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av

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Abstract

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The purpose of the current study is to generate knowledge about the preschool teacher's incitements to action in the work they conduct around the upbringing of children, as well as how preschool teachers experience their own actions in interactions with children.

The current study adopts a phenomenological lifeworld approach (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Schütz, 1966). This approach has been chosen in order to be able to understand the phenomenon of upbringing from the preschool teacher's perspective. The study has been carried out in four different sections at four different preschools. Interaction between nine preschool teachers and 64 children (3-5 years old) at the four different sections was video-recorded. The data was comprised of video observations and interviews using the method of stimulated recall (Caldehead, 1981).

In the analyses conducted three themes emerged. The first theme that emerged is The preschool teachers wish to respect each child's uniqueness. In this theme the ways in which the unique child is met both by the preschool teachers and other children is described. The second theme is The preschool teachers want to achieve order. In this theme the ways in which upbringing finds expression through order are revealed. The third theme Existence: the preschool teachers want to lay the foundations for life in the future, shows how – both in the here-and-now, but also from a future-oriented perspective – upbringing finds forms of expression in preschool. The preschool teachers' incitements to action indicate a striving to respect children's rights to being unique individuals, the right to order and predictability, and the right to have hope, both in the here-and-now and in the future. These rights are relational and interrelated with one another. For the preschool teachers these rights are of importance, both from the child's perspective, but also in relation to others. On occasions the adults can abstain from certain rights, if this is regarded as relevant in the particular situation. Rights also involve a degree of responsibility.

Using these concepts, dimensions of upbringing can be identified and analysed, both in research as well as in pedagogical practice. In this way the study can contribute to creating a more in-depth understanding of upbringing and its nature, and can challenge teachers to develop their own practice and thus contribute in the ongoing development of the profession.