

Institutionen för pedagogik, kommunikation och lärande

Läroböcker, demokrati och medborgarskap

Konstruktioner i läroböcker i
sambandskunskap för gymnasiet

av

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Abstract

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Swedish citizenship education is charged with a double mission: socialization and education of democratic citizens. This means that textbooks exist in a field of tension between conveying content as true knowledge and offering it as a perspective amongst others. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is employed in order to analyse how textbooks navigate between these poles.

Thus, the thesis explores how ten textbooks in social science in upper secondary school construct citizenship and democracy as systems of knowledge and beliefs, relationships and subject positions, with special attention given to the question of how they regulate pupils' civic activities.

The analysis of ten textbooks showed that democracy is constructed as liberal, representative government, and that textbooks describe contemporary Swedish government as a truly democratic, rational and effective form of government. Consequentially, citizens are predominantly described as voters, as opposed to politicians. The relationship between voters and politicians was constructed as a relation of trust and a trade-off where voters exchange votes for political decisions in their favor.

The relationship between text and readers is partially characterized by subordination, and partially by persuasion. The common denominator is the necessity to reproduce contemporary political structures by means of practicing citizenship - that is, voting - and by identification with existing formal political structures as democratic and superior.

Thus, the overall conclusion is that textbooks enact a certain conflict between means and ends. While the end is the reproduction of liberal democracy and liberal, individual citizenship, pupils are requested to transform themselves into supporters of contemporary Swedish democracy, positioning them as not-yet-citizens and not-yet political subjects.