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## **Collaborative research and practice development exploring inclusive practices for children in vulnerable positions**

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# 29<sup>th</sup>

## EECERA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Early Years: Making it Count

Thessaloniki, Greece

20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2019

# ABSTRACT BOOK



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**CONDITION OF PARTICIPATION:** Some abstracts submitted by delegates for participation in EECERA 2019 have been revised and edited in good faith by the Scientific Committee. The organisers cannot be held responsible for the contents of the abstracts published in this book.

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## **KEYNOTE I**

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019**

**09:30 – 10:30**

**MARIA EVANGELOU**

**University of Oxford, United Kingdom**

### **Designing early childhood setting-based interventions to enhance home-setting partnerships in challenging circumstances**

Children's development takes place within an extensive environmental context that incorporates families, communities, and social, economical and political constraints. Early childhood interventions take place within an interdisciplinary framework of fields. These interventions are often located within a risk and resilience framework, to put in place protective factors intended to build a child's resilience to adversity. This keynote presentation will use Theory of Change to delineate how early childhood settings can be supported to design and/or implement setting-based interventions to enhance home-setting partnerships. Theory of Change allows the programme developers to describe in detail the rationale behind the development of their intervention, the theoretical framework that underpins their work, and to identify the potential causal links that might be bringing change to the agreed outcomes as a result. This would be especially useful for those colleagues who work with children at risk of underachieving their full potential. This is a topic of great current interest as a number of families and their children are living globally in challenging circumstances. While interventions so far value the contribution of both home and setting on child development, they lack a focus on the interactions that take place within and between homes and settings as these interactions have unique contributions to a child's development.

## **KEYNOTE II**

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019**

**11:00 – 12:00**

**JAN PEETERS**

**Centre for Innovation in the Early Years (VBJK), Ghent University, Belgium**

### **Measuring the outcomes of young children or analysing the effectiveness of the ECEC systems, what counts most?**

In the field of ECEC policymakers, practitioners and researchers each have their distinct role to guarantee the quality of ECEC. However, these 3 key players, though united in their aim for quality, seem to speak a different language. At the same time, none of them solely have the full array of knowledge and skills to move effectively towards quality ECEC. To realise sustainable change, policy, research and practice need to be regarded as inextricably linked and need to look together for accountability to invest in high quality ECEC. Together they have to make choices about what form of quality assessment or quality control is appropriate to convince political parties and governments to invest in quality ECEC. In the last decade more and more international organisations and national governments have wanted to evaluate ECEC programs by measuring the child outcomes. But is this always the right choice? Low and middle income countries cannot afford expensive evaluations through measuring children's outcomes. In other countries, this approach which limits quality to child outcomes does not fit in the pedagogical vision of the practitioners. Can researchers provide alternative methods to evaluate the quality of ECEC for those countries that take into consideration a broader view on quality and that embrace the vision of the practitioners? Are there ways of analysing the whole system of ECEC that are also creating possibilities to compare countries and that do involve practitioners, researchers and policymakers? This key note is a story of a journey through 8 middle income countries, where we discussed with more than 800 practitioners, policymakers and researchers their vision of the quality of the ECEC system in their country.

**KEYNOTE III**  
**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2019**  
**13:20 – 14:20**

**ELIZABETH A. SHUEY**

**Education and Skills Directorate, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD),  
Paris, France**

**Improving measurement to enhance services and systems for our youngest children**

Early childhood is a time of rapid growth, exploration and learning that occurs in the contexts of relationships with others. Young children's early experiences and the quality of their interactions and relationships varies tremendously across cultures, communities, institutions, families and individuals. For some children, this variation is in support of their individual needs and interests. For other children, the variation in early experiences is inequitable, related to social and economic conditions as well as policy and regulatory contexts. These early differences matter for young children's well-being and have long-term implications for health, wellness and educational and economic attainment as children grow. Researchers and policymakers bear responsibility for ensuring that knowledge around early childhood education and care is applied in ways that promote equity and support all children. Robust, timely data are essential to inform policy and build best practices. Ongoing efforts at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), specifically the International Early Learning and Child Well-Being Study and the Starting Strong Teaching and Learning International Survey, aim to strengthen research and measurement around young children's outcomes and their ECEC environments. This keynote presentation will give an overview of the conceptual and research foundations for these new research initiatives, highlighting the opportunities to promote equity in policies, services and systems for our youngest children.

**KEYNOTE IV**  
**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2019**  
**14:50 – 15:50**

**SAMUEL J. MEISELS**

**Buffett Early Childhood Institute, University of Nebraska, United States**

**Assessing young children: What early educators need to know**

Pressure to demonstrate the effectiveness of early childhood programs and to evaluate young children's readiness for school are fueling mistaken assumptions about how young children learn and how best to assess their growth and development. The source of much of this pressure comes from policymakers who want to know what kind of impact specific early childhood programs are having on children's learning and if scarce public funds are being used wisely. In the U.S. these questions have led to the creation of high-stakes testing regimes and accountability standards based on methodologies developed for older students. Using a national testing program designed for Head Start as an example of high-stakes early childhood testing and observational assessment as an alternative, this presentation focuses on the importance of developing context-rich, responsive assessments that reflect children's complex learning patterns, conform to meaningful standards, and represent valid ways of evaluating children's learning.



# Symposium Set A

13:30 – 14:50, Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019

## A 1

### **POLICY INFLUENCES AND DATA IN TIMES OF CHANGE**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Carolina Snaider, Teachers College, Columbia University, United States**

#### **How think tanks and literacy policies can be used to analyze neoliberal influences on Icelandic preschools**

Kristin Dýrfjörð, University of Akureyri, Iceland

The aim is to explore how the Preschool in Iceland has become part of a new political horizon in which national and multinational agencies and think tanks are powerhouses. It explores how players other than preschool-teachers are undermining professional powers and acquiring control. It will consider how players are enacting neoliberal ideology and using means developed or promoted by transnational institutions (Grek, 2014). The research is grounded in neoliberal writings of among others, Hursh, 2016; Lissovoy, Means, & Saltman, 2015). It is carried out by comparing two literacy document from the Reykjavik-city. Theoretical framework is based on a.m.o. on Giroux (2007) writings on pedagogy as political and critical. Qualitative discourse analyses are used as a methodical tool. The main ethical considerations connect to the use of concepts such as neoliberalism and how widely conclusions can be drawn. There is a danger to over-interpret. Analysis of the development of two literacy policy documents has shown how preschool teachers have been set aside in favour of experts from other disciplines and how this has changed educational policy from being play-based to being part of the newspeak. The ideology behind these two policy documents indicates that the actors in the later one are looking to transnational agencies. It is unclear if or how the early childhood profession in Iceland can regain control of educational policy. It may be too big fight for one profession. The profession must first acknowledge the change and it have to map it, frame it, and name it.

*neo-liberalism, policy studies, literacy, early childhood, discourse analyses,*

#### **What Argentina needs to know: Producing and using data to better serve young children**

Carolina Snaider, Teachers College, Columbia University, United States

This paper elaborates on the situation of young children in Argentina and the status and nature of services that children receive. My main purpose is to argue for the production of child data systems in the country. Studies show that child data allow for identifying policy priorities and better address the needs of young children (Cochenour & Hebbeler, 2015; Gruendel & Stedron, 2012; Jordan, King, Banghart, & Nugent, 2018). Comparative international studies have found that producing and using child data is an essential component in countries with high-performing ECCE Systems (Kagan & Landsberg, in press). Systems theory informed my analysis, which predicates that ensuring high quality ECCE services for all children requires not only expanding programs, but also developing the supportive infrastructure: e.g., governance, financing and assessments. Data are one of the core infrastructural components of effective ECCE systems (Berlinski & Schady, 2015; Kagan et al., 2016; Kagan, Tarrant & Kauertz, 2012). For this qualitative study, I conducted a desk review using as major sources official websites and legal documents. Importantly, while I argue for the production of child data, I also remark the ethical responsibility to assure confidentiality. The country analysis reveals Argentina does not produce effective child data—neither at individual nor aggregated levels. Data comes from independent databases, most of them not from official government agencies; data are outdated, rarely collected systematically across time, and reported in incomplete and disintegrated ways. I end offering some policy recommendations because reliable data are critical to make sound, informed policy decisions.

*Argentina, early childhood policy, child data, system theory, Latin America*

#### **The Swedish preschool class in times of policy change**

Sven Persson (1), Helena Ackesjö (2), Lina Lago (3), (1) Malmö University, Sweden; (2) Linneaus University, Sweden; (3) Linköping

University, Sweden The aim of the research project is to analyse policy changes concerning the Swedish preschool class. The preschool class for six years old children is described as a transition zone between preschool and school (Ackesjö and Persson, 2016). Teachers construct an educational position for the preschool class that is influenced by both the social-pedagogical and the academic school traditions (Lago, 2014). New institutionalism and policy enactment theory are used to understand how teachers adapt, interpret and transform policy to a local educational context (Czarniawska, 2005; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991). Re-

contextualisation is a key concept in the policy enactment theory to analyse how teachers do policy (Ball et al., 2012). Theories of professionalisation processes are used to understand the importance of professional recognition and jurisdiction. This is a longitudinal policy ethnographic study over four years (2018-2021). The main methods are document analyses and interviews with teachers and principals. All respondents are guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. They are free to leave the project at any time. On policy level, the term 'schoolarisation' describes a positional shift for the preschool class in the education system. Parallel processes of re-contextualisation are initiated when new curriculum is confronted with the teachers' interpretations of their assignment. Teachers express a recognition in terms of a societal trust in the teaching they conduct. On policy level, the term 'schoolarisation' describes a positional shift for the preschool class in the education system. Parallel processes of re-contextualisation are initiated when new curriculum is confronted with the teachers' interpretations of their assignment. Teachers express a recognition in terms of a societal trust in the teaching they conduct. The study implicates that there is no linear relation between new policy and educational practice, instead policy is re-contextualised in relation to local organisation and teachers' beliefs.

*policy enactment, preschool class, Sweden, ethnography, profession*

## A 2

### CREATIVITY AND DRAMA

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Anne Clerc-Georgy, University of Teacher Education, State of Vaud, Switzerland**

#### **"I thought all you needed for a successful class was a desk and paper...": The Effect of an integrated creative arts class on early childhood pre-service teachers**

Leslie Rech, Kyunghwa Lee, Robert Capuozzo, Francesca Pase, University of Georgia, United States

This paper examines pre-service (PS) teacher perceptions of early childhood (EC) classrooms during integrated arts in EC course. Much research has demonstrated that integrating arts experiences improves academic achievement, fosters creative thinking, and enhances student engagement (Israel 2009; Martin et al, 2014), but recent studies of PS teacher attitudes about integrating arts in classrooms report initial discomfort with materials, processes, or planning (Belardo, Burrows, & Dambekalns, 2017; Leonard & Adeyanju, 2016). To understand PS teachers' graphic representations of EC classrooms, we draw on Barad's (2007) concept of intra-action in which juxtapositions of phenomena (such as PS teachers and an integrated arts course) provoke and produce new meanings. We analysed 51 PS teachers' pre- and post-instruction drawings in fall 2018. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Pseudonyms have replaced the names of participants. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. Participating PS teachers' pre-instruction drawings included traditional classroom materials and configurations, such as grouped desks, whiteboards, rugs, cubbies, and bulletin boards. In post-instruction drawings, while 45 of 51 (88%) included new materials and configurations (such as free choice areas for drama, arts, or science) 30 post-drawings (59%) retained or added more traditional materials and configurations. The findings illustrate ways in which integrated arts coursework both compliments and comes into tension with student field experiences and have implications for EC teacher education courses and programs with a focus on arts, integration, and creativity.

*arts, creativity, integrated curriculum, early childhood teacher education, drawing*

#### **Early childhood pre-service teachers employ drama techniques in their involvement during children's play**

Anthia Michaelides, Eleni Loizou, University of Cyprus, Cyprus

This study explores pre-service early childhood (EC) teachers' play skills (scenario and role skills) through the lens of creative drama. Children's mature play, refers to the highest level of play skills children can develop (Leong & Bodrova, 2012). In children's socio-dramatic play, skills such as scenario, roles, props, language etc., can be seen (Leong & Bodrova, 2012). An important element in children's play skills development is the teachers' involvement (Loizou, 2014). Also, creative drama can support children's and teachers' play skills (Lobman, 2003), thus exemplifying a relationship between drama and play. Drawing on Vygotsky's ZPD, we acknowledge teacher's involvement in play as a means to support play skills development (Bodrova, 2008). Research on teacher's involvement in children's play has reported various types of involvement (Gmitrova, 2013) and characteristics (Hakkarainen et al., 2013). Fourteen pre-service teachers conducted a 30-45-minute-long video during children's sociodramatic play and reflected upon it. Specific questions guided their reflection. Common categories of involvement were noted and drama techniques identified. Consent forms were given to all participants with the opportunity to leave at any time. Results highlight the use of drama techniques or some of their elements by teachers during their participation in children's play. For instance, improvisation, the giving and receiving offers elements were employed. In all cases the participants incorporated the

drama technique of teacher in role; they were in role during their participation in children's play. The pedagogy of play can be enhanced by drama techniques supporting role and scenario play skills.

*role and scenario play skills, mature play, sociodramatic play, teacher involvement, drama techniques*

### **Thinking play and curriculum dialectically: The example of puppet theatre**

Anne Clerc-Georgy, Daniel Martin, Béatrice Maire Sardi, University of Teacher Education, State of Vaud, Switzerland

Our research focuses on the dialectics between play and curriculum. The aim is to identify how teachers capture the knowledge emerging in play in order to promote their appropriation by pupils. The research is about play and pre-school learning and development (Bodrova & Leong 2011; Fleeer, 2009; Pramling & al. 2017; Vygotsky, 1933/2016). It aims to develop a specific didactics in preschool (Clerc-Georgy, 2018) taking into account the children's perspective (Sommer & al., 2013). In a historical-cultural perspective, we investigate the question of double mediation (Schneuwly, 2008), by the teacher and by knowledge considered as tools of the mind. Its purpose is to identify teacher's mediation during play activities initiated by children (Pramling Samuelsson & Asplund Carlsson, 2008) in order to promote the appropriation of these tools prescribed in the curriculum. This research is qualitative. In the way to analyse interactions between meanings proposed by teacher and their appropriation by pupils, we recorded and transcribed moments of free play in classrooms. The analysis focuses on interactions as well as on the effect of teacher mediation on pupils' play. The teacher and parents have given their authorization for data collection and use in research. Based on a puppet theatre produced by two children, the mediation proposed by the teacher, with the whole class, promotes the conscious use of knowledge in subsequent plays. This research questions teacher training for primary school and documents the nature of practices that aim both at the development of children's play and their appropriation of cultural tools.

*play, mediation, learning, tools of the mind, historical-cultural perspective*

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## **A 3**

### **WORKING WITH REFUGEE FAMILIES AND CHILDREN**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Cath Arnold, United Kingdom**

### **Precarious lives: Longing to belong in the early years foundation stage in England**

Controllah Gabi, Josie Gabi, University Centre Stockport College, United Kingdom

This paper aims to scrutinise how we might use extracts of ethnographic data with EYCS students to encourage them to rethink familiar practices when working with refugee children in order to foster a sense of belonging and identity in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It draws insights on how pedagogical practices and processes may enable the materialisation of children's sense of belonging (Millei, 2019). Drawing inspiration from Barad (2003), we turn to new materialism to explore the dynamic relational entanglements of intra-acting human and non-human affective assemblages where the space between being and longing opens up possibilities for molecular work with students. Decolonisation theory is also utilised as a useful tool for understanding refugee children's experiences. This qualitative study involved semi-structured interviews with practitioners and participant observation within an ethnographic orientation that seeks rich understandings of the school cultures and contexts within which notions of 'belonging' are materialised. A consent form was provided to participants. Informed consent was negotiated with the children involved since it has been argued that even young children are able to understand such concepts (David, 2001). Participant names have been anonymised. Students are provoked to think about resisting assertions of 'truth' and to consider the affective dimension of learning and teaching. There are political and cultural implications for early years practice particularly how pedagogy can facilitate the realisation of a sense of belonging.

*refugee, decolonisation, belonging, early years, EYFS*

### **Constructing early childhood services as culturally credible trauma recovery environments: Barriers and enablers for refugee families**

Cherie Lamb, University of New England, Australia

This study explored barriers and enablers to access and participation in early childhood education (ECE) for refugee families living in Queensland, Australia. Refugees are significantly underrepresented in ECE programs across Australia (Baxter & Hand, 2013; Krakouer et al., 2017; Thorpe et al., 2011; VFST, 2016). Critical Race Theory was used to challenge dominant ideologies that perpetuate inequities at the intersection of oppressive issues around race, class, gender, language and national origin (Yosso &

Solórzano, 2005). The study was located on the interpretive/critical continuum with a social constructionist orientation in which truth is constructed through perception and exchanges with others. Data was obtained through interviews and focus groups with 55 participants consisting of 29 parents and 26 early childhood practitioners from seven community-based agencies affiliated with an early childhood initiative of the Queensland Department of Education. Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2014) methodology honoured the lived experience of participants through their words and stories. Ethics approval was granted by the UNE Human Research Ethics Committee and conducted in accordance with Ethical Conduct in Human Research (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2007). The majority of refugee families were denied access to ECE, with key areas of exclusion being: poverty, language, trauma, culture, and racism. Families who fully participated described culturally credible services that fostered culturally safe and secure environments; promoted language rights; and implemented trauma-informed, culturally sustaining pedagogies. Findings demonstrate the need for state-wide investment in well-resourced, responsive strategies to construct ECE services as culturally credible trauma recovery environments.

*refugee, families, early childhood trauma recovery, racism & discrimination, holistic services & education*

#### **"There isn't a single recipe": Refugee children's first year in preschools in three municipalities in Iceland**

Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, University of Iceland, Iceland

The aim of the study is to explore the experiences of parents, principals and teachers of Syrian quota refugee children of reception and educational partnerships in six preschools in Iceland. Block, et al. (2014) note that in a context of increasing numbers of refugees and asylum seekers globally, recognition of the importance of the school environment for promoting successful settlement outcomes and inclusion for refugee children is growing. The theoretical framework of the study includes critical approaches to education (May & Sleeter 2010; Nieto 2010) and multilingual education for social justice (Cummins 2004; Skutnabb-Kangas et al., 2009). In this qualitative research study, methods included semi-structured interviews with principals and teachers in the children's preschools and their parents. A thematic analytical approach (Braun & Clarke, 2013) was applied to analyse the data. The project followed the usual practices of ethics in research on Humans (Kvale, 2007). Participants signed an informed consent form prepared in their heritage languages. Anonymity of the participants was ensured and their decisions on languages and locations of the interviews respected during the entire study period. The refugee children are doing well in the preschools and the educational partnerships with the parents have largely been successful. However, while educational practices in the preschools are inclusive, there are many challenges to address. The children and the preschools would benefit from a clearer work rubric and quality control. Professional development of the staff in multilingual and multicultural education could provide a stronger educational and social basis for the refugee children.

*Refugee children, Preschools, Educational partnerships, Professional development, Syrian refugee families*

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#### **A 4**

#### **CHILDREN VOICES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: THE USE OF ARTISTIC LANGUAGES FOR PEDAGOGICAL DOCUMENTATION (PART 1)**

Self-organised symposium

The symposium builds upon a cross cultural study that brings together pedagogical documentation, arts-informed methods and children's voices. Taking the theme 'Inside Outside' the study explores how combining pedagogical documentation and arts-informed methods can provide tools for including the voices and experiences of all children in ECE. It is based on a qualitative transnational research and aims to examine: 1. How pedagogical documentation and arts informed methods can be used to include all children's voices in ECE 2. What the concepts of inside/outside mean to children and teachers. The project examines children's (aged 18 months-6 years) and educators' views of the concepts of inside and outside, currently taking place in Italy, Greece, England, Scotland, Norway and Japan. This first of two symposia combines theoretical discussion of the relationship between pedagogical documentation and children's voices with perspectives from Italy and Japan.

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**Chair: Alison Clark, UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom**

#### **Children voices and pedagogical documentation: Where next?**

Alison Clark (1), Kari Carlsen (2), Mari Pettersvold (2), (1) UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom; (2) University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

Overall aims of this cross-national study are: 1. How pedagogical documentation and arts informed methods can be used to include all children's voices in ECE; 2. What the concepts of inside/outside mean to children and teachers. Based on research on

pedagogical documentation (Formosinho, Oliveira-Formosinho and Costa, 2019) and participatory methods, we explore young children's views and experiences of the theme inside/outside: Space (Clark, 2010), Social Relationships and Self. The project marries discourses around pedagogy, participation and arts practice with young children. Within this theoretical paper we explore the intersection between young children's participation (Clark, 2017; Pettersvold, 2014) and pedagogical documentation (Carlsen, 2015). We investigate how different concepts of 'voice' have been interpreted in making children's living and learning visible in this way. This is a qualitative transnational study involving researchers, educators and young children in Italy, UK, Greece, Japan and Norway that employs arts informed and participatory methods. EECERA (2015) ethical code was followed alongside the work of "collective praxis approach (Cahill 2007), epistemological humility (Clark 2010) in exploring multiple perspectives in cross-national research and ethical helix (Palaologou 2016). The discussion raises questions about whose voices count in pedagogical documentation and in what form? Does pedagogical documentation always set out to be participatory or is there a special case to be made for a more participatory pedagogical documentation? We raise questions about how pedagogical documentation can give insight into children's opportunities for participation and next how educators may use this slow knowledge to make participation possible for all children?

*children's voices, arts-based documentation, participation, pedagogical documentation, participatory documentation*

### **Children's voices in early childhood education: Using artistic languages for pedagogical documentation in Italy**

Elisabetta Biffi, Chiara Carla Montà, Franca Zuccoli, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

This presentation focuses on the Italian perspective by using the theme of 'inside/outside' to examine the role of arts in training ECE teachers and initial meanings of the concept for children and teachers. The study draws on participatory research, involving artistic language (Sullivan 2009) in relation to the multi-dimensional concept of inside and outside (Clark, 2010). It is grounded in a child-rights' framework, with specific reference to article 31 of the UNCRC and to General Comment No.12 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child which underline the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life. Within a phenomenological hermeneutic perspective (Van Manen, 1990) meaning-making is elicited by the employment of arts-informed methods (Cole & Knowles, 2008 and Butler-Kisber, 2010). The conceptual underpinnings of the research include a focus on pedagogical documentation as a strategy of inquiry for both teachers and children (Rinaldi, 2012), and a view of children as capable of reflecting on highly complex ideas (Bateson, 1972). A specific protocol was drawn up for obtaining consent/assent and protecting children's rights, in line with ethical guidelines of EECERA (2015). The research is still ongoing, however, the Italian findings suggest that children's voices through artistic expression can be viewed as a participatory method of inquiry, training and documenting. Secondly, the conceptual dimensions 'inside/outside' are profoundly intertwined. Artistic languages and the concept of 'inside/outside', which reflect the multidimensionality and complexity of the educational process can inform teacher training practices.

*children's voices, arts-informed documentation, arts-informed research methods, pedagogical documentation, inside/outside spaces*

### **Children's voices in Early Childhood Education: Using artistic languages for pedagogical documentation in Japan**

Mari Mori (1), Ikuko Gyobu (2), Tomohiro Uemura (3), Akiko Guniji (4), (1) Tsurukawa College, Japan; (2) Ochanomizu University, Japan; (3) Tama Art University, Japan; (4) Gunma University, Japan

The presentation focuses on the Japanese perspective to explore and examine 1) how pedagogical documentation and arts informed methods can be used to include all children's voices in ECE, and 2) What the concepts of inside/outside mean to children and teachers. Based on research on pedagogical documentation (Formosinho, 2009, Formosinho, Oliveira-Formosinho and Costa, 2019) and participatory methods, we explore young children's views and experiences of three dimensions of inside/outside: Space (Clark, 2010), Social Relationships and Self. The project marries discourses around pedagogy, participation and arts practice with children. We explore the role of pedagogical documentation as a participatory mechanism to bridge methodological attitude(s), language(s) and cultural differences in research (Clark, 2017, Vecchi, 2010). This focus can enhance diverse children's voices (corporeal and/or verbal) and has the possibility of creating reciprocal responsive and emotional attuned relationships between children and educators. This is a qualitative transnational study that employed arts informed and participatory methods. EECERA (2015) ethical code was followed alongside the work of "collective praxis approach (Cahill 2007), epistemological humility (Clark 2010) and ethical helix (Palaologou 2016), and the Japanese ethical guidelines. This research is work in progress; however, the Japanese study revealed that listening to voices and arts-based documentations of children identifying the processes of children's ways of thinking related to their everyday lives and the world of fantasy. It offers suggestions related to how to integrate arts approach to pedagogical documentation that includes all voices (corporeal and verbal) as well as implications for educators' pre and in-service training.

*children's voices, arts-based documentation, arts-based research methods, pedagogical documentation, inside/outside spaces*

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**Chair: Claudia Gluschankof, Levinsky College of Education, Israel**

**Teachers' ideas about children's right to participate in ECE**

Nadine Correia, Helena Carvalho, Joana Durães, Cecilia Aguiar, ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, CIS-IUL, Lisbon, Portugal, Portugal

We aim to investigate teachers' ideas about children's right to participate in early childhood education (ECE), identifying complex profiles of teachers' ideas, and exploring associations between profiles and individual/contextual variables. Research highlights the relevance of promoting children's right to participate in ECE (Sheridan & Samuelsson, 2001), as an indicator of ECE quality (Sheridan, 2007), and emphasizes ECE teachers' role, namely their ideas to its promotion (Sandberg & Eriksson, 2010). Children's right to participate refers to children's right to exert influence in all matters affecting them, freely expressing opinions and having them considered (United Nations, 1989), through shared decision-making with adults (Venninen, Leinonen, Lipponen, & Ojala, 2014). Teachers' beliefs are crucial for understanding/improving educational practices (OECD, 2009), being influenced by individual characteristics (Faour, 2003).

Participants were 59 ECE teachers (26-60 years old), from 59 randomly selected ECE settings (Lisbon area). Information on teachers' education, experience, pedagogical models, and institution/group was gathered. A qualitative interview was conducted, followed by content analysis, multiple correspondence analysis and cluster analysis. Authorization obtained from National Commission for Data Protection, University Ethics Committee; teachers and parents' written consent, children's assent; all data protected with codes. Four profiles of teachers' ideas about participation were identified: 'Teachers' motivation'; 'Teachers' conditioned responsibility'; 'Children's' benefits'; 'Context dependent'. Teachers' profiles are significantly associated with years of professional experience and type of institution. Age is significantly different across profiles. We provide additional insights to a fuller understanding of teachers' positioning about this topic, useful to inform research addressing multiple levels of child participation.

