

Institutionen för didaktik och pedagogisk profession

Svenskämnets estetiska dimensioner
- i klassrum, kursplaner och lärares uppfattningar

av

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AKADEMISK AVHANDLING

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Abstract

Title: Aesthetic dimensions in the subject Swedish – in classroom, curricula and teachers' perceptions
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This thesis explores aesthetic dimensions in the school subject Swedish in classroom, curricula and teachers' perceptions. In focus is the question about young pupils' (7-9 years old) possibilities to use different modalities in order to express themselves, communicate and learn. The overarching aim is to highlight obstacles and opportunities to include aesthetic expressions in the subject Swedish. Aesthetic forms of expression refer to both physical and virtual forms of literature, music, fine arts, film and dance. Using data obtained from action research, curricula and interviews, examined within a framework of sociocultural and social semiotic multimodal theory, the thesis provides an analysis of pupils' possibilities to create meaning through different sign systems within the subject Swedish.

To be able to fulfil the aim of the study, the design includes three different part studies. Study one, "*Music and Language in Interaction - An Action Research Study of First-Grade Pupils*" describes the ways children participate, communicate and interact in a structured program with language and music activities. The result shows how language and music activities in interaction contain a rich variety of communication and semiotic resources. Study two, "*Aesthetic interests and communicative forms, a curriculum study of Swedish as a school subject*" examines how aesthetic perspectives of the subject Swedish appear in curricula from 1969 to 2011. Critical discourse analysis shows that these communicative forms are included in the curriculum from 1980, but reduced in earlier and later curricula. Study three, "*Aesthetic interests and subject content, a study of teachers' perceptions of Swedish as a school subject*" consider, through critical discourse analysis, how six teachers position themselves in different discourses regarding their view of language.

The over all results of the three studies highlights a tension between different discourses, more specifically between a skill discourse and a multimodal discourse. Thus, different modalities are regarded in a vertical view, with written language as the "highest" form, or a horizontal view where expressions are valued equal, but useful for different purposes. The thesis shows that a skill-oriented subject Swedish dominates in classroom, curricula and teachers' perceptions, but also that there are teachers, and school communities, who include the aesthetic means of expression in their teaching of Swedish. The result implies a discussion about pupils' abilities to participate in, and master, literacy in different contexts as a democratic right. Hence, the thesis raises the question of conditions for a multimodal subject of Swedish.