

ABSTRACTS

Kosunen, Sonja. 2012. 'So we do have schools where they come from: the Finnish élite' – middle class children's school choices away from the local school. The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus 43 (1), 000–000.

The possibilities of making a school choice vary across different municipalities in Finland. This article discusses school choices by middle-class mothers. The aim was to clarify why the appointed local school would not be preferable for these mothers' own children. The data consists of seven interviews of mothers whose children had applied for a study place in a class with a specific curricular emphasis in some other than the local secondary school appointed by the school authorities in the City of Vantaa, Finland. The interviews were subjected to critical discourse analysis. The mothers see the school market as a field of a school choice game, where parents can make good and bad choices. The fear of falling is followed by the assuring discourse and the local school avoidance discourse. According to these the future of the child may be at stake in the form of limited future possibilities due to parent's bad school choice strategies. For these middle-class mothers the choice of a special-emphasis class and into a selected peer group was seen not only as an option but also as a necessity when considering the interest of the child.

Descriptors: school choice, school market, fear of falling, middle class, institutional routes

Salminen, Jari – Säntti, Janne. 2012. From classroom didactics to research-based reflection. The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus 43 (1), 000–000.

This article focuses on major changes in teaching practice studies (University of Helsinki) that took place in the class teacher education between the 1970s and the year 2005, when the Bologna process determined the current degree requirements. The research material consists of official documents like study programmes, teaching practice directions and records of department and faculty councils. These documents suggest that there were three separate periods in teacher training. In the first period (1979–1992) the focus was on the trainees' practical skills. In the second period (1993–2004) the individual and professional features of trainees were emphasised while the third period (2005–2008) highlighted the scientific and societal elements. On the grounds of these three periods we can distinguish three different trends: 1) the goals of teaching practice have expanded 2) the duration of practice has diminished, and 3) trainees' independent work has increased while tuition has decreased.

Descriptors: academic class teacher education, teaching practice, supervision

Virta, Jukka – Lintunen, Taru. 2012. Applying social and emotional skills at school. The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus 43 (1), 000–000.

Meaningful and working teacher-student relationships are an essential part of students' growth and successful teaching and learning. Good interaction skills are needed to create and maintain these relationships. Four in-service physical educators participated in a training course aimed to improve the teachers' social and emotional skills. The purpose of this study was to understand the teachers' experiences and thoughts on applying the social and emotional skills at school in teacher-student relationships.

This study is a qualitative case study. The subjects of the study are four in-service PE teachers who participated in a year-long course on social and emotional skills. The data consists of their semi-structured interviews. Based on the qualitative analysis (Moilanen & Rähä 2001) four aspects of teachers-student relationship and interaction were extracted from the data: negotiation – ordering, teaching – teacher-student relationship, individual student – group, and self-disclosure – privacy. Applying the social and emotional skills practised in the course challenged the teachers to reflect on

the fundamental aspects of teaching such as the use of power and the boundaries of teacher-student interaction.

Descriptors: Social and emotional skills, listening skills, teacher-student relationship, teacher training

Lahtinen, Aino-Maija – Ikonen-Varila, Merja. 2012. **'Mind and education' - a course that challenges students' thinking and views of knowledge. The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus 43 (1), 000–000.**

This article addresses a course on mind and education as well as the pedagogical study of the course. It aimed at enhancing the students' understanding about the mind by the use of theoretical and artistic learning material and of the pedagogical approach which required active participation for the students. The data consists of written assignments of 23 students. In the qualitative analysis of the data, attention was paid to the students' descriptions of their perceptions of the course and specifically the various ways they processed the course content and their experiences when constructing their understanding about the mind. The resulted descriptions were reflected within the framework of the psychological research on thinking and personal epistemology. The students' ways of processing the material and experiences could be classified into two main categories. One way of processing was summarising and declarative, the other reflective and integrative. The latter one was most sophisticated and demonstrated the relativistic view of knowledge as well as the tendency for the combination of ambiguous information and various frames of reference. Based on the study we suggest that the course was able to enhance the students' understanding about the mind. Moreover, the course challenged the students' personal epistemology and ways of thinking. Thereby the substance of the course and the pedagogical approach were able to meet the challenges pertaining to the complex world, while these challenges should also be included in the education of academic professionals in general.

Descriptors: mind, education, experience, understanding, adult thinking, personal epistemology, pedagogy