*children's right to participate, early childhood education, ECE teachers, ideas, teachers' profiles*

**Illuminating the voice of the young child through practitioner talk**

Naseema Shaik (1), Colwyn Martin (2) Ina-Marie Harcourt (2), (1) Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa; (2) University of the Free State, South Africa

This study explored how early childhood practitioners gave significance to the voice of children by acknowledging their rights to be listened to and for the choices and decisions they make to be validated. Pedagogy in participation (Formosinho & Formosinho 2012) informed this study with reference to the axis of belonging and participation. This axis focuses on the pedagogy of bonds whereby the experience for children belonging to the centre and being able to genuinely participate and being listened to is highly valued. This study was qualitative and located in an interpretive framework. The interpretive paradigm allowed us to gain insight into the practitioners' points of view, where knowledge was constructed through experiences and practice with the children at the centres (Tracy 2013:41). Data was collected through semi structured interviews with four early childhood practitioners. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University and consent was also gained from the participants of the study. The findings suggest that whilst the voice of young children can be illuminated when listening is relational and creates opportunities for children to be agentic, some practitioners also had a limited understanding of what it genuinely means to listen to children as age and competencies were understood to be a limiting factor. Policy initiatives need to be driven towards intervention of how listening to young children is conceptualised in the South African context. Additionally, teacher training for both pre-service and in-service teachers need to focus on programs that develop teachers' skills on genuinely listening to children.

*voice, listening practitioners, participation, children's rights*

**Musical expressions in preschool – children as experts and teacher as learner**

Claudia Gluschankof (1), Sarit Bercovich (2), (1) Levinsky College of Education, Israel (2) Independent, Israel

To understand the conditions that enable self-initiated musical expressions children in a kindergarten led by a teacher who defines herself as a-musical. Self-initiated musical expressions in preschool may include choreographies to music brought by the teacher

or by the children (e.g. Gluschkof, 2018); singing (e.g. Countryman et al., 2016), and improvising with music instruments and other artefacts (e.g. Glover, 2000). The present study is grounded in three conceptual frameworks: multimodality (Flewitt, 2006), embodiment (van der Schyff, 2015) and agency (James & James, 2008). Children exercise agency, when they initiate and control their musical expressions. Those are multimodal in their nature and embody their understanding and knowing. This study is grounded in the paradigm of the 'new' sociology of childhood (James & Prout, 1990) that recognises the children's agency and their independent rights. It is an ethnography conducted by the educator and the researcher, including video-clips, written descriptions and reflections, conversations with the children and the educator. The parents gave their consent to the educator to film the children and share the clips with the researcher. The educator asked the children if they wanted to be filmed. The educator, who considers herself a-musical (in the sense that she does not enjoy music, she sings out-of-tune, and does not perceive differences and nuances in instrumental music pieces), developed her musicality while observing and reflecting on the children's musical expressions. An educational setting where the teacher is aware of her limitations and accepts them as the expert ones, children creativity strives.

*music, creativity, agency, preschool, movement*

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## **A 6**

### **COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE AND TEACHER LED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Wendy Boyd, Southern Cross University, Australia**

#### **Empowering preschool teachers through teacher led professional development**

Iris Heskia Barad, Tel Aviv University / Board of Education, Israel

This study evaluates the efficacy of a teacher led professional development course for enhancing preschool teachers' autonomy, sense of empowerment and accountability for their professional development and teaching. Empowered teachers are professionals who have the power to create curricula, administer their own lessons, and, as a result, have the ability to effectively teach their students. When empowered to direct their own professional development, teachers claim ownership of their work and invest in it accordingly. Engaged, focused, positive teachers have a tremendous impact on student achievement (Desimone, 2011). This study is based on the empowerment approach, which considers empowerment to be a phenomenon that occurs at different levels: individual, organisational and in communities (Zimmerman, 1995). 50 preschool teachers' group leaders participated in a professional development course, which emphasized learning as a process emerging from activity in a subjective and socially constructed world (Galperin, 1992b), and was aiming to empower participants for designing their own courses (Stolk et al., 2011). Feedback data were collected to measure the efficacy of the course in developing participants' confidence in designing professional development courses for the groups they lead. To maintain transparency and confidentiality the study was explained to teachers thoroughly, and feedback sheets were handled in a concealed manner and were filled anonymously. Results indicate a highly satisfaction mark of the course and a growing sense of autonomy and accountability of teachers toward their professional development. The findings may broaden the understanding of the contribution of self-created teacher led professional development for teachers practice.

*teacher empowerment, professional development, accountability, teachers' autonomy, preschool teachers*

#### **Teachers' assessments of their professional development in the context of societal changes**

Tiiu Õun, Maire Tuul, Marika Veisson, Tallinn University, Estonia

In recent decades, the approach to learning and the understanding of teachers' work has changed in Estonia. The aim of this study was to ascertain the changes in the professional development of teachers in the societal context based on teachers' own assessments. The aspects of teachers' professionalism have earlier been studied quantitatively, and it has been found that teachers attribute little value to university-based preparation and scientific and research-based practice (Mikser et al. 2018, 2019). Earlier studies have revealed that ECE has faced significant changes in Estonia (Tuul 2017). These changes include the changed role of parents, the change in regulations affecting the services and the change in the pedagogic orientation. The phenomenological approach that focuses on subjective experience was chosen as the data collection method. We conducted semi-structured interviews with 15 teachers. The data analysis was based on thematic content analysis. The Estonian researchers' code of ethics was followed with voluntary participation and anonymity, with a right to withdraw and with a clarification of how data will be used. The teachers mentioned that societal changes affected primarily their approaches to teaching. Differently from the Soviet period, teachers use the child-centred approach more. Training courses have contributed to the increase in teachers'

professionalism. As problems, teachers named the high demands of parents and the high work load regarding children with special needs. The results of this study can be used in the development and implementation of the curriculum of early child care institutions and in teacher education.

*professional development, preschool teacher, professionalism, societal changes*

### **How Community of Practice (COP) can be applied to the Early Years Sector in County Kildare Ireland**

Debbie Mullen, Early Childhood Ireland, Ireland

This research will look at 'How can you apply the model of community of practice to the Early Years Sector in Kildare'. Early Childhood Ireland and Kildare County Childcare Committee have explored how a community of practice can be applied to the Early Years Sector in County Kildare with the aim of sharing best practices and creating new knowledge to advance Early Years professional practice and to facilitate interaction on an ongoing basis between Early Years Professionals. Etienne Wenger summarises Communities of Practice (CoP) as "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly." Originators: Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in 1991 and further elaborated in 1998 This paper draws from a Community of practice design guide developed by Darren Cambridge, Soren Kaplan, and Vicki Suter (2005) which uses a step by step framework to create communities of practice. Qualitative research using a mixed method approach including interviews, focus groups, observations, educators' stories and feedback. Ethical considerations of informed consent & assent for practitioners' freedom to withdraw from the study, anonymity, participant safety and wellbeing are adhered to. One of the most significant findings of this research is the relationship building among early year's practitioners from local settings and the mutual support and encouragement they have for each other. By professionals utilising each other's' skills and resources their effectiveness in their practice will increase therefore providing a better quality of experiences for children and families

*professionalism, community of practice, relationships and collaboration, wellbeing, sharing practice*

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## **A 7**

### **COMMUNITY, INTERGENERATIONAL AND PARENTAL CO-OPERATION**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Bernhard Kalicki, German Youth Institute (DJI), Germany**

### **The effect of the parent-teacher relationship on the socio-emotional development of young children**

Keshni Bipath, University of Pretoria, South Africa

We examined the effect of the parent-teacher relationship on the socio-emotional development of young children. Many researchers have found a large body of information showing that parental involvement had led to improved academic achievement of the child (Lau, Li & Rao, 2012; Meier & Lemmer, 2015; Lemmer & Van Wyk, 2004; Mncube, 2009). However, there is sparse knowledge of the importance of this partnership on the socio-emotional development of the young child. Epstein's ecological theory was used as the theoretical framework as it focused on the overlapping spheres (school, community and family) that influence a child's life. This qualitative, interpretative study using a case-study research design was conducted in ECD centres in Pretoria. Data consisted of interviews with parents, observation of the children and document analysis (communication books). Confidentiality of the participants was ensured by using pseudonyms, Informed consent was negotiated and participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any given time. The study proved that the two crucial spheres of a young child's life (parents and teachers) need to oscillate and overlap for young children to feel safe and secure to operate at their optimal best – both socially and emotionally. The more the parents and teachers overlapped (communicated), the more the child felt emotionally at ease and became socially more responsive. Findings highlighted that higher education institutions needed to address the training needs of early childhood educators regarding building positive relationships with parents of the children they teach.

*parent-teacher partnership, socio-emotional development, young child, sensitivity to parents, accountability for the optimal development of young children*



## **Evaluating the Impact of TOY to share, Play to Care**

Gillian Lake, Mathias Urban, Geraldine French, Therese Farrell, Fiona Giblin, Dublin City University, Ireland

This study is an upscaling of an existing intergenerational programme, 'TOY to share, play to care', which provides community-based inclusive informal early transition experiences for ethnic minority children to school in 7 European countries. Phase 1 of the project focused on the establishment of Play Hubs. The current phase, and this paper, are focusing on an impact evaluation of the project. This impact evaluation is drawing upon Fetterman's (2012) theory of empowerment evaluation. It is an emerging framework that is responsive to local needs and uses cycles of reflection and action by the providers and service users themselves. An interpretative emergent paradigm with qualitative methodology using case study and focus groups will provide data on shared understandings of local impact. Service users (Local Action Teams) are defining the direction of the research and, through their self-evaluation, participating at every step of the study. Informed consent was sought through the provision of plain language statements and participants were given the opportunity to withdraw at any time. This impact evaluation is interrogating shared understandings of impact at a local level. The guiding question will be how concrete, diverse, and inevitably specific local experiences can be framed. Learning at systems level can occur, without losing the richness and diversity 'on the ground' to surface-level generalisability. Seen within a systemic perspective, the challenge for policy and governance at all levels is to abandon linear but simplistic understandings of implementation, and to enable circular processes instead. The project will have implications for policy and provide a global perspective on inclusive early childhood services through a local lens.

*evaluation, inclusionary childhood, impact, intergenerational*

## **Cooperation between daycare and family: Expectations and experiences as seen by parents and caregivers**

Bernhard Kalicki, Boris Geier, Stefan Michl, Birgit Riedel, German Youth Institute (DJI), Germany

ECEC is part of the educational system, it also facilitates parental labour-force participation. Since families have a higher impact on child development than ECEC the interplay of ECEC and family is of interest. Partnerships of family and daycare are studied in different countries and show cross-cultural similarities and differences (Murray et al., 2018). The odds for a caregiver-parent partnership depend on individual characteristics but also on structural features (e.g., power relations; Chung & Kim, 2018). Systemic conceptualizations of human development and welfare are common in developmental psychology (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) and political science (Evers, 2005). The extent and quality of cooperation between family and daycare has an impact on child outcomes. Applying the concepts of mixed welfare systems and hybrid organizations these constellations of parental and institutional expectations can be analysed on a micro-level (i.e., with regard to individual target children and their caregivers). Pedagogical standards and attitudes towards their cooperation are measured by standardized questionnaire instruments for parents and ECEC personnel. 562 target children (aged 1 to 3 and involved in ECEC) and their parents and caregivers are studied (dependent samples). Parents were randomly chosen and offered access to the daycare setting. Sample recruitment was conducted by an independent institute following the regulations for protection of privacy. Participation was voluntary. Data processing is aligned to an open science strategy. Besides their content the congruence of parental and professional expectations and standards is associated with indicators of cooperation. Implications for shaping this partnership are discussed.

*ECEC, pedagogical standards, cooperation with family, child characteristics, contexts of development*

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## **A 8**

### **DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE OF BABIES AND UNDER 3S**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Gabriela Tebet, Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP), Brazil**

#### **'What counts' and 'Who counts' in cartographies of babies / toddlers' experience in early childhood education and care?**

Gabriela Tebet (1), Anete Abramowicz (2), (1) Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP), Brazil; (2) Universidade de São Paulo - USP, Brazil

We aim to explore innovative approaches, like cartography, highlighting infants' perspectives and what can they tell us about their everyday experiences. From ideas developed by Alison Clark and Peter Moss (2011) and by Fernand Deligny (2015), we present a set of recent works that used cartography to search and can bring us interesting data for discussion. We start from a theoretical approach about the unique condition of babies, which request specific methodologies, distinct from those ones used in research with young and older children (Tebet and Abramowicz, 2014). The conceptual framework favours dialogue with Liane Mozère, who highlight the micro-sociological perspective and babies' power to act and with Fernand Deligny and his pedagogical

documentation of agency/acts/movements/gesture through cartography. From the paradigm of cartography, after observation and recording video and photos, we produce cartographic notation with specific symbols for a qualitative study of babies and their agencies and assemblages. Searching babies is a complex task since they can't consent research. It requires an ethical attitude of researchers in observing and documenting babies' movements. Furthermore, research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee, as well as by practitioners of nurseries and babies' families. No babies were stressed by this research. Our main results show the great potential of the use of cartography as pedagogical documentation and as a research tool. Highlighting experiences of babies in daycare can contribute to evidence the agency of the babies, their development and possibilities of working with them.

*cartography, infants, babies, toddlers, under to 3's*

#### **Developing preschool practice with young children through action research**

Ingibjorg Sigurdardottir, Hrönn Pálmadóttir, University of Iceland, Iceland

The aim is to create knowledge on preschool practice with children under the age of 18 months where preschool teachers create professional learning community, and develop practices through action research. Learning community is a group of teachers who learn together and from each other, aiming at common understanding and collaboration to improve their practice. Building a learning community, is important when working on professional development and improvements in schools (Mertler, 2018; Sigurðardóttir, 2013). Action research has proven to be effective approach to support teachers' professional development and to empower them as professionals (Gordon, 2008), and beneficial for children's learning and Wellbeing in preschool (Araújo, 2012). The study is an ongoing action research in three preschools in Iceland. Data is gathered through interviews, audio recordings, journal writings, photos, and videos (Koshy, 2010). Thematic analysis is used to analyse the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Ethical issues regarding access, informed consent, trust and power positions were taken into consideration. All of the participants are given pseudonym. Preliminary findings show that the teachers find it challenging to reflect on their pedagogical practice with the youngest children. It was important for them to have the researchers' support when creating the first steps in their learning community. Participation in a learning community create opportunities to develop new understanding on children's play and learning, and their role as preschool teachers. The study contributes to existing knowledge concerning the preschool teachers' professional development and pedagogical practice with the youngest children.

*action research, learning community professional development, pedagogical practice, toddlers*

#### **Toddlers Engagement in Portuguese Crèches: Is it related to social and self-regulation skills?**

Carolina Guedes (1), Teresa Aguiar (1), Cecilia Aguiar (2), Clara Barata (3), Joana Cadima (1), (1) University of Porto, Portugal (2) ISCTE-IUL, Portugal; (3) University of Coimbra, Portugal

In this study we investigate toddlers' engagement with educators, peers and tasks in Portuguese crèches and its associations with social and self-regulation skills. Child engagement with educators, peers and tasks in early childhood settings has been recently highlighted as crucial for child development during preschool (Bohlmann & Downer, 2016; Williford et al., 2013). However, little is known about toddlers' engagement in crèche. According to transactional models of development, child individual experiences with educators, peers, and tasks provide valuable information regarding the quality of classroom processes (e.g. Sabol et al., 2018). In this quantitative observational study, a total of 104 toddlers (average 30.4 months) attending 28 toddler classrooms participated. Toddler's engagement was observed during daily activities. Self-regulation, namely selective attention, working memory and inhibitory control, were assessed directly. Children's prosocial competence, behaviour problems and classroom behaviour regulation were reported by teachers. Consent forms including detailed information were obtained from all participants (centre directors, educators, parents). Procedures followed the European Commission data protection and privacy ethical guidelines and were approved by the Portuguese Data Protection Authority. Results from models accounting for nesting in classrooms, revealed that after controlling for age and sex, child engagement with i) educators was positively associated with prosocial behaviour, behaviour regulation and selective attention; ii) peers was positively associated with selective attention; iii) tasks was positively associated with behaviour regulation, selective attention, and inhibitory control. Findings suggest the importance of child engagement, particularly with tasks, for self-regulation and the importance of child interactions with educators for prosocial behaviour.

*toddlers' engagement, prosocial behaviour, self-regulation skills, InCLASS toddler, observational study*

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**Chair: Sharon Ryan, Rutgers University, United States**

**The reductionist nature of 'school readiness' as a transitional concept**

Louise Kay, Liz Chesworth, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

This research aimed to identify how the 'school readiness' agenda in England influences pedagogical practices in the Reception classroom. This paper argues that discourses of 'school readiness' have led to the 'schoolification' of the Early Years. Policies based on scientific constructions such as the Good Level of Development (GLD) have defined how 'readiness' is understood, ignoring the cultural complexities of children's lived experiences (Moss, 2013) and funds of knowledge (Moll et al, 2016). Tensions between the beliefs of teachers, policy, and pedagogy, were explored using Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (Engestrom, 1999) as a theoretical/methodological framework. The interpretive study used interviews to illuminate beliefs about 'school readiness' and to identify how teachers conceptualised the construction of 'school readiness'. The data analysis focused on 'manifestations of contradictions' (Engestrom & Sannino, 2011) that highlighted tensions between beliefs, pedagogy and policy frameworks. Voluntary informed consent was obtained from the participants prior to the research being carried out. Responses were anonymised. The time constraints of teachers were given consideration to ensure the research caused as little disruption as possible. The findings illustrate how the 'school readiness' agenda creates tensions between the attainment of 'academic' outcomes driven by the GLD and children's lived experiences. Furthermore, it is argued that the complexities of 'school readiness' as a transitional construct marginalises already disadvantaged groups of children. From a policy perspective, the GLD needs further interrogation as a construct that pushes a reductionist view of early childhood as a place to 'ready children for school'.

*school readiness, cultural-historical activity theory, good level of development, pedagogical practices, assessment policy*

**Behind the Closed Doors of Public Preschool Classrooms: Practices and Problems**

Rahime Cobanoglu (1), Yesim Capa-Aydin (2), Ali Yildirim (3), (1) Sinop University, Turkey; (2) Middle East Technical University, Turkey; (3) University of Gothenburg, Sweden

The present study sought to examine the classroom practices of a sample of preschool teachers employed in the public educational system of Turkey. As teaching practices make difference in children's developmental gains, it is critical to uncover what happens behind the closed doors of early childhood education (ECE) classrooms. Although many countries extended their efforts to increase the enrolment rate in ECE programs (OECD, 2014), it seems that teaching practices have remained problematic in the field. There is evidence that developmentally appropriate practices are not commonly implemented in ECE programs (Bryant et al., 1991; Dunn & Kontos, 1997). This study is a strand of research on process quality. Process quality in ECE addresses the experiences and interactions of children in classrooms (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999). In this qualitative inquiry, data were collected through open-ended classroom observations. We explored the classroom practices of eight teachers that had B.S degrees in an area related to child development and education. The consent of Ministry of National Education was obtained to make class observations in schools. Teachers' participation in research was voluntary. The results revealed that some teacher practices were not developmentally appropriate in the preschool classrooms. There was almost no teacher effort for supporting children's learning during child-initiated activities. The activities that are likely to support children's higher cognitive functioning were scarcely observed in the classrooms. Also, preschool teachers addressed a range of issues regarding the management of children's behaviours. The results provide implications for pre-service teacher education and teacher professional development.

*process quality, teaching classroom practices, teacher qualifications, Turkish preschool teachers*

**Where has choice gone? Preschool in the shadow of accountability in the United States**

Sharon Ryan (1), Elizabeth Graue (2), (1) Rutgers University, United States; (2) University of Wisconsin, United States

Critics contend that the focus on academic readiness that has spurred public investments in preK in the United States, is pushing out play and limiting teacher autonomy. This qualitative case study examines how policy is shaping teacher and student choices in 6 sites. This study builds on the small group of qualitative investigations (e.g. Brown, 2007) that suggests preK teachers and children are navigating a clash of values in their sites. This study also draws on quantitative studies of children's experiences in public preK (Chien, 2010). We draw on an enactment view of policy implementation which assumes that teachers and children are not simply policy subjects (Ball, Macguire, Braun, & Hoskins, 2011) but are also policy actors who shape, resist and implement

policy. This research is situated within the interpretivist paradigm. A qualitative comparative case study was conducted in New Jersey and Wisconsin. In each state we sampled three programs. In each classroom, we observed 2 focal children and documented teachers' practices. Data were coded by district for references to state preK policies to develop case portraits. Identities of districts and participants had to be protected through use of pseudonyms and no identifiers. Despite the child-centred claims of preK policies in 2 states, young children had less time to make decisions and engage in meaningful play and teacher choices were limited. Policymakers need to find ways to communicate more explicitly the intent of public preK to administrators and teachers in local communities.

*preschool, choice, teaching, policy, qualitative*

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## **A 10**

### **MATHEMATICS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD: REFLEXIVE PRAXIS LEADING TO INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGY**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium introduced a book project for the EECERA book series, *Towards an Ethical Praxis in Early Childhood: From Research into Practice*. The aim is to generate a book which specifically encourages critique, innovation, and exploration of young children's mathematics learning through its underlying philosophical framework, content, and structure. The book is conceived as the result of a research project undertaken in many different countries using collaborative approaches among early childhood mathematics education researchers and early childhood education practitioners. Each of the book chapters (except for the first and last) will identify a narrative vignette which is deemed by the chapter's authors to clearly reflect at least one of Bishop's six fundamental mathematical activities: explaining, counting, measuring, locating, designing, and playing, and his theory of mathematical enculturation (Bishop, 1988). In the symposium, some of the editors and authors will present the concept of the book and two of the chapters.

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**Chair: Camilla Normann Justnes, Norwegian Centre for Mathematics Education, Norway**

#### **Reflexive praxis leading to innovative early childhood mathematics**

Oliver Thiel (1), Elena Severina (2), Bob Perry (3), (1) Queen Maud University College, Norway; (2) Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway; (3) Peridot Education Pty Ltd, Australia

The talk presents a project that focuses on children's mathematics learning through play and other pedagogical approaches. It is based on research from several different contexts around the world by Thiel and Perry (2018), Severina and Helgesen (2017), Worthington and van Oers (2016, 2017), Figueiredo, Gomes and Rodrigues (2018), and others. As theoretical and conceptual framework, we use Alan Bishop's theory of mathematical enculturation and his six fundamental mathematical activities (Bishop, 1988). Each facet of the research project starts with a narrative vignette that describes young children's mathematical learning in a specific context. It is followed by three commentaries – one written by a researcher, one by a practitioner, and a third written by a researcher from a country or cultural background different from the source of the vignette. In this way, we combine practice and research and facilitate international comparisons. The commentaries draw attention to the needs of adults working with children to engage with their professional knowledge and its application, as well as ensuring that their work is grounded in egalitarian principles and ethical practice. The findings show the importance of reflexivity in both research and practice concerning early childhood mathematics education and the need for researchers and practitioners to open their practice to peer scrutiny. The project contributes to the translation of research into practice – as well as providing a forum where practice can inform ongoing research directions. It will be of interest to educators and practitioners as well as policy-makers and researchers, across diverse contexts.

*early mathematics, international comparison, reflexivity, mathematical enculturation, innovative approaches*

#### **Harry's Line Work**

Robert Perry (1), Sue Dockett (1), Elspeth Harley (2), (1) Charles Sturt University and Peridot Education Pty Ltd., Australia; (2) Charles Sturt University, Australia

This presentation is an example from the overall research project which uses a narrative vignette from an Australian preschool educator to explore the potential of a 4-year-old child's play in their mathematical development, particularly geometry and measurement. The presentation builds upon work about learning stories (Carr and Lee), powerful mathematical ideas (Perry and Dockett) and the current emphasis on STEM in early childhood. The framework underlying the example and the entire project is that of Bishop's (1988) six fundamental mathematical activities as they are displayed through children's play. A narrative vignette drawn from educator observation in an Australian preschool, jointly devised by the educator and researchers, was analysed using Bishop's activities. Commentaries have been written by educators and researchers, including one commentary from a researcher

unfamiliar with the context of the vignette. The presentation will compare and contrast these commentaries and consider their implications for early childhood mathematics education. All institutional and practical requirements for ethics clearance, informed consent and participation were strictly adhered to. Young children's play often involves many different mathematical ideas and can be extended by educators who are aware of the possibilities while remaining cognizant of the importance of children's initiation and conduct of play. The mathematical possibilities are construed by commentators based in their own contexts and knowledge, but all fit within Bishop's six activities. The possibilities of mathematical learning facilitated by analyses of play activities through Bishop's six activities can form the basis of preschool mathematics curriculum. Practical examples will be provided.

*preschool, mathematics learning fundamental mathematics activities, play, curriculum*

### **The power of play: Cowboys, measuring tapes and the construction of meanings by children**

Maria Figueiredo, Ana Patricia Martins, Helena Gomes, Myriam Marchese, Polytechnic of Viseu, Portugal

A practitioner research study focused children's play with a measuring tape in the doll house. The aim was to analyse the different meanings children gave to the tool when introduced in a play-centre, both through play and language. The measuring tape was introduced in the doll house with no explanation. The study was based on the concept of literacy-enriched play centres discussed by Christie and Roskos (2009) and Bishop's (1991) socially constructed perspective on Mathematics. Valuing play and the organization of the educational environment, as well as the perspective on Mathematics and its Didactic that we adopted are consistent with the Curricular Guidelines for Early Childhood Education in Portugal (Ministry of Education, 2016). It was an interpretative study, based on participant observation and interviews with the 18 children of 3 to 6 years old. The free play was observed for 3 weeks and event sampling was used together with the Louvain Involvement Scale for Young Children (Portugal & Laevers, 2018). The individual, short, informal interviews happened after play time focusing on the tape and on measuring. Informed consents were collected from the children and the parents. Children differed in their use of the measuring tape. A group recognized it and used it for measuring during play; a second group recognized it but was unsure about how to use it; a third group played with it with no acknowledgment of its function. Enriching play centres mathematically draws children's knowledge during play and turns it into resources for the whole group's learning.

