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Mapping writing across school subjects in grade 4

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Writing is central to pupils' education, employment, meaningful lives and for citizenship, i.e. writing in different contexts and disciplines. Therefore, an important challenge is the teaching of writing to develop pupils writing in different school subjects. This case study deals with pupils' everyday school writing literacy practices. The aim is to explore the teaching of writing in grade 4 in all school subjects. This paper draws on empirical data collected as a pre-study in two grades 4 in the project Writing as nutrition for democracy (VR 2018-03779). The data consist of literacy mapping of the school (common areas and 2 classrooms), four weeks' observations of the teaching of writing in grade 4 in all school subjects (89 lessons in total), and informal interviews with the 8 teachers observed. The data is content analyzed using Ivaničs (2004, 2017) framework for discourses of writing and Bernstein's (1977; 1990) framework for structuring the pedagogic discourse in classification and framing.

The findings reveal that writing was undertaught in most school subjects but writing as a tool for learning – enacted in a discourse for thinking and learning – had a strong position. In language subjects, text-focused writing discourses dominated. Context focused writing (a social practices and a socio-political discourse) was rare, as has been shown by other studies. Preliminary analyses indicate that most subjects but Swedish have strong classification and that the teaching of writing has weak framing, which is obvious in the literacy mapping of the school.

Finally, a comprehensive teaching of writing is argued to develop pupils' writing proficiency. How such teaching can be achieved is discussed in relation to what literacy skills that are necessary in the 21st century.

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