

 	<h2>COURSE DESCRIPTION</h2>	  <p>Education and Culture DG Lifelong Learning Programme</p>
<p>Name of the course: <i>EASE - Early Literacy in Transition from Preschool to Preschoolclass</i></p>	<p>Early Years Transition Programme</p> 	<p>Institutions: University of Gothenburg, Department of Education Early Childhood Education (Childhood Studies)</p>
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Training

Course description in the study programme:

The transition from early childhood services to primary school marks a significant change in the lives of children and their families. The goal of the course is to reinforce educational continuity at the interface between early childhood services and primary school by supporting children and their parents in this transitional process.

On the basis of the didactic concepts of the EC sector and primary school, common education concepts will be developed in order to initiate effective co-operation at both educational levels. Teaching materials in early literacy for co-operative teaching will be conceived, tested and implemented. This will promote an exchange of views of all involved in the educational process and document the individual pathways of each child at the beginning of lifelong learning.

Aims: This following objectives focuses on in the course:

- Enabling pre-school teachers and primary school teachers to find *a more unified approach to learning and a common understanding of education* that should be adopted at both educational levels to collaborate more effectively, i.e. to improve educational continuity and thus facilitate the transition process of children (aged 5-7) and their families.
- Make different aspects of childrens literacy learning visable
- Use Learning Stories as a mean for challenging and childrens literacy learning

1. Enhancing the effectiveness of transition through co-construction

by developing a cooperative approach to and resulting in a common understanding of education that can be adopted at both educational levels

- Sensitisation - raising awareness for both teachers/trainers and students
- Curricula framework, guidelines, didactic concepts of the EC sector and primary schools
- Ecological transition - systems model (Bronfenbrenner)

2. Ensuring roles for the key actors at various levels - a developmental task

that is, to promote the involvement and exchange of views between children, parents and professionals in both sectors

- Project management,
- Co-operative practices with “feeders” (EC sector) and “receivers” (primary school) institutions
- Co-operative practices with children and parents

3. Developing activities that support learning across the transition process

that is, developing inter-connecting curricula in early literacy and language practice with a holistic and participatory approach

- Presentation of examples of successful initiatives and co-operative practices
- Joint conception of inter-connecting curricula in early literacy in peer to peer groups
- Focus on child's ability to cope with transition in an active and play-oriented way

4. Supporting socio-emotional well-being and cognitive achievements

which means assessing children's literacy competence and thus encouraging them to reflect on their own learning paths thus enabling them to become autonomous learners throughout life

- EASE adaptation of the learning-stories-approach (M.Carr 2001) - a common base for discussion between both institutions children and parents
- Learning how to learn including meta-cognitive approaches
- Specific support for at-risk children including intercultural education
- Support for gifted children

Pedagogical approach:

- Developmental pedagogy – focus and define a learning object, improve in your own practice, reflection evaluation.
- Teachers own experience is a lead theme during the whole course.
- Documentation and assessment

No costs for the participants

Implementation

In six sessions the aim in the EASE-course are implemented.

Learning Stories as a documentation of children's learning process. (Carr, 2001). 3.5 hours

Present the internal evaluation, (in and out questionnaire¹, target groups: parents, EC staff, teachers).

The teachers get a task to read for one child at the time for for each of there target children, and to document and reflect at the childrens

Lectures about different literacy aspects of relevance for this group. 3.5 hours

Specific interest of experianc of literacy and childrens own culture. A second task is to collect childrens writing/expressions in pictures and drawings, symbols and text.

Childrens different strategies meaning in narratives.

The reading task is followed up, discussed and evaluated.

EASE international outlook – experience from Thessaloniki 3.5 hours

Followed by a parental meeting.

Down under looking up ... 3.5 hours

Lecture by Ph.D. Valerie Magrain, Massey University of Palmeston North, New Zealand. A New Zealand perspective of literacy and Learning Stories.

Family life and popular culture in contact with preschool and primary school. Literature 3.5 hours

Seminar Fast, Carina (2007) an ethographic study focuses literacy learning in the perspective of childrens early experiance in the famliy life

Children express their thoughts about the roles of the mother thounge and the majority language 3.5 hours

Multilingual aspects in transition. Hiba Abou-Touk discuss the results from her Master thesis. *Code-switching and establishing the power of a dominant language. Issues in the lives of multilingual children in Sweden*

Monitoring:

The group of teachers will test their jointly conceived inter-connecting assessment in accordance with current Swedish curriculum for preschool, preschool-class and primary school.

The implementation will be carried out in four steps:

1. The heads support the teachers to attending the educational transition course and its objectives. The heads will ensure a flow of information to team members and staff and the guarantee acceptability of the project in its practical phase.
2. Parents, as experts on their children, will be informed about all project related processes at their children's educational institutions. They will monitor the transmission or publication of their children's documentations. Parents will also be involved in the project's evaluation.
3. The materials developed will be implemented in the "feeders" (pre-school), and "receivers" (pre-school-class/primary schools), evaluated and finally integrated into the institution's programme. The provider collects the results into a quality-development-profile containing numerous examples of good practice and practical procedures.
4. The testing phase will be monitored and co-ordinated by the university and moreover by vocational school trainers in order to avoid such risks as over-burdening staff or unnecessarily generating resistance to changes in an institution's programme.

Description of evaluation

1. **Children:** Pedagogical documentation offers a chance to establish a common base for discussion between institutions and parents. The learning-stories-approach (Carr, 2001) will be used to evaluate children's progress in language and early literacy. The children will be exposed to increasingly complex patterns of reciprocal activity and be challenged by gradual shifts in the balance of power from the teacher to the learner. These shifts will reflect the children's growing ability to set their own goals, assess their own achievements, and thus assume responsibility for their learning.
2. **Parents, educators and primary school teachers:** a questionnaire will be administered to these target groups. The aim is to clarify the perceptions of the target groups regarding successful transition practices. The questions are open-ended allowing the target groups to express their ideas freely. The questionnaire will be administered twice, at the beginning and at the end of the project in order to find out how perceptions may have changed.

Certification

The training institutions e.g. University of Gothenburg, Department of Education will award a certificate to those who have successfully participated in the Educational Transition course and who have successfully developed and tested the inter-connecting curricula at their training day-care centres and primary schools in order to enhance connectivity between both educational sectors and thus facilitate the transition for children aged 5 to 7.

Dissemination - Sustainability:

Representatives of school boards and EC providers, trade unions, heads of schools, heads of EC centres and representatives of parents' associations will be informed at regular intervals about the progress of the project. Integration of the results into a quality-development-profile (handbook) containing numerous examples of good practice and practical procedures.

Bibliography:

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Carr, M. (2001). *Assessment in Early Childhood Settings. Learning stories*, London: Paul Chapman.

Chambers, A. (1998) *Böcker inom oss - Om boksamtal*. Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren.

Dahlgren, G., Gustafsson, K., Mellgren, E., Olsson, L-E. (2006). *Barn upptäcker skriftspråket*. Stockholm: Liber. Sverige.

Fast, C. (2008). *Literacy : i familj, förskola och skola*. Lund: Studentlitteratur AB. Sverige.