*enriched play centres, mathematics, measurement, children's perspectives, play*

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## **A 11**

### **OUTDOOR LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Sigal Achituv, Gordon College of Education and Oranim College of Education, Israel**

### **Kindergarten teachers and parents' perceptions about the "junkyard" as a unique pedagogical communal approach**

Sigal Achituv (1), Shulamit Manzura (2), (1) Gordon College of Education and Oranim College of Education, Israel; (2) Efrata College of Education and Oranim College of Education, Israel

The study explores kindergarten teachers and parents' perceptions about the "Junkyard Communal Approach", and their role in its operation. The Kibbutz educational system acts as an incubator of EC innovations adopted in Israeli settings (Brody, 2017). One innovation is the "Junkyard", a unique environment, consisting of artifacts of the adult world no longer in use, and encouraging children's free-play (Haas & Gavish, 2008; Golden et al., 2017). The junkyard as a constructivist ecological based approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Libman, 2013) is adapted to child's developmental needs (Achituv, 2014) and is considered a major tool by teachers trained on "Junkyard Approach" (Vib, 2017). This qualitative study involved: 14 in-depth interviews with kindergarten teachers operating junkyards in rural and urban areas; 12 parents; and observations at kindergartens' junkyards. A consent form and information sheet were provided to all participants. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. No conflicts of interest were found between researchers and research subjects. The junkyard was found as reflecting the community environment and as contributing to all aspects of children's development. Teachers' role was perceived as building the junkyard, being responsible for routine maintenance, and mediating during activities. In an increasingly sterile living environment, the junkyard is a unique area representing real life and communal experience adapted for young children. The research highlights the need to support teachers' staff, community, and supervisors when implementing the "Junkyard Approach". This study contributes to spreading the "Junkyard Approach" in ECE policies and practices in Israel and abroad.

*junkyard approach, communal approach, Kibbutz educational system, children's development, children's free play*

### **Children as eco-citizens?**

Marianne Pretshus Heggen (1), Barbara Marie Sageidet (2), Veronica Bergan (3), Nina Goga (1), Liv Torunn Grindheim (1), Inger Wallem Krempig (3), Anne Myklebust Lynngård (1), Tove Agnes Utsi (3), (1) Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway; (2) University of Stavanger, Norway; (3) The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

In this presentation we explore whether treating children as being and becoming eco-citizens should be the aim of education for sustainability in ECE. We consider previously published research on child-sized citizenship, connection with nature, children's curiosity and children's literature, and through environmentally friendly practices as gardening and harvesting wild food. Viewing children as different citizens (James, 2011), we investigate how their different citizenship may support a transition to a more sustainable community. The implications of this in early childhood is investigated using Biestas (2009) three dimensions of education; subjectification, socialisation and qualification. We see children as competent beings, influencing, and being influenced by, their cultural-historical context. This theoretical study is an interdisciplinary inquiry, and through collaborative dialogue, we transform the understanding of children as eco-citizens. As this study is theoretical, our ethical concern was to be true to the original literature and to children as different citizens. Letting children come forward, for example in harvest activities, may lead to opportunities where the children and teachers learn together, and explore together. By subjectifying the children in such situations, the children may contribute as different citizens to a change towards a higher degree of sustainability. Early childhood education may hence provide possibilities for the children's contribution as being eco-citizens, as well as qualifying them for the role as becoming eco-citizens. We conclude that children should be viewed as being and becoming eco-citizens and that this should be one of the primary goals of ECEfs.

*education for sustainability, citizenship children's literature, children's curiosity, children's contribution*

### **Nature pedagogies for sustainability in 'bush kinder', Australia.**

Fran Hughes, TAFE NSW, Australia

This doctoral study explored how the links between nature and sustainability were perceived by a sample of early childhood educators in bush kinder settings in Australia, and the implications for their pedagogy. The study is built on previous early childhood education for sustainability (ECEfs) research and its place in nature based programs (Hass & Ashman, 2014; Kelly & White, 2013; Rafferty, 2013), however, there is limited research about the related pedagogies. A social constructivist (Crotty, 1998) theoretical framework to construct and apply knowledge underpinned the study. Early childhood educator's agency towards transformative change was supported by a methodology based upon Participatory Action Research (PAR), Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and Case Study. Data collection methods included individual interviews, focus groups, educator reflective journals and researcher field notes from participant observation. These were collected over an eight-month period. Ethical issues were considered according to the University of New England guidelines on ethical research. Study findings suggested that the distinctions between nature and sustainability were often not easily identifiable by the participating educators. Further findings suggested that the participating educators perceived that their relationships with nature, their awareness and understandings of Indigenous connections to the land, and place-responsive pedagogies played an important role in re-imagining the efficacy of their teaching practices in bush kinder. The study has implications for both policy and practice, particularly in re-thinking the assumption that children's connection with nature equates with Efs, and educators' understanding of their own pedagogical roles in relation to a nature-sustainability nexus.

*Early childhood education for sustainability, nature pedagogy, bush kinder, Indigenous, place*

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## **A 12**

### **PLAY PEDAGOGIES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Cristina Mesquita, Instituto Politécnico de Bragança, Portugal**

### **Conceptualising power in play pedagogy**

Una McCabe, Thérèse Farrell, Dublin City University, Ireland

This research presents a reinterpretation of play vignettes using a Foucauldian lens. It documents a re-imagination of research which was originally concerned with sociodramatic play interventions. The contribution play makes to young children's learning and development has been widely acknowledged and discussed (Broadhead, 2004; Moyles, 2015; Wood, 2013). Power is examined by Foucault who discusses "the micro-physics of power" embedded in institutions (Foucault, 1977, p.26). We argue that these micro-physics of power also permeate play pedagogy. Engagement in this type of thinking provides an alternative lens

for analysis, and has the potential to be productive, to create discourse and develop new ways of thinking. Originally, the study included thirty-two children aged three to six. Their sociodramatic play was recorded before, during and after adult involvement. Analysis was previously conducted using a sociocultural lens. In this study, the data is reanalysed using a Foucauldian lens to focus on the power dynamics in the play episodes in order to see if new findings emerge. The research is low risk as it is a desk based reinterpretation of existing data. In the original study from which the data was gathered, full permission was obtained from participating children and their educators and parents or guardians. The reimagining of the data offers new insights into play pedagogy and the ways in which children seek and find power in play episodes. The results of the reinterpretation suggest a challenge to dominant ideologies within the discourse of research in early childhood education.

*play, power, pedagogy, Foucault, sociodramatic*

### **Implementing a pedagogy of play**

Maria Kyriakou, University of Cyprus, Cyprus

This study aimed to explore the kind of actions and activities a kindergarten teacher developed in order to create and support a play environment. We draw upon a socio-cultural framework which supports relationships and scaffolding of experiences (Vygotsky, 1976). Teachers need to have the knowledge and the skills to observe children's play, assess children's play skills and recognize their play needs in order to effectively intervene and support children towards mature forms of play (Loizou, 2018). Play is "a dominant pedagogical force in early childhood education" (Ailwood, 2003). Developing play skills in children can give quality in their sociodramatic play and make it more successful. Ninety-five children of the ages 4-6 participate in this research (25 in experimental group and 70 in control group) with two of their teachers. Data collection included observations, videos, photographs, interviews, group conversations and teacher's diary. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analyse the data. Parental consent was acquired and all children voluntarily participated in all of the activities. The findings suggest that implementing pedagogy of play requires the consideration of four variables: 1. Assessing the procedure (culture of play, children play skills) 2. Play with children 3. Organizing and supporting an environment to create a culture of play 4. Reflection in teacher's actions and in the procedure. The comparison of experimental and control group showed that play based environments can support better the development of children's play skills. Professional development for play pedagogy- teacher practice etc,

*play & learning, play skills, play pedagogy, culture of play, children's play skills*

### **Mediation of guided play in early years education: A pilot of a professional development programme**

Valeska Grau (1), Amaya Lorca (1), Daniela Jadue (2), David Preiss (1), Katherine Strasser (1), Magdalena Muller (1), Macarena Perez (1), (1) Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile; (2) Universidad de O'higgins, Chile

This paper presents a study showing the design and implementation of a pilot teacher professional development programme aimed to improve mediation of guided play. Weisberg and collaborators (2013) claim that guided play is the best way to include the game in the curriculum of early childhood education. According to them, guided play incorporates both children autonomy and control of actions and adult structuring of the play environment. Trawick-Smith & Dziurgot (2011), advance in a model of play scaffolding, which aims to develop a suitable match between the needs of children and the teacher's guide. Following the frameworks of types of play (Whitebread et al, 2012) and playful pedagogies (Weisberg et al, 2015) and a socio-cultural paradigm, 10 early years educators participated in the programme. The sessions were based on observation and reflection of real practices. The effects of were measured through observation protocols, pre-post classroom videotaping and interviews. All teachers and head teachers and parents were asked for written consent. Children had to assent. Results show that teachers improved their mediation practices between pre and post, and showed an increase of frequency in all mediation roles, except from observation. In relation to observations protocols, there was a significant increase in constructive observations. Regarding the interviews, teachers highlighted the relevance of using videos to observe their own practice and acquiring knowledge to justify pedagogical decisions regarding to play implementation. This research could help the implementation of validated programmes of teacher education in relation to implementation and mediation of guided play.

*play, early years, mediation, educators, professional development*

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**Chair: Aikaterini Michalopoulou, University of Thessaly, Greece**

**The development of the reflective attitude on educational practices in initial teacher education**

Aikaterini Michalopoulou, University of Thessaly, Greece

The objective of our research is the investigation of the reflective attitude of 78 Early Childhood student teachers on their teaching practice, which is taking place in different kindergartens in Volos, Greece. Rosenstein (2002), Zeichner & Liston (1996) and Jay & Johnson (2002) developed different models of reflection, used in the educational practice. The theoretical framework used in our research is the typology of reflection developed by Jay and Johnson (2002) which involves three intertwined dimensions: descriptive, comparative and critical reflection. In the descriptive dimension, the practitioner describes the matter for reflection, in the comparative, the practitioner reframes the matter for reflection in the light of alternative views, perspectives and research and in the critical, a new perspective is established. The criteria developed by the students were as follows and consist the development of their reflection through their writings: level of children's interest, tracing children's original ideas, setting up collaborations and creation and functioning of groups, space, choice of subjects, methods and materials, changes they think need to be made to improve the programme they implemented. The ethical concerns were the respect for the persons and the voluntary participation. The students were informed regarding the procedure of the research project and their anonymity were protected. Based on the results, student teachers will be able to form a differentiated and balanced programme, consisting of activities to cultivate reflexivity. Our research can have an impact on the initial teacher education: early childhood professionals become more effective through critical reflection.

*descriptive reflection, comparative reflection, critical reflection, implementation, educational practice*

**Scheme and position as a tools of developing the reflection of preschool teachers in the analysis of video**

Olga Shiyana, Anna Iakshina, Moscow City University, Russia

The research aim is to study deficiencies and cultural tools of development of professional reflection. According to (Dewey, (1991), Schön (1983), Liston, Zeichner (1991) Costa and Kallick (2008)) teaching practice is reflective in its essence. In the works of Coffey (2014). Snoeyink (2010) Pirard (2013)) video-analysis is considered as an effective method for development of professional reflection, elicitation of weaknesses and strengths of practice. Theoretical framework relies on cultural-historical theory (Vygotsky) and concept of mediation is used to understand the mechanisms of reflection development. A qualitative analysis of the video recordings and reflective reports of students and teachers was carried out. Experts analysed the relevance of the reflexive report to the content of the video, the content and structure of the reports. 20 preschool teachers and 30 students took part in the study. Participation in the study was voluntary, participants could withdraw from the study at any time. We define reflection as the process of awareness and correlation of observations of children, tasks that are set by the teacher on the basis of observations, and the actions of the teacher. A qualitative analysis of reflective reports and video showed two groups of deficiencies: substantive (difficulty concentrating on the development of children) and structural (difficulty of correlating observations, tasks, and planning actions). Based on the analysis, an in-service training aimed at developing reflection was elaborated. Scheme and position are used as cultural tools of developing reflection. Outcomes may be used in in-service and pre-service training.

*professional development, preschool teacher reflection, schema, position*

**Early childhood practicum as a place for transformation of early childhood students' conceptions of teaching and learning**

Tijana Borovac, University of Osijek, Croatia

The aim of this study is to explore experiences of early childhood teacher students during their early practicum in kindergarten, how they reflect and describe children's learning through their documentation. Previous studies showed that working with children in early years' practicum, creates opportunities for early childhood student to re-think their existing beliefs about children ways of thinking and learning (Recchia, Shin, 2010), particularly if they were based on documentation. Rinaldi (2006) emphasises that for the teacher, being able to reflect on how the learning is proceeding means that teacher can base his teaching not on what he wants to teach, but on what the child wants to learn. The theoretical framework of the study is socio-cultural with reference



to Dewey, Vygotsky and Rogoff. The design of the study was qualitative case study in nature, involving 25 students. The data were collected through pre and post focus group interviews, document analysis of their documentation and reflections about their documentation experience. An informed consent has been obtained from all students to provide confidentiality. Early practicum provided a unique context for challenging some previously held notions concerning early childhood teaching and learning as the students encountered. When student teacher sees their role as learning alongside the children, their actions and documentation is very different than when they are thinking of their self as a conveyer of information, mediators of conflicts. Implications for future research and practice for early childhood teacher preparation programs are discussed particularly on basis of pedagogical documentation.

*early years practicum, pedagogical documentation, student teachers, children's learning, reflection*

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## **A 14**

### **QUALITY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALISATION IN A NEOLIBERAL CONTEXT**

Self-organised symposium

For many in the early childhood sector, professionalisation is a goal to be actively pursued as it is perceived to bring with it benefits of status, improved working conditions and better pay. Accompanying this is a focus on research investigating what it is that EC professionals do, and how can we best support them. In this symposium we will firstly explore teaching as improvisation in ECEC services in Denmark and Italy to examine how expert practitioners are able to achieve an effective balance between structure and improvisation in a neoliberal context that, internationally, attempts to define quality as measureable elements of practice. We then investigate professional identity development in beginning early childhood educators in British Columbia. The third paper challenges the idea that good quality early childhood practice can be identified and standardised, arguing the need for professional discretionary decision-making in order to adjust practice to context.

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**Chair: Margie Rogers, University of New England, Australia**

#### **If it ain't got that swing: Developing professional practice in ECEC through improvisation**

Fabio Dovigo, Danish School of Education, DPU Aarhus University, Denmark

Drawing on studies of jazz and other arts, the proposal suggests that expert teaching in ECEC is associated with creative improvisation based on constructivist, dialogic, and inquiry-based methods. ECEC has become a priority in many national agendas, leading to an increasing interest in developing professional practice to ensure quality services (Peeters, 2016; OECD, 2017). However, this development is generally interpreted as a linear process, where knowledge is externally produced and applied to achieve fixed and measurable outcomes (Dalli, Urban, 2013). The linear view of teaching doesn't match with the complexity of working in ECEC. It also undermines the professional identity of practitioners, who perceive themselves as disempowered (Kilderry, 2014; Osgood, 2006). Conversely, ensuring the quality of ECEC requires practitioners to be engaged in reflective conversations and develop significant meaning making (Dahlberg, Moss, 2005; Dalli, 2012). We adopted an ethnographic approach to carrying out extensive fieldwork in four kindergartens in Denmark and Italy. Data were collected through participant observation, conversations, and in-depth interviews with practitioners. We committed to respect confidentiality and anonymity of participants by asking practitioners and caregivers for informed consent. Far from linear and predictable, the process of developing meaning making activity through interaction between adults and children is intrinsically dynamic and open, based on improvisational as much as on planning abilities. The paper will provide room for discussion about the way expert practitioners are able to achieve an effective balance between structure and improvisation, as well as about the implications for the training of future ECEC practitioners.

*improvisation, professionalisation, quality, professional identity, meaning making*

#### **Professional identity development through a community of practice**

Laura Doan, Thompson Rivers University, Canada

This research explored the experiences of Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) who were part of a community of practice (COP). This COP is based on previous research with beginning ECEs in British Columbia (Doan, 2016). The work challenges traditional discourse of training and delivery, where educators are viewed as passive vessels waiting to be filled (Pacini-Ketchabaw, Nxumalo, Kocher, Elliot, and Sanchez, 2015). Rather, the educator is seen as an active, contributing agent, participating in the co-construction of knowledge. This perspective on continued learning within a COP supports the image of the educator as continuing to evolve, which challenges the current notions of professionalisation and competencies. This work is influenced by the theories of COP (Lave & Wenger, 1991), teacher efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998), and professional identity

development (Katz, 1972). This research is framed within a constructivist paradigm and is qualitative in nature. Participants took part in interviews and focus groups. The Canadian Tri-Council Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (Government of Canada, 2014) was adhered to in all stages of the research including informed consent, right to withdraw from participation in the study and confidentiality. Data is currently being analysed, but preliminary findings indicate that professional identity has developed through participation in the community of practice. Participants spoke about the development of both capacity and their sense of teacher efficacy. Given the high attrition rate, this work helps to inform policy makers on what ECEs need to sustain themselves in their chosen field.

*community of practice, induction, professional identity development, teacher efficacy, peer-mentoring*

### **Contextualised, not neoliberalised professionalism in early childhood**

Margie Rogers, University of New England, Australia

This paper seeks to challenge the idea that good quality early childhood practice can be identified and standardised, arguing the need for professional discretionary decision-making in order to adjust practice to context. The research project occurred in one Australian service, where specific cultural knowledge, care, partnership and support of potentially vulnerable families was highly valued by parents. However, such qualities were largely unrecognised by the staff themselves. There is a standardised neoliberal notion of what professionalism entails, adding importance to managerialism and the need for micromanagement (Giroux, 2013; 2015), standards, frameworks, lists of outcomes and expectations as part of supervision and the need for control as discussed by Graber (2012) and Monbiot (2016). The theoretical frame is neoliberalism that is argued by managers in terms of efficiency (Luks, 2017) but does not empower workers. The study used a Mosaic approach for data collection to harness the voices (Clarke & Moss, 2011) within the services and a narrative approach to presenting the data in order that the participant's narratives were heard (Polkinghorne, 1986). Ethical approval through the university was gained and a consent form and information sheet was given to all participants. This paper seeks to challenge the idea that good quality early childhood practice can be identified and standardised, arguing the need for professional discretionary decision-making in order to adjust practice to context. From this we can learn ways to support educators to recognise and value their own strengths and those that they work with, in their context.

*neoliberalism, context, families, educator professionalism, cultural knowledge*

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## **A 15**

### **RE-EXAMINING PARADIGMS, THEORIES AND METHODOLOGIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURES**

Self-organised symposium

Global climate change demands rethinking of worldviews, and education has long been touted as the conduit for change to illuminate new ways of human being in the world. Over recent decades in early childhood education various theories and methodologies have been scrutinised and qualitative paradigms shifted, but we argue core to these endeavors must be global sustainability. Early childhood educators and academics alike would readily espouse human intergenerational equity, but how can we be more sensitive to the human sciences and condition in a predominantly more than human world? In this symposium, we aim to provoke a re-examination of paradigms, theories and methodologies for working with young children and offer ways for moving forward in early childhood education for sustainability (ECEfS) research and practice. The studies shared capture the potential for ECEfS, from serendipitous materials like a rusted blue car to early childhood policy documents and relational ontologies.

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**Chair: Sue Elliott, University of New England, Australia**

### **Fostering ECEfS with a rusted blue car and young children in a Canadian nature preschool program**

Debra Harwood, Brock University, Canada

The study explores the co-presence of 'less than gorgeous materials' enmeshed with children's lives as they participated in a nature preschool program in Canada. The objective was to examine the ways in which the post-human landscape serves as an important referent in understanding and challenging theories of learning and teaching ECEfS. Building upon post-humanist research in ECEfS and critical theories that help to contest the centralism of humans. Taylor, Blaise, and Giugni (2013) write "a post-human landscape repositions childhood within a world that is much bigger than us (humans) and about more than our (human) concerns. It allows us to reconsider the ways in which children are both constituted by, and learn within, this more-than-human world" (p. 49). Post humanism (Taylor, 2017) as a theoretical frame repositions childhood and reconsiders children's learning as constituted both with and in a more than human world. A qualitative paradigm involved an ethnographic case study utilizing methods such as

participant-observer field research with pre-schoolers and their educators. Consent forms were provided to all adult participants. Ongoing assent was negotiated with the children with each visit. Only pseudonyms were used throughout and all participants could freely withdraw from the study at any time. This study offers a glimpse into the possibilities that can emerge when we move beyond human-centric ways of thinking about sustainability. Curricular and pedagogical changes are needed to counter the human/nature divide and romanticism associated with ECEfS. New policies and practices can emerge that promote children's inter/intra-relations to the world.

*early childhood education for sustainability, post-humanism, ethnography, critical perspectives, nature learning and teaching*

### **Regimes of truth in early childhood education for sustainability**

Eva Ärlemalm-Hagsér, Mälardalen University, Sweden

In this research the intention was to respond to the question: what regimes of truth about ECEfS and the dualisms such as nature–culture and human–nonhuman are to be seen in Swedish policy documents and educational practices? In this study, regimes of truth about early childhood education for sustainability (ECEfS), plus methodologies and theories reflecting nature–culture and human–nonhuman relations are scrutinized. This research is built on the need for further research on ECEfS (Davis & Elliott, 2014; Green, 2015; Somerville & Williams, 2015). Concepts including regimes of truth and critical pedagogies are employed as a theoretical framework in this study. This qualitative research draws on a methodological frame (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008) where a critical theoretical approach (Ideland & Malmberg, 2015) research comprises secondary data from policy and educational practices documents from 10 Swedish preschools randomly selected from 5 Swedish municipalities (urban to rural). The analytical method used is critical text analysis (Sterling et. al 2016). Ethical issues were considered according to the guidelines of the Swedish Research Council (2017), Ensuring fair representation in the selection of the data and confidentiality and anonymity for participating preschools. Preliminary findings are that policy documents and stated educational practices visibly demonstrate the complexity and ambiguity of sustainability issues. Where distribution of power, injustice, inequity and inequality are dilemmas that need to be negotiated in early childhood educational practice. The study has implications for both policy and practice according to that hegemonic ideologies connected to sustainability in children's lives demands visibility and deconstruction.

*critical theory, early childhood education for sustainability critical pedagogies, sustainability, early childhood educational practice*

### **Sustainability as an ontological matter instead of a predefined meaning: The case of ECEfS**

Kassahun Weldemariam, Gothenburg University Sweden

The aim is to explore how the notion of sustainability is conceptualized in ECE; and to examine post-anthropocentric practices of sustainability within ECE. Post-humanism (Taylor, 2013, 2017) criticises the child-centric approach and promote children's entanglements with nonhumans (Taylor and Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2015). This study draws on the backdrop of this anthropocentric critique. The study employs post-humanist framework (Haraway, 2016; Bennett, 2010). Since anthropocentrism is considered as a root cause of unsustainability, it is imperative to choose a theory that offers post-anthropocentric world view. Framed within post-structuralist paradigm, this study employs post-qualitative inquiry approach, i.e. thinking with concepts and philosophy (St. Pierre, 2018). This approach is chosen as it allows to decentres the human researcher and allow other non-human actors to come into play. Ethical guideline of the Swedish Research Council (2016) which ensures children's safety, privacy and anonymity of the data is followed. Written and verbal consent was obtained. Besides, emergent and unforeseen ethical issues are taken into account. It was evident that children's emergent relationships with places, animals and matter could be a springboard to address sustainability challenges. Hence, children are not just agentic learning subjects, but subjects to become-with and affected by other agentic actors. The study has an implication on how pedagogy is enacted, the role of the teacher, the role of the child and the notion of learning per se. Policies need to consider these ontological multiplicities which can open up new and alternative ways of learning and knowing.

*post-humanism, new-materialism, relational ontology, distributed agency, post-anthropocentric*

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## **A 16**

### **SIG RETHINKING PLAY - PLAY AND CHILDREN'S AGENCY**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium draws from research and theoretical contributions that present different aspects of children's agency during play and discuss the potentialities of the agentic role of children during their play both in early childhood settings and outdoor spaces. The role of supporting children's agency in play and at the same time the recognition of the complexity of this agency during

children's play interactions (play environment, children's competencies, teachers' role and children as researchers of their own play) are analysed in the three papers.

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**Chair: Sofia Avgitidou, University of Western Macedonia, Greece**

**Children's rights and agency in play and teacher lead activities**

Kristin Karlsdóttir, University of Iceland, Iceland

The aim is to explore how children's agency is differently supported in two preschools and how their agency is reflected in play. Children learn from participating in play and other activities of interest for them (Johnson et al., 2013; Wood, 2014). When playing children develop relationships with other children and pursue their own interests and autonomy (Howe, 2016). The study builds on the conviction that children are social agents who are competent, able and resilient. They are seen as agents and citizens at present time and the future (Prout & James, 2015). The study is ethnographically inspired; children's experiences were described in details and carefully interpreted, leading to the construction of representative cases, with the intention to better understand cultural contexts and how individual children make sense of the preschool context (Hatch & Coleman-King, 2015). Confidentiality and anonymity of data was attended to by gaining informed consent, reducing power imbalances, and building trust between the researcher and the participants (Dockett, 2008). The children were given fictitious names. The children's interactions in two preschools show that they needed to tackle diverse issues or problems, sometimes succeeding but at other times not. In the play situations children's competencies became explicit, very often showing children as active agents in their lives, but sometimes and for some children this did not happen. The findings might encourage teachers to look more closely into how children's agency is encouraged in the preschool and find ways to help children develop more inclusive interactions within their peer group.

