

15th International Conference of the Spanish Association of Language and Literature Education,
15th International Conference SEDLL, 19-21 November 2014, Valencia, Spain

Developing professional knowledge and skilled practice through literary conversations in various didactic contexts

Torill Strand^a, Eva Michaelsen^{b*}

^{a b} *Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, Pilestredet 52, 0130 Oslo, Norway*

Abstract

The paper presents a project of literary conversations in a college course for teachers and in elementary schools. The project was conducted in a part time continuing education course (30 ECTS credits) as a cooperation between lecturers in Norwegian language and literature and the course participants who are all teachers working in primary and lower secondary schools. In this study, we explore how the knowledge and experiences related to literary conversations learned in the course were transferred to practices in the teachers' own classes. The results revealed several challenges that will be discussed in the further developing of the courses.

© 2015 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license

(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of the Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, Departamento de Lingüística Aplicada.

Keywords: Literature didactics; Elementary school; Teacher education; Professional development.

1. Introduction

Educational work with literature in the classroom, both in higher education and in elementary school, has in the last two decades been taking arguments and methods from various approaches. The perspectives have changed from the most text-centered to the extreme student-centered approaches. Today, many educators and literature scholars claim that fiction is valuable both as an aesthetic object and as an educational foundation for the development of reading and writing skills (Aase, 2010; Skaftun, 2009; Langer 2011; Frey & Fisher, 2011). The curriculum for

* Eva Michaelsen. Tel.: +47- 67237457

E-mail address: eva.michaelsen@hioa.no

teacher education in Norway emphasizes that teacher education must be both practice-oriented and value-oriented regarding formation.

In this study, we explore how the knowledge and experiences related to literary conversations in a part-time college course for teachers were transferred to practices in primary and lower secondary schools. Our aim is twofold: firstly, we want to illustrate how the course may help to develop teachers' literary competence, and to examine how this knowledge is transferred to the teachers' own teaching. Secondly, the results shall lead to further development of the course for teachers.

Literary conversations in the subject Norwegian in school and in teacher education are closely related to the dimension of self-formation or “Bildung” (Klafki, 2001), and represent an approach that emphasizes dialogue. Transactional theory (Rosenblatt, 1994), personal responses (Chambers, 1985; Daniels, 2002), didactics of developing reflectivity (Gee, 2004), and the importance of dialogue (Bahktin, 1982), are core concepts in the project.

The topic of the study is expressed through the following question: *How may literary conversations contribute to professional reflection and skill learning in various didactic contexts?*

2. Material and method

Teachers participating in the part-time course are working at different levels in elementary schools, from the 1st to the 10th grade. The material forming the basis for a descriptive analysis in this study is obtained through the academic year 2013-2014. It is mainly based on written reports where teachers (in all 80) present and reflect on the work of literary conversations in their own classes in primary schools.

“Literary conversations” are discussions of fiction texts in small groups according to certain principles, structures and conversation rules (Hennig, 2012). Literary conversations give students the opportunity to share their reading experiences with each other so that they can achieve a deeper understanding and reflect on what they read in a community of interpretation in which they are in control of the conversation. As work processes, literary conversations are closely related to transaction-oriented approaches (Rosenblatt, 1994; Fish, 1980).

As support for the structure of the project and as an analytical tool in the study, we have looked to W. Sullivan's three “apprenticeships” for professional education (Sullivan, 2008). Here the term “communities” is used to highlight the importance of cooperation:

- Communities around intellectual and cognitive knowledge: Students learn analytical reflection, arguments and research that constitute the knowledge base of the field.
- Communities around practical skills: Students learn professional skills through participating in imaginary and practical situations.
- Communities around values and attitudes: Students share the profession's core values through learning about them and practicing them.

In the project, this means that the teachers' acquisition of professional and academic knowledge in the literary field, and their participation in literary conversations in the course at HiOA, provide the basis for the teachers' own practice in school. The knowledge base is formed by textbooks, research articles, lectures at campus and written assignments. In their own schools the teachers tried out (and further developed) literary conversations adapted to the curricula and the level of their classes. Experiences learned here were discussed and further developed in course lectures and in written assignments. In retrospect, the teachers reflect on whether they have sufficient subject knowledge, whether the practical situation allows such work, and if the working methods and course content are aligned with their beliefs and values as professional teachers. Experiences and reflections about literary conversations as part of the education and formation work in school are expressed through the teachers' written reports.

3. Results and discussion

The reports show that the testing of literary conversations in the teachers' own classes revealed several challenges. Firstly, teachers emphasize academic and didactic content and practice. Secondly, the time aspect is

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1111383>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1111383>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)