



Hillevi Lenz-Taguchi

Hillevi Lenz Taguchi, Associate Professor in Education at the Department of Education, Stockholm University, has her background and formal training in Sociology and Literature. Lenz Taguchi's work has mainly been preoccupied with (theoretically, methodologically and practically) going beyond the dichotomy of theory/practice in educational practices, by means of feminist, poststructural and deconstructionist practices. Some of her international publications from the last 10 years are presently revised and put together in a book to be published in 2009; *Doing justice in early childhood education. Materializing theory and theorizing the material* (Routledge). This book summarizes her collaborative research with preschool teachers, teachers and teacher educators in preschools, teacher education and in-service training. Going beyond and reconceptualising undergraduate as well as doctorate student's writing practices is a central feature of Lenz Taguchi's work that she is presently publishing on. Her current research, however, concerns preschool children's gendered identity constructions from a material feminist approach on language and the physical environment.

ABSTRACT for key-note address at EECERA in Stavanger Sept. 3-6, 2008.

Justice in early childhood education? Justice for whom and for what?

The contemporary educational arena is characterized by contradictory movements. On the one hand, increased complexity, multiplicity, and diversity push for increased inclusion of children and families with diverse backgrounds. On the other hand, these circumstances enforce strategies of complexity reduction in the educational system. Policy makers and practitioners understand new developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) as ways to continue the tradition of providing a "good childhood" by treating and evaluating everyone in relation to the same universal, comparable, and centralized standards. In this context we need to think of inclusion and justice in new ways. Inclusion cannot be about bringing children and families from the outside and marginal position of their skin colour, ethnicity, sexuality, (dis)ability, gender or age, to the inside of norm(al) early childhood educational practices. Rather than having them escape and/or surrender their minority subject positions, we need to make use and be inclusive of them, in a listening and negotiable performative pedagogy. We need to do justice to diverse and multiple ways of being and understanding, and be ready to negotiate and transform our own values and how they are materialized as practices. Moreover, we not only need to do justice to the prevalent inter-active/inter-personal relationships in ECE but we also need to turn our attention to the intra-active processes between what we think and say (the discursive) and to how our bodies relate to environments, materials, things, furnishing, spaces and places (the material) that we occupy, handle and use in our daily practices.