



JEANETTE KOSKINEN has since 2018 worked as an ECEC teacher educator, first at Mälardalen University and, since 2020, as a PhD student at Örebro University. Koskinen holds a Bachelor's degree (2015) and a Master's degree (2019) in early childhood education and care from Åbo Akademi University in Finland. She is a certified ECEC teacher with professional experience from early childhood education in both Finland and Sweden.

This thesis examines language teaching in early childhood education and care (ECEC), with a particular focus on multilingual children's development of academic language. Particular attention is given to ECEC environments characterized by rich language diversity. The study is situated in Sweden and Finland, which here serve as examples of two different linguistic contexts. The aim of the thesis is to examine ECEC teachers' perspectives, teaching strategies, views on multilingualism, and their role as linguistic models, as well as to develop a teaching model, Academic Linguaging, to support intentional academic language teaching for children aged 1–5 years.

In the past, it was assumed that children in ECEC should primarily develop everyday language, which was viewed as the foundation for later acquisition of academic language in school. As language diversity has increased and children's language backgrounds have become more varied, it has been recognized that multilingual children may require more time to develop academic language. Consequently, prior research has emphasized the importance of offering children opportunities to encounter and develop academic language already in ECEC. However, there is still limited knowledge about how such teaching can be understood theoretically and organized in practice. This thesis aims to contribute to filling this gap.

The empirical foundation of the thesis consists of two subsequent studies: a survey study and a practice-based study. The survey study identified four teacher profiles related to language teaching—implicit, positive, explicit, and challenged. These profiles highlight variations among teachers that earlier research has suggested but seldom detailed. A second part of the survey focused on teachers' perceptions of their role as linguistic role models. The findings show that teachers largely view themselves as linguistic role models, particularly in relation to dialogic reading and adult led play. At the same time, preparation before reading activities appears to be less common, indicating that teachers' self-perception is not always accompanied by systematic and informed teaching practices.

The practice-based study aimed to test and further develop the Academic Linguaging teaching model. The model was designed to provide a structured, theoretically grounded, and practically applicable tool to support children's academic language development in ECEC. It consists of six steps, spanning from initial teacher preparation to the modification of language-teaching practices. Despite some challenges, such as limited time for planning, the participating teachers described the model as supportive in making language teaching more intentional, structured, and inclusive.

Overall, the findings show that language teaching in ECEC is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon shaped by the interplay of individual, pedagogical, and organizational factors.

ISSN 1404-9570
ISBN 978-91-7529-761-3

JEANETTE KOSKINEN

Reframing Language Teaching in ECEC Through Academic Linguaging

2026



Doctoral Dissertation

Reframing Language Teaching in ECEC Through Academic Linguaging

JEANETTE KOSKINEN
Education

JEANETTE KOSKINEN
Reframing Language Teaching in ECEC Through Academic Linguaging