A seamless transition or an oasis to rest in?

Children’s pictures of the Swedish preschool class

Helena Ackesjö
University of Gothenburg
helena.ackesjo@lnu.se
The Swedish preschool class

- A transition zone from preschool to school
- A voluntary school form, included in the curricula of the compulsory school
- Not preschool but also not school
- The teachers want to shelter this pedagogic practice (Ackesjö, 2010)
Research questions

- How the children experience the activities in the preschool class?
- What is focused in the preschool class from the children’s point of view?
Method

- The children contributes with stories from their positions
- 172 pictures from children in 10 preschool classes have been analyzed

"What do you do a normal day in the preschool class?"
Pictures as communicative narratives

- Communicative narratives
- Literacy events
- Pre-readers and pre-writers
- Pictures are included in the concept of literacy (Kress)
- Through the pictures the children represent and communicate their experiences
- Contextual clues
Findings

- Play indoors and outdoors (53%)
- Circle time (20%)
- Education in several subjects and themes, indoors and outdoors (15%)
- Collaboration with other grades (2%)
- School routines (no activities, only descriptions of routines) (10%)
Play (53%)

- Play both indoors and outdoors
- No adults are painted
- Free play, chosen by the children?
- “Preschool-like” play

This is when I’m building with Kapla sticks.

We used to be in the building room, where I play with cars and Lego, and build spaceships.

I used to play with cars on the red carpet.
Teaching indoors and outdoors (15%)

- Teacher guided situations
- Reading, writing, mathematics, science...
- "School-like" education

We do the ABC, we learn letters and the sign language.

This is when we learn stuff.

This is when the teacher tells us to do the Friday-book. So we do that. When we’re done, we
Circle time (20%)

- Well known activity
- A place for education, a method for teaching
- "Eating fruit and reading stories" is dominating in the pictures

This is when we have circle time. We are 15 children in our group. We talk about different things, like shapes, words, letters. And we eat fruit.

When we have circle time, we use this time to play, listen to stories, and eat fruit.
The Swedish preschool class, a seamless transition or an oasis to rest in?

- The circle time as a clue of a seamless transition?
- Adult-led teaching is no dominant element in the preschool class
- Playing and learning are woven together
- Do the preschool class activities foremost consist of (free) play?
- Playing and learning in their own time
The education of the child shall be directed to...
the development of the child’s personality,
talents and mental and physical abilities
to their fullest potential.


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