

Evaluation, Assessment and Geographical Education

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This Presentation

- Danish school geography
- Evaluation and assessment
- 'GeoGlimt' – a modest look at evaluation, assessment and geography education
- Recommendations

Danish School Geography

Primary and lower secondary education

- 1st – 6th level: Science
- 7th – 8th/9th level: Geography

More than 50 percent of all geography teachers in Danish primary and lower secondary school do not have any geographical educational background

Evaluation *or* Assessment

- Evaluation is concerned with the teachers' teaching
- Assessment is focusing on learning results or learning processes whether it concerns those of the students or the teachers themselves

Evaluation *and* Assessment

Characteristics

- Systematic and methodical (formative or summative)
- Based on values and aims
- Correspond with goal-oriented action
- Identifiable subject or intention

Formative *versus* Summative

*When the cook tastes the soup, that's
formative*

*When the guests taste the soup, that's
summative*

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The focus in the survey

- How evaluation and assessment is practiced in school geography
- The methods used for evaluation and assessment
- The view on evaluation and assessment
- An identification of problems, difficulties and possibilities related to the work with evaluation and assessment

How is evaluation and assessment practiced in Danish school geography?

- Teachers very seldom evaluate their own teaching
- Teachers only seldom assess the outcome of their teaching (the students' geographical knowledge and competences)

Teaching is a four step process

- 1) Working out aims based on the curriculum as well as the students' qualifications
- 2) Planning the way teaching has to be carried out in order to reach the aims
- 3) The education (the students' work)
- 4) Evaluation of the three former steps

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Results on step #1

Working out aims based on the curriculum as well as the students' qualifications

- Teachers do not very often work out their educational aims based on the curriculum
- Personal interests (knowledge) or the content in the textbook generally decide the geographical topics
- Students' interests might influence the teachers' decisions

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Results on step #2

Planning the way teaching has to be carried out in order to reach the aims

- The planning work is normally focusing on the students' work with the geographical topics (What do they have to know? How do they have to organize their work? What must the students produce? How much time is needed for the topics?)

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Results on step #3

The education (the students' work)

- The students' work is often based on a democratic dialogue between the teacher and the students
- Textbooks and atlas are the primary geographical sources for the students
- The education seldom take place outside the classroom

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Results on step #4

Evaluation of the three former steps

- Evaluation mainly deals with the students' work (step #3)
- Evaluation is unsystematic and is not documented
- Evaluation is very often based on informal conversations with the students

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Summarized results

In Danish schools there is no clear distinction between evaluation and assessment.

In Danish language the word 'evaluating' includes evaluation as well as assessment

Danish geography teachers accept the necessity of evaluation and assessment in order to raise the quality of education
– *but they don't know how to do it!*

The actual situation

- The majority of Danish geography teachers are not capable to identify the substance of evaluation and assessment: The essence in geography
- This leads to problems in defining the purpose of geographical education: Developing the students' geographical competences or geographical literacy

The actual situation *(cont.)*

- Although a majority of the geography teachers would like to evaluate their own teaching and the outcome they don't know what to focus on
- And they don't know how to practice evaluation and assessment

Geography teachers need professional help!

Recommendations

The school management

- The school management / the head teacher should promote the development of an evaluation and assessment culture in the school
- The school management should ration appropriate time for pedagogical work

Recommendations

The school management *(cont.)*

- The school management should establish the needed conditions for an educational raising quality in any subjects for any students
- The school management should make sure that any teacher is given access to relevant pedagogical literature of current interest

Recommendations

The school geography

- The number of geography lessons should be increased
- The geography lessons should be timetabled in a way it possible to include fieldwork etc. as part of the teaching
- Economic resources should be increased in order to make it possible to update geography materials as well as teacher qualifications

Recommendations

The geography teachers

- Teachers teaching geography should be educated geography teachers
- Geography teachers should be allowed to participate in in-service training courses and further education in geography and geographical subjects
- Geography teachers should be allowed to participate in in-service training courses on evaluation and assessment strategies

Recommendations

The geography teachers *(cont.)*

- Geography teachers should have access to establish and participate in networks and teams of geography teachers
- Geography teachers should cooperate with science teachers in order to secure progression in geography education

Recommendations

The geography teaching

- The geography teaching should be based on teaching plans known by students and their parents, colleagues, and the school management
- Any geography lesson or project should be founded on well defined aims

Recommendations

The geography teaching *(cont.)*

- The teaching in geography should include various numbers of teaching methods and geographical working methods, by using the classroom as well as the surroundings outside the school
- When interdisciplinary education is involving geography, the geography teacher should be sure geographical content and working methods are used

Recommendations

The geography teaching *(cont.)*

- The geographical education should include participation in international projects in cooperation with schools from other countries in order to give the students the opportunity to meet 'foreign' cultures
- Evaluation and assessment should be an integrated aspect of geography education

Recommendations

The evaluation and assessment work

- Evaluation and assessment should be carried out systematically
- The purpose of evaluating and assessing should be clear, and the choice of evaluation and assessment methods and tools should follow the purpose

Recommendations

The evaluation and assessment work *(cont.)*

- Before any evaluation and assessment a decision should be made about who is allowed access to the results of the evaluation and the assessment, and any involved should have knowledge about this decision

Recommendations

The evaluation and assessment work *(cont.)*

- There should be a clear distinction between evaluation of the geographical teaching and the assessment of the students' geographically learning
- Evaluation of the evaluation and assessment work should be carried out regularly

Recommendations

Evaluation of the geography teaching

- Evaluation of the geographical teaching should be founded in concrete aims
- The design and the practice of evaluation should be decided when the geography teaching is planned
- Evaluation should be integrated in a general frame for teaching
- Evaluation should be written

Recommendations

Evaluation of the geography teaching *(cont.)*

- The object for evaluation should be well defined and clear
- Supervision should be one of the methods of evaluation
- Formative as well as summative evaluation should be used in relation to any geography lesson or project

Recommendations

Evaluation of the geography teaching *(cont.)*

- Results from evaluations should be discussed with colleagues in order to raise the quality of the competences of the geography teacher as well as the geographical teaching
- Evaluation of the geography teaching should include assessment of the students' outcome from the education

Recommendations

Assessment of the students' benefit from the geography education

- The purpose of assessment should always be to encouraging the students' developing responsibility for their individual learning
- The aim for assessment should continually be the development of the students' geographical competences
- Assessment should include students' self evaluation as well as the teachers' assessment

Recommendations

Assessment of the students' benefit from the geography education *(cont.)*

- Assessment should always be formative as well as summative
- Assessment should be carried out by the use of different methods and tools
- The students should be involved in the work of elaborating assessment and evaluation methods
- The students should include assessment as part of a systematic learning strategy

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