

Abstract for paper presentation at WIREC2018

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Reshaping education by creating and telling indigenous teaching stories

Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own educational system in a manner that is conducive to their cultural methods of teaching and learning. In Norway, Sámi schools follow the state-regulated Sámi curriculum. However, to achieve teaching based on the Sámi culture, new teaching content and teaching methods need to be developed to enable the reshaping of education. The aim of this paper is to discuss experiences from an action research study conducted in collaboration with ten teachers. In the study, the teachers carried out and documented teaching activities in kindergartens and primary schools. The purpose of the paper is to address the experiences resulting from the action research on the basis of Egmoose's methodological approach to action research. The approach concerns the facilitation of the process, and an examination of the experiences, of action research, and it can help highlight some of the challenges and opportunities of action research engagements. First, the participants critically examined the praxis of and formulated visions for the implementation of teaching activities. Similar to earlier action research studies, the participants experienced obstacles toward the implementation of culture-based teaching activities. These obstacles stymied the implementations, and in order to continue, the action research approach needed to be revised. The work then focused on digital storytelling from the statement "we need to tell the stories we want to live." What kinds of culture-based teaching activities and stories did the participants implement, and what could these mean for the reshaping of indigenous education? The teachers chose to focus on teaching activities on the basis of Sámi livelihood activities such as reindeer herding, fishing, and preparing food. During the teaching activities, I as researcher conducted ethnographic fieldwork. The main findings from this part of the study relate to how the engagement was influenced by the concrete activity, the participants' earlier experiences, and the materiality and physical environment. This influenced the teaching role and the participants' interaction with the children involved.