

Call for a international research project collaboration: intercultural preprimary education



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Racial and gender prejudices already start to develop in early childhood. Although these early years are crucial to support **positive intergroup attitudes**, research clearly indicates that teachers feel inadequately prepared to deal with diversity in their classrooms. There seems to be a significant demand for knowledge and support regarding early childhood and anti-discrimination among school management, teachers, civil society and academics. Research and professional development often only enhance the importance of **countering prejudice** from primary education onwards. Accessible support and information for early childhood teachers is lacking.

At AP University of Applied Sciences and Arts, we run a project that focuses on the in-service training of early childhood teachers. By following the method of **educational design based research** (EDBR; McKenney & Reeves, 2018), we have carefully developed design-principles in co-creation with teachers that ensure an **effective professional development program on supporting intercultural competences of early childhood teachers**. Yet, a strategic approach to ensure further long-term systemic change at school level is needed. After all, one's practice as a teacher is not only determined by knowledge and attitudes, but also by colleagues, school policy, etc. Recent meta-research indicates that peer-coaching and team-focused courses (regarding interculturality) embedded in a school are effective.

International research shows huge potential in **video-coaching** for the quality of interaction and quality of teaching. We would like to explore this innovative approach to support teachers to reflect on 'hidden' and implicit bias. By looking at video tapes of their own or colleagues' practices, hidden dispositions, practices of 'othering', stereotyping and good practices could be made visible and tangible, in order to reflect on them and to support intercultural competences. This method was used in Flemish research on gender in secondary education, but not yet -to our knowledge- in early childhood education.



We are aiming to fill the existing gap in research and practice. Based on educational design-based research (EDBR), we would like to design a professional development trajectory that internationally supports the intercultural competences of early childhood teachers, in which video-coaching is given a central place.

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