

Copyright is retained by the first or sole author, who grants right of first publication to the IARTEM *e-Journal*. The IARTEM *e-Journal* is published by the International Association for Research on Textbooks and Educational Media.

Understandings and misunderstandings of metaphors and images in science textbooks among minority pupils in Norwegian primary schools

Citation: Askeland, Norunn & Aamotsbakken, Bente (2010). Understandings and misunderstandings of metaphors and images in science textbooks among minority pupils in Norwegian primary schools. *IARTEM e-Journal* 3 (2) 64 - 80

Abstract

On the basis of ongoing research on pupils' reading of textbooks in school science the paper discusses how metaphors are understood and not understood by pupils from cultural minorities in primary school. Our literacy project is financed by the Norwegian Research Council (NFR) and conducted in a primary school with more than 75 % pupils from cultural minorities.

The paper provides examples from observations in the classrooms and interviews with pupils in pairs in order to show how the use of images and language, and especially verbal and visual metaphors create understanding and/or confusion. The paper also discusses how textbooks can be improved and enhanced to provide better communication for pupils in general as well as for pupils from minority cultures.

We draw upon literacy theories (Bråten, Kress & van Leeuwen), functional linguistics (Halliday, Maagerø), and a variety of theories of metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, Littlemore, Cameron, and Deignan) in developing the themes and results of the research.

Key words: Literacy, Metaphor, Multimodality, Communication