

NERA Network 9 Allmenn didaktikk – General Didactics

Invitation to the Pre-Conference Workshop on Didaktik and Assessment at NERA, Helsinki

Dear Colleague,

We are pleased to invite you to participate in a stimulating half-day pre-conference workshop entitled "Bridging Didaktik and Assessment: Capturing Complexity in Educational Practice," to be held in conjunction with the upcoming Nordic Educational Research Association (NERA) conference in Helsinki.

Given your scholarly interest in the Nordic educational landscape, we believe this workshop will offer you a valuable space for intellectual exchange and professional development. We scrutinize the role and impact of numerical grades and delve into the potential of gradeless assessment, we seek to engage with fellow scholars who are passionate about advancing holistic education models that reflect the tenets of Didaktik.

This workshop explores a significant dilemma within the educational realm: the discrepancy between the holistic, yet assessment-free concept of Didaktik and the prevalent numerical grading system used to judge student performance in schools.

Key Questions:

1. How can one develop assessment methods that reflect the holistic principles of Didaktik while providing meaningful feedback on pupils learning progress?
2. What are the implications of the disconnect between Didaktik models and assessment practices for teacher education, teaching and professional development?
3. How might one reimagine educational practice (theory?) to better integrate the insights of Didaktik

Didaktik emphasizes a comprehensive educational experience that nurtures not just academic proficiency but also personal and social development. The traditional practice of using numerical grades is scrutinized,

as these marks may not adequately capture the rich, complex journey of learning in line with Didaktik's philosophy.

With the Nordic movement towards gradeless evaluation gaining momentum, the significance of this research is underscored as it probes whether abandoning numerical grades can indeed marry educational practice with the ideals of holistic learning, or if it signifies a deeper need for a revised model that fuses teaching, learning, and assessment into a coherent, integrated whole.

Theoretical Challenges:

1. Conceptual integration: How can we bridge the theoretical gap between Didaktik's holistic view of education and the more compartmentalized approach often seen in assessment practices?
2. Validity and holism: In moving towards more holistic assessments, how can we ensure they accurately reflect the multidimensional nature of learning as conceptualized in Didaktik?
3. Systemic alignment: How can we develop educational systems that coherently integrate Didaktik principles from curriculum design through to assessment and reporting?

Join us in exploring and addressing theoretical challenges like conceptual integration, ensuring the validity in holistic assessments, and achieving systemic alignment of Didaktik principles within our educational systems.

We anticipate a lively and thought-provoking dialogue, seeking not only to discuss theoretical conflicts but also to chart a path for the revision of current Didaktik thinking.

Workshop schedule, Tuesday 4/3-25:

13:00 – 13:15: Welcome and Introduction

13:15 – 14:00: Keynote Presentation Eline Wise, University of Oslo

14:00 – 14:30: Coffee Break

14:30 – 15:15: Keynote Presentation Michael Uljens, Åboakademi

15:15 – 16:00: Keynote Presentation Anders Jönsson Högskolan Kristianstad

16:15 – 16:45: Plenary Session: Synthesis and Way Forward

19:00 Dinner (to be announced)

Please mark your calendar for Tuesday 4/3-25, and register by sending an email to ola.henricsson@gu.se, **registration deadline: 10/1 2025**. Space is limited to

ensure a conducive environment for discussion, so early registration is encouraged. *We will notify you about the exact room upon arrival.*

We look forward to welcoming you at the intersection of Didaktik and assessment to collectively redefine our educational paradigms.

Warm regards,

Pre-conference Workshop Coordinator

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Keynotes

Eline Wiese, University of Oslo

Assessment in diverse classrooms: Challenges and possibilities at the intersection of equity and validity?

Increasing social, cultural and linguistic diversity creates challenges with assessment, and especially for how pupils with a migration background are given the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills in subjects. In order for the assessment to be both valid and reliable, teachers must adopt other, more equitable and inclusive assessment practices. Yet, to ensure equity by facilitating for adapted, or differentiated, and inclusive assessment, some challenges arise for ensuring validity, particularly at the intersection between formative and summative assessment.

