



## SIG 9 Phenomenography and Variation Theory

1/2019 Newsletter

Dear SIG 9 members and friends,

Welcome to the Second issue of our Newsletter!

This time we are celebrating the vibrancy of our SIG community and looking forward to our next opportunities to meet together as a group.

We enjoyed a great SIG meeting in Birmingham in September. It was a great pleasure to meet colleagues who came to their first SIG conference as well as renewing friendships with familiar faces. The next part of the newsletter gives a flavor of the event.

We hope that you will be coming to the EARLI conference in Aachen in August. The early bird registration closes on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, in just about a week. Please remember to renew your membership in SIG9 along with your EARLI membership, which also will give you a discount on the conference fee. The SIG is an important platform for the phenomenography and variation theory community, and the more members we are, the stronger we stand in the EARLI organisation.

We are also pleased to be able to share abstracts from a couple of recently completed theses in our field. New scholarship and new researchers are crucial to the health of any research programme and it is great to see the valuable contributions of new researchers in our field.

### COORDINATORS

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The newsletter closes with some key dates for your diary.

Get them logged!

*Peter, Åke & Jaana*

## SIG9 CONFERENCE 2019, BIRMINGHAM, UK

### *A glimpse of the conference*

SIG9 conference 2019 in Birmingham brought together 50 colleagues from 13 different countries (Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Malta, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom).



Lively discussions and networking...





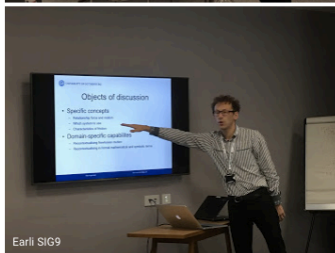
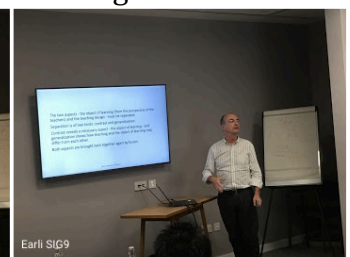
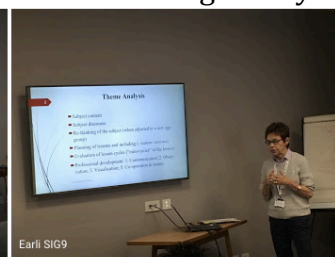
High quality keynotes by Prof. Kirsti Klette and Prf. Paul Ashwin



Sparkling moments in connecting with old friends and making new friends...



Sharing most recent findings and ideas.... and learning from your colleagues...





JURE and first-time SIG9 conference attendees

### ***A first-timers view from SIG9 conference***

*"I was warmly welcomed on the first day (including a colleague from my own university on the other side of the world whom I had not even met yet!) As I listened to how others understand phenomenography and apply the phenomenographic process, the presentations reminded me of a patchwork quilt, each adding to my own understanding. It is amazing how phenomenography can be applied to such a broad range of disciplines! I was so happy to have this opportunity because it confirmed that I am on the right track as I take my first steps in my own journey thus far as an early phenomenographer. I really appreciated the feedback and encouragement of others who are more advanced and have begun to keep in touch with a few already. I would especially like to thank Peter Davies, Åke Ingerman and Jaana Kettunen for all the effort they put into to creating such a successful conference, and Ference Marton and his colleagues for championing phenomenography. I look forward to seeing everyone again in 2020."*

Kathleen Teh  
JURE and first-time SIG9 conference attendee

***Thank you to each and all of you for coming to Birmingham and making this conference so special!***

Few more pictures of the conference:  
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/GjnqDEYMyY9qx9tZ8>

Shared presentations :  
<http://tinyurl.com/sig9conference2018>

Please do notice that we will close these folders by the end of the June.





## EARLI INVITED SIG9 SYMPOSIUM

During the EARLI conference in Aachen there are two main SIG9 events. We will have the SIG9 members meeting and dinner. The SIG9 will also host an invited symposium, continuing the themes from the 2018 conference. Under the title “New horizons for phenomenography and variation theory in higher education”, Guy Durden, Elina Wright and Ruksana Osman, Keith Wood and Airi Rovio-Johansson, and Åke Ingerman et al. will discuss the specific and unique contributions from phenomenography and variation theory to higher education contexts, conditions for such contributions, and directions of development.



We are looking forward to meeting many SIG9 members in Aachen!

All information about the conference can be found at <http://EARLI.org/EARLI2019>

## ONLINE COURSE ON PHENOMENOGRAPHY AND VARIATION THEORY

Many of the JURE participants at the 2018 conference were also taking an online course in Phenomenography and variation theory, hosted by University of Gothenburg, with Angelika Kullberg and Åke Ingerman as course leaders. The conference was the single physical meeting in the course where the participants discussed analysis in concrete terms. In total 16 PhD students passed the course, being located across the world from Vancouver in the west to Brisbane in the east, with an emphasis in Europe and Scandinavia. The course covered the key literature in the tradition during 40 years, and featured lectures by Ference Marton, Shirley Booth, Ulla Runesson and Ingrid Pramling-Samuelsson. It is planned to be offered again in 2020.

## CALL FOR SIG9 COORDINATOR

We would like to inform you that we will be looking for a new SIG 9 coordinator, as Peter Davies will step down at the EARLI 2019 conference in Aachen, Germany. All members of SIG 9 are invited to submit their candidacy or nominate candidates (by e-mail to [ake.ingerman@gu.se](mailto:ake.ingerman@gu.se)). Please send us the names, affiliation and contact information of yourself or others who might be interested.



The deadline for these applications is April 23th 2019. The election itself will be held via the online voting system of EARLI, prior to the EARLI 2019 conference. All SIG 9 members will be invited to cast their vote. More information about being a SIG coordinator can be found at <https://www.earli.org/sites/default/files/2016-10/SIG Policy Paper - for EC approval.pdf>

Only EARLI SIG9 members can be nominated and vote. Please feel free to contact us for any questions or concerns regarding the coordinator position of SIG 9. We hope that you will seriously consider applying for this position, as it is a great way to get (even more) involved in the research community of Phenomenography and Variation Theory and the development of research collaboration within the group and in the EARLI community.

## RECENT DOCTORAL THESIS

**Nina Kallweit, Humboldt Universität Berlin, Germany**

*Children's experience of political phenomena – a phenomenographic research of children's concepts of 'war' and 'peace'. Consequences for political learning in general studies in primary school*

The aim of this research project is the investigation of children's concepts of "war" and "peace" in order to generate theoretically and empirically grounded impulses for political learning on the phenomena "war" and "peace". The main goal is to make a contribution for the development of political learning in general studies in primary school. For this purpose, a research approach based on phenomenography is used. Overall, 47 pupils attending the classes 3 and 4 at schools in Berlin were interviewed by using the problem-centered interview approach (by Witzel) with phenomenographic elements.

The results of this investigation constitute the following central impulses for political learning on phenomena "war" and "peace": (I) An understanding of the phenomenon "war" in its political meaning favors an understanding of the phenomenon "peace" in its political meaning. Therefore, the phenomena should be taught together. (II) Additionally, the phenomenographic data analysis showed that it is necessary to analyze the experience of the phenomenon "war" ("by itself") and as well as the experience of the protagonists involved in the phenomenon "war" separately, so as to comprehend the experience of "war" more extensively. In this case, it is suggested that a simultaneous instruction of the phenomenon "war" ("by itself") and the protagonists, which are involved in the phenomenon "war", emphasizes and improves an understanding of "war" in its political meaning. (III) Finally, the teaching with selected pictures can be a successful approach, which gives pupils a fundamental access to an in-depth political understanding of the phenomena "war" and "peace"

Dr. Nina Kallweit was awarded the Ilse Lichtenstein-Rother Prize for her doctoral thesis in March 2018 at the 27th Annual Conference of the German Society of Interdisciplinary Science in Elementary School (Gesellschaft für Didaktik des Sachunterrichts/GDSU). **Congratulations!**

## RECENT LICENTIATE THESIS

**Anna Backman, University of Gothenburg, Sweden**

*Highlighting booktalks about shadows*

Children's books and stories are often advocated for teaching about various content in preschool. The purpose of this study is to describe how five children together with a preschool teacher talk about 'shadow' based on four children's books and in particular how shadow appears as a learning object in the booktalks. Shadow is a phenomenon that can be explained by physics, but shadow also occurs in children's books as something connected to folklore, art and fiction. An analysis based on Variation theory reveals (1.) how children experience shadow in conversation about children's books.



The result shows that the children experience shadow as affected by someone or something, visible with light and projection surface, manageable like objects, as well as self-acting with fictional abilities. The analysis also answered (2.) what is possible for children to discern of shadow as a light phenomenon in the booktalks. In the result the dimensions of variations that emerge in the booktalks reveal why visibility appears as an aspect for the children to discern and why length and placement are aspects of shadow as a light phenomenon that are not possible to discern.

This licentiate thesis is part of *the Swedish National Research School on Communication and Relations as Foundations for Early Childhood Education (FoRFa)*.

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE SIG 9 - HOW TO JOIN US?

If you are not yet a member of the SIG you can make a big difference to the well-being of the SIG by becoming a member. If you are already an EARLI member you can sign up for the SIG at any time. It only costs €8. Becoming a member gets you to an €80 discount on the conference fee and membership of EARLI cost €95 – so membership of EARLI will only cost you an additional €15.



By showing your support for the SIG through becoming a SIG member you increase the profile of the SIG within EARLI. EARLI regularly reviews membership numbers for the SIGs and the more members we have, the more the future of the SIG is safeguarded. Go to <https://earli.org/join> to sign up!

**We wish new members warmly welcome to our SIG 9!**

## KEY DATES IN 2019 - 2020

3rd <sup>th</sup> April	Deadline for early bird registration for EARLI 2019
24 <sup>th</sup> April	Deadline for candidacy nomination for SIG9 coordinator
25 <sup>th</sup> April	Presenter registration deadline for EARLI 3029
May	Voting for SIG9 coordinator
10 <sup>th</sup> -11 <sup>th</sup> August	JURE 2019 conference
12 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup> August	EARLI 2019 conference and SIG9 members meeting
24 <sup>th</sup> September	Deadline for material for the next newsletter
October	Next newsletter
17 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> August, 2020	SIG9 Conference 2020, in Göteborg, Sweden

## REMEMBER TO FOLLOW US IN TWITTER

We use twitter to share important news and events for our community. If you want us to retweet something among our members, just tag us under @Earlisig9  
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/earlisig9>

