Abstract

In recent years, the Singapore government has emphasized improvements in the quality of early childhood education. One reform is the Nurturing Early Learners curriculum framework (NEL, 2012-2013). Earlier research findings suggest some discrepancies between the curriculum framework and actual practices (Bautista et al., 2018; Lim-Ratnam, 2013). This talk presents findings from the literature review on educators’ perceptions and reasoning on the quality of early childhood programs, curriculum and curriculum implementation internationally and locally. “Quality” in early childhood education has traditionally been defined in terms of two interlinked types of factors: structural factors such as class size, teacher-child ratio, physical environment, teachers’ qualifications and process factors, e.g. quality of teacher child interaction and nature of centre leadership. Recent research defines quality as the way in which teachers understand the curriculum and implement it in practice (Dahlberg et al., 2013). This translates into a need to understand the features of curriculum framework, and how to make sense of it. As main findings, the features that enhance or prevent teachers’ implementation of good quality curriculum will be presented.

Biography

Dr. Heidi Layne is a Research Scientist at the Centre for Research in Child Development in NIE. Heidi gained her PhD in the Philosophy of Education from the University of Helsinki, Finland. Her background is on teacher education, teachers’ professional development, early childhood education and multicultural education. Her research experience varies from researching classroom practices, programme and curriculum evaluation to researching teachers and parents’ attitudes towards plurilingualism and translanguaging methods.