



Teaching Environments in Preschool Teaching

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Swedish preschools

- 🍏 Children age 1-5
- 🍏 Part of the school system
 - 🍏 National curriculum 1998
- 🍏 High attendance
 - 🍏 83% of the 1-3 year olds
 - 🍏 93% of the 4-5 year olds
- 🍏 Preschool teachers and caretakers
- 🍏 EDUCARE – EDUcation and CARE merged

The larger study

- 🔥 How does education meet the demands for cognitive development in schools, afterschools and preschools?
- 🔥 How does the teachers' ways to plan and carry out activities change after having participated in development programs, and what development methods seem to be more effective?
- 🔥 Observations and interviews:
 - 🔥 65 lessons in classrooms grade K-12
 - 🔥 30 sessions of afterschool activities
 - 🔥 40 sessions of preschool activities
 - 🔥 82 sessions during development programs.

This paper

- 🍌 How do the preschool teachers and caretakers describe the considerations they make when planning and how are these represented in the observed preschool activities, and more closely in circle-time and the hallway situation?
- 🍌 What differences (if any) can be found when comparing these results to the analyzed school and afterschool teachers, and to research literature?
- 🍌 Method:
 - 🍌 40 sessions of preschool activities, observations, interviews.
 - 🍌 Analysis: Educational connoisseurship and criticism (Eisner, 1991), critical events (Dascal 1985, Maracondes, 1985, Koschmann et al. 1998).
 - 🍌 Focus on circle time (EDU) and hallway (CARE).

Previous preschool research

- 🌱 Little research interest in didactic areas in preschools (Tallberg Broman, 2010)
- 🌱 Preschool teachers interpret their mission in many different ways (Håkansson & Sundberg, 2012).
- 🌱 Child centered pedagogy vs. development pedagogy (Pramling, 2011)
 - 🌱 Quality differences in children's learning
 - 🌱 Development pedagogy close to Reggio Emilia pedagogy (Persson, 2008).

Bloom's revised taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001)

THE KNOWLEDGE DIMENSION	THE COGNITIVE PROCESS DIMENSION					
	1. Remember	2. Understand	3. Apply	4. Analyze	5. Evaluate	6. Create
A. Factual knowledge	11 (12) [10]	9 (11) [8]	12 (10) [12]	2 (4) [3]	3 (4) [3]	5 (2) [4]
B. Conceptual knowledge	4 (7) [3]	2 (6) [>1]	5 (6) [3]	1 (2) [1]	1 (>1) [>1]	>1 (0) [0]
C. Procedural knowledge	14 (8) [15]	10 (8) [12]	15 (11) [15]	2 (2) [1]	1 (1) [1]	3 (>1) [4]
D. Meta-cognitive knowledge	2 (2) [2]	1 (1) [1]	>1 (1) [1]	<0 (<0) [<0]	<0 (<0) [<0]	0 (0) [0]

Preschool, (school), [afterschool]

Five different teaching environment identified

- 🌱 The common teaching environment
 - 🌱 The student investigative teaching environment
 - 🌱 The scaffolding teaching environment
 - 🌱 The 'moralistic' teaching environment
 - 🌱 The 'laissez-faire' teaching environment
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The common teaching environment

- 🍏 Start with the preschool teacher repeating
- 🍏 The preschool teacher presents new knowledge
- 🍏 The group practices and the preschool teacher corrects
- 🍏 The preschool teacher summarizes



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C. Procedural knowledge						
D. Meta-cognitive knowledge						

The child investigative teaching environment

- ❁ Common in several activities in preschool
- ❁ Introducing new material that will help the children to develop
 - ❁ The children explore their own areas of interest in whatever way they choose
- ❁ Cf. child centered pedagogy (Pramling, 2011)



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The 'moralistic' teaching environment

- 🍏 The preschool teacher seemed occupied with something else
 - 🍏 teaching the children how to behave?



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The 'laissez-faire' teaching environment

- ❶ Observed in afterschools and preschools, not in classrooms
- ❶ Staff seems to lack pedagogical intentions or goals
- ❶ Activities lack knowledge or cognitive content
- ❶ Decisions and activities are left to the children, and the children use most of the talk time



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C. Procedural knowledge						
D. Meta-cognitive knowledge						

The scaffolding teaching environment

- 🌱 Puzzlement, perplexity and challenge
- 🌱 Analysis:
 - 🌱 What did we find out? What did we learn?
 - 🌱 What do we want to learn/understand now?
 - 🌱 Thinking tools and strategies
- 🌱 New knowledge
- 🌱 Generalization and transfer
- 🌱 Evaluate the work

- 🌱 Cf. development pedagogy (Pramling, 2011)



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Conclusions

- ❶ All five teaching environments were found with a bulk of the child-investigative.
 - ❶ At circle-time (and other activities traditionally connected to teaching) the common and moralistic environments are more common.
 - ❶ In the hallway (and other activities connected to caretaking), the laissez-fair and moralistic environment dominate.
- ❶ The staff often thought in dichotomies: caretaking / education, with a fear of “schoolification”.
- ❶ Documentation and “Reggio Emilia inspiration” were performed with very different cognitive outcomes:
 - ❶ To most staff the important differences between child-investigative and scaffolding teaching environments seemed unclear.
- ❶ Scarce research focus on education might have lead to a lack of professional language concerning education.

Papers can be found at

www.igniteresearch.org

- ❁ Pihlgren, A. S. (2013). *Planning for Thinking and Cognitive Development of Students.*
- ❁ Pihlgren, A. S. (2014). *Complementary Education in Classrooms and Afterschools.*
- ❁ Pihlgren, A. S. (2015). *Enhancing Teachers' Understanding of How to Develop Students' Thinking.*
- ❁ Pihlgren, A. S. (2016). *Teaching Environments in Preschool Teaching.*
- ❁ Pihlgren, A. S. (in press). *Keeping Order in a Thinking and Learning Environment.*