



EARLI SIG 9

Phenomenography & Variation Theory








Dear SIG9 members and friends,

Welcome to the latest issue of the SIG 9 newsletter.

Ann-Sofie, Malin & Will

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Vote For Our New SIG Coordinator

We're excited to announce that voting is now open for the new coordinator of our group! This is your chance to have a say in the leadership and future direction of our community. **This position is to replace our outgoing coordinators: Senior Coordinator Ann-Sofie Jägerskog and JURE Coordinator William Zoppellini**, who have both completed their dedicated 4-year term. The SIG extends heartfelt thanks to Ann-Sofie and William for their many contributions, including facilitating conferences, organising SIG events, and managing the network.

Our candidate is Dr. Tanya Hathway, a passionate and experienced member of the global research network committed to advancing our approach and making a tangible impact on educational practice.

Voting is open from 11th April until 25th April 2025.

Meet Dr. Tanya Hathway

Dr. Hathway has been privileged to work within a dynamic international network of researchers, driving innovation and influencing educational practice worldwide. Her commitment to collaboration, progress, and inclusivity makes her a strong candidate for leading our group into its next chapter.



Dr Hathway - Motivation Statement:

Dear SIG9 colleagues, I am excited to have the opportunity to address the phenomenography and variation theory community, contribute to the future of the SIG and ensure that its foundations remain strong. My passion for Phenomenography and Variation Theory started in 2005, leading to an opportunity to attend my first biennial conference in 2007. As a doctoral student, I was in awe of the speakers and panel members.

Fast forward to having participated at the last two biennial conferences, the inclusive approach to SIG9, including the networking and collaboration opportunities of the previous two biennial conferences I have attended, has given me a chance to give back to that inspiring community. I have gained a greater understanding of the approach, yet I am always left with questions that inspire my curiosity.

I have been privileged to be part of the global network of researchers actively advancing the approach and impacting educational practice. The position of convener represents an opportunity to directly influence and grow the number of connections and collaborations which will support a thriving SIG9. Through SIG9, I have added the opportunity to work with researchers in different institutions on different continents. I aspire to help others make similar connections to expand their research and publication opportunities and advance the Phenomenographic and Variation Theory approaches.

I aim to continue the successful work undertaken by the conveners, adopting their short- and long-term views to expand SIG9 and the inclusive approach to supporting doctoral students. If appointed as a convener, I would honour this approach, using it to strengthen and widen existing research and practice networks and actively promote SIG9 using my international connections to grow membership and intellectual capacity. With my experience of working and researching internationally, I could make a valuable contribution to SIG9.

I am looking forward to collectively advancing the research approach we adopt. Thank you for considering my nomination.

Pre-Conference Day 2025

A reminder that Our SIG will run a **Pre-Conference Day on 24th August 2025**. This will happen the day before the EARLI conference, in Graz, Austria.

The event will take place at Grand Hotel Wiesler, Grieskai 4-8 8020 Graz (www.grandhotelwiesler.com).



The event will start at 09:00 and finish at 16:00. The schedule will be released closer to the event, and we will continue to seek member input on what sessions/activities will be most desired.

Upcoming SIG 9 Symposium – EARLI 2025

We're pleased to announce that SIG 9 will be hosting a symposium at the **EARLI 2025 Conference in Graz**, titled:

“Assessing Student Knowledge in Learning Study and Lesson Study: Directions Towards a Stable Ground”

This symposium brings together distinguished academics from around the world who are actively engaged in research using **Phenomenography** and **Variation Theory**. It promises to be a rich and thought-provoking discussion on assessment within these powerful research approaches.

