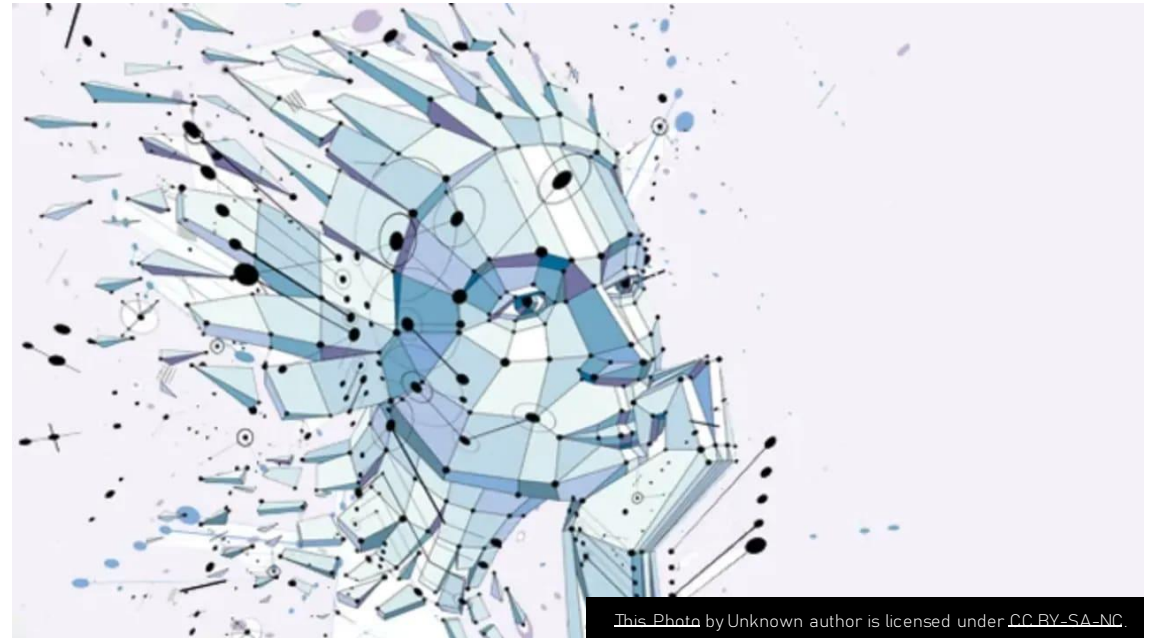
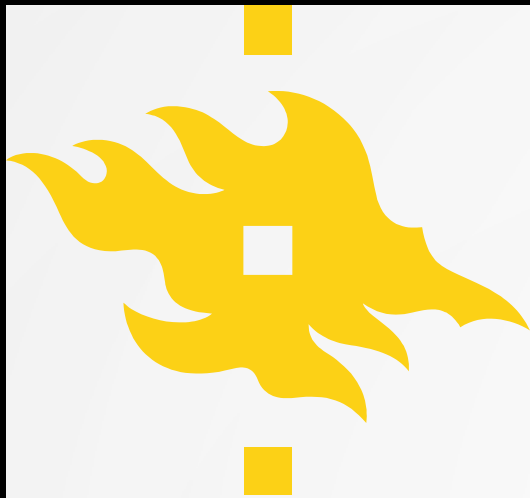

Metaphors of sustainability and transformation in the Covid-19 era in the context of hybrid online university pedagogy – the case of SveaSus, safe spaces & group work

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SVEASUS

Sustainable World Heritage Learning
through a Phenomenon-based Approach



An educational project for
future teachers and other
educational science students

University of Helsinki,
Faculty of Educational
Sciences



Svenska
kulturfonden

Covid-19 Course Hybridity

- multimodal approaches
- multilingual participants and approaches
- context diversity
- use of digital devices
- diverse perspectives on teaching
- groupwork and focus on collaboration
- **tutorials alternating with teaching sessions throughout the course**
- diverse grouping constellations
- sharing the challenges of the current situation





Safe spaces for learning in higher education

- Safe spaces are needed for the shaping of individual and group/collaborative/common orientations (pedagogical purposes) - largely under-researched & contested **metaphor that conveys complexity and links with transformation & sustainability**
- Covid-19 social distancing and other related regulations have destabilized orientations & pedagogical purposes; *students & teachers disoriented –community life got disoriented – societal matter vs individual matter*
- SveaSus transdisciplinary perspective: embodiment + arts-based methods for SusEdu in a framework that aims for **transformative learning using technologies and work in groups**

- Students' video storytelling
 - problematized the Anthropocene,
 - the isolation of selfies and the triviality of social media, and
 - the disconnectedness in a constantly connected world (shots in the video)
 - marginalization in classrooms
 - intergenerational responsibility

The tutorials meant to inspire & empower the students in the process of building the conceptual basis of their storytelling argumentation through dialogue; the safe space of the course seems to have been a political space as different types of perspectives played out and were negotiated on an ongoing basis: the students'; the teachers'; the researchers'; the invited teachers'. The negotiation took place in more and less explicit & in less and more grounded ways. The more explicit were manifested in the tutorials. This process became more visible in SveaSus-2022 in the post-Covid era.

Group work on sustainability issues in tutorials

Some tentative initial findings for the aim of student initiative & critical reading of reality



We know that for communities to grow in sustainable ways, safe spaces are essential for:

- shared orientations; commitment
- awareness of roles and responsibilities
- in order to be able to articulate voices on critical matters
by shaping and sharing coherent stories for sustainability pedagogy purposes

Initial analysis of stories, students' rationale, live and written feedback indicates that:

Safe spaces are important to add authenticity to the sustainability education classroom, yes!

But safe spaces do not necessarily link with transformative learning.

The students showed a genuine interest to dig deeper into critical matters, however:

- as one student mentioned, "it is hard to put the ideas together", and...
- "frustrating to move [the story] forward"

Also, the approach to safe spaces seems rather emotional which indicates a contradiction between students' and teachers' perspectives and, e.g., the role of evaluation. Critical thinking & judgment, which are two totally distinct concepts and serve different purposes and ethics, were interpreted as synonymous by some students.

A naïve perspective on technology and its integration for teaching and learning emerged in both pedagogical implementations of SveaSus in 2021 & 2022.

These tentative initial insights raise considerations about whether & how metaphors of sustainability do signify sustainable ways of relating and building sustainable communities & societies now and in the future.

