Implications of an Everyday Life Approach in Childhood Research

Jan Kampman
Dept. of Psychology and Educational Studies
Roskilde University, Denmark
jank@ruc.dk

In my presentation I will try to show how an everyday life approach can be seen to have implications for the research on three different, although related, levels.

First, the impact of dealing with everyday life as a methodological perspective will be dealt with. Placing at center stage the interest in what children are actually doing and saying in their everyday life settings (in my research especially in the contexts of the daycare institutions and schools), this perspective points to need for ethnographic inspired methodological approaches.

Second, everyday life as a concept related to phenomenological traditions will be seen to have an impact as an analytical tool, looking for children’s meaning making processes, negotiations, agency and the like. An important aim with the research in this perspective would be to establish some kind of conceptualization of how children perceive their own everyday life – or in other words to establish a ‘child perspective’.

Third, everyday life will be seen as a sociological concept, in line with the traditions known from the work of Henri Lefebvre, Thomas Leithäuser, Dorothy Smith, Agnes Heller, and others. Especially the ‘societalization’ of everyday life and its impact on the increased formal structuring and organization of children’s everyday life will be in focus. I will broadly be speaking about the consequences of the rationalization of children’s everyday life as part of a modernization process.