In this context, formative assessment is seen as dialogue-based guidance that students receive while working on assignments or during lessons. Thus, not only does it affect how teachers assess in the classroom, but increasing diversity also impacts the organisation of everyday school life and places demands for realising a pedagogy that to a greater extent promotes, and is based on, pupils' perspectives and knowledge, and which gives them the opportunity to participate in both teaching and assessment.

With this as a backdrop, I will discuss how increased linguistic and cultural diversity in school puts the issue of grades versus formative assessment at the forefront. In order for teachers to have the opportunity to carry out such a supervision-based dialogical assessment, they need time for each individual student. I will therefore argue that to ensure valid and reliable formative assessment that is also equitable and inclusive, presupposes a rethinking of the pedagogical choices and structures not only for assessment, but also in the pedagogical choices made in the organisation of teaching.

Michael Uljens, Åbo Akademi

Evaluation and educative teaching for Bildung in non-affirmative Didaktik for schools

This key-note makes the assumption, all positions regarding pedagogical evaluation need to be grounded in some theory of teaching, studying and learning. In turn, all theorizing starts with pointing out the questions we expect our theory to answer. Which then are the specific questions a theory of didactics should actualize? In Nordic Didaktik, it is typical to start the reflection by pointing at the traditional didactic triangle, consisting of the three poles teacher, student and content. In the Scandinavian literature, there is an additional, frequently occurring triangle, with the poles aims, content and method. I argue that while these approaches identify important themes, these triangles are not examples of theories in Didaktik. To overcome this dilemma, I propose that a non-affirmative interpretation of Bildung centered pedagogy, offers a fruitful point of departure for understanding curriculum work and teaching. Non-affirmativity refer to the character or nature of pedagogical interaction. This position utilizes concepts from modern classic education, like recognition, *Bildsamkeit* and summons to self-activity. Such a position offer ways beyond formal theories of Didaktik emphasizing the attainment of competencies and material theories of Didaktik focusing attainment of subject matter knowledge. In contrast to both epistemic and learning psychological grounded subject matter Didaktik which both favor the mere learning of content, non-affirmative school didactics instead argues for educative emancipation. Like in classical emancipation, educative emancipation also requires the learner to reach insight in existing values, practices, views and knowledge. Valuable insights and useful knowledge must be learned. But, the pedagogical process does not stop here. Instead of only getting the learner to adopt or acquire some new but predefined ways of relating to the world without own processing, educative teaching uses the selected content for reaching beyond the content itself. Educative emancipation aim at developing the learner's capacity to productive freedom. Promoting productive freedom is not only about becoming able to understand and utilize cultural tools for acting in the world, but also to liberate for the development of self-directed capacity. I round up by identifying six practical dimensions of Bildung-centered educative Didaktik and by asking if these may form a point of departure for pedagogical evaluation.

Anders Jönsson, Höskolan Kristianstad

Different conceptualizations of assessment

There are at least two different conceptualizations of assessment. One is based on human judgment and focuses on assessment of quality. This conceptualization of assessment is very old and, in a sense, intuitive, and we don't know when it arised. The other conceptualization is linked to the psychometric tradition, where assessment is seen as a measurement. In research, these conceptualizations of assessment are generally treated as a dichotomy, where researchers stick to and defend their position in either of these two endpoints. In practice, however, they are mixed into an "assessment hodgepodge" where neither of the conceptualizations are identifiable as distinct or acknowledged as such. In my presentation, I will show that these conceptualizations of assessment are indeed distinct, but also that they have different potentials to – as is reads in the program – "reflect the holistic principles of Didaktik while providing meaningful feedback on pupils learning progress". I will also make the argument that gradeless teaching can be seen as a way to use the different conceptualizations of assessment more productively.