*play, agency, peer cultures, competency, power relations*

**Agency, accountability and play**

Mandy Andrews, Plymouth University, United Kingdom

The aim is to share a theoretical framework and perspective for acknowledging children's agency arising from research into children's use of outdoor play places and spaces. This draws on understanding children are not only responsive agents in construction of their social and relational encounters, lives and experiences (James and Prout 1997; Lefebvre 1991) but are agentic actors, not 'othered' but 'becoming with' humans and other than human, creatures, things, landscapes (Haraway 2010; Barad 2007). Posthuman (Haraway 2016; Barad, 2007) and Deleuzian (2005) theoretical frames offer that children may be engaged in playful agentic encounters; both shaping and being shaped through intra-active processes. Broadly ethnographic and posthuman paradigms generate intra-active creative methodologies and walking encounters with children in their favourite play places. This approach challenges traditional ethics, and accountability. Inclusion is not first about a meeting, and then an ethics that is attached to it, but a recognition that those are intimately entangled. It matters which stories we are telling and which remain untold (Tynell 2016). University, BERA and EECERA guidelines, permissions consents and confidentiality are applied. Traditional accountability for the predictable outcomes generated through structured instrumentalism located in a perspective of the mature human vision is challenged through intra-active approaches with children. Agency is not anthropocentrically owned, but resides in complexity of encounters and potentialities. Such a theoretical awareness transforms practice, accompanied by an ethical accountability for moral choices, for an expansion of 'what might be' rather than adult defined convergent outputs of 'what should be'.

*play, agency post-human intra-action, accountability, ethics of choice*

**Children as researchers and active constructors of their play**

Sofia Avgitidou (1), Maria Tanakidou (2), (1) University of Western Macedonia, Greece; (2) Early Childhood Education, Norway

This research studies the process of facilitating children as researchers and active participants in the re-organization of their play classroom environment. An emphasis on empowering children's voices and participation in decision making has been connected with the role of children as researchers with various methodologies ((Clark & Moss, 2001; Einarsdottir, 2005). This study draws from current sociological (Prout & James, 1990; Mayall, 2002) and pedagogical theories (Clark, 2005) that stress the need to support and listen to children's voices and support their participation in decision-making and action (Lansdown, 2005). This is a qualitative study. Field notes, children's interviews and photographs are analysed to identify children's perspectives and the teacher's issues of concern as well as the challenges in facilitating children's agency, the chosen actions and reflections about their effects. According to ethics rules (Alderson & Morrow, 2011) the children were informed that they were completely free in their decision to participate in the research. Main challenges regarding supporting children's agency regard fostering dialogue and

systematic interaction among children, making visible their views and proposals, sustaining their interest for problem solving and action. Relevant actions are presented and reflectively criticised. Results enhance teachers' awareness of the issues and processes for supporting children's agency and participation in the daily educational process.

*children as researchers, free play, agency, teachers' role, dialogue*

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## **A 17**

### **WHAT SHOULD BE IN A CURRICULUM FOR TEACHER EDUCATION AND HOW CAN IT BE DELIVERED?**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Mine Conkbayir, Mine Conkbayir Consultancy, United Kingdom**

#### **Making EC-training count - Implementation of a curriculum for trainers**

Robert Jurleta, Sarah Girlich, Landeskompetenzzentrum zur Sprachförderung an Kindertageseinrichtungen in Sachsen (LakoS), Germany

The vocational training of EC-professionals is defined by the curricula of the federal states in Germany. However, the concrete realisation of the content lies with the teachers. As a result, there is no direct comparability of different skills among new entrants. The aim of this paper is to examine the necessary topics on language promotion and development in early years for EC-professionals in their daily working routines and to develop a curriculum for trainers and teachers. As shown in Meyer (2019) and Friedrichs (2015) there are different aspects to consider when developing content for trainers and EC-professionals (e.g. links to existing skills, participation, sustainability). Training-programs have to be suited for trainers and ec-professionals; however, it also needs to facilitate their daily work-routines. Based on Fröhlich-Gildhoff (2017) we developed and evaluated training-content and materials (Girlich, Jurleta, Glück 2018). Based on a first survey we developed the curriculum. After a 5-day-training (3+2 days) all participants took part in a structured questionnaire and were asked in an interview to evaluate the content and the methods of the curriculum. The quantitative and qualitative analysis showed benefits of practical tasks, enabling transfer and favours the demand-driven approach. Ethical considerations and anonymity are secured in the interview and the questionnaire. The internal evaluation of the curriculum showed that factors of presentation method, amount of content and factors of transfer need to be considered. The implementation of other training courses for trainers needs to be improved. Our findings show implications for train-the-trainer- and EC-professional-programmes regarding practical suitability and comprehensibility.

*professionalism, train the trainer, transfer of training, process support, language development*

#### **How to make research accessible and attractive to ECEC professionals through a blog**

Helena Taelman (1), Olga Wysłowska (2), Kamila Wichrowska (2), Tiago Almeida (3), Silvia Barros (3), Carla Peixoto (3), Eva Bombeke (1), Astrid Cornelis (4), Ruth Heuvelman-Kroon (5), Leonie Steenis (6), (1) ODISEE, Belgium; (2) University of Warsaw, Poland; (3) Escola Superior de Educação de Lisboa, Portugal; (4) Thomas More, Belgium; (5) CED group, Netherlands; (6) Fontys, Netherlands

Flemish teacher educators have maintained a successful blog for ECEC professionals since 2015. This initiative was followed by Dutch, Polish and Portuguese blogs in September 2018, and a European blog in January 2019, aiming to bridge research and practice concerning diversity and social inclusion. ECEC professionals' information habits, needs and wishes were investigated to adjust the contents of those blogs. The scarce research on information literacy concerns teachers of older children, who prefer online sources and avoid academic literature (Shipman et al., 2015) The blogs build on the transactional professionalisation model of Slot et al. (2017), by offering three entrees to change: (1) new knowledge and raising awareness of beliefs, (2) practice tips, which may change competences through enactment, (3) reflection. 13 focus groups with ECEC professionals over 4 countries were conducted using a shared qualitative research procedure within educational design research. These data will be supplemented by analyses of the blogs' reading statistics. Aims and privacy measures were clarified and participants gave active consent. Professionals reported most confidence in dealing with children from poor families and to a lesser extent with children from ethnic minority or immigrant background or children with disabilities, which reflects the population of children they are experienced in working with. When looking for information, professionals prefer consulting colleagues or searching online, while academic journals are unpopular. They prefer concrete tips, want to know what works, and value for the acknowledgement of existing practices. This study is relevant to improve the bridge between research and practice.

*research communication, blog diversity and social inclusion, European dissemination, bridge between research and practice*

## **An exploration of the relationship between neuroscience and Early Years (EY) training: Case studies of knowledge transfer**

Mine Conkbayir, Mine Conkbayir Consultancy, United Kingdom

This presentation will explore ways knowledge from neuroscience is transferred to EY training; how knowledge from brain development/neuroscience informs EY pedagogy and practice; current EY training practices in this area; how such training might be enhanced; and identify enablers and inhibitors in the process of neuroscience knowledge creation and knowledge transfer. This presentation builds on work from Howard-Jones (2007), Goswami (2006) and Immordino-Yang et al., (2007) who demonstrate how knowledge from neuroscience can inform EY and the potential limitations of this. This research explored knowledge transfer models (Ward et al., 2009; Gladwell, 2000 and Lave and Wenger, 1991) and devised a new theory to achieve knowledge transfer. The presentation will also explore change processes (e.g. Gladwell, 2000; Handy, 1993 and Kotter, 1996) and organisational learning theory. Within this the five key concepts of knowledge creation, knowledge transfer, change process, curriculum design, power and truth are explored. This research operates within an interpretivist, qualitative paradigm, using survey and case study methodologies with questionnaire, interview and documentary analysis as individual methods. Ethical considerations resulted in a participant information letter outlining informed consent, opportunity to opt out at any point and anonymity. This research found that there is no universally effective knowledge transfer process; individuals must be creative, brave and unique in their approach to developing their own change processes to assimilate new knowledge. My findings, utilised by EY lecturers, encourage widespread inclusion of educational neuroscience in EY training.

*knowledge transfer, knowledge creation, change processes, neuroscience, professionalisation*

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**A 18**

## **EFFECTIVENESS, TRANSFORMATION AND VALUE TRANSMISSION IN ECEC**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Jennifer van Krieken Robson, University of East London, United Kingdom**

### **Transforming early childhood pedagogy in South Africa**

Thembi Phala, Hasina Banu Ebrahim, Donna Hannaway, University of South Africa, South Africa

The aim of this paper was to provide situated accounts of pedagogy through multiple practitioner voices, which enabled thoughts on the transformation needed in early care and education (ECEC) for birth to five. Pedagogy-in-Participation (Formosinho and Oliveira-Formosinho, 2008 and later Oliveira-Formosinho and Formosinho, 2012) underpinned the study. A multi-faceted conceptualisation of early childhood pedagogy was favoured which is situated and context-bound. The rights-based lens (Formosinho and Oliveira-Formosinho, 2008) together with, social (Vygotsky) and critical constructivism (Apple, 1982) was used to unpack pedagogy for this study. This qualitative case study, which used structured questionnaires, was located in the critical constructivist paradigm. The main ethical concern related to protection of the participants. All participants consented to the study and were guaranteed anonymity. The purpose and value, as well as the social contribution of the research was responsibly undertaken. Four key learnings arose, which were; conceptions of pedagogy; inequities, exclusions and diversity; pedagogic relationships; and pedagogic strategies. The implications are for professional development practices and ECEC teacher competencies from the vantage point of rights-based framings and inclusive democratic practices with and for all young South African children. Furthermore, pedagogic approaches and practices must pay attention to equity, inclusion and diversity and young children's development and learning must be approached by paying attention to equity in pedagogic relationships.

*transformative pedagogy, early childhood care and education, inequities, exclusions and diversity, pedagogic strategies, pedagogic relationships*

### **Creating effective early childhood teachers: Accountability and impact with measure of student learning**

Janet Arndt (1), Mary Ellen McGuire-Schwartz (2), (1) Gordon College, United States; (2) Rhode Island College, United States

Developing effective Early Childhood (EC) teachers is crucial to meeting the goal of "Early Years: Making it Count". To identify evidence of teaching effectiveness that promotes impact on young students' learning, 15 EC teacher candidates participated in a case study (Yin, 2018) as part of their practicum at small USA liberal arts college. Teacher candidates were taught intentional teaching (Epstein, 2014; Neuman, 2019; Wagner & Parks, 2015) and how to identify student's learning evidence as well as methodologies to measure learning (Stipek & Byler, 2004; 2011). During practicum, teacher candidates completed the Measure of Student Learning (MSL). Teacher candidates identified literacy or numeracy content students would be expected to know using multiple collection methods pre and post teaching (Bas & Beyhan, 2019). Teacher candidates wrote well-structured lessons which included Universal Design for Learning guidelines (CAST, 2019) to meet diverse learners' multi-sensory needs. Teacher candidates

taught, adjusted practice, provided challenges for advanced students, and intervention for at-risk students. Mixed methods (Creswell, 2014) were used by each teacher candidate to measure their students' learning. Multiple methods contributed to trustworthiness. Teacher candidates committed to confidentiality in data collection and dissemination of findings. Post-analysis of lessons and reflections by teacher candidates provided qualitative data to enrich understanding of the process. Teacher candidates analysed qualitative and quantitative data, displayed findings using graphics to demonstrate measure of students' learning growth. Extrapolated findings reveal how qualitative and quantitative assessments demonstrate impact of early childhood learning growth to make early years count.

*early childhood teacher effectiveness, accountability assessment, intentional teaching, growth in student learning*

### **How do practitioners in early years provision promote fundamental British values?**

Jennifer van Krieken Robson, University of East London, United Kingdom

This research explores how early childhood practitioners in England mediated the requirement to promote Fundamental British Values (FBV), as a counter terrorism strategy, through their pedagogical practice. There is a growing body of critical research examining the impact of FBV within both primary and secondary education. The study is situated with the literature on values education in ECEC. Viewed through the post-modern lens, understandings of values may shift in the constant search for authoritative sources (Bauman, 1993). Theoretical perspectives on moral pedagogy (Basourakos, 1999) may support an understanding of how FBV is mediated in early childhood pedagogy. This study was conducted within the interpretivist paradigm and explores the multiple understandings of FBV. ECEC practitioners' interpretation of FBVs was not separable from ECEC provision so case study was relevant. Data was collected through semi structured interviews with ECEC practitioners and samples of pedagogical documentation constructed by adults and children. I reflected on the relationships of power throughout the project between the researcher, adult and children participants. Adults were informed of the research and their consent sought. Children were invited to give verbal assent. Practitioners deployed a contextual moral pedagogy where children construct understandings of moral values and practices characterised by rich democratic dialogues. ECE practitioners can reflect on the ways in which they implement national policy that may impose a specific set of values on both practitioners and children.

*early childhood education and care, counter terrorism, values education, moral pedagogy, fundamental British values*

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## **A 19**

### **TRANSITIONS TO PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Tunde Anna Tasko, Eszterhazy Karoly University, Hungary**

#### **Transition to primary school in Ireland: Findings from an Irish cohort study**

Elizabeth Tobin, Jennifer Symonds, Abbie Cahoon, Dymrna Devine, Seaneen Sloan, University College Dublin, Ireland

This presentation discusses findings from a new, national longitudinal study of primary schooling in Ireland, which aims to capture data on primary education including the transition from preschool, building on existing Irish research on curriculum and pedagogy in the early years (Hayes & O'Neill, 2017; Moloney, 2011; Neylon, 2014), school readiness (McGettigan & Gray, 2012) and transition practices (Ring, 2016, 2018). Underpinned by an ecological framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000) which acknowledges the complex interrelationships between the home, preschool and primary school in influencing children's learning and development, this presentation draws on data collected within a positivist paradigm. Survey methodology is being used to collect quantitative data from parents and early years professionals in approximately 300 settings. Data are being collected on the preschool environment, curriculum and staffing, child social, emotional and behavioural development, the home learning environment, family socio-demographics, primary school choice and transition preparation, and links between preschools and primary schools. Participation is entirely voluntary and based on informed consent. Ethical approval was received from the UCD Human Research Ethics Committee. Data collection and analysis are currently in progress. This study is positioned to inform a number of important policy and practice developments in Ireland, including the first whole government early years strategy (Dept. for Children and Youth Affairs, 2018), the recent expansion of free universal early years places, the establishment of quality frameworks, regulations and inspections for early years settings, and the implementation of an early childhood curriculum framework (NCCA, 2009).

*transition to primary school, school readiness, early years curriculum, home learning environment, quantitative methods*

## **Two types of the transition from preschool education to primary school education in Japan**

Sachiko Asai (1), Ryoko Kodama (2), Motoko Ohta (3), (1) University of Tokyo, Japan; (2) Ochanomizu University, Japan; (3) Wako University, Japan

This research aims to identify two types of transition from pre-primary to primary schools by examining the practice of the two national laboratory kindergartens, Ochanomizu University Kindergarten and Kobe University Kindergarten. In Japan, transition became a big issue in the 1990s, and the two kindergartens have been seeking the best way to make transition smooth. Ministry of Education made it clear that the teachers' mutual understanding of teaching principles and methods is important (Country Note on Transitions between ECEC and Primary Education Japan, MEXT, 2016). OECD recommends "child-centred transition" (OECD, 2017). In many countries, however, there is an increasing tendency toward "schoolification". At Ochanomizu, the teachers of the Kindergarten and the Primary School collaborated and explored "child-centred transition". The teachers of Kobe University Kindergarten tried to clarify the readiness for school curricula. Based on historical scholarship, we collected and analysed the research reports on transition by the two kindergartens from the 1990s to the present day. The target materials are all open documents. Names of the teachers and pupils appear frequently, but they are modified into fictitious names. In the research project of Ochanomizu University Kindergarten and Primary School, teachers did not choose the way to schoolification of the Kindergarten; instead, the Primary School tried to change their concept of learning framework. In contrast, the teachers of Kobe University Kindergarten indicated "desirable natures, abilities and figures" when children enter primary schools. This study will contribute to the inquiry into an alternative way that would not lead to schoolification of ECE.

*transition, schoolification, child-centred transition, readiness for school, early childhood education in Japan*

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## **A 20**

### **APPROACHES TO DEVELOPING SERVICES FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Victoria Michaelidou, University of Cyprus Nursery & Kindergarten School, Cyprus**

#### **A place-based approach to improving early child development outcomes**

Clare Law, Centre for Early Child Development, United Kingdom

Blackpool Better Start is an inclusive partnership approach, collectively laying foundations that will enable babies and young children to thrive in the context of sensitive and responsive relationships with their caregivers. It is a strategic investment by the National Lottery. The case for investing in Early Childhood Development (ECD) is compelling. There is strong evidence from multiple disciplines that pregnancy and early years is a particularly sensitive period of life, when foundations are set for future learning, behaviour and health. Marmot, M. (2010) Dartington Social Research Centre (2013) (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Shonkoff, Richter, van der Gaag & Bhutta, 2012). The programme is inspired by collective impact and wider systems change models and a community development framework, reducing key stressors and building on strengths. We are taking a whole systems approach. Through a place-based approach we are measuring impact across outcomes through individual programme level quantitative measures, utilising stories and listening to seldom heard voices through a community engagement strategy. The programme takes a test and learn approach and learning is gathered from staff and service users. Support measures are in place to mitigate risk, with robust structures for staff and families. Improving ECD outcomes is not the responsibility of any professional or service. Blackpool Better Start illustrate the potential of joined up, systems-wide approaches to improving ECD outcomes. The work will put the science and evidence of ECD into practice. The partnership is evaluating the impact and sharing learning within and beyond A Better Start nationally.

*community, place-based, adversity, resilience, collective impact*

#### **Professional competencies of staff members in family support programmes**

Franziska Cohen (1), Mareike Trauernicht (1), Rianne Francot (2), Martine Broekhuizen (2), Yvonne Anders (1), (1) Freie University, Germany; (2) Universiteit Utrecht, Netherlands

This study examines, what professional competencies of staff members are needed when working in a diverse environment of family support programmes. Various long-term studies show that early family support programmes have a positive impact on child development (Karoly et al., 2005; Teti et al., 2017). Previous research about the requirements of professionals in the area of early childhood education and care [ECEC] (Fröhlich-Gildhoff et al., 2011; Siraj-Blatchford et al. 2002) revealed different facets of professional competences. However, less is known about professional competencies of staff members in successful family support



programmes. Moreover, the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in European societies leads to new challenges for family support programmes: With this study, we followed the qualitative research paradigm. We conducted a comparative qualitative study of two German (Chancenreich, Stadtteilmütter) and one Dutch family support programme (Step). The perspectives of the providers, financiers, staff and parents were captured by focus groups and expert interviews. A qualitative content analysis was conducted with MAXQDA (GER) and NVivo (NL) by examining the professional competencies of staff members. Ethical issues in conducting the study were addressed with informed consents and respect for anonymity and confidentiality for the participants. First findings indicate that a strong motivation and the ability to create trust with families in combination with professional skills and knowledge are important staff requirements for a successful programme. Results are discussed in light of existing research, to develop a refined model for professional competences in family support services that can be used for organisational development.

*family support programmes, professional competencies, comparative analysis, motivation, attitude*

### **Vision to reality: First 5: A whole-of-government strategy for babies, young children and their families**

Nuala Connolly, Anne-Marie Brooks, Hazel O'Byrne, Early Years Division, Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Ireland

This paper describes the vision and roadmap of First 5, Ireland's Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028, to build an effective early childhood system to support positive experiences across young children's lives. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) led the Strategy development and is responsible for overseeing implementation. The Strategy draws on developmental theory (Piaget, 1964), attachment theory (Bowlby, 1980), literature on early intervention (Allen, 2011), parenting (Gutman, L. and Feinstein, L., 2007), neuroscience (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000) and health outcomes (Canny et al., 2018). Progressive Universalism, the core conceptual basis, prioritises strengthening supports for all and includes proportionate measures for those who need additional support. The development was informed by the Report of an Expert Advisory Group. Other contributions included a consultation with young children, Open Policy Debates, submissions from organisations and the bi-lateral work of an Inter-Departmental group. The starting point for developing this Strategy was to consider babies and young children. The Strategy is informed by evidence, children's rights as enshrined in the UNCRC, honouring young children's views. First 5 was launched in November 2018. A three-year Implementation Plan will be published in May 2019, followed by a Research and Evaluation Strategy. The paper will present the vision, major areas of action and the roadmap for implementation. The vision of First 5 is to enhance early childhood in Ireland. The Strategy will be the foundation of an ambitious reform agenda for babies, young children and their families in Ireland.

*early years, national policy, strategy, early learning and care, communities*

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## **A 21**

### **CONCEPTIONS AND PERCEPTIONS OF RISK IN EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Edita Rogulj, University of Zagreb, Croatia**

### **Barriers for outdoor play in early childhood education and care (ECEC) institutions: Perception of risk in children's play among European parents and ECEC practitioners**

Ellen Beate Hansen Sandseter (1), Trond Løge Hagen (1), Rita Cordovil (2), Frederico Lopes (2), (1) Queen Maud University, Norway; (2) University of Lisbon, Portugal

This study aims at examining the factors that ECEC practitioners and parents experience as barriers for children's outdoor play in a cross cultural perspective. Risk aversive perceptions and practices among ECEC practitioners and parents have proven to be an important reason for the decline of young children's opportunities for free outdoor play and this is found to differ between cultures. The study is placed within the framework of ecological theory such as the Theory of Affordances (Gibson; Heft; Kyttä) in looking at children's opportunities to utilise diverse environments (also outdoors) for play and activities in order to promote their development, learning and health. This is a study within the pragmatic paradigm, with a mixed method approach. The results presented here are from questionnaires completed by ECEC practitioners (32) and parents (184) in Greece, Portugal, Estonia, Croatia and Norway. The data is analysed in the statistical software SPSS. The study complied with the research ethical requirements in each of the participating countries. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and anonymity was secured. Norwegian practitioners and parents see less barriers to children's play than those from the southern European countries. Traffic, stranger danger, lack of play spaces and poor play facilities are common barriers for children's outdoor play. The results will provide important information on barriers on children's outdoor play that will be used to further develop the best suited

means of working to increase children's outdoor play in European countries, targeting both politicians, parents, ECEC owners and practitioners.

*outdoor play, children, barriers, risk, perceptions*

### **Opinion kindergarten teachers about risky play**

Edita Rogulj, University of Zagreb, Croatia

The aim of the research is to get opinion of 150 teachers from Zagreb, about concept children play with element risky play. Sandseter (2011) gives a review the concept of risk play and division of activities that have a risk element. Hill & Bundy (2014) develops a new instrument for measuring teacher's tolerance to the everyday risk in children play. Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological model of man's environment provides the basis for observing the environmental impact of the ecological system on an individual in the context of the environment. The combination of biological and environmental impacts leaves a strong influence to child development. Ecological influence is part of a paradigm of "deep ecology" based on the quality of pedagogical approach to a risky play. TRIPS question will be used for data collection of opinion of teachers (Hill & Bundy (2014)). The Statistical Social Science Pack will be used for analogy the results. To all participants was explaining the goal of research and purpose. The research is anonymous and voluntary. Research was conducted in accordance with methodological research questions based on the highest quality standards. According to the results, the teachers need make changes about the risky play in the practice based on the theoretical framework. Increasing the tolerance of risky play, teachers making new opportunity for children learning. Implementing the State Pedagogical Standard in the segment of regulating the number of children in the group would facilitate the integration of the Outdoor Concept.

*children early and preschool age, ecology, free play, nature, Outdoor Concept*

### **Towards a re-conceptualisation of risk in early childhood education**

Mandy Cooke (1), Sandie Wong (2), (1) Charles Sturt University, Australia, Frances Press (3), (2) Macquarie University, Australia; (3) Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

This research explored educators' perspectives and practices of beneficial risk-taking in early childhood education. Beneficial risk-taking – risk-taking that may have positive outcomes for learning and development – is acknowledged as being an important part of early childhood (Little & Eager, 2015). Previous research has predominantly examined children's risk-taking in outdoor physical play (for example, Little, 2010; Sandseter, 2009). Less attention has been paid to children's risk-taking indoors, in activities other than play, in non-physical domains and educators' risk-taking. This study applied the theory of practice architectures as a theoretical, methodological and analytical framework. The theory of practice architectures is an ontological site based practice theory (Kemmis et al., 2014). It provides a way to move beyond "the elusive search for 'best practice'" (Mockler, 2016, p. xxiii) toward a more individualised approach that recognises the diversity of education settings. Data was gathered through a qualitative case study consisting of observations, interviews and document analysis. Data was analysed using thematic analysis and the theory of practice architectures. The study was approved by the Charles Sturt University Human Research Ethics Committee. Procedures of informed consent from parents and educators, and ongoing assent from children were respected. Initial results suggest that the predominant discourse of risk-taking in children's outdoor play is largely reflected in educators' perceptions and practices. Although some educators are aware of a broad range of risk-taking, findings suggest greater attention needs to be paid to social, emotional and cognitive risk-taking and the risks associated with educators' learning and curriculum development.

*risk, risk-taking, risky play, educators' practice, theory of practice architectures*

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## **A 22**

### **DIGITAL MEDIA AS A WAY TO MAKE VULNERABLE CHILDREN'S VOICES COUNT**

Self-organised symposium

The symposium presents results from a collaborative R&D project in which researchers and practitioners explore, demonstrate and discuss how digital media may create new possibilities for children to participate as active agents in their own lives, also when things are problematic. The purpose of the research was to: 1. Facilitate that professional caregivers base all dialogues, activities and encounters with children (and parents) on each specific child's perspectives on the situation. 2. Expand the child's ability to bring its own understandings into encounters with professional caregivers through multimodal narrative forms that offer children with sparsely verbal language new opportunities for participation. The term multimodal indicates that different means or channels

are always used simultaneously as tools in communication. 3. Preserve the child's narratives and perspectives in a persisting form that allows for dialogue within a broader horizon of themes coming from several of the child's different life arenas.

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**Chair: Anette Boye Koch, VIA University College, Denmark**

**The use of digital media to enhance vulnerable children's participation in communication and decision-making regarding their own lives**

Anette Boye Koch, VIA University College, Denmark

Child-centred practice has a long tradition within general education, but studies point to a difference when it comes to children in vulnerable positions, whom professionals often encounter as objects with focus on deficiencies. The research aims to explore digital media as a pedagogical tool in order to involve vulnerable children as participants in communication regarding themselves. We refer to previous work exploring children's perspectives (Koch 2019) and research on digital pedagogy (Johansen, 2017). Children are considered active participants calling upon modern childhood sociology and a tradition of child-centred pedagogical practice. Participation is conceptualized with reference to Hart (1996) and empirical data is analysed with reference to Shier (2001). 11 children were selected to pedagogical-psychological treatment together with their families. 5 professionals attended a course in media pedagogy in order to experiment with digital media in practice. Action-learning workshops were facilitated for exchange of professional experiences and reflections. Qualitative interviews were performed with each child. All workshops and interviews were video-recorded. The inquiry depends on informed consent and voluntary participation. Digital stories are considered children's private property. High ethical standards were applied to minimize any distress caused throughout the research. The study shows higher levels of child participation and a reduction in power inequalities when professionals communicate with children using digital media. Thus, professionals find it easier to relate to and support the vulnerable children. All children should serve as participants in their own lives, also when things are problematic. Digital media pedagogy is a way to make children's voices count.

