

The first issue in English

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This is the first issue in English of a new journal on research in mathematics education. The journal is named *Nordisk Matematikdidaktikk* – abbreviated NOMAD – or in English, *Nordic Studies in Mathematics Education*. It is issued four times a year. One of the issues is in English. The languages in the other issues are either Scandinavian (Danish, Norwegian, Swedish) or English. The first number came in October, the second in December 1993. In 1994 there are four issues – March (in English), June, October and December. Every subscriber to the journal automatically becomes a member of the Association "Nordisk matematikdidaktikk". Between December 1993 and March 1994, the number of subscribers has increased from less than 200 to 330; more than 65%!

The journal addresses departments and teams doing research, developmental work and teaching in mathematics education and everyone who is interested in following the progress of the field in the Nordic countries. The most important aim of the journal is to stimulate, support and foster Nordic researchers and postgraduate students mathematics education and to develop mathematics teaching and teacher education in theory and practise at all levels of the education system. We hope that NOMAD will promote Nordic studies in mathematics education and spread their results both inside and outside the Nordic countries. The journal is also open for and welcome articles written by researchers outside the Nordic countries.

This issue contains three articles. Jeremy Kilpatrick and Bengt Johansson have made a study on standardized mathematics testing in Sweden. The national tests in mathematics for the compulsory school and the system for standardizing teachers' marks – introduced into the Swedish school system about fifty years ago – were essentially the creation of one man, Frits Wigforss. The article describes the legacy of Wigforss and the background to and reasons for his work. The article is of special interest because of the current changes in many countries – moving from norm-referenced national assessment to criterion-referenced assessment based on a new generation of goals- and achievement-related curricula.

In the second article, Erkki Pehkonen presents a study of Finnish students' experiences and wishes about mathematics teaching. Seventh-graders' responses on open-ended questions in a questionnaire are

classified by means of a category system. Pehkonen discusses similarities and differences in experiences and wishes between boys and girls and stresses the importance of listening to the students' proposals for improving mathematics instruction.

The third article also deals with assessment, but is more directly concentrated on what could be done to develop the current practice. Based on a study of authentic mathematics tasks in England and Wales – used in their national assessments – and on a discussion on the meaning of the concept of validity, Dylan Wiliam suggests a fourth referent for assessing authentic tasks – besides norm-referenced, criterion-referenced and ipsative assessment. Wiliam's article is an important contribution to our understanding of assessment and mark-schemes in the field of mathematics education. The articles of Kilpatrick, Johansson and Wiliam are examples of the ongoing efforts made around the world to develop the field of mathematics assessment (see, e.g. Marshall & Thompson, 1994).

In the English issue we publish the abstracts of all articles from the previous volumes in order to make it easier for readers who do not understand Scandinavian languages. Since volume 1 contained just two issues, we have abstracts from six articles in this number.

In volume 1(2) we reported on some recently published books and ongoing work on criteria for scientific work in the field of mathematics education. One of the books we mentioned was *Criteria for Scientific Quality and Relevance in the Didactics of Mathematics*, edited by Gunhild Nissen and Morten Blomhøj. The report is a result of a research conference held in Gilleleje, Denmark, April 27 – May 2, 1992. In this issue we publish Göran Wallén's review of the report.

In newsletters from associations and groups of researchers in our field, we are happy to read about the big and increasing number of conferences and meetings on mathematics education taking place all over the world. The Nordic countries are no exceptions. In our announcement section, you are invited to two exciting conferences, one in Lahti and one in Södertälje.

References

- Marshall, S. P., & Thompson, A. G. (1994). Assessment: What's new – and not so new – A review of six recent books. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education* 25(2), 207-218.