Communities of practice. Literacy and young Deaf children

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A national centre of expertise within the field of special education

Statped is managed by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training.
Six specific areas

- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- Deaf-blindness/combined sensor loss
- Language and speech difficulties
- Acquired brain injury
- Learning difficulties

Provide a multidisciplinary profile between these disciplines.
In Norway

- Newborn screening
- Cochlear implants
- Sociocultural perspective on learning
- Inclusion
  - Mainstream schools
  - Co-enrollment settings
    - Bimodal, bilingual education
Deaf children and literacy

- Lag behind their hearing peers as a group
- The gap increases with age
- Why?
  - Numerous of explanations
Literacy as social practice

- Children`s literacy learning is a joint construction by the participants in literacy events.
- Literacy development start early
- Early language skills promote literacy learning later in school.
Communities of practice.

- Introduced by Lave and Wenger (1991)

- Importance of belonging to a social community, not only being in the same place.

  - Engage in joint activities and communication
  - Sharing information and building relationships
The aim of the study

To develop knowledge about literacy practices for young deaf children in a preschool setting

and in particular

identify what may impact on deaf children’s possibility for participation and learning in literacy events with deaf and hearing children
Findings

- Deaf children did not interact and participate in significant literacy events in the way that their hearing peers did.

- Teacher-assigned literacy events were more accessible than others.

- Taking part in multiparty talk,- a challenge
Communication practices and values

Sign language competence among the staff

Knowledge about deaf children educational needs

Institutional constrains and conditions
Communications practices and values

- Same educational setting but different goals for deaf and hearing children
- Predominance of spoken language
Sign language competence among the staff

- Formal competence in sign language was not required for new staff.

- In Norway there are few qualified teachers that are both trained in teaching deaf preschool children and in sign language.
Knowledge about deaf children`s educational needs

- Visual oriented communication

- Theoretically aware, but when it came to daily practice the staff often forgot this important aspect.
Institutional constraints and conditions

- Schoolification of preschools
  - The term indicates more teacher assigned activities, more formal learning activities and less time for activities initiated by the children and for play.
Future research

- How do we develop preschools settings where all young children have the opportunity to participate and interact in significant literacy events; events which may promote language and literacy learning?

- How should an educational setting be structured so all children may participate in a shared social, academic and communicative environment
Articles


Thank you for your attention!

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