Editorial

In the 20th Volume no less than 19 research papers were published in Nomad. The volume was crowned with a very comprehensive thematic double issue on textbook research; the largest issue ever of Nomad. We continue with thematic issues with guest editors and if you have an idea of a theme suitable for such an issue you are welcome to send us a description of it. This year's thematic issue is about pre-school children learning mathematics. It is progressing well, and we expect to have another interesting thematic issue out in the autumn.

In the spring of 2016 the editors of Nomad will arrange the fifth workshop for doctoral students. The invitation to participate is published on the Nomad web site (http://ncm.gu.se/node/6962). The participating students submit a first version of an article for Nomad. Before the workshop all submitted manuscripts will be reviewed by one student and by one of the editors. The papers are then discussed in groups during the workshop. This has worked very well and several of the papers discussed on previous workshops have eventually gone through the ordinary review process and been published in the journal.

We replace members of the editorial group one at a time, to keep the continuity. Kristina Juter is leaving the group this spring after four years as an editor.

> I have really enjoyed my time as an editor for Nomad. I have particularly appreciated working within the group of editors. Thank you for these years!

We thank Kristina for all the good work. As sad we are that Kristina is leaving, as happy we are to welcome our new editor Ewa Bergqvist from Umeå University. Welcome to the group of editors!

The "open access" publishing of Nomad articles is now working. We have two databases; one that requires a subscription to e-Nomad containing all published articles and one containg articles older than two years. The latter is labelled "open acess" at the Nomad web.

The inflow of papers to the editors is still very good, clearly indicating a high research activity in the Nordic and Baltic countries. We are certain that this trend will continue.

In this issue

Due to the good supply of papers and to avoid a too long wait for papers to get published, we have put four papers into the first issue of volume 21.

The first paper is a paper by Elisabeth Rystedt, Cecilia Kilhamn and Ola Helenius, called *What's there in an* n*? Investigating contextual resources in small group discussions concerning an algebraic expression*, about pupils' algebraic constructions. Three pupils, 12 years old, were video recorded while discussing the meaning of a letter used in an algebraic setting. In their efforts to make sense of the letter, they showed a large span of different contextual resources and interpretations of the letter, but the conceptions were not fully established. The authors concluded that learning about certain communicative genres in mathematics is as important as learning about mathematical concepts and processes of that mathematical area in mathematical learning.

The second paper has the title *Mathematics teachers' initial implementation of a digital tool package* and is written by Ingvald Erfjord. The study is situated in Grade 8 in two Norwegian schools and involves one teacher at one school and three teachers at the other school. In the beginning the teachers used the DMS-package Cabri Geométre but later switched to GeoGebra. The empirical material comes from different types of events in the project such as school meetings and interviews and also observations of classroom activities. To analyse the data Erfjord takes an Activity Theory perspective and argues that although the teachers appeared to have similar *objects* for the implementation of the DMS-package their *goals* and the kind of issues dealt with in the implementation process were quite different.

The third paper in this issue is Annette Bagger's *Pressure at stake: Swedish third graders' talk about national tests in mathematics*. By interviewing 102 pupils about the experiences with the national test, Bagger is able to point several of the pupils experiencing a "negative pressure" associated with the test situation. In her data, Bagger is also able to point to differences in the pupils' experiences according to the gender of the pupils and whether they are multilingual or not. Finally, Bagger discusses the correlation between the pupils experiencing negative pressure and those in need of educational support.

The fourth and final paper addresses the history of mathematics education. Johan Prytz and Martin Karlberg look at the way New Math was introduced in Sweden and address the intriguing question of to what extent the claim holds that New Math had a negative effect on students' learning. As phrased by one of the paper's expert reviewers in the field: "The main new contribution to the history of mathematics education starts [...] where a study of the intervention study reported in Nordic

School Mathematics (1967) is critically discussed with reference to unpublished partial reports from the Swedish National Archives, starting with methodological considerations behind this approach". Based on this investigation, the authors find that in most parts the claim that New Math material had negative effects on students' learning is incorrect.

Finally, this issue contains a report, *News from Nordic mathematics education*, where the chair of NoRME, Mette Andresen, reports on projects, up-coming events and recent dissertations in the Nordic and Baltic countries.

The Editors