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Mentalitet, pedagogik, historiskt minne

Om utbildningens samtida villkor och processer

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Akademisk avhandling

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Abstract

This thesis attempts to highlight the contemporary conditions and processes of education in order to define what kind of education dominates the 21st century School. What mentality and pedagogy are governing the design of the 21st century School? How can the historical perspective help to explain the conditions and processes in contemporary education? This thesis studies these questions by analyzing and interpreting active educational discourses from the beginning of the 21st century. The study is based on critical hermeneutics. The concepts are mentality, inherent pedagogy and historical memory. The material underlying the study consists of 351 news articles about education in the Swedish newspaper Västerbottens-Kuriren. The interpretation process has been carried out at different stages, in order to describe, explain and understand active educational discourses. This interpretation applies three complementary methods - text analysis, hermeneutic interpretation and critical discourse analysis. The findings indicate a mentality containing three main trends – equal togetherness, independent learning and independent freedom of choice, which arises from an inherent pedagogy containing two main trends - competence-developing and a performance-enhancing process. The contemporary mentality and pedagogy are emerging in the gap between Piaget's and Skinner's educational ethos. At a shorter historical perspective, mentalities in the 1990s bear major structural similarities to the mentalities formed in the 21st century. In parallel, inherent pedagogy in the 1990s shares less structural similarities to the pedagogy formed in the 21st century. At a longer historical perspective, one will notice major structural similarities between the 18th century and the 21st century. What distinguishes one period from another is that the 18th century was a class society with teachers who had low ambitions, whereas the 21st century is a democratic society with teachers who have high ambitions. What unites the periods is that both the 18th and the 21st centuries witnessed great spatial and economic change. They are centuries of coercion and competition as well as centuries of freedom. In addition, they share the qualities of distance and control, and they both treat children as adults. Finally both centuries face unfinished policies with contradictory trends. From a media perspective, the debates from the 1990s and the editorials and facts from the 21st century news articles bear no similarities in terms of ideological positions on education.

Keywords

Education, Mentality, Inherent pedagogy, Historical memory, Mass media, History, Hermeneutics, Text analysis, Discourse analysis

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