



Editorial: special issue introduction

This special issue focuses on perceptions and practices of diversity in education. The call for papers concerned empirical articles that address perceptions and practices of diversity in education in its broadest sense: in kindergartens, schools and adult education, among children, pupils, students, teachers and teacher educators. We received several interesting contributions, and I am very proud to present five solid articles that I think individually and together will be pieces of the puzzle of this vast under-researched field called *diversity in education*.

In their article, Burner, Nodeland and Aamaas explore teachers' and teacher educators' perceptions of and self-perceived practices with diversity among students in a study with 92 informants. Not surprisingly, teachers seem to be more practical and concrete than the teacher educators. However, both groups tend to leave out structural issues (like socio-economic background) and the five national minorities in Norway when reflecting on diversity in education. The findings call for a more critical approach to diversity as a concept. Fylkesnes, Mausestaden and Nilsen do precisely this in their article: they adopt a critical perspective in their investigation of teacher educators' perception of cultural diversity, who generally speak of cultural diversity as something positive but at the same time perform *othering*. This contradictory perception, or what the authors call double meaning-making pattern, should be interesting for other researchers to follow up.

The article by Janne Solberg investigates parents' socialization processes in kindergarten practices. It is important to understand how kindergarten staff act out their relations with minority and majority parents because the relationships are crucial for the children's well-being and the parents' meetings with the kindergarten as a public institution. Solberg has conducted ten days of close observations when parents deliver and pick up their children in kindergarten. Her findings show discriminatory behavior/tone toward minority parents and should be a wake-up call for educators, parents and kindergarten staff. A similar focus can be read in Sønsthagen's article about minority parents and their meetings with educators in kindergartens. The meetings seem to be superficial, in line with the educators' perceptions of diversity, pertaining to music, food and holidays.

Finally, Jore writes about History Didactics in her article, looking closer at how a critical discourse in classroom discussion could have unfolded by the use of the so-called former Jew-paragraph in the Norwegian Constitution. In discussions about minorities in

Norway, there is a tendency to forget the country's past atrocities toward Jews. This article, based on teachers' and students' discussion of the Norwegian Constitution, illustrates well how the Jew-paragraph is neglected, considered un-constitutional and irrelevant even though it was an important part of the Constitution.

I hope the articles in this special issue will be read, used, discussed and criticized by anyone interested in how perceptions and practices relating to diversity unfold in educational settings. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the editors for their invitation to put together this special issue and their support throughout the process.

Prof. Tony Burner
Guest editor