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SÄRSKILD BEGÅVNING I EN FÖRSKOLA OCH SKOLA FÖR ALLA

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Giftedness in a preschool and school for all

Abstract
Based on four articles, this compilation thesis analyses different actors' constructions of giftedness and ideas about meeting gifted children's needs in preschool and early childhood educational settings. Previous research has highlighted gifted children's need for early educational adaptations and support for their continued development and maintained desire for learning. Because children's early educational experiences influence their continued cognitive, social and emotional development, constructions of giftedness at different societal levels surrounding the child were important to explore. Questions addressed included how preschool personnel, principals and parents of gifted children talk about giftedness, how the construction of giftedness changes over time in Swedish daily press, and what meanings talk about giftedness have for gifted children's provided education in preschool and school. The theoretical framework underpinning the entire thesis is social constructivism. In addition, special educational perspectives, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory model, and discourse analysis were used to analyse the respondents' understandings. Empirically, the thesis is based on material collected in four studies conducted between 2019-2021. These include an on-line questionnaire to preschool personnel (n=78), interviews with preschool teachers (10) and principals (5), interviews with parents (16), and an overview of Swedish newspaper articles about giftedness (n=72). Results show that constructions of giftedness create tensions by generating diverse ideas about the offered teaching in practice, alongside different views of hindering factors for providing an adequate education, organizational thresholds or lack of education about giftedness. Dilemmas included planning an education that meet the needs of all – as well as individual children's needs. Another dilemma was naming someone *gifted* in a strong tradition of an egalitarian education. How preschool staff, principals, parents and newspaper debates construct giftedness is vital for making conscious choices and treatment of giftedness in a preschool and school for all.

Keywords
giftedness; gifted education; preschool education; early childhood education; school for all

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