. 215). This places particular limitations on interviews because the narratives told in the context of an interview are always co-constructed (Bazeley, 2013). In this approach, validity is thus related not to the data but to the inferences drawn from them (J. W. Creswell & Miller, 2000). What is more, this implies that other stories could have been told from the same encounters. The choice of particular narratives and discourses in focus through this study is informed by the notion of the telling case, in which validity is related to the explanatory power of the case to “make previously obscure theoretical relationships apparent” (Andreotti, 2011a, p. 90).
4 Overview of Papers Finished/Planned From the Project

**Paper 1: Teaching About the Other in Primary Level Social Studies: The Sami in Norwegian Textbooks**

Number of pages: 11 (attachment 2)


Abstract:

Purpose: The aim of this article is to discuss to what extent and in what ways the Sami people are included in national imaginary in textbooks. The article sheds critical light on important aspects of democracy, inclusion and multiculturalism in education through the example of indigenous peoples in Norway. The article also explores what opportunities textbooks provide for promoting anti-oppressive education and pedagogical subjectification.

Method: Social studies textbooks for primary school are analyzed based on critical discourse analysis (CDA) and elements from multi-modal analysis. The analysis focuses on the use of vocabulary and pronouns signaling inclusion and exclusion. Specific attention is paid to the hidden curriculum.

Findings: The Sami are essentialized and actively constructed as the Other through the structure and content of narratives. This corresponds to the strategy described in anti-oppressive education as education for the Other. Externalization of the Sami from the story of the Norwegian national day and in particular, treatment of the discriminatory Norwegianization politics, reinforce the image of Norwegian exceptionalism.

**Paper 2: Education for Sustainable Development and Narratives of Nordic Exceptionalism: The Contributions of Decolonialism**

Number of pages: 23 (attachment 3)

Status: Accepted for publishing in *Nordidactica* (Nordic journal), in print January 2019

Abstract: This paper argues that approaches embedded in technology optimism hold a hegemonic stance in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Norway. A monolithic focus on technology also leads to a lack of emphasis on the possible contributions of Social Studies. Although sustainable development is commonly understood as having the global goal of “saving the planet,” ESD remains situated within a colonial epistemological regime. In spite of its good intentions, ESD may in fact contribute to the construction and reproduction of
differences between “Us” and “Them,” denoting the Global North and South. The aim of this paper is to explore the contributions of decolonial perspectives in providing possible interruptions of the hegemonic narratives, and fostering transformation. The paper exemplifies how current practices of ESD can serve to sustain rather than change the global economic and political systems. It is argued that decolonial perspectives can be tools for disrupting mainstream ESD.

**Paper 3: Navigating the Discomfort of Race and Racism in Citizenship Education**

Number of pages: 22 (attachment 3)

Status: First draft finished, planned submission tentatively April 2019

Abstract: This paper sheds light to the elusive presence of race and racism in citizenship education in Norwegian primary schools. Empirical examples from classroom observations at six schools sheds light to how race and racism are treated as taboo concepts, but nonetheless plays central roles in structuring conversations on national identity and citizenship. It is argued that the affective dimensions at play in classroom dialogues must be recognized in anti-racist and citizenship education, through the discussion of the concept “pedagogy of discomfort”. Although this discomfort may be applied as a pedagogical tool in deconstructing Whiteness and majority students’ self-images, it also carry problematic implications in terms of social justice. Empirical examples shed light to how the classroom is always epistemologically violent and never a safe space for all students. It is thus imperative to acknowledge that the continued workings of the modern/colonial epistemology positions subjects radically different within this pedagogical strategy. A major implication from the paper is that the common focus on attitudes and values in anti-racist education is insufficient for a citizenship education that enhances social justice.

**Paper 4 (No title)**

Number of pages: 0

Status: Planned first draft tentatively July 2019

Description: In this paper, I will discuss results from teaching intervention 2.
5 Tentative Table of Contents for Synopsis “kappe”

Requirement: 50 – 80 pages, to account for the context of the papers in the study.

1) **Introduction (5 pages)**
   - Background
   - Relevance of study
   - Research questions and aims

2) **Theoretical and epistemological reflections (20 pages)**
   - Between criticality and transformation
   - The decolonial project

3) **Methods, material and analytical practice (10 pages)**
   - Post-disciplinary research
   - Research as bricolage
   - Overview of material
   - Considering positionality: The teacher as researcher
   - Critical discourse analysis
   - Narrative analysis
   - Post- and decolonial discourse analysis

4) **Ethical considerations (5 pages)**
   - Between ethics and epistemology
   - Radical ethics

5) **Paper 1 (10 pages)**
   - Presentation of topic
   - Discussion of concepts
   - The contribution of the paper to the project and the research field

6) **Paper 2 (as Paper 1) (10 pages)**

7) **Paper 3 (as Paper 1) (10 pages)**

8) **Paper 4 (as Paper 1) (10 pages)**

9) **Conclusion (10 pages)**
   - Contribution to the research field
   - Final discussion of research questions
6 Attachments

Attachment 1: Description of Teaching Intervention 2
3 pages

Attachment 2: Paper 1
11 pages

Attachment 3: Paper 2
23 pages

Attachment 4: Paper 3
22 pages