*child-centred approaches, participation, digital pedagogy, child interviews, vulnerable children*

**Can I add you on SnapChat? - Children's voices and choices in communication with professionals**

Erika Brandt, Anette Boye Koch, VIA University College, Denmark

In Denmark children have the right to be involved into matters concerning themselves (Consolidation Act on Social Services, 2015). However, it has proven difficult to do in praxis to the extent that the legislation describes (Rigsrevisionen, 2016). This study explores whether digital media can expand children's possibilities for expressing themselves in encounters with professionals. Research show that children in their approach to digital media experiment with forms of expression. Research findings show that many adults are concerned about children's use of digital media. The problem is that these concerns force an adult point of view upon the matter and we risk missing possibilities that are obvious to children (Johansen, 2017). The study is conducted as design-based research (Brown, 1992). Data consist of videos, interviews and multimodal products produced by children and professionals. In order to make this study explorative we aimed to avoid that the therapeutic methods limited children's ways of expression. Children and parents were informed about the study both verbally and in writing in order to secure informed consent and voluntary participation. Professionals can communicate with children who won't or can't participate in a face to face conversation if a wider range of digital communication forms (e.g. text messages, SnapChat messages and small videos) are recognized as legit by professionals. Professionals should be sensitive and open towards types of media that the children are comfortable using and reconsider which communication channels they find legit for communication with children in order to develop a more child-centred practice.

*children's perspectives, digital media, child-centred practice, children's participation, multimodal communication*

**Development of a digitally supported child-centred practice in pedagogical and therapeutic encounters**

Gitte Bach Jensen (1), Anette Boye Koch (2), Erika Zimmer Brandt (2), (1) Boernecentret, Aarhus, Muncipal Family Treatment Service, Denmark; (2) VIA University College, Aarhus, Denmark

In a mediatized society, we cannot fully understand social life without exploring the use of media (Hjarvard, 2016). This study seeks to investigate the possibilities regarding digital media use in order to enlarge, enhance and maintain children's perspectives in pedagogical and therapeutic encounters. We refer to previous work exploring children's perspectives and research on digital pedagogy (Fonagy et al., 2008, Johansen, 2017). The study addresses the clash of interests between child-centred participation and adult-led projects (Franks 2011) exploring how to support vulnerable children's perspectives. We draw on new cross-media

communication research that seeks to understand practices related to use of digital media from the users point of view (Sandvik et al., 2016). The study is framed as a design-based research (DBR) project (Amiel & Reeves, 2008). DBR is based on iterative processes, collaboration, and practice. The aim of the intervention is to understand, but also to refine, evaluate and develop a new design. Informed consent and voluntary participation were ensured from children and parents. The digital data that children produced during the study are not stored externally and children hold ownership to their data. When children's perspectives and voices are enhanced new possibilities arise and the role of the professional changes. Close collaboration between research and practice unfold new nuances and uncover more understandings. Thus, in order to develop a more child-centred practice, you must develop the professional's ability to tolerate uncertainty, their courage to experiment and truly listen to the children's experiences and points of view.

*child-centred practice, vulnerable children, new cross-media communication, professional role changes, collaboration research and practice*

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## **A 23**

### **EXPLORING THE ROLE OF THE PROFESSIONAL WITHIN ECEC**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Roxana Pastor, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Mexico**

#### **Blind by my certainties and objective assessments**

Roxana Pastor, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Mexico

This presentation discusses insights from a case study (Stake, 1998) that documented an early childhood teacher's best practices in order to reflect on my own knowledge and practice as a university professor. This study grows out of an international research on Good Practices in the early childhood field (Zabalza, 2012) and of studies that aim to connect teacher training with the practical knowledge of teachers (Blanco et al 2015, Contreras, 2016). The main framework for this study was the "Reggian approach" (Cagliari et al 2016) in order to understand the role of the teacher as an apprentice of children and the families' active participation in the school. A narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2000) gave voice to children, teacher, families and researcher. During a school year I participated in the daily routines alongside the teacher and documented her work through participant observations and unstructured interviews. The participants' active role in this research insured an ethical approach. In order to insure anonymity, all names have been changed. This teacher's work with children and families, made me wonder if my conceptions of the child and the adult and "best" assessment practices, did not blind me in my understanding of the child's resources and made me focus only in what I had objectively identified as his/her needs. Reflecting on our certainties and how this can limit our practice, can lead us to a better understanding of children and teacher's roles in the assessment and intervention processes.

*case study, assessment, children's capabilities, teacher's role, professionalisation*

#### **More than making connections: Mid-level coordinating actors within the Tanzanian early childhood system**

Jessica Landgraf, Michigan State University, United States

To understand two mid-level coordinating actors (MLCAs) within the Tanzanian ECEC system and their involvement in an initiative to coordinate national ECEC policy and programs. Why think of ECEC as a system: (Britto et al., 2011; Bruner, 2012; Kagan et al., 2015; Vargas-Barón, 2013). Why the need for better understanding mid-level coordinating actors (MLCAs): (Britto et al., 2013). Examples of MLCAs in other countries: (Vargas-Barón, 2013). NGOs in Africa: (Eze Akan, 2016; Lutabingwa & Gray, 1997; Bratton, 1989). ECEC Policy: (Bakuza, 2014; Haddad, 2002; Neuman & Devercelli, 2012) I use systems theory in the ECEC context (Britto, Yoshikawa, & Boller, 2011; Bruner, 2012; Kagan, Araujo, Jaimovich, & Cruz Aguayo, 2015; Vargas-Barón, 2013) to conceptualize the sector's complex make-up and provide a framework to understand the routes of coordination and cohesion. Utilising a conceptualisation from anthropology of "policy worlds" I view policy as a non-linear process in which many actors at all levels negotiate, influence, and impact both the policy and its implementation (Levinson et al., 2009). My study sits within the qualitative interpretivist paradigm through case study methodology, utilizing interviews, observations, and document analysis. Ethical concern for confidentiality: pseudonyms, de-identifying interview transcripts, participant consent forms, secure data storage. Mid-level coordinating actors use their positioning within the ECEC system, using program experience and policy advocacy, to impact

beyond their own capacity through influence on public resource allocation and structures. Implications for low-income countries trying to build and improve their ECEC systems, ECEC stakeholder practices, and scaling up programs.

*connection of policy and programs, system co-ordination, mid-level coordinating actors, low-income ECEC systems, advocacy and impact*

### **Exploring early childhood pre-service teachers' perspectives on play during a university practicum course**

Maria Kampeza, Angeliki Vellopoulou, University of Patras, Greece

This study explores what characteristics do pre-service teachers associate with play and how they define its role in early childhood classrooms before and after their participation in a play-related practicum course. In order to enhance the value of play and improve the position of play in early childhood education, the perspectives of future teachers on play must be taken under consideration and more attention should be paid to teacher preparation programs (Altun, 2018, Jung & Jin, 2014, Sherwood & Reifel, 2010). Teachers' attitudes towards play depend largely on the educational preparation these teachers received while they were students. Therefore, pre-service teachers who understand the value of play in children's learning and development, are more likely to integrate all benefits that play can offer in their practice. A qualitative research process was followed. Participants' responses were coded and categorized, and conclusions were drawn connected with relative literature. Open-ended questions were used to obtain written responses from 100 participants who were in their 3rd year of studies in the Department of Educational Science and Early Childhood Education at the University of Patras in Greece. All respondents were informed about the research and their participation was voluntary. Results showed that participants enriched their understanding of what play is and the different ways it can be incorporated into curriculum. Play-related courses in students' practicum might affect future professionals' confidence regarding play's importance. Teacher trainers who understand how their students make sense of play will better inform their training in relation to theory and practice.

*play, pre-service teachers, perceptions, practicum, early years*

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## **A 24**

### **INFORMAL LEARNING IN TIMES OF AUSTERITY PROJECT: EMERGING FINDINGS FROM ENGLAND AND PORTUGAL**

Self-organised symposium

This investigative project focuses on documenting informal family learning in four urban disadvantaged neighbourhoods experiencing austerity in England and Portugal. Poor families with young children are harder hit than any other group by austerity policies. Informal family learning in community spaces contributes to development of young citizens, for character building, positive learning dispositions and executive learning functions, influencing successful school outcomes yet it remains under researched. The project aims to enhance family and informal learning for disadvantaged children before entry to school, generating learning with international relevance. In this symposium we will set out the emerging findings which have documented changing levels of availability/access to what were, historically, public, free, cultural/leisure services on which poor families depend for stimulation and extension of family learning, including libraries, parks, playgrounds, youth clubs and museums with local neighbourhoods. The impact of these changes on family learning and their sense of participation in neighbourhood civic life will be reported.

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**Chair: Christine Pascal, Centre for Research in Early Childhood, United Kingdom**

#### **Theoretical and methodological frameworks in action**

Christine Pascal, Centre for Research in Early Childhood, United Kingdom

1. How has austerity impacted on access to public, free, informal learning spaces and resources in communities? 2. How have informal learning experiences children been affected by changes in free, public community spaces and resources, especially for disadvantaged, low income families? 3. How have communities sustained free, public community spaces with regard to building neighbourhood community building, solidarity and creativity? It builds on the social mapping techniques developed by Duxbury, Garrett-Petts, MacLennan (2015) to "map" tangible and intangible cultural assets within local landscapes. This project adopts a praxeological (Pascal and Bertram, 2012; Formosinho and Formosinho, 2012) and Affirmative Inquiry (Cooperrider (2008) approach. It also draws on Wellman's (2001) Community Typology theories. This is an exploratory, multi-method, transnational praxeological project. It will use neighbourhood 'cultural mapping' and family case study methods. The study has ensured all participants provide informed ethical consent, all data, primary and secondary, will be anonymised and stored securely for the

duration of the project. As it is an affirmative inquiry risks to participants are reduced and researchers will take issues of power distribution very seriously. The project will use the neighbourhood cultural maps and family case studies to explore changes in the availability of local cultural assets over the 10 year period of austerity in England and Portugal, exploring saliences across two countries, with a view to wider transfer of the knowledge generated about support for informal family learning in these contexts. The project will create specific academic, public, cultural and policy-relevant outputs to stimulate discussion/action on the changing social contract between the state and an individual.

*austerity, informal family learning, community learning, neighbourhood cultural mapping, praxeological research*

### **Sense of community past, present and future in two Birmingham neighbourhoods**

Tony Bertram (1), Andy Cramp (2), (1) Centre for Research in Early Childhood, United Kingdom, (2) Independent Consultant, United Kingdom

1. How has austerity impacted on access to public, free, informal learning spaces and resources in communities? 2. How have informal learning experiences children been affected by changes in free, public community spaces and resources, especially for disadvantaged, low income families? 3. How have communities sustained free, public community spaces with regard to building neighbourhood community building, solidarity and creativity? It builds on the social mapping techniques developed by Duxbury, Garrett-Petts, MacLennan (2015) to "map" tangible and intangible cultural assets within local landscapes. This project adopts a praxeological (Pascal and Bertram, 2012; Formosinho and Formosinho, 2012) and Affirmative Inquiry (Cooperrider (2008) approach. It also draws on Wellman's (2001) Community Typology theories. This is an exploratory, multi-method, transnational praxeological project. It will use neighbourhood 'cultural mapping' methods. The study has ensured all participants provide informed ethical consent, all data, primary and secondary, will be anonymised and stored securely for the duration of the project. As it is an affirmative inquiry risks to participants are reduced and researchers will take issues of power distribution very seriously. Acknowledging the unique 'situatedness' of each neighbourhood case study, we will interpret the data by looking over time for key themes and saliences across the two English neighbourhoods. The project will create specific academic, public, cultural and policy-relevant outputs to stimulate discussion/action on the changing social contract between the state and an individual.

*informal family learning, austerity, praxeological research, neighbourhood cultural mapping, community learning*

### **Family and community realities in two Oporto neighbourhoods**

Júlia Formosinho, João Formosinho, University of Minho and Portuguese Catholic University, Portugal

1. How has austerity impacted on access to public, free, informal learning spaces and resources in communities? 2. How have informal learning experiences children been affected by changes in free, public community spaces and resources, especially for disadvantaged, low income families? 3. How have communities sustained free, public community spaces with regard to building neighbourhood community building, solidarity and creativity? This project builds on the work of Myhr et al, (2017); Cara and Brooks, (2012); Heckmann and Mosso, (2014) on family and community learning. It also draws on Wellman's (2001) Community Typology theories. This project adopts a praxeological (Pascal and Bertram, 2012; Formosinho and Formosinho, 2012) and Affirmative Inquiry (Cooperrider, 2008) approach. It uses case study and family life story techniques (Miller, 2009). This is a multi-method, praxeological project which will build family and service case studies of the impact of the changing availability of public spaces/places on informal family learning through interviews, home learning narratives and historical documentation. The study ensures all participants provide informed ethical consent, all data will be anonymised and stored securely for the duration of the project. The affirmative inquiry means risks to participants are reduced and researchers will take issues of power distribution very seriously. Acknowledging the unique 'situatedness' of each neighbourhood case study, we will interpret the data by looking over time for key themes and saliences across the two Portuguese neighbourhoods. The project will create specific academic, public, cultural and policy-relevant outputs to stimulate discussion/action on the changing social contract between the state and an individual.

*informal family learning, austerity, praxeological research, service case studies, community learning*

# Symposium Set B

15:40 – 17:00, Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019

## B 1

### ACCESS AND INCLUSION

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Gesine Nebe, Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg, Germany**

#### **Enabling all children to belong, be engaged and to learn**

Anna Hreinsdottir (1), Hanna Ragnarsdottir (2), (1) Borgarbyggd, Iceland; (2) University of Iceland, Iceland

This project aimed to identify, analyse and promote the main characteristics of quality inclusive early childhood education for all preschool children. This provided an opportunity to examine IECE provisions across Europe that are addressing the quality principles already identified by the European Commission (2014) and the OECD (2015). The project builds on inclusive education in early childhood settings (Sapon-Shevin, 2007; Siraj-Blatchford, 2006). Also Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) bioecological model of human development and policy literature from the European agency for special needs and inclusive education. Sixty-two IECE country experts from across Europe collected and analysed data from example IECE settings in eight European countries, questionnaires on national developments and discussions during case study visits. A clear image and voice of the child and childhood should be valued, parents are the most important partners and their participation is essential. Also a shared understanding of quality. The findings of the project give various indications on how to develop inclusive preschool work and what needs to be considered. A model of a preschool ecosystem of diversity was developed and guidelines were made which preschool teachers and other staff can use to examine and reflect on whether the environment of the preschool takes into account the diversity of the children in the group. The findings of the project can be used by policy makers, researchers and administrators, teachers and preschool staff in their efforts to increase the quality of preschool activities for all children.

*school of diversity, inclusive learning environment for young children, special needs, belonging, learning*

#### **Access to early childhood education: Preschool providers application of admission criteria**

Stefan Schulder (1), Nina Hogrebe (1), Johanna Mierendorff (2), Gesine Nebe (2), (1) Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Germany; (2) Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg, Germany

The study sheds light on preschool leaders'/teachers' assessment of admission criteria and associated differences between providers. Although all children in Germany have a legal entitlement to preschool, socially disadvantaged children participate to a lesser extent than their more privileged peers (Gambaro et al. 2014) and find themselves in segregated centres of specific providers (Becker/Schober 2017; Hogrebe 2016). Explanations for these inequalities overemphasise parental choice (Vandenbroeck/Lazzari 2013) and marginalize the role of organizations which might answer differently to social challenges and parental demands (Beckert 2010). The study is part of the project "Segregation and Preschool Providers" funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. We draw on data of the German National Educational Panel Study (Starting Cohort 1 Newborns, Wave 2 and 3). Preschool leaders/teachers (n=167 and n=442) rate the importance of admission criteria on a four-level scale. Following an empirical-analytical paradigm, we use quantitative methodology (e.g. variance analysis) to identify the relative importance of admission criteria and differences between providers. All data are anonymized. Results are reported on aggregated level. Inferences about organizations or individuals are impossible. First analyses show that social necessity (Mean=3.2) is more important than the employment of both parents (Mean=2.7). The importance of parental employment differs between providers (SD=1.1). For example, in preschools run by the German Red Cross (Mean=3.4) and the Workers' Welfare Association (Mean=3.3) parental employment has greater importance than in parents' initiatives (Mean=2.6). By applying admission criteria differently, providers might foster segregation. The role of locally monitored selection procedures is discussed.

*educational inequalities, access segregation, admission criteria, preschool provider*

#### **Framing a problem: Placement procedures in childcare in Germany and their relation to ethnic and social segregation.**

Gesine Nebe, Johanna Mierendorff, Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg, Germany

The research aim is to understand ethnical/social segregation in ECE as closely tied to the ECE providers' side (supply side) of giving available places to certain children resp. families (demand side). Segregation hence is to be looked upon as a result of recruitment processes in a very tight childcare market rather than that of parents' choice. Research in this area is almost non-existent. Yet,

Hogrebe (2016, 2014) & Peter & Spieß (2015) emphasised that segregation in ECE settings is related to residential segregation and Mierendorff (2016) & Mierendorff, Ernst, Krüger, Roch(2015) shed light on parental and institutional practices of distinction and segregation. Theories of segregation (in preschools) and of childhood in the welfare state (e.g. Häußermann, 2004; DeHaan, Elbers, Hoofs, Lesman, 2013), organisational theory and theory of the welfare state frame this research. Grounded theory is adopted within a constructivist paradigm, drawing on document analysis as well as on content oriented analysis of qualitative interviews. All interviewees had given their consent to research and publication. Since ECE placement (procedures) result from structures of the German child/youth welfare system being subsidiarily organised, the supply side is rather strong. Logics of 'matching' child/family and facility may apply rather than those of providing equal-access-childcare or of preventing segregation. In a situation of insufficient supply of childcare places segregation may increase due to significant market power on the supply side. Sufficient ECE provision may pivotally shift this imbalance. Yet, segregation seems to be (to some extent) integral to a subsidiarily organised ECE system; ECE providers need to be aware of that.

*ethnic and social segregation, parents and families, placement procedures, recruitment procedures, childcare providers*

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## **B 2**

### **SUPPORTING QUALITY: ONLINE TEACHING FOR HOLISTIC, RELATIONAL AND INCLUSIVE EARLY EDUCATION**

Self-organised symposium

Prevailing neoliberalism within education encourages a narrow focus on bringing settings (structure) and children (outcomes) to a predetermined fixed point, irrespective of experience, background or culture. Those who get to this point are applauded, while those who do not are, through a functionalist lens, seen to have failed. This symposium will share the work of the THRIECE (Teaching for Holistic, Relational and Inclusive Early Childhood Education) project. THRIECE is an international research project that interrogates conceptions of quality in ECE. Recent definitions of 'quality' in education have identified three key concepts: Structural quality, Process quality, and Outcomes. While each of these may be equally important (depending on the paradigmatic perspective from which they are viewed), they are not equally measurable, and process quality is often overlooked. We argue that this is potentially damaging since relationships and interactions may be more influential for children than the contexts in which they occur.

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**Chair: Nóirín Hayes, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin University, Ireland**

#### **Teaching for holistic, relational and inclusive early childhood education: A new conception of quality ECE**

Leah O'Toole (1), Claire Regan (2), Nóirín Hayes (3), (1) Maynooth University, Ireland; (2) Marino Institute of Education, Ireland; (3) Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

This paper introduces the Erasmus+ THRIECE (Teaching for Holistic, Relational and Inclusive Early Childhood Education) project, a transnational partnership between educators and universities in Ireland, Poland and Portugal that speaks against the prevailing neoliberalism in European education. The holistic strand promotes constructivist approaches, challenging teacher-led education. The inclusive strand explores play as a meaningful context for children's cultures. The relational strand incorporates approaches from Cognitive Analytic Therapy not previously used in education. We span traditional theoretical borders, examining 'good' education through theories as diverse as those of Bronfenbrenner, Bourdieu, Bernstein, Bowlby and more, from psychological, sociological, pedagogical and philosophical perspectives. We argue that interpretivist and critical/transformational paradigms can exist in complementarity, finding common ground between traditionally polarised discourses, conceptual frameworks, and creating a new, innovative lens for ECE. Using participant action research (PAR) methodology, we use multiple methods including observations, recordings, documentation and interviews. THRIECE's ethics are reflected in its co-construction of knowledge, and promotion of self and critical awareness to support social change. Consent was received from all participants at the commencement of the project with commitment to seek additional 'consent for use' on an ongoing basis taking consideration of power balances, informed consent, confidentiality and respectful use and storage of materials. Ethical approval was received through Marino Institute of Education. THRIECE identifies quality education as 'holistic', 'inclusive' and 'relational'. In challenging existing paradigms we provide a mechanism for realising holistic, inclusive and reflective relational practice within ECE settings and offer guidance on how this can be supported.

*inclusion, relational, holistic, inter-disciplinary, neoliberalism*



## **Relational education in early childhood education and care settings**

Noirin Hayes (1), Eleanor Peters (2), (1) Trinity College Dublin, Ireland; (2) Play Together Montessori, Ireland

This paper reports on the relational strand of the THRIECE (Teaching for Holistic, Relational and Inclusive Early Childhood Education) project, a research project which interrogates conceptions of quality in ECE. Recent definitions of 'quality' identify three types - Structural, Process and Outcome. While equally important they are not equally measurable, and, reflecting a shift towards neoliberal approaches, process quality is often overlooked. We argue that this trend is damaging since relationships and interactions may be more influential for children than contexts. Building from the bio-ecological model (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) the study is rooted in both a post-modern and rights-based perspective. THRIECE is underpinned by a constructivist-interpretive paradigm alongside a critical or transformative paradigm. Using a participant action research methodology, it draws on a number of methods including observations, recordings, documentation and interviews. Consent was received from all participants at the commencement of the project with a commitment to seek additional 'consent for use' from parents and children once modules have been developed. Ethical approval was received through Marino Institute of Education. This paper challenges prevailing neoliberalism within education particularly the emphasis on outcomes over learning opportunities. It problematises understandings of early learning and illustrates the power of relational early education with examples from practice deconstructed through the lens of the THRIECE philosophy of quality. In challenging existing paradigms we provide a mechanism for realising reflective relational practice within ECE settings, offer guidance to policy makers on how to support it and open new avenues of research.

*professional practices, process quality, bio-ecological model of development, relational pedagogy, neo-liberalism*

## **Relational education in the early classes of the primary school**

Claire Regan (1), Adrian Coffey (2), (1) Marino Institute of Education, Ireland; (2) Carlow Educate Together National School, Ireland

This paper reports on the primary classroom-based relational strand of the THRIECE (Teaching for Holistic, Relational and Inclusive Early Childhood Education) project, an international research project that interrogates conceptions of quality in ECE. The prevailing neoliberalism within education (Sahlberg, 2014) encourages a narrow focus on bringing settings (structure) and children (outcomes) to a fixed point, irrespective of background or culture. Those who achieve are applauded while those who do not are, through a functionalist lens, seen as failed (Ó Breacháin and O'Toole, 2013). Drawing on Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) this study is rooted in both post-modern (Moss, 2008) and rights-based perspectives (Lundy, 2007). THRIECE is underpinned by a constructivist-interpretive paradigm alongside a critical or transformative paradigm. It uses participatory action research methodology to understand and realise relational practice in early primary school classrooms. A mosaic method included observation, recordings, documentation, interviews and reflective practice. Consent was received from all participants at the commencement of the project with a commitment to seek additional 'consent for use' from parents and children once modules have been developed. Ethical approval was received through Marino Institute of Education. This presentation shares findings on the mechanisms used for making process-based understandings of quality education more visible, tangible and defensible within a prevalent culture of accountability and 'value for money'. Challenging recent policy initiatives towards narrowing primary curricular focus to 'core' subjects and 'accountability' through improved standardised scores this paper provides exemplars of an alternative quality classroom-based relational pedagogy.

*early primary education, relational pedagogy, neo-liberalism, standardised testing, process quality*

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## **B 3**

### **WHAT COULD PROFESSIONALISATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD LOOK LIKE TO EC PROFESSIONALS?**

Self-organised symposium

Around the world those in the early childhood sector are vigorously pursuing professionalisation. In a neoliberal world, professionalisation is achieved through externally imposed standards against which services are regularly evaluated. Accompanying this is mandated curriculum and external quality monitoring of its implementation. Whilst there are differences in the way different nation states design and implement these criteria, the overarching idea that professionalisation must be accompanied by evidence-based accountability is widely accepted, despite ongoing challenges. We offer three different perspectives of the challenges facing the sector's drive towards professionalisation. We challenge what professionalisation means to those working directly with children. We explore the tension between assumptions that professionalisation of the sector automatically focuses on the ways we enact children's rights, and an alternative positioning placing more emphasis on women's rights. We finish with an overview of the impact of neoliberalism on the sector and the impact of this on professionalisation.

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**Chair: Margaret Sims, University of New England, Australia**

**Co-constructing professionalism – A qualitative approach to collective visions of professionalism**

Antje Rothe, Leibniz University Hanover, Germany

The habilitation project explores, how preschools establish a professional horizon against which they structure individual perceptions and actions. Collective perspectives of professionalism are therefore related to professionals' actions. High expectations of high quality ECEC services strongly focus individuals' professional actions. Only few studies take collective visions of professionalism into account (e.g. Lochner 2017). Additionally, few studies consider how these relate to exterior expectations (e.g. Viernickel et al. 2013) as well as to their professionals' actions. The central concepts, 'professionalism' and 'professional organisations', draw on the Documentary Method (Bohnsack 2019, based on Mannheim 1970, Garfinkel 1967). From this stance, professionalism refers to a common (mostly implicit) vision of action that enables professionals as part of this organisation to make decisions. In a first phase of the project, group discussions, conducted in ten inclusive German preschools, are analysed to reveal these visions. The project was approved by the University ethics committee. Participants were informed about the research interest and ethical issues (e.g. anonymisation and option of revoking the consent). Power relations were addressed by giving the participants' emphases priority through the method chosen. The analysis gains insight into how collective perspectives on professionalism relate to external standards and demands. Besides common themes identified across preschool teams, each team also displays unique collective visions of professionalism. Responding to overarching tendencies of accountability and on the theoretical basis outlined above, the results relate to a 'bottom up'-perspective on professionalisation processes, emphasizing the relevance to consider professionals' collective visions of professionalism in ECEC.

