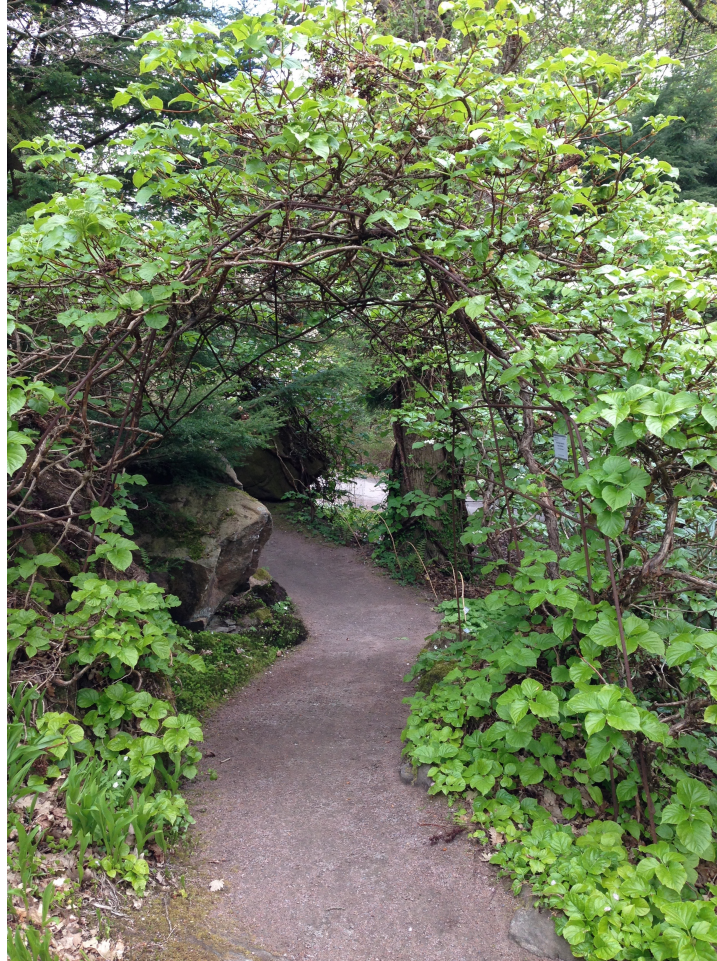


Views of poetry as a competence, expressed by students in the teacher education



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In Sweden since 2011: curriculum is oriented towards creating knowledge at school that is measurable and evidence-based

At the same time: an overarching aim for education at school to stress equality by letting all students use languages of their own, to express themselves (<https://www.skolverket.se>)



Peter Tillberg

- A conflict between knowledge that is measurable, and goals aiming at maintaining democracy - also characterizes the teacher education in Sweden
- What about the role of what's not measurable at school?
Aesthetics? To be able to discuss this: teacher students' views of the role of poetry in education – during their teacher education, and future work as teachers
- Do the students regard knowledge in poetry as a competence worth achieving, and if so, for what reasons?

Aesthetics in comprehensive school

- 1842: the subject Swedish mainly consisted of writing, and reading of religious texts.
- Late 19'th C. and during the 20'th C. the subject also included literature and history of literature.
- The curriculum from 1980: poetry and aesthetic forms of expression had a strong position, related to children's experiences and need to express themselves.



Arguments for working with poetry?

- **Functional:** work with poetry for language development purposes
- **Emancipatorical:** children have the right to express themselves
- **Literary:** our cultural heritage should be preserved by work at school

(Wolff, 2004)

Curriculum from 2011 moves away from *emancipatorical* and *literary* arguments, in favour of *functional* arguments.

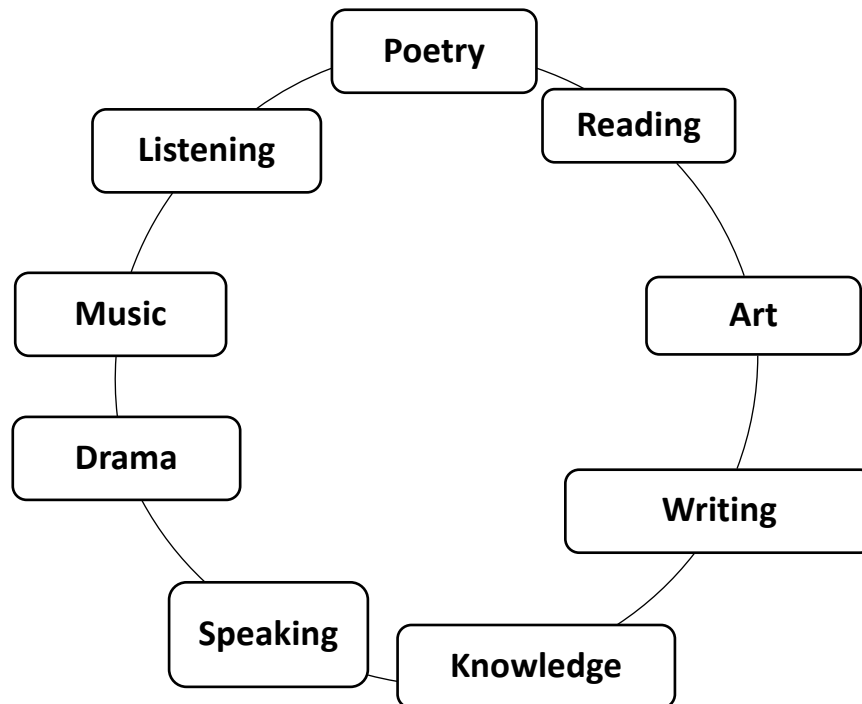
Agency

- 1. The iterational element of agency:** an individual's personal life story. Previous thought patterns and ways of acting are incorporated into the current situation.
- 2. The practical evaluative perspective:** the individual's capacity to make practical and normative judgements.
a) cultural b) structural c) material aspects
- 3. The projective aspects of agency:** the individual's imaginative ability seeing a future (hopes, fears, dreams).

(Priestly, Biesta and Robinson, 2013)

Design of the study

- Data: interviews with eight teachers being educated to work in the Swedish primary school.
- The students were asked to associate with the keywords below:



Association interview: Christophersen and Ferm Thorgersen (2015)

The iterational dimension

- The students have very different experiences of aesthetic expressions.
- They express emancipatory and literary reasons for using poetry.
- They argued that aesthetic expressions enrich people and that these subjects are important for their own sake.

The practical-evaluative dimension

- The students seem to understand aesthetic forms of expression as different languages to use when teaching.
- They argued that pupils learn in different ways and that variation is needed to keep up the pupils' interest in learning.
- Assessment seems to be an obstacle - only written material is a valid ground for examination according to the students. They think it is difficult to evaluate something that is expressed in an aesthetic form.

The projective dimension

- The students express a wish to involve aesthetic forms of expressions in their future teaching, but they are uncertain about whether they have sufficient knowledge.
- The feelings expressed alternate, often within the same individual, between being afraid, incompetent, uncomfortable and insecure to feelings of being safe, comfortable, willing, daring and inspired.
- Through aesthetic expressions, students expect their future pupils to develop creativity and openness in general, not just for educational purposes.

The student's beliefs, aspirations and imaginations of the future teacher role

- Agency:

Life histories, the teacher education, beliefs and aspirations about the future role as a teacher are important for teachers agency.

- Obstacles:

- 1) Lack of knowledge about aesthetics

- 2) Requirements from the curriculum

- Opportunities:

- 1) Possibilities for shaping their own ways of teaching.

- 2) Interest for aesthetic forms of expression as an important part of the teaching.

Discussion

- More knowledge about aesthetic content in the teacher education is needed.
- The students don't see that they in the future have the agency to include aesthetic expressions in their teaching.
- The students' identities, their values and their thoughts about aesthetic expressions is important for their conception of agency.
- There is a conflict between understanding the importance of using aesthetic expressions, and not having sufficient knowledge to work with this.

Thank you for listening!