Symposium abstract:

Lesson and learning studies aim towards developing teaching with respect to better facilitating learning outcomes. Being teacher-driven collaborative development research, lesson and learning studies emphasise local validity, usefulness for teachers and potential professional development for teachers and have been applied across a broad spectrum of teaching and learning situations. Positive effects on students' learning are often claimed or alluded to, directly or indirectly, but ways and levels of supporting such claims varies. However, such claims must be substantiated in a systematic and direct way as measures of student knowledge. Measures rely on various degrees and characters of empirical evidence, ranging from informal indications over interview data to written knowledge tests. Such empirical data may also be used in developing teaching designs or be grounds for teacher reflections, and this may imply necessary compromises. The relatively small scale and limited resources imply compromises with respect to what is feasible.

This symposium will discuss the role and function of student knowledge assessment in lesson and learning studies. It will include examples of different systematic approaches to knowledge assessment and their strengths and weaknesses, qualitative as well as quantitative, specific as well as broad, direct as well as indirect, one-dimensional as well as multi-dimensional, and from different levels of schooling and subjects including mathematics, science, social science and language. The symposium will also discuss the validity and legitimacy of knowledge assessment in relation to knowledge claims made in lesson and learning studies, aiming to contribute towards establishing stable ground when moving forward.

The exact time of the symposium will be announced in the official EARLI 2025 conference schedule. Stay tuned!

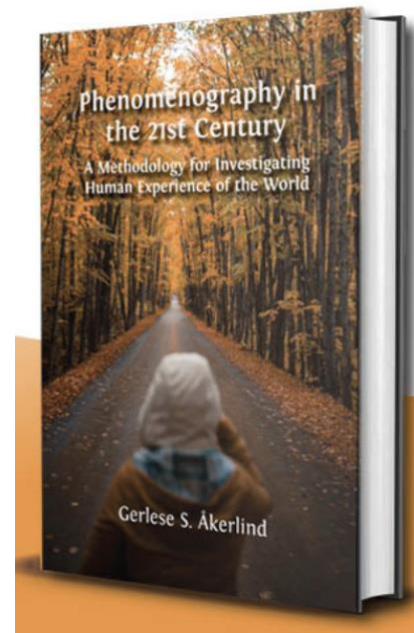
We look forward to seeing many of you there and continuing the conversation in person.

Book Release

We're delighted to share the release of a new book by **Dr. Gerlese Åkerlind**, a leading scholar in the field of phenomenography.

Title: *Phenomenography in the 21st Century: A Methodology for Investigating Human Experience of the World*

Available now as Open Access – [Link to text](#)



This essential work explores how phenomenography continues to evolve in the 21st century. The book emphasises phenomenography's core focus: exploring the varied ways people experience and make meaning of the same phenomena, and how these meanings shift based on changes in awareness.

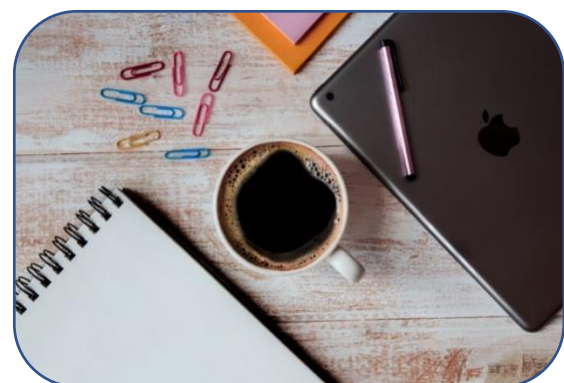
Dr. Åkerlind outlines how modern phenomenographic research has advanced well beyond its early stages, offering new methodological and theoretical insights. These developments are critical not only for educational researchers but for anyone across the social sciences interested in understanding human experience in a nuanced, structured way.

Whether you're a doctoral student, a seasoned phenomenographer, or a social scientist curious about expanding your methodological toolkit, this book is a must-read.


Research and Publications

What have you been up to? We would like to feature our community as much as possible in the newsletter.

Please send any publications or completed PhD thesis that you have so we can feature in the next issue.



Recent research from the Phenomenographic community:

-  Lam, H.C. (2024, Dec). Applying variation theory in learning Chinese characters. *International Journal of Chinese Language Education*, 16, 165-186. Link: <https://ijcle.eduhk.hk/article/335>