*professionalism and professionalisation in ECEC, professionalism and organisation, qualitative study, group discussions and documentary methodology, collective perspectives of preschool teams*

**Professionalism in the early childhood workforce: Women's rights or children's rights?**

Pamela Calder, London South Bank University, United Kingdom

To what extent are debates about the purposes of early childhood services and the professionalism of staff impacted by implicit discourses, such as those of children's and of women's rights? Does the supposed tensions, that are sometimes offered as a problematic choice, between these two aspects of human rights rest on unspoken assumptions about what the services are like and who they are for, Looking at the differing policy justifications for providing nurseries for babies and young children, this paper reviews arguments, including both those of women's rights and children's rights (Kyorholt and Penn, 2019), in the context of government policies in England (Little and Winch, 2016). Working within a paradigm of feminist qualitative research (Fraser, 2013) it takes a socialist feminist stance, drawing on discourse analysis and Foucauldian concepts of power (Burman, 2008). It uses participant observation and documentary analysis as methodological tools and an interpretive approach to discourse as a way of conducting a conceptual analysis. Ethically the paper aims for integrity when selecting episodes and examples to explore, and in referring to individuals. The paper concludes by discussing where such arguments may lead in terms of what should be expected of the purposes of early childhood provision and the professionalism of the staff? A women's rights discourse can influence policy and practice, in contributing to justifications for a universalist rather than targeted approach to provision and to the professional competences expected of the staff.

*women and children's rights, professionalism of staff, discourses, government policies in England, nurseries for babies and young children*

**Neoliberalism and early childhood: The invisibility of our take-over**

Margaret Sims, University of New England, Australia

I examine the impact of neoliberalism on early childhood academics and the ways in which neoliberalism shapes not only their everyday experiences in the workplace, but the content and pedagogy of their work. The work arises from a range of different projects (Sims, Alexander, Nislin, et al., 2018; Sims, Alexander, Pedey, & Tiko, 2018; Sims & Tiko, 2019; Sims, Waniganayake, & Hadley, 2018a, 2018b; Waniganayake & Sims, 2018), along with auto-ethnographic work (Sims, 2019). The frame is the notion of figured worlds: neoliberalism creates expectations for those in different roles who then enact these requirements, creating further role expectations that shape the work of others (Pennington & Prater, 2016). An interpretivist ontology and social constructivist epistemology using interviews and surveys explored participants' perceptions. A critical narrative autoethnography supported the linking of personal experiences with both theory and practice. Where required, ethics approval was gained under Australian legislative requirements. This included standard processes in relation to confidentiality, anonymity and non-coercion. Permission

was gained to use quotes with a promise of anonymity. Particular care was taken in the one autoethnographic study to ensure anonymity of those included in professional reflections. Top down standards and accountability of performance against these standards has become the norm. Critical thinking and the ability to make professional decisions are thus limited and the work of early childhood leaders becomes focused on shaping the work of staff towards conformity. Resistance to neoliberalism is discussed, particularly in relation to a vision of what early childhood professionalism might look like.

*neoliberalism, professionalism, figured world, conformity, leadership*

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#### **B 4**

### **ACTION RESEARCH, CHILD STUDY AND EXISTENTIAL MEETINGS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Kjell Aage Gotvassli, Nord University, Norway**

#### **Is there shared understanding of the benefits of child study among early childhood educators?**

Cath Arnold, United Kingdom

Child study has a long history and in this current study, I investigated whether individual, naturalistic child study is valued as research among a sample of early childhood educators in our current context. I aimed to explore with the sample their views on research generally, large quantitative studies and individual, naturalistic child studies. Much has been written on child study as research and some writers have critiqued the history of child development (Brehony, 2009; Bloch, 1992). The concept of the 'baby biography' as a way of studying and beginning to understand child development was well established across Europe by the early 1900s (Tiedemann, 1787; Darwin, 1877). I used a qualitative, interpretive paradigm to conduct this research. The methodology is practitioner enquiry and methods were literature search, focus groups (3 held in settings involving a total of 28 participants) and emails with individuals (15). The research was carried out over a period of 6 months. Participants opted in. We agreed that the findings would be reported anonymously. I was aware of the need to represent views that might not concur with my own. I found that educators, who had been involved in such studies highly valued the benefits to themselves, the child/ren and families involved, however, as the findings were not generalizable to groups of children, such studies were limited to offering insights into the development and learning of other children. Exploration of the value of individual, naturalistic child study emphasises its use as a methodology in practice and on courses.

*naturalistic, child study, research methodologies, advantages, limitations*

#### **How to succeed in action research in ECECs?**

Kjell Aage Gotvassli, Torill Moe, Nord University, Norway

How can action research (AR) in ECECs contribute to the development of new pedagogical practices and development of ECECs as learning organizations? Coghlan & Brannick (2014, p.5) point out some success factor for AR: quality of participation, quality of AR processes, research in action and collaborative work. This is in-line with Carr & Cernis (1986) participatory AR. AR is used to explore how organisational change can be an inclusionary process where ECECs develop new practices. We examine how AR methodology can reshape ECECs practices to become a learning organization (Schön 1987; Senge 1990). We examine how experimental learning and reflection can be used as a tool to organize learning, and how reflection as a practice can help develop competence among staff (Kolb 1984). We use participatory AR as paradigm and experimental learning and AR methodology: working with 4 individual ECECs designing, evaluating and implementing change processes, analyses of interviews with ECEC managers and staff and observation of meetings and staff work in ECECs. Informed consent was obtained, all interviews are anonymized and data deleted afterwards. The project has been approved by the Norwegian Research Council. Following key findings for success will be presented: Clarification of roles and responsibilities, knowledge of AR as a working form, time for selection of focus area, action researcher as facilitator, broadest possible participation, collective work forms, management and priority, use of common tools, continuous ethical assessments. Findings are interesting to all who seek to use action research methodology to build better practice.

*action research, learning organisation, reflection in action, collective work processes, leadership in ECECs*

## **Existential meetings' in preschool practice**

Anna Rantala, Umeå University, Sweden

This research aims to understand and describe how meaningful relationships between adults and children take place and are understood in preschool practice through the core concepts of subjectification as a process that results from 'existential meetings'. Research performed in Swedish preschools mostly focuses on children's learning and on socialization through adults' actions or children's agency. Research that focuses on the relationship between adults and children in preschool is however, limited. Biesta (2011) discussed the functions of education; qualification, socialization and subjectification. In order to understand the complexity of subjectification, Aspelin (2010) believes that a fourth function is needed – 'existential meetings' that aim to strengthen children's personal development. In this research, we view this as an important preschool function. The theoretical perspective is based on Aspelin's concept of existential meetings, also related to co-existence/co-operation and closeness/distance (Aspelin & Persson, 2011). This research followed a reflective and critical approach, and is based on 37,5h of video observations. The material is analysed through a deductive approach and was approved by the Swedish Ethics Committee for Research. All participants have given consent and are anonymized. The findings reveal that the relationship between adults and children can have potential for strengthening children's personal development. But this is dependent on whether the teacher can balance between 'closeness' and 'distance'. This research has implication for preschool practice and contributes to a better understanding of how existential meetings through meaningful relationships can take place (and be organized) in preschool practice.

*children, closeness/distance, co-existence/co-operation, teacher, video observations*

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## **B 5**

### **CHILDREN'S VOICES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: THE USE OF ARTISTIC LANGUAGES FOR PEDAGOGICAL DOCUMENTATION (PART 2)**

Self-organised symposium

The symposium builds upon a cross cultural study that brings together pedagogical documentation, arts-informed methods and children's voices. Taking the theme 'Inside Outside' the study explores how combining pedagogical documentation and arts-informed methods can provide tools for including the voices and experiences of all children in ECE. It is based on a qualitative transnational research and aims to examine: 1. How pedagogical documentation and arts informed methods can be used to include all children's voices in ECE 2. What the concepts of inside/outside mean to children and teachers. The project examines children's (aged 18 months-6 years) and educators' views of the concepts of inside and outside, currently taking place in Italy, Greece, England, Scotland, Norway and Japan. This second symposium combines theoretical discussion of the development of artistic languages in pedagogical documentation with perspectives from England, Scotland and Greece.

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**Chair: Ioanna Palaologou, UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom**

#### **Developing an artistic language in pedagogical documentation**

Zenna Kingdon (1), Elisabetta Biffi (2), Franca Zuccoli (2), (1) University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom; (2) University of Milano- Bicocca, Italy

The aims of this cross-national study are: How pedagogical documentation and arts informed methods can be used to include all children's voices in ECE; What the concepts of inside/outside mean to children and teachers in terms of spaces, relationships and self. Based on research on pedagogical documentation and participation (Formosinho, 2009, Formosinho, Oliveira-Formosinho and Costa, 2019) together with studies using participatory methods to explore young children's views and experiences under three dimensions: Space (Clark, 2010), Social Relationships and Self. The project marries discourses around pedagogy, participation and arts practice with young children. We explore the role of expressive languages in pedagogical documentation as a participatory mechanism to bridge methodological attitude(s), language(s) and cultural differences in research. This focus can enhance diverse children's voices and has the possibility of creating reciprocal responsive and emotional attuned relationships between children and educators. This qualitative transnational study employs arts informed and participatory methods including workshops involving drawing, photography and drama. EECERA (2015) ethical code was followed adopting a listening and respectful approach to children and within cross-national discussions including designing a specific protocol for obtaining consent/ assent and protecting children's rights. The coalescence of pedagogical documentation and arts based methods is new providing an important opportunity for children and practitioners. By exploring the intersection, we reveal the value of creating common ground for young

children to explore and revisit. We offer suggestions of ways to integrate arts informed approaches in pedagogical documentation that includes all voices, this has implications for educators, pre and in-service training.

*artistic languages, arts-informed documentation, arts-based research methods, pedagogical documentation, inside/outside spaces*

#### **Children's voices in Early Childhood Education: using artistic languages for pedagogical documentation in the UK.**

Ioanna Palaologou (1), Zenna Kingdon (2), Lorna Arnott (3), (1) UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom; (2) University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom; (3) Strathclyde University, United Kingdom

This presentation focuses on the UK perspective to examine: 1. How pedagogical documentation and arts informed methods can be used to include all children's voices in ECE; 2. What the concepts of inside/outside mean to children and teachers. Based on research on pedagogical documentation (Formosinho, 2009, Formosinho, Oliveira-Formosinho and Costa, 2019) and participatory methods, we explore young children's views and experiences of three dimensions of inside/outside: Space (Clark, 2010), Social Relationships and Self. The project marries discourses around pedagogy, participation and arts practice with young children. We explore the role of expressive languages in pedagogical documentation as a participatory mechanism to bridge methodological attitude(s), language(s) and cultural differences in research. This focus can enhance diverse children's voices (corporeal and/or verbal) and has the possibility of creating reciprocal responsive and emotional attuned relationships between children and educators. This is a qualitative transnational study that employed arts informed and participatory methods such as collage, sculpture and drawings. EECERA (2015) ethical code was followed alongside the work of collective praxis approach (Cahill 2007), epistemological humility (Clark 2010) and ethical helix (Palaologou 2016). Consent from all participants was acquired at all stages. Preliminary findings referred to UK study reveal that there is an interconnectivity between real, embodied and social spaces that impact on each other as well as children's and educators' relationships. It offers suggestions related to how to integrate arts approach to pedagogical documentation that includes all voices (corporeal and verbal) as well as implications for educators' pre and in-service training.

*artistic languages, arts-based documentation, arts-based research methods, pedagogical documentation, inside/outside spaces, [social spaces, embodied spaces]*

#### **Children's voices in early childhood education: The use of artistic languages for pedagogical documentation: The Greek perspective**

Angeliki Bitou, OAED, Greece

The Greek perspective examines: 1. How pedagogical documentation and arts informed methods can be used to include all children's voices? 2. What do the concepts of inside/outside mean to children and teachers? Based on research on pedagogical documentation (Formosinho, 2009, Formosinho, Oliveira-Formosinho and Costa, 2019) and participatory methods, we explore young children's views and experiences of three dimensions of inside/outside: Space (Clark, 2010), Social Relationships and Self. The project marries discourses around pedagogy, participation and arts practice with young children. We explore the role of expressive languages in pedagogical documentation as a participatory mechanism to bridge methodological attitude(s), language(s) and cultural differences in research. This can enhance diverse children's voices (corporeal and/or verbal) and has the possibility of creating reciprocal responsive and emotional attuned relationships between children and educators. This qualitative transnational study employed arts informed and participatory methods such as collage, sculpture and drawings to collect data from teachers and children. Data were analysed thematically. EECERA (2015) ethical code was followed seeking consent and ascent from all participants alongside the work of "collective praxis" approach (Cahill, 2007) epistemological humility (Clark 2010) and ethical helix (Palaologou 2016). This research is still in progress. Preliminary analysis have shown that through arts teachers and children express their voices (corporeal and/or verbal) through multiple ways (e.g. sensory, kinaesthetic, imaginary) which otherwise are not captured. It offers suggestions related to how to integrate arts approach to pedagogical documentation that includes all voices and implications for educators' pre and in-service training.

*artistic languages, arts-based documentation, arts-based research methods, pedagogical documentation, inside/outside spaces*

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**Chair: Edel McDonnell, University College Cork, Ireland**

**Kindergarten children's portfolio - Parents' opinions**

Anthoula Nerantzidou, Democritus University of Thrace, Greece

The purpose of this study is the investigation of collaboration strategies between kindergarten teachers and parents with respect to the designing, the implementation and the exploitation of the Portfolio. The Portfolio has been officially implemented in Greek kindergartens for 16 years as an assessment method of the child. It is the first time that an on-site study is carried out and parents' opinions regarding the Portfolio's implementation and function are recorded. The Portfolio is one of the main methods of authentic assessment in Kindergarten children. Parents are considered as important factors in the Portfolio process and the success of their children (Rekalidou, 2016; Wortham & Hardin, 2019). However, parents need more support and information to target their active involvement (Birbili & Tzioga, 2014; Orillosa & Magno, 2013; Weldin & Tumarkin, 1998). For the data collection, a self-completion questionnaire was given to parents of children who attend kindergartens where the Portfolio is implemented. The questionnaire included open-ended and closed-ended questions. The present paper displays the results of the qualitative analysis of the open-ended questions. The questionnaires were given face-to-face together with an information sheet explaining the purpose of the research study and ensuring the participants' anonymity. The study deduces that parents perceive positively the implementation of the Portfolio. Nevertheless, there seem to be difficulties in the development of collaboration between kindergarten teachers and parents about the child's Portfolio. It is likely that the record of opinions and suggestions formulated by parents would enable their essential participation in their children's Portfolio.

*Portfolio, kindergarten, collaboration, teachers, parents*

**How do they construct collaborative relationships? A case study of Japanese ECEC centre and community's continual collaboration**

Yumi Yodogawa (1), Mariko Miyata (2), Sachiko Nozawa (1), (1) University of Tokyo, Japan; (2) Shiraume Gakuen University, Japan

The aim of this study is to discuss how an ECEC centre in urban area construct relationship and collaborate with people in the community to enrich children's experience. Many early childhood curricula, practice and research are emphasizing the importance of viewing young children as citizens and their relation with local communities (BRIC, 2017; Sykes, 2018). However, in urban areas, bonding social capital was significantly lower than in rural areas (Sørensen, 2014). Hence, it is more of a challenge for ECEC centres in urban areas to build up localized trust and reciprocity within the community. In this study we refer to the concept of "bonding social capital" (Putnam, 2000) and the pillars for deepening community (Born, 2014) to analyse the construction and continuation of relationship between ECEC centre and community. A Japanese director at a private ECEC centre in Tokyo, president and vice president of local civic association, and a safeguard from local government were interviewed about their situation and aims for collaboration in semi-structured form in December 2018. Informed consent and voluntary participation was obtained. From the interview, it was suggested that the centre director's openness and children's regular participation to the gathering in community was the cue for constructing warm relationship. People in community were willing to share joyful experience with children and teachers through traditional events or any support they can offer. To foster collaborative relationship between ECEC centre and community, they valued the joy for supporting children's happiness as well as accessibility to each other.

*community, social capital relational trust, urban area, collaboration*

**Novice teachers construct partnership with parents**

Michaella Kadury-Slezak, Sivan Shatil Carmon, Sigal Tish, Iris Levy, Levinsky College of Education, Israel

The aim of this study is to show the complexity of the construction of relationships between novice teachers, who graduated at Levinsky College, and children's parents in preschool. This study relates to various studies that stress the contribution of parents-teachers' relationships to children's academic and social-emotional adjustment (Hughes & Kwok, 2007). It also highlights that parents – teachers' relationships are always created and shaped within the complexity of the local educational field (Nichols & Read, 2002). This study is based on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and Banks (2013) Multicultural education and responsive pedagogy. This study employed a qualitative-interpretative paradigm based on semi-structured

interviews. Participants were 11 novice teachers who graduated at Levinsky College, with up to five years of practice. All novice teachers agreed to participate in this study and their identities remained confidential by using pseudonyms. Finding revealed that novice teachers have indicated different levels of parents' involvement in the preschool. Two dimensions of novice teachers' professional development were found: (a) the extent of novice teachers' agency – from listening to acting (b) the extent of searching and reaching parents' cooperation- from acting alone to cooperation enabling parents' initiatives. Teacher preparation programs must form alliances with field mentors to enhance students' perception that being a teacher is about working with families and communities, in addition to working with children and to prepare them to various situations with diverse families.

*Ecological perspective of practice, parents-teachers' relationships, parent involvement, parent's cooperation, novice teachers*

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## **B 7**

### **EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Susan Catapano, University of Nebraska, United States**

#### **The use of children's literature with second language learners**

Sofie Tjaru, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

This study aims to examine the use of children's literature in pre-primary settings with second-language learners. The Finnish National Core Curriculum (NCC) assigns teachers to use children's literature. Given that the pre-primary year pursues early literacy development, teachers face a multifaceted task in supporting both second language acquisition and all abilities that intertwine into what is known as literacy (Dickinson & McCabe, 2001). The study employs a sociocultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978). Second language acquisition is seen as a result of learning environment, social interactions and scaffolding (Bruner, 1978). Literature is here seen as a means of vocabulary and literacy development (Mol et al., 2009). Data consists of teacher interviews and video observations of read-aloud sessions. The qualitative interview analysis use mixed methods and provide information on what skills are actually bolstered during sessions. Ethical aspects are in line with national research policy. This means names and identities of participants are not disclosed, informed consent from teachers and parents is collected and recording is stopped if children do not want to be filmed. Initial results indicate that teachers are aware of the challenges of reading to second language learners and use different sets of strategies. In order to promote understanding, teachers use information redundancy and different modes of communication, such as body language and paraphrasing. Results are discussed regarding how NCC describes the use of literature, contributing to the description of practice in relation to policy.

*children's literature, early literacy, language immersion, video observation, second language acquisition*

#### **Supporting early literacy with culturally relevant children's literature**

Susan Catapano (1), Meredith Jones (2), (1) University of Nebraska, United States; (2) University of North Carolina, United States

Teachers support early literacy through thoughtful selection of children's literature to activate prior knowledge. In my book, Fleming, J., Catapano, S., Thompson, C M., and Carrillo, S. R. (2016). *More Mirrors in the Classroom: Using Urban Children's Literature to Increase Literacy (Kids Like Us)*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. Culturally relevant pedagogy framework; Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Theory into Practice*, 34(3) 159-165; Neito, S. (1999). *The light in their eyes: Creating multicultural learning communities*. New York: Teachers College Press; and Delpit, L. D. (1988). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. *Harvard Educational Review*, 58(3), 280-298. Students in teacher education programs identify children's literature that meets the culturally relevant pedagogy necessary to help students develop literacy skills. Methods include reviewing texts for relevance and evaluating texts for quality. This presentation uses secondary data and information gathered by the presenter from teacher education students during over 20 years of teaching in teacher education programs. Teacher education students participate in classroom discussions on this topic as part of their course. This discussion is not covered as a Human Subjects Category and does not required consent for use in general presentations. Students are not identified. Beginning teachers need support to recognize culturally relevant pedagogy and quality materials to support reading in young children. Beginning teachers will be able to scaffold early literacy skills by using a culturally relevant pedagogy in selecting and sharing children's literature with young children.

*children's literature, culturally relevant pedagogy, prior knowledge, early literacy, assessment*

## **The place of teaching assistants in supporting reception children's literacy development under the statutory assessment of England**

Kubra Firat, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

The purpose of this study was to understand the roles of teaching assistants (TAs) in children's literacy development in a reception class in England, where schools have to assess and report their children's literacy skills against pre-determined early learning goals (ELGs) at the end of the Reception year. Sosinsky and Gilliam (2011) point out that there is plenty of research concentrating on teachers and their roles, yet the place of TAs in early years settings is under-researched. The current study, therefore, seeks to contribute to addressing this imbalance. Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory (1979) formed the theoretical framework for the research, which is designed as a single case study with embedded units (Yin, 2003). As a participant observer, I spent nine months researching the classroom and conducted interviews with the teaching staff at all levels. The participants gave their consents before the data collection, and their names were changed with pseudonyms. The study revealed clear demarcations in the work of TAs and teachers, despite the day to day responsibilities TAs had in teaching literacy, especially to children with lower literacy skills. The teacher was the only person responsible for planning and conducting children's baseline, interim, and summative assessments. TAs considered that this summative assessment was part of the teacher's role, although they completed formative assessments and reported on children's achievement against the learning goal specified for each activity by the teacher. There is much to be gained by encouraging closer collaboration between TAs and teachers in the summative assessment processes.

*early years assessment, summative assessment, literacy development, collaboration between teachers and teaching assistants, the ecological system theory*

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## **B 8**

### **PERSPECTIVES ON THE USE OF DIGITAL MEDIA**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Annerieke Boland, University of Applied Sciences - iPabo Amsterdam, Netherlands**

#### **Influencing factors of the social interaction between children and parents during digital activities at home**

Ahmet Sami Konca (1), Feyza Erden (2), (1) Ahi Evran University, Turkey; (2) Middle East Technical University, Turkey

The aim is to identify influencing factors of the social interaction between children and parents during digital activities at home settings. Previous studies underline the importance of digital technologies for social development of young children. Considering children's intense use of digital technologies, children's social interactions with others are introduced. It is important to investigate social aspect of young children's technology use as there are some concerns about negative influence of technology use on social development of children (AAP, 2016). Johnson (2010) proposed Ecological-Techno-Microsystem that provide a holistic view for the relationship between digital technologies and development of young children. A phenomenological approach was used. The interactions were observed during home visits. No personal information was gathered, and it is completely anonymous. The data are kept safe in an encrypted hard disk. The children's passive exposure to the digital-technologies, inappropriate content of some digital activities, the children's multitasking, and irrelevant communication during digital-activities were related to the conflicts. On the other hand, appropriate features of digital-activities and interaction related to digital activities led to synchronise. There may be other contextual characteristics that may affect interactions. In addition, interactions may vary across different contexts. Therefore, adults should be made aware about determining these characteristics which may be particular to each child. Adults bear a considerable responsibility to provide secure and appropriate digital activities to their children. Parents have joint roles as facilitators, teachers, and gatekeepers, and should, therefore, provide appropriate designs and content for children, rather than focusing solely on screen time duration.

*young children, digital activities, social interaction, conflict, synchrony*

#### **From digital competence to digital capacity? Studying preschool digital media practices from a socio-material perspective**

Ulf Buskqvist, Emelie Johansson, Karlstad University, Sweden

This study was conducted to examine preschool digital media practices from a socio-material perspective by asking two research questions: which affordances are made in intra-actions within preschool digital media practices? How can digital media practices in preschool be described? In an attempt to study digitalisation in preschool, being limited to neither an individual, nor a structural approach, a socio-material perspective is used. The socio-material perspective understands humans, environments, artefacts, and technics as interweaved in language, interactions and organisational and communicative practices. (Orlikowski & Scott, 2008). The



socio-material perspective used has been influenced by Latour's (2005) Actor Network Theory which defines artefacts and human actors as actants with the equivalent potential of agency, within the network they constitute. The data were collected when video recording digital media practices in a preschool context, consisting of 170 minutes film. It was analysed through a socio-material perspective. An analytic step was to identify affordances made in intra-actions of digital media and humans. Informed consent from preschool teachers, children and their legal guardians was collected by using a Participant Information Form and a Participant Consent Form. The study shows that touch pads acts as nodes in preschool's digital media practices. Four significant affordances were created in intra-actions between humans, touchpads, and other artefacts. The results of the study indicate the requirements of asking new questions about the preschool's digitalisation. The established concept of digital competence needs to be supplemented with the concept of digital capacity. Digital capacity emphasizes intra-actions between children, preschool teachers and artefacts.

*digitalisation, socio-materiality, touch pads, preschool, digital media*

#### **Examining the relationship between social skills and screen time in preschool children**

Seyma Degirmenci (1), Tuğba Eryiğit (2), Hilal Yılmaz (3), (1) Marmara University, Turkey; (2) Istanbul Aydin University, Turkey; (3) Marmara University, Turkey

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between social skills and screen time of the children aged 4-5 years. Years of research suggests excessive screen time is strongly associated with cognitive and social decline in young children (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2001; Brown, 2011; Hill et al., 2016; Rideout, 2013; Tomopoulos et al., 2010; Wethington, Pan, & Sherry, 2013) but There is no study examining the relationship between screen time and social development in terms of child-family-teacher. The preschool years are a critical period for the development (Leblanc et al., 2012). Excessive screen times is associated with psychological, emotional, and social problems in preschool children (Cao et al., 2011). Evidence also shows that screen time behaviours formed during the preschool years are stable and track into late childhood (Jones et al., 2013). Qualitative research design was used in the study and research data were collected by semi-structured interview technique. In this technique, we used family-based interventions, teacher-based interventions and child-based interventions. The study group consisted of 60 children between the ages of 3-5 in the middle socioeconomic level, who were preschool education in Istanbul and their parents and teachers. In our study, we received necessary permits from parent and school management to be able to work one-on-one work with children. The coding and content analysis of the research findings is still ongoing. The use of devices with screens (screen time) is steadily increasing worldwide so it is therefore important to understand its relationship to social skills.

*Preschool, screen time, social skills, 3-5 years old, education*

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#### **B 9 INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL STUDIES OF THE PEDAGOGIC ROLE ATTENTIVE TO CULTURE DIVERSITY, REASON, UNCERTAINTY AND EMOTION.**

Self-organised symposium

Friedrich Froebel described the pedagogic relationship as the 'sun which draws out' the child (Froebel, 1830 cited in Lilley 1967:78). He captured the universal essence of the pedagogic role. Yet pedagogic relationships are also shaped by national and cultural difference and diversity. They are underpinned by empirical evidence and professionalism but also full of complexity and uncertainty, reasoned but sometimes unreasoned. Individual subjectivity plays its part too. It is this mix that accounts for the richness of pedagogy but it is a mix that must also be accountable. The presenters in this symposium, all committed to Froebelian principles, offer three different approaches to the accountability, through an international comparison of pedagogies of care, an evaluation of Work Discussion as a model of professional reflection attentive to emotion, and a study of supporting and enhancing pedagogy within a group of practitioners.

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**Chair: Peter Elfer, University of Roehampton, United Kingdom**

#### **Pedagogies of care for one-year-olds: A collaborative, cross-national study**

Sacha Powell (1), Mary McMullen (2), Jean Rockel (3), Maria Cooper (3), Carrey Tik Sze Siu (4), (1) The Froebel Trust, United Kingdom; (2) Indiana University, United States; (3) University of Auckland, New Zealand; (4) Education University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Our study sought commonalities and distinctions in the pedagogical orientations of trained ECEC professionals who work with one-year-olds in England, New Zealand, USA and Hong Kong. Infant-toddler pedagogy is a growing field of study; internationally, empirical work has begun to identify and challenge concepts of quality in early childhood services (e.g. Fenech 2011, Angus &

Carroll-Lind, 2011, Mathers et al 2014). We adopted an ecological paradigm (Darling 2016), taking care to respect participants and their local traditions and avoiding colonialism, ethnocentrism and intellectual provincialism (Tobin and Hsueh 2007; Alexander, 2009). We were informed by sociocultural and relational theories of early childhood practice, which situate caring for infants within educational frameworks (Dalli et al 2011; Rockel 2011, Ruprecht et al 2016, Sosinsky et al 2017). Our study was inspired by the work of Joseph Tobin (e.g. 1989, 2009) who argues that ECEC settings are sites of enculturation, which reflect continuity and change. Building on his seminal ethnographic studies of preschool in three cultures, we used 'videocued, multivocal' elicitation and layered interpretation to explicate the meaning(s) of 'pedagogies of care' in group-based settings for infants and toddlers in our four countries. We collaborated with infant-toddler teachers to create, edit, view and analyse the discussions about 15-minute 'day in the life' style videos from each country. Our complex ethical considerations included questions of ownership and power and involved openness and sensitive negotiation. We found global discourses merging with culturally-situated beliefs to shape pedagogical orientations. An international language of care has local inflections.

*infants, toddlers, pedagogy, comparative, care*

### **Developing close thoughtful attention to children and families in early years pedagogy - The contribution of work discussion groups**

Sue Robson, Peter Elfer, Antonia Zachariou, University of Roehampton, United Kingdom

Pedagogy with young children is intellectually demanding but individual subjectivity and emotion are central and essential. This presentation reports research to evaluate 'Work Discussion' (WD) as a model of professional reflection. Rustin (2009) sets out underpinning theory of WD. Its use in schools and nurseries has been documented (Jackson 2008, Elfer 2012) but not previously evaluated. This presentation reports on a year-long evaluation of WD with practitioners working with two-year-olds. Underpinning theory is psychoanalytic. At the heart of psychoanalytic theory is the concept of 'defences' – it is difficult to talk about interactions that are uncomfortable or difficult and even harder to see our own part in them being difficult. The research adopts a qualitative paradigm and uses ethnographic methods in a case study design. A primary ethical consideration is ensuring practitioners discuss their work in a safe and supportive environment. The WD groups are led by two facilitators to ensure sensitive attention is given to each participant's wellbeing. All practitioner participants thought that WD had benefited their work with children and families. This included practitioners being less judgmental, better able to empathise, improved information sharing, and deeper, more objective thinking. Observational data showed children's personal, social and emotional progress was significant, and beyond what might be reasonably expected. The effect was also greatest for some children amongst the lowest attaining at the start of the project. Evidence of the effectiveness of WD enables a strong case for its inclusion as part of a competent system (Urban et al 2012).

*professional reflection, nursery children under three, work discussion, practitioners*

### **Examining the impact of a discussion group on the self-perception of early years practitioners**

Stella Louis, Froebel Trust, United Kingdom

The aim of this research is to help to develop a model which can support and enhance professional practice. Manning-Morton (2006) research highlights that providing Early Years Practitioners with a secure group space to explore their thoughts and feelings about specific practice will allow them to develop understanding. During my research data was interpreted using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, to explore how a group approach might support the participants' professional development and their understanding of children's learning. I used Interpretive Phenomenology Analysis (IPA) methodology developed by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009). This methodological approach enabled me to better grasp, listen to and understand the experiences of the participants. The issues of potentially vulnerable and less powerful participants were also considered. The need to support EYPs to develop objectivity and their skills as an observer is very important. It can reduce anxieties associated with feeling threatened or fearful because of a lack of knowledge as to how the curriculum is implemented. It is helpful in facilitating the development of self-understanding by addressing ways in which observations and assessments are constructed, understood and used in practice. While the current policy does not consider professional knowledge from a cultural and socio-political context, it may be advantageous to offer EYPs regular time and space for reflective group discussion, where they look closely at children's development and learning.

*reflection, group discussion, self-development, learning, observation*

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**Chair: Sevcan Hakyemez-Paul, University of Turku, Finland**

**Perspectives on collaboration with parents in ECEC. A content analysis on steering documents in Australia, England, Finland, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Germany and Sweden**

Heidi Harju-Luukkainen (1), Susanne Garvis (2), Michelle Bramley (3), Wendy Goff (4), Emely Knör (5), Ewa Lewandowska (6), Sivanes Phillipson (4), Trish Lewis (7), Alicia Sadownik (8), Gaye Tyler-Merrick (9), (1) Nord University, Norway; (2) University of Gothenburg, Sweden; (3) Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom; (4) Swinburne University of Technology, Australia; (5) University of Education, Germany; (6) The Maria Grzegorzewska University, Poland; (7) University of Canterbury, New Zealand; (8) Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway; (9) Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

In this study, we look at ECEC steering documents of eight countries and analyse how collaboration with parents are defined and recognized in these documents. The theoretical framework for this study draws upon current larger cross-national and national research on parent-teacher partnership (Vlasov and Hujala 2017; Hakyemez-Paul et al. 2018). According to Vlasov and Hujala (2017) ECEC services maintain a central role in supporting families with young children. How this partnership between families and service providers is conducted and understood is dependent on the political, societal and cultural changes in the nation's context. Further, according to Alasuutari (2000) the challenge in this collaboration is to agree on the interpretation of partnership and participation. The recognition of parental collaboration differs across countries. Therefore, we use comparative research approach to identify, analyse and explain similarities and differences across them. We use content analysis on textual data to identify key features (Morgan et al. 2010). Our study is based on textual data. Ethical consideration has been given to ensuring a large representation of data from eight countries. The data is analysed collectively in order to avoid bias and reach high objectivity. According to the results authentic, reciprocal and contributory partnerships with parents are highlighted in Australia, England, Finland, New Zealand and Germany. The recognition of the importance of parental collaboration is crucial in the steering documents. This will not only have its effects on the everyday work in ECEC, but it will also affect how teachers are educated in that country.

*professionalism, parents, collaboration, international comparison, content analysis*

**Paternal involvement in Turkey**

Sevcan Hakyemez-Paul, University of Turku, Finland

Uncovering early childhood educators' understandings, attitudes and preferences on paternal involvement (PtI) is aimed. The affecting factors of paternal involvement in the day care context were also investigated to further support the research goal. Previous studies show the importance of PtI in children's academic achievement and wellbeing (Lamb, 1997; Evans & Fogarty, 2005; Hakoama & Ready, 2011). Considering the changes in society and family structure, it is especially important to investigate the PtI in educational institutions (Castelain-Meunier, 2002; Berger, 2004). For an efficient PtI, understanding the perceptions of early childhood educators and their practices would be significant (Lamb, Michael E., 2000). Investigating PtI through Epstein's (2012) parental involvement framework could help to develop better understanding for an effective way for PtI. Quantitative method was chosen. A questionnaire was distributed in Ankara. No personal information was gathered, and it is completely anonymous. An informed consent was included in the questionnaire. The preliminary results reveal that the participants have a positive attitude towards PtI. They are not convinced about the place of fathers in the school premises, thus they mostly prefer home support. They also state that PtI is insufficient due to the unwillingness of fathers. This research will provide a better understanding of what the current state of PtI in ECEC is, as well as to help determining how to develop effective PtI for equality among parents. This will strengthen the fathers' place and relationship with their child along with supporting women in work force and pupils' Wellbeing and success.

*paternal involvement, paternal involvement types, early childhood education and care, educators' views, Turkish context*

**The politics of parental belonging to preschool**

Björn Egilsson, Jóhanna Einarsdóttir, University of Iceland, Iceland

The study focuses on how parents from linguistically, culturally and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds in Iceland experience their children's preschool and how the politics of their own belonging to the preschool and its community play out. In Witten, McCreanor & Kearns (2007), parents have indicated that preschools are important sites to their community belonging and Mitchell et al. (2017) regard quality ECEC centres to be places where families belong. However, research on the politics of parental

belonging are uncommon. The study is informed by Relational Sociology (Elias, 1978; Erimbayer, 1997), the work of Yuval-Davis (2006) on the Politics of Belonging and Sumsion & Wong's (2011) 'Cartography of Belonging'. Qualitative approaches and a social constructionist theoretical perspective were applied. Semi structured interviews were conducted with 13 parents of preschool children of diverse backgrounds from two preschools in the municipality of Reykjavik, Iceland. Parents were asked for informed consent in their mother languages and interviews were facilitated by interpreters. The research was approved by the preschools, the Municipality of Reykjavik and the University of Iceland Science Ethics Committee. Although the participants' overall experience of the preschool was positive, their views on their belonging were more nuanced. While some benefitted from or strived towards belonging to a preschool community, others kept their distance or actively retained the boundaries between the home and school spheres. Furthermore, fluency in the dominant language played a significant role. Limitations of the study and implications for relationship building with parents from diverse backgrounds in preschools will be discussed.

*early childhood, Nordic, parents, diverse backgrounds, politics of belonging*

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## **B 11**

### **PEDAGOGICAL UNDERSTANDINGS THAT PROMOTE CHILDREN'S OWN MATHEMATICS**

Self-organised symposium

When the theme of this year's EECERA conference was announced, the first reaction in our SIG 'Mathematics Birth to Eight Years' was: "This is very suitable for talks about early mathematics." Interestingly, we use the most fundamental of all mathematical activities as a metaphor for having or giving someone or something a value. In this symposium, we focus on pedagogical understandings that promote children's own mathematics. First, Elizabeth Carruthers talks about opening teacher's pedagogy towards a child-orientated socio-cultural model of early mathematics teaching. Maulfry Worthington investigated 3-4-year-olds' mathematical inscriptions, and her findings reveal the potential of rich pretend play for cultural transmission of mathematical knowledge. In the last talk, Silje Christiansen presents results from her MA thesis. Her findings show that children are more active when children rather than teachers initiate mathematical activities.

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**Chair: Oliver Thiel, Queen Maud University College, Norway**

#### **Moving from an adult orientated perspective to a child-centred model of early mathematics pedagogy**

Elizabeth Carruthers, Bristol University, UK, United Kingdom

This research is about teachers researching their own early mathematics pedagogy and finding their personal way, to support and understand children's mathematics. This is based on Hughes (1986) work, who through clinical studies, uncovered very young children's own representations of quantity. Carruthers and Worthington (2005, 2006 and 2011) further revealed children can also use their own mathematical graphics, beyond quantities in schools and homes. The study presented here shifts the focus to teacher's perspectives of their practice in supporting children's mathematics. This research is participatory (Manzo and Brightbill, 2007), based on socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978). It is a qualitative, longitudinal study, situated within an interpretivist, post-modern paradigm (Dhalberg et.al. 2006). Phase one of the data was from seven reception teachers' written diaries. Building on this, phase two delves deeper focussing on two case studies (Baxter and Jack, 2008) from the original seven teachers. The data was collected from three focus groups. Participants signed consent forms; they understood that they could withdraw from the study, at any time. This was discussed at different phases of the project. Pseudonyms were used. The findings revealed that, if teachers want to support Children's Mathematical Graphics, they may need to consider taking on a socio-cultural model of mathematics pedagogy. This shift in conceptual practice seems vital, in order for them to understand young children's mathematics. This research will add to the ever growing body of knowledge of democratic, child-centred pedagogy and could inform teachers of ways that they could support young children's own mathematics.

*children's mathematical graphics, teaching model, changing practice, pedagogy, mathematics*

#### **The cultural transmission of mathematical signs: Child's play**

Maulfry Worthington, Bert van Oers, Marjolein Dobber, VU University, Netherlands

This research investigates how young children learn from sign-use across inscriptions, and from whom they learn the cultural system of mathematical signs, its objective to highlight children's peer-learning of symbolic-tools. Succeeding Worthington and van Oers' (2016) study of children's mathematics within their spontaneous pretend play it focuses on peer learning, highlighting intertextuality (Kristeva, 1980) and natural pedagogy (Csibra & Gergely, 2011), to support children's learning of signs. Using a genetic approach to study children's mathematical sign-use 'in the process of change' (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 65), the study is underpinned by Vygotsky's social-semiotic theory supporting symbolic-tool use. Drawing on Vygotsky's (1978) cultural-historical paradigm it investigates the transmission of cultural signs. Research methods are qualitative, interrogating one case of one nursery

school, the focus on written observations of seven children and their inscriptions, the methodology observational and interpretive. The ethics of observing and gathering data from young children were considered vital. The research was explained to the children using everyday language and their agreement sought. Parents were informed orally of the study's aims, the role of observations and their rights to withdraw from participation, one child withdrawn early in the study. The findings reveal children's intertextual sign-use and the potential of rich pretend play for cultural transmission, confirming young children's social learning mechanisms which complement and help them build on their existing cultural knowledge. Practice supporting all aspects of graphicacy (e.g. drawing, writing and mathematical) and rich pretend play can support young children's mathematics and should be acknowledged in early childhood policy.

*Cultural transmission, intertextuality social learning, mathematical inscriptions, pretend play*

### **Multilingual children's participation in mathematical activities**

Silje Christiansen, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

How do multilingual children participate in mathematical activities led by the staff and in mathematical activities led by the children? With Norwegian Pisa test scores below average, and minority speaking children scoring below the Norwegian average there has been a lot of political focus on the need for more mathematics in the kindergarten (Lange, 2016). With little research done on how multilingual children participate in the kindergartens in general, and even less on mathematics, I had to look to research on child participation and teacher control (Emilsson, 2006, 2007), and connect this to mathematics (Bishop, 1988). As mathematics in the Norwegian framework plan for kindergartens is closely linked to Bishop (1988) I found it natural to use his theory for analysing mathematics and I used Hedegaard's (2012) cultural-historical approach to analyse children's motives in the participation. During a six-week long ethnography inspired fieldwork in one kindergarten, I generated 25 hours of video-observations involving six children and three teachers. The study is fulfilling the Norwegian Centre for Research Data's ethical requirements for consent and data storage. The results of the study show that situations led by the children involves lots of mathematics and all the children participate. Situations led by the staff has a tighter structure and the children are less participatory, especially the children who uses little Norwegian verbal language. The finding shows that a more systematic and political emphasis on mathematics not necessarily lead to children participating in more mathematical activities, especially children who uses little Norwegian verbal language.

*Mathematics, Teacher control, Children's resources, Participation, School readiness*

## **B 12**

### **PROGRAMS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY LITERACY**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Gary Bingham, Georgia State University, United States**

### **An exploratory study of using play-based activities to promote young children's learning of phonetic symbols**

Yi-Wen Tsai, National Pingtung University, Taiwan

Chiung Ju Chang, Wang Chia Elementary School Affiliated Preschool, Taiwan

The purpose of this study is to explore the effects of the play strategies on children's learning of phonetic symbols. There is considerable research on the benefits of play for children's learning across all areas of development (Kennedy & Barblett, 2010). Piaget's theory on the construction of knowledge via active exploration through play and Developmentally Appropriate Practice (NAEYC, 1987) provide a theoretical and research evidence base for protecting children's opportunity to learn and develop through the provision of traditionally valued play-based experiences. Forty 4- to 6-year-old young children participated in the study. A variety of play-based activities with phonetic symbols was implemented for thirty minutes every day for eight weeks. Researchers observed children to determine their level of interest in and response to the play activities. The pre-test and post-test were conducted before and after the play-based curriculum to evaluate children's learning of Chinese phonetic symbols. Parental consent was obtained for their children's participation in the study before conducting the research. The results showed that children's learning motivation of phonetic symbols increased dramatically from not being interested to learn to eager to play phonetic symbol related games. In addition, the number of phonetic symbols that children can recognize increased from the average of 3.8 to 8.6. The findings of this study can encourage preschool teachers to help children learn phonetic symbols joyfully and pleasantly in their early years. Young children naturally acquiring phonetic symbols through play is helpful for their early reading ability and transition from preschool to elementary school.

*phonetic symbols, play-based activities, learning through play, young children, developmentally appropriate practice*

### **Promoting early writing in preschool: Outcomes of an online teacher professional development project (iWRITE)**

Gary Bingham, Georgia State University, United States

This study examined the impacts of an online professional learning program (iWRITE) on preschool teachers' knowledge and writing practices. Young children's early writing skills are important predictors of later literacy achievement (Aram, 2005; Ouellette & Sénéchal, 2008). Teachers' writing practices are important predictors of later writing development (Aram & Biron, 2004; Gerde, Bingham, & Pendergast, 2015). Sociocultural theory informed the way we provided and examined teachers' environmental and writing instructional supports (Prior, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978). Children's writing is conceptualized with attention to handwriting, spelling, and composing skills (Berninger, 2000). This post-positivistic study employed quantitative methods. Teachers were randomly assigned to treatment (access to online learning modules and coaching) or comparison conditions. Teachers' writing practices were observed three times during the school year. Observations documented writing environments, opportunities that teachers provided children for writing, and examined the nature of teacher's pedagogical writing supports (e.g., modelling, scaffolding). Teachers consented to participate in this research and were allowed to stop participating at any time. Because observers were blind to condition, their privacy was maintained throughout the project. Results revealed that treatment teachers increased their writing environment and instruction more than control teachers (writing materials = 6.4 points higher,  $p < .001$ ; writing instruction,  $d = 1.4$ ,  $p = .001$ ). Pre and post surveys also revealed that teachers evidenced positive change in their knowledge about children's writing development as evidenced by more complex views of early writing development and understanding of strategies to support children's writing development. Findings demonstrate that teachers can be supported in implementing high-quality writing practices.

*early writing, professional learning, teacher practices, literacy, online learning*

### **Preschool program for supporting early literacy: Short- and long-term outcomes**

Urška Fekonja, Marjanovič, Kaja Hacin, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

The aim of this study was to establish both short-term and long-term effects of a preschool program, designed to encourage children's early literacy in the year before primary school. Adults can scaffold children's early literacy in different ways; preschool activities, such as conversation, symbolic play and shared reading, support the development of early literacy in preschool children (Lonigan, 2004; McCoy and Cole, 2011). Socio-cultural theory emphasizes the role of symbolically rich environment and the encouragement within the zone-of-proximal development in child's development and learning (Gillen and Hall, 2003; Vygotsky, 1967). This longitudinal study included 45 children, aged on average 5.6 years, from two preschool groups. Children's literacy skills were assessed three times: before and immediately after the three-month implementation of the designed preschool program and at the end of the first grade of primary school one year later. Parents gave their written informed consents for their children to be included in the study. Before the individual assessments, children were informed that they could freely end their cooperation at any time. Children significantly increased their literacy skills during the preschool program implementation. Children, who progressed the most in their metalinguistic awareness and graphomotor skills during the implementation of the program, expressed higher metalinguistic awareness and graphomotor skills by the end of the first grade. The study emphasises the importance of scaffolding early literacy in the preschool period and underlines the role of a competent adult who encourages the development of early literacy during various symbolic activities within the preschool curriculum.

*early literacy, scaffolding, storytelling, graphomotor skills, metalinguistic awareness*

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## **B 13**

### **THE IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN ECEC**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Maelis Karlsson Lohmander, University of Gothenburg, Sweden**

### **Early childhood educators re-conceptualise their practice and professionalise their educational role through a professional development program in a university kindergarten in Cyprus**

Andria Christodoulou, Nasia Charalambous, Victoria Michaelidou, University of Cyprus Nursery & Kindergarten School, Cyprus

This is a case study aiming to discuss the experiences of 14 early childhood educators in regard to the effect of a professional development program (PDP) on their effectiveness. Nowadays, many researchers have mentioned the important role of the PDP in teachers' effectiveness as well as the indirect relationship with children's outcomes (Snyder et al, 2018; Weiland et al, 2018, Chang, 2017). Guskey (2002) suggested that teachers need to be supported by principal in order to make successful implementations in

their classrooms and achieve the "change". The theoretical framework of this study is the 'Look-Ahead' PDP model by Baird & Clark (2018) based on Implementing New Curriculum with a Focus on Instructional Strategies. The sample of the study is the 14 preschool teachers in the kindergarten and nursery school of the University of Cyprus. This is qualitative study based on the opinions and experiences of the teachers and as well on video recordings, group meetings and conversational interviews. Ethical issues regarding access, informed consent, trust and power positions, between the researcher and the teachers have been taken into account. The study has shown that teachers' instructional practices and general behaviour have been improved by the end of the 'Look-Ahead' PDP. It is a fact that stake holders and policy makers are nowadays more and more focusing on Professional Development as a major factor of school effectiveness and educational system stability. This study introduces a new model of PDP that seems to really have a good impact on teacher's effectiveness.

*professional development, teacher coaching and mentoring, teacher role, school effectiveness, teacher effectiveness*

#### **Kindergarten teachers on further education leading educational development work**

Reidun Larsen, Hilde Løvig-Larsen, University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

The object of this study is finding out how kindergarten teachers on further education can develop their pedagogical practice in kindergarten by leading educational development work. In Norway, ECEC is to work with educational development to secure the involvement of the staff (Ministry of Education, 2017, p.23). A central aim in this study is to see how kindergarten teachers can benefit from former students work with educational development. The study is based on previous research on how kindergarten teachers experience leadership of educational development work in strengthening their pedagogical practice (Larsen & Larsen, 2019). The study focuses on the learning community of practice (Wenger, 1998, 2004; Lave & Wenger, 1991), and how kindergarten teachers can develop pedagogical practice by leading educational development work (Togsverd & Ørskov, 2010; Pedersen, 2010). This study is placed under the social-constructivist paradigm, with a qualitative design. The material is both focus group interview and student texts written by kindergarten teachers on further education. Although the names of participants were anonymized, the participants were also our students. Therefore, the consent- and information sheet clarified that participation could be withdrawn at any time, without influencing the student-teacher relation. We found a connection between strengthening the community of practice and how the students worked with anchoring the work and resistance. Another discovery of importance is how research on former students' work can influence on current students' development work. One implication on practice is that successful development work on further education depends on lecturers guiding the students throughout the educational programme.

*educational development work, community of practice, further on education, leadership, students as participants*

#### **Early childhood educators' voices in shifting curricular policies and praxis**

Maelis Karlsson Lohmander (1), Valerie Sollars (2), (1) University of Gothenburg, Sweden; (2) University of Malta, Malta

This study illustrates the experiences of ten early childhood educators working in different contexts but experiencing changes to their curricular framework. The study records Maltese and Swedish educators' experiences of their involvement with curriculum development leading to changes in their practice. Despite widespread agreement about the roles and responsibilities of highly-skilled early childhood professionals (OECD, 2018; Hallet, 2013) policy planning and curricular decisions are often undertaken by stakeholders outside the classroom. The participation of educators varies, raising doubts about the extent to which their knowledge and insights are given due importance when curricular modifications are underway. Yet, they are expected to implement changes, often with minimal professional development, monitoring and support. An empirical-phenomenological framework (Christensen, 2017) was adopted. In-depth interviews (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013) were conducted with five participants in each country. Semi-structured questions allowed practitioners to reflect upon their participation in curricular changes. Interview data were analysed through narrative analysis (Earthy & Cronin, 2008). Ethical guidelines in both countries were followed (Vetenskapsrådet, 2015; Research Ethics Committee, UM, 2018) ensuring voluntary participation, signed consent, freedom to withdraw and anonymisation. Since data are still being collected, it is anticipated that while practitioners acknowledge the need for professional development when curricular changes are implemented, greater involvement in the decision-making stages, respecting their professional training and experiential knowledge would be welcome. The findings of this study have implications for policy and practice and shed insights on how policy changes are understood and translated into practice.

*curricular changes in ECE, policy-making in ECE, educators' voices, stakeholders' participation, phenomenology*

## PERSPECTIVES ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Individual Paper Symposium

**Chair: Farhana Wan Yunus, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia**

### **Types of play and conditions for learning process: Integration of children and educators' perspectives and analysis of classroom interactions**

Amaya Lorca, Valeska Grau, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile

This research seeks to understand the diverse conditions for learning process present in different types of play in preschool, by integrating both the children's and educators' perspective and analysis of classroom interactions. Research in this field has investigated separately children's perspective (e.g. Colliver & Fleer, 2016), educators' perspective (e.g. Pyle & DeLuca, 2016) and types of play (e.g. Fisher et al., 2013). Therefore, it is necessary to develop a more comprehensive approach. While studies have evidenced different benefits of the diverse types of play (Whitebread et al., 2012), the conditions for learning process present in different types of play are still unknown. From an historical-cultural perspective, these conditions include degree of involvement, dialogue and beliefs (Sebastian & Lissi, 2017). This research is situated in a constructivism paradigm and is a qualitative case study. A pre-kinder classroom was filmed 33 days. 6 children were interviewed 4 times and educators were interviewed twice. We will report the dialogic analysis of interviews and classroom interactions in play episodes. Recordings of classroom play were selected for analysis based on interview responses. Adults gave their consent and children gave their assent after a didactic explanation. Results indicate that different types of play present diverse conditions for learning process. Engagement and type of talk appear differently in different plays. In those different types of play, both children and educators present tensions in their beliefs about the relationship between play and learning. This study is a contribution to pedagogical decision making about play in classrooms.

*types of play, conditions for learning, interactions, children's perspective, educators' perspective*

### **The value of play in after-school care; parents, after-school care leaders and children's perspectives**

June Berger Storli, Hilde Dehnæs Hogsnes, University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

More than 81% of all children starting school in Norway also spend time in after-school care. There is limited knowledge about the role that after-school care may have for children. This presentation will focus on how after-school care as an arena for play may contribute to a sense of continuity for children, both in the transition from kindergarten to school and in children's everyday life in school. The study is part of an evaluation of the quality and content of after-school care in one municipality in Norway (Hogsnes, Storli & Moser, 2017). This study (Hogsnes & Storli, in press) is based on Dewey's (2005) thoughts of play, as well as Cultural Historical Activity Theory (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011; Vygotsky, 1978). The study is placed under the social-constructivist paradigm (Mertens, 2010) and the material is based on focus group interviews with parents, leaders of after-school care and children. Ethical considerations are taken care of through institutional ethical procedures regulating research in Norway (NSD). Participants have given written consent to participate. Sound recording has been deleted after transcription and the material is anonymized. Both children, parents and leaders in after-school care emphasize the importance of play in after-school care. After-school care, as an arena for play, gives children opportunities to experience continuity across institutional boundaries. In the purpose of letting children experience continuity employees in after-school care, teachers in kindergarten and school must cooperate. Play is recognized as an important activity for children, in vertical as well as in horizontal transitions.

*after-school care, vertical transitions, horizontal transitions, play, co-operation*

### **Practitioners' perceptions of children's learning outcomes from playing with peers**

Farhana Wan Yunus, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

The aim of this study was to find out how the children's play was understood by untrained practitioners in childcare centres in Malaysia. Research on infants' and toddlers' play in ECE centres shows many benefits for children's development including enabling children to learn about the social world of peer interactions (Aureli & Colecchia, 1996; Elkind, 2007). Moreover, peer interactions during play is important for developing the children's social competence as mentioned in the Social Competence Prism (Rose-Krasnor, 1997). This study uses Super and Harkness' (1986) notion of the psychology of the caretakers as an essential component of the child's developmental niche. By considering the practitioners' perceptions of children's interactions through the lens of Super and Harkness's concept, it becomes possible to see that the practitioners' perceptions can have an influence on children's peer interactions. This study sits within a social constructivist worldview and uses a case-study approach. In collecting the data, this study uses interviews, observations, video-stimulated recall and focus group discussions. Ethical concerns were



outlined and approved by the Human Ethics Committee. The findings of the study show that the complexity of children's experiences remained hidden to the practitioners until they took part in the video-stimulated recall interviews. It provided the practitioners to deepen their thinking about children's peer interactions and to begin seeing them as linked with learning through play. The practitioners perceived that (i) sharing resources; (ii) communicating with peers; and (iii) understanding peers' intentions, needs and emotions constituted important learning for children during playtime. Trainings should be considered to the practitioners.

*play and learning, peer interactions, early childhood education, ECE practitioners, perceptions*

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## **B 15**

### **CAREER TRAJECTORIES OF MEN IN ECEC**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium presents three perspectives on men's career trajectories in ECEC. Two papers grow out of an international study of male dropouts and persistors in the ECEC workforce from 12 countries. The first study examines how men's construction of masculinities in the ECEC context resists dominant gender norms on the one hand while sustaining hegemonic masculinity through confirmation of gender binary discourses. The second paper offers a new view on the role of agency in men's career decisions by showing how men in ECEC hybridize traditional male and female forms of agency as they deal with their minority status and identity in a female dominated profession. The third paper focuses on the centrality of cultural context in understanding how men in ECEC negotiate international gender discourses in their career paths and decisions by comparing dropouts and persistors in three countries on different continents.

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**Chair: David Brody, Efrata College of Education, Israel**

#### **Why men stay and why men leave early childhood education: Masculinities, sexuality and resistance**

Deevia Bhana (1), Kari Emilsen (2), Yuwei Xu (3), (1) University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa; (2) Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway; (3) Portsmouth University, United Kingdom

The study sought to address the dropout and retention in men's career trajectories in ECEC. Aim1.To identify factors which contribute to men's decisions to remain in and exit out of the ECEC profession. We examine why men stay and why men drop out of ECEC by drawing from qualitative in depth interviews conducted with 37 male teachers. Brownhill (2015) focused on male and female teachers, service providers and parents to show that there is need to address different levels of barriers to men's involvement in ECEC. Brody's (2015) study shows how gender boundaries can be broken as men in ECEC resist gender norms about traditional work. Warin (2018) addresses the problem of gender balance and theorises gender as fluid rather than biological basis upon which to include men in ECEC. Theory: Critical masculinity studies by Connell (1995) is conceptualised as a social construction of the relations between men and women. Dominant masculinity is based on the denigration of the feminine. Multiple masculinities exist thus also potential to change. Interpretive approach used in this study. Individual interviews conducted with 37 men. Qualitative research approach used to gain in-depth knowledge of meanings. Participants signed consent forms. Pseudonyms are used. Confidentiality is guaranteed. Masculinity is key to understanding why men stay and why men exit ECEC. Men both resist and reproduce dominant masculinity and are under pressure to avoid care work and children in ECEC. Policy proposed to increase men in ECEC. Role model theory and biological theories of essentialism are outdated.

*men, masculinities, gender, sexuality, power*

#### **Hybridised agency among male early childhood workers as a factor in their career decisions**

David Brody, Efrata College of Education, Israel

This study aims to understand the agentic behaviours of men in ECEC. Agency theory has been applied to career decision making in teaching (Cochran-Smith et al., 2012; Smith, 2011), and thus holds promise as a lens through which men's careers in ECEC may be productively examined. Anzaldúa's (1987) concept of new mestiza provides a theoretical foundation for this study. Bandura (2006) proposed the agency as a construct to explain how people influence their future. Feminist perspectives, such as Mahmood (2011) and McNay (2013) emphasize resistance as an agentic characteristic. Anzaldúa (1987) refers to mestiza as negotiation between cultural and marginalized identities which may be conflictual, thus creating a hybrid space. A qualitative hermeneutic paradigm was chosen to reveal participants' unique blend of male and female agentic styles responding to challenges of a gender normed profession. Methodology entails life histories of three men who chosen the ECEC profession. Methods include a narrative interview and drawing a longitudinal storyline. Anonymity of the participants was guaranteed. IRB approval was attained. The men's status incongruity resulting from choosing "women's work" framed career decision-making and lead to construction of

hybridized agency. Each man constructed agency bordering on traditional male and female typologies, thus maintaining their masculinity while engaging in the caring work. These findings reconceptualise agency among male ECEC workers as balancing the contradiction between masculinity and a commitment to the ethos of caring. These findings engender sensitivity among ECEC leaders regarding needs of men who choose the profession.

*agency, men in ECEC, masculinities, career decisions, mestiza*

### **Different cultures different men? A cross cultural and comparative study from Australia, China and Norway**

Birgitte Ljunggren (1), Kari Emilsen (1), Victoria Sullivan (2), Karen Thorpe (2), Yuwei Xu (3), (1) Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education (QMUC), Norway; (2) The University of Queensland, Australia; (3) University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom

The paper explores the available subject positions for men working in Early childhood education and care (ECEC) offered by cultural gender discourses in Australia, China and Norway. It discusses whether those men's gender subjectivities reproduce or challenge nationally and globally persistent gender binary thinking in the ECEC sector and whether this affects retention. The paper answers to a lacking research on career trajectories of men in ECEC (Brody, 2017). It builds on Warin's (2018) identification of different male worker identities in British ECECs by adding a comparative aspect while comparing findings from three countries. This paper adds to the paucity of cross-cultural studies in research related to gender and men's participation in ECEC (Rohrmann and Brody, 2015). The paper applies a poststructuralist discourse theoretical perspectives (Winter Jørgensen & Phillips 2013) which enables analysis of individuals' gender subjectivities situated within cultural contexts and gender discourses. Discourse analysis detects the present subject positions in a set of data generated through a three-part data collection protocol applied in current countries. It includes narrative interview, semi-structured interview, and a graphic storyline from three men with ECEC experience from each country. This methodology aligns to a poststructuralist paradigm Anonymity secured in interviews, and in any written recordings of observations. We find traces of national and global gender and masculinities discourses that open for both challenging and reinforcing gender patterns in career choices of men in the ECEC sector. Findings may raise sensitivity to gender in policy and practice and better gender balance.

*Men in ECEC, discourse, gender, comparative analysis, retention*

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## **B 16**

### **RELATIONAL PEDAGOGY, AFFORDANCES AND EMOTIONAL EDUCATION IN OUTDOOR LEARNING**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Joan Turner, Mount Saint Vincent University, Canada**

#### **Emotional education and outdoor experiences in early childhood**

Michele Cagol, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy

Being able to turn one's attention to one's own inner world, to recognize emotions, to be aware of what one is feeling and why, all are key elements of emotional self-awareness. A study with first-grade children investigates how they can improve their relationships with themselves, others and the world. While many curricula are designed to boost emotional intelligence, effective emotional education is unlikely to be achieved within traditional settings (Goleman & Senge, 2014). The challenge is to combine emotional education with outdoor experiences, which turn out to be generative when accompanied by reflection (Mortari, 2009). This study uses the epistemological framework of naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) whose main principle is to conduct research in real-life contexts, which is key to developing emotional awareness. Further, this study is placed within an interpretive paradigm and adopts the methodology of research with children (Christensen & James, 2008). It is a single case study based on action-research, and makes use of multiple methods of investigation to collect different types of data for triangulation. The field research involved a first-grade class in a primary school. Parental consent and child assent were obtained after providing written/oral information. Confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntariness were respected (children could choose to stay outdoors without participating in the study). Results show that outdoor experiences, regularly followed by personal and group reflections, contributes to the building of emotional competence. This research suggests an alternative approach to early childhood emotional education, one that combines outdoor education with learning emotional self-awareness.

*emotional education, emotional self-awareness, early childhood, naturalistic inquiry, outdoor experiences*

## **Relational pedagogy in outdoor play - Perspectives of children, parents and educators**

Anna Rose Maguire Codd, Maynooth University and National University of Ireland, Ireland

The overarching aim of this research is to explore how the outdoors shapes pedagogical interactions and relationships in an early years' care and education (ECCE) setting in rural Ireland. Research studies have explored pedagogical interactions in the outdoors (Tonge, Jones, Okely, 2018; Mawson, 2014; Sandseter, Little, Wyver, 2012; Maller, 2009). This research brings together embodied education, 'which emphasises the use of the body in the educational practice and the student-teacher interaction both inside and outside the classroom ...' Smyrniou, Sotiriou, Georgakopoulou and Papadopoulou (2016: 31) and relational pedagogy which fosters the construction of appropriate relationships embedded within the schooling process (Crownover and Jones (2018: 18/19). It is located with a children's rights perspective based on Lundy's concept of children's participation which emphasizes space, voice, influence and audience to ensure an inclusive process through which all children have equal opportunities to participate and will be appropriately supported by adults and their peers. An ethnographic research design, consistent with an interpretivist paradigm will be used. A mosaic approach to data collection facilitates children's, parents' and educators' contributions. Semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews will be conducted. Child protection, informed consent and assent, power dynamics will be ongoing. The research will focus on how pedagogical interactions/relationships are shaped by the outdoors in an early years' setting. The research aims to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the outdoors in an Irish context in the EYS as a community of practice of children, their parents and educators.

*relational pedagogy, embodied education, relationships, interactions, outdoors*

## **Affordances of wooden planks invite children's movement during outdoor play**

Joan Turner (1), Jane Cawley (2), Sara Kirk (2), Michelle Stone (2), (1) Mount Saint Vincent University, Canada; (2) Dalhousie University, Canada

The aim is to review photographic data from a larger evaluation study of children's use of loose parts (LP) and document the affordances of wooden planks observed during preschool children's outdoor play (Houser et al., under review; Stone et al., 2019). Stone et al. report children spent little of their day in sustained sedentary behaviour (SB), transitioning quickly from SB to physical activity (PA). The significance of LP materials in enhancing movement through active outdoor play is not well established (Houser et al., 2016); this study contributes to understanding how LP contribute to children's movement. Affordance theory suggests children's perceptions of LP will influence how they behave and play with the item (Gibson, 1986). The affordances of common, open-ended wooden planks are visible through observation of the ways in which movement is supported during outdoor play. The mixed-method evaluation of a loose parts outdoor play intervention includes a deductive content analysis of 99 photographs provided by early childhood educators; 31 photographs featuring play with wooden planks display affordances perceived by children and associated activity. Informed consent was given by parents; children's faces and site locations were obscured in photographs to protect anonymity. Affordances used by children as they position their bodies to walk, run, slide, roll, balance and jump during outdoor play include the flat smooth surface, length, strength and portability of wooden planks. Documenting ways movement is enhanced through the affordances of wooden planks helps to justify the inclusion of LP materials to promote physical activity.

*loose parts, outdoor play, movement, affordance theory, photographs*

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## **B 17**

### **SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM AND SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Kate McAnelly, University of Otago College of Education, New Zealand**

## **"In the little things, the big things lie": Using sensory ethnographic and new materialist methodologies to research the active participation and learning of autistic children in early childhood settings**

Kate McAnelly, University of Otago College of Education, New Zealand

This paper is drawn from the findings of my PhD research, which focused on sensory environments in early childhood settings and how these produced the active participation and learning of autistic children. Research on sensory learning environments is largely absent in extant literature (McAnelly, 2017). This is problematic for autistic children as many experience sensory stimuli differently to typically expected 'norms' (Kluth, 2012). The project drew from an agential realist framework, underpinned by the notion of intra-action (Barad, 2007). This enabled me a detailed view of how sensory environments were constituted and consequently

produced the active participation and learning of focus children. Sensory ethnographic and new materialist methodological approaches informed the project (Pink, 2015; Fox & Alldred, 2017). A wide variety of data collection tools, including observations, interviews, photos, videos, child-led walking tours, and environment mapping, were used by focus children and I in co-producing the research (Clark, 2017). Ethical considerations centred on the verbal communication capacities of focus children not being privileged as the only way they could meaningfully contribute their knowledge and ideas to the project. A multiplicity of data collection tools supported this. The value of sensory ethnographic and new materialist approaches to 'go deep' in investigating and understanding the experiences of autistic children in early childhood settings is key to share. The reconceptualisation of early childhood environments internationally as sensory spaces that 'speak' to children and either support or constrain their active participation and learning is an urgent call for us to consider.

*autism, learning environments, sensory meaning making, sensory ethnography, new materialism*

### **Self-perceptions of children in need of social-emotional support and early childhood education professionals perceptions of the child – Is there a connection?**

Marianna Heinonen, Päivi Pihlaja, Turku University, Finland

The aim of this research is to gain knowledge about the self-perceptions of children under school age with social and emotional difficulties and the perceptions of early childhood education professionals concerning these children. Previous studies have underlined the negative perceptions of teachers concerning children in need of social-emotional support (Grieve 2009, 175; Male 2003, 168-169). The negative perceptions have an impact on teacher-child relationships and feedback given to the child, which has an influence on the child's self-perceptions (Oja-Koski 2000, 123-125). Internalization of perceptions produced by the environment (Dunne & Moore 2011, 362) may lead to situations in which the child and the adult unknowingly maintain the child's social-emotional difficulties (Cooper 1999, 3, Pihlaja 2008). In this research the theories of cognitive developmental psychology, symbolic interactionism and social constructionism are combined. For this qualitative study 10 children and 12 early childhood education professionals were interviewed and the material was analysed by using content analysis. The specific ethical questions of interviewing children and special groups are discussed and the anonymity and privacy of participants is protected. The participants have given their approval for this study. Preliminary findings: The perceptions of professionals were mainly positive, however, clear contradictions between some perceptions were also found. These differences are discussed by connecting and comparing the professional's perceptions to the children's self-perceptions. With this research we hope to increase the early childhood education professional's understanding and self-reflection concerning the meaning and importance of positive perceptions.

*early childhood education and care (ECEC), social-emotional difficulties (SED), teacher's perceptions, self-perceptions, self-concept*

### **Language development at the beginning of kindergarten in Hungary**

Tunde Anna Tasko, Katalin Burom, Eszterhazy Karoly University, Hungary

Our aim is to survey perceptive and expressive language development at the beginning of kindergarten (at 3 years of age) in order to explore delayed language development or specific language disorders. Our other aim was to study the characteristics of language development in this age group. There are several international research papers on language development in different groups of children (Hart and Risley, 2003; Fenson et al., 2000). The MacArthur-Bates Communicative Development Inventories (CDI) used parent-report instruments for assessing communicative skills in infants and toddlers. It was adapted 8 years ago in Hungary. There are orders in Hungary to survey children's language development at the beginning of kindergarten (at 3 years of age) by Speech therapists using CDI from 2017 in order to explore delayed language development or specific language disorders early. Parent report data on early language development measured using the MacArthur Communicative Development Inventory (CDI) was collected on 150 preschool children in Eger and its surroundings in Hungary. We use data anonym. Participants get acquainted with the aims and terms of the research and sign an informed consent. Based on previous research (Kas et. al., 2010) we anticipate, that for kindergarten children's (at the age of 3) language development is determined by the parents' educational level, and we think CDI is indicative of delayed language development and specific language disorders. If we want to know more about the characteristics of language development of preschool children, this research will help with assessment and intervention

*receptive language development, expressive language development, vocabulary, the MacArthur-Bates Communicative Development Inventories (CDI), kindergarten*

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**Chair: Annica Löfdahl Hultman, Karlstad University, Sweden**

**A reflective approach to promote educators' professional learning**

Manon Boily, Jean Baptiste Tamie, Julie Lefebvre, University of Quebec, Canada

This communication presents the study that took place in a childcare centre (birth to 4-years), and included 9 educators who participated in an on-site training sessions. The research aimed to understand the process of reflective practice implemented during workplace training combined with reflective tools to support educators' reflection in their practice. Reflective practice has been identified as one of the essential conditions for improving practices (Bleach 2014, Lehrer 2013, Peeters De Kimpe and Brandt 2016, Walker 2009, Musatti and al. 2016). However, the potential for a reflective approach adapted to educators in the context of an ongoing professional development activity using specialized tools such as the logbook and self-evaluation, was not highlighted by research. To understand the process of reflective practice implemented during workplace training, we have taken the model developed by Lefebvre (2016) in her doctoral thesis. Her model is inspired by Holborn's model (1992), the self-evaluation theory (Oberg, 1992), and the reflective tool developed by Legault (2004). The methodology is qualitative and interpretative. Data collection included reflective journals combined with self-evaluation. We obtained an ethic certificate from our university for this study. Participants have all signed the consent form. The analysis led to the development of a new reflective practice model with six steps: 1) Awareness; 2) Analysis; 3) Self-evaluation; 4) Reinvestment; 5) Assessment and findings; 6) Pedagogical readjustment. The potential of combining a reflective practice model with six steps and specialized tools to promote educators' professional learning, and political decisions to support educators' professional learning are discussed.

*reflective practice model, reflective practice, professional learning, educator, childcare centre*

**Issues of quality in preschool teacher education**

Annica Löfdahl Hultman, Katarina Ribaeus, Karlstad University, Sweden

In order to develop high quality in ECE in a democratically troublesome time, teacher education needs to prepare students to be able to handle different pedagogical issues and value conflicts. The aim of our presentation is to highlight a student perspective on their teacher education. Questions in this presentation deals with if the teacher education is prepared to meet the students of today, and how? Previous research has shown a gap between theory and practice, e.g. Cochran-Smith et al. (2015) when discussing preparation of teacher education throughout the whole publication. The theoretical perspective is grounded in an ecological approach of teacher agency (Biesta et al, 2015). In a project on students' developing professional skills, a group of students have met with researchers once a week on issues of democracy and how the teacher education supports their teacher agency. All participants gave their informed consent. Our findings show how teacher students use their own and others' experiences in discussions on how to act in different hypothetical or real situations. However, when student teachers' experiences are not met by the teacher education, we might ask us what will happen to the scientific ground and to the proven experience? Is there a risk their professional skills will be based on "simple science and deprived and distressed experiences?" As researchers what can our role be to support the teacher education and the student teachers?

*teacher education, student teachers democracy, teacher agency, scientific ground*

**ORICL: Evaluating the effectiveness of a new educator reflection and assessment tool for working with children under 3**

Gerry Mulhearn (1), Linda Harrison (2), Sandie Wong (2), Sheena Elwick (1), Laura McFarland (1), Lysa Dealtry (1), Kate Williams (3), Magdalena Janus (4), (1) Charles Sturt University, Australia; (2) Macquarie University, Australia; (3) Queensland University of Technology, Australia; (4) McMaster University, Canada

The project tests the effectiveness of a new reflection and assessment tool to improve early childhood educators' ability to observe, assess, and critically reflect on the quality of individual children's learning experiences in settings for children under three years. ORICL responds to the importance and complexity of monitoring and improving quality programs for an increasing number of children under 3 years of age in early childhood programs (OECD, 2015, 2017). The tool complements instruments that are used to assess overall program quality (ECERS-E, STEW). The current version was co-developed and refined using a Delphi process engaging a panel of 20 early childhood experts (Crisp et al, 1997). Two key pedagogical frameworks, Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning framework for Australia (COAG 2009), and Measuring and Monitoring Quality in Childcare: A

Pedagogical Framework for Childcare for Babies and Toddlers (Kind & Gezen, 2014) have influenced identification of key constructs of quality for the tool. The project adopts both quantitative and qualitative approaches, enacting principles of co-design. This pilot study includes 15 educators in centre-based and family day care services trialling the tool and participating in follow-up surveys and interviews. The research is conducted in accordance with the Australian National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2015). Educators have found the tool provides new insights into how they as educators could make changes to enhance children's experiences. With educators' endorsement, there is potential for the tool's broader use across all setting types to improve practice.

*children under 3, reflective practice, quality improvement, co-design, practice evaluation*

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**B 19**

## **PARTICIPATION, PARTNERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT OF PARENTS AND FAMILIES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Robyn Babaeff, Monash University, Australia**

### **Participation of parents in Norwegian early childhood education and care**

Tove Ingebrigtsen, Martin Samuelsson, Nord Universitet, Norway

The overall aim in this presentation, is to explore parents and educators' views on parent participation in Norwegian ECEC. In addition, we conceptualize how parent participation can be structured. The research is closely linked to the ongoing European research project on quality in ECEC, the 'European Quality Seal' project, and previous research from the Norwegian ECEC quality project, BePro's result from the parental survey on quality. The study draws on sociocultural theoretical perspectives including different stakeholders' perspectives on parent participation in ECEC. Habermas' formulation of deliberative democracy is used as theoretical background for how parent participating can be structured. The study is a part of a stakeholder survey involving Norwegian ECEC educators and parents from 30 ECEC institutions. We focus on the aspects on parental involvement, parent participation, and decision-making processes. Critical theory is used as foundation for the analysis and conceptualization. The study follows ethical standards and privacy policies approved by the Norwegian Social Science Data Service and The Norwegian Data Protection Authority. Participants' confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed. Based on Habermas' model of deliberative democracy we discuss and argue if and how parents can be actively involved in the governing of the early childhood education that their children attend. Parent participation in Norwegian ECEC is on the political agenda and there is an awareness of this as a day-to-day practice. Yet, there is a need to investigate this phenomenon further, both in a practical and theoretical sense. We contribute in the discussion.

*Parent participation, Parents' views, Educators' views, European Quality Seal project, Habermas' deliberative model*

### **Media's role on motivators of family engagement**

Rabia Filik Uyanik, Hasibe Özlen Demircan, Middle East Technical University, Turkey

The study aimed to assess the association of the motivators of mother's engagement decisions into their children's education with media exposure (ME) and maternal belief systems of "social comparison orientation, intensive motherhood and competitive attitudes" (MBS). The great body of research assessed the motivators' relation on parents' engagement behaviours (e.g. Reininger & Lopez, 2017). However, empirical research investigating the origin of such motivators for the mothers' side is scarce. Within the sociological standpoints, mothers' ME and their MBS, stated as dominant maternal beliefs and behaviours in today's technological world (Douglas & Michaels, 2004; Chae, 2015), might be powerful origins. In this study, the engagement motivators were drawn upon Parent Involvement Model (Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005). Also, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) adapted for the interaction of mass media, school and parents. The combination of ME and MBS was framed within Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954). Using quantitative methods, data from conveniently selected 1027 mothers in Turkey was subjected to canonical correlation analysis. Mothers participated voluntarily. Written consents, informing participants about confidentiality and right to withdrawn, were taken. The results revealed that media portrayals, mainly childrearing information, and MBS, particularly intensive mothering, have a role in explaining psychological and contextual motivators for mother's engagement. The findings evidenced the stakeholders of education from wider societal systems,

i.e. mass media, making contributions to children within the framework of family engagement. Thus, a broad viewpoint is required for family engagement practices.

*family engagement, motivators to mother's engagement decisions, media exposure, intensive motherhood, early childhood education*

### **Parent - educator partnership in flexibly scheduled ECEC**

Kaisu Peltoperä, Tanja Vehkakoski, Leena Turja, Marja-Leena Laakso, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

This research aims to disclose educators' and parents' subject positions in the chain of care when children are attending flexibly scheduled early childhood education and care (ECEC) due to their parent's non-standard working hours. Earlier research show that families using flexibly scheduled ECEC have diverse forms as well as living and working conditions. These pose challenges for meeting families and building partnership with them. (Rönk et al. 2017.) In the analysis we use the concept 'chain of care' that is more commonly used in health services than early education (Åhgren 2003). The data consists of educators' (n=31) and parent's (n=20) interviews. This research follows the principles of discursive psychology (Edwards & Potter 1992) and is based on social constructivism. The interviewees were informed about participants' rights so that they could estimate their willingness to participate. The preliminary results indicate that in flexibly scheduled ECEC it may be challenging to meet parents often enough to build a strong partnership, but interviewees also reported how close the partnership can be in flexibly scheduled ECEC, where educators take care of the tasks (e.g. in the evenings and nights) that are typically related to home and family members. Therefore, parents may feel that "ECEC centre is like my spouse that I negotiate the childcare duties with". It is important to understand that flexