

Politicking at school – or politicking by school?

The politicization of teaching in Finnish schools in online discussions

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This article explores the conceptions constructed by online discussions regarding the teaching of politics at Finnish schools. In January 2021, Perussuomalainen Nuoriso, the youth organization of The Finns Party, launched a campaign to reveal teachers whose instruction would not be neutral towards The Finns Party. The data of this article consists of online discussion that took place at the end of news articles reporting the launching of the campaign. The analysis combines rhetorical analysis, rhetorical-performative discourse theory, and othering online discourse theory. The results show that many discussants felt that the school system is biased and questioned teachers' trustworthiness. On the other hand, many discussants emphasized that teachers are highly educated professionals. The discussion primarily encompassed classroom teaching, without paying attention to how the values of Finnish school education are determined. Many comments aimed at othering teachers and presented teachers as representatives of the elite. Discussions included accusations of schools pursuing the goals of political opponents, which is typical of discourses used by populist groups. The results raise the question of whether there is a need for more open public discussion regarding how the values of education are determined and how capable Finnish media is of making quality news reports about schooling.

Keywords: Online discussion, politics in teaching, othering, Perussuomalainen Nuoriso, democracy education

Personalization in the parliamentary election campaign

– Party leaders and parties in social media

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The social media communication of political actors is vital in campaign communication. The significant role of party leaders in parliamentary election campaigns is undeniable but their role in the party communication and how they are discussed on social media is less known. The focus of the research is on personalization in the campaign communication of Finnish parties and party leaders on three biggest social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram during the 2019 parliamentary election. The aim is to research how personalization manifests in the posts by political actors. The posts are highly individualized, but there is less personal content published. Principally, social media does not seem to add personal content by political actors, as most personal content found in the data is shares from traditional media. The party leaders have a significant role as a communicative representative of themselves as well as their party and the other candidates from their party. There are also significant differences between the platforms. Publishing on Twitter relies strongly on agenda-setting and topic posts while Facebook includes most personal content out of all three platforms. Instagram is the least used platform by all actors.

Keywords: campaign communication, personalization, social media, parliamentary elections, party leaders

Cyclical Europeanisation, Coronavirus Crisis and Finland

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This article examines, based on expert interviews, how different but overlapping logics of action guided the policies of the EU and its member states, especially those of Finland, in the first year and a half of the pandemic. We see three inherent logics – selfishness, emulation and coordination – taking shape, together assembling a form of what we call cyclical Europeanisation. Even though the normative principle of Europeanisation does not seem to have faltered, actions regarding the pandemic make apparent the tension between the Commission and the selfish member states. At the same time, the member states have found themselves in a situation that touches all and have emulated each other's policy measures under conditions of ambiguous scientific information. Regardless of the problems incurred, the ability to revert the tensions between the logics and also combine them pragmatically have formed a driving force for Europeanisation that further bolsters the argument of how the EU develops through crises – and not simply in terms of one-dimensional emergency governance.

Keywords: EU, europeanisation, governance, pandemic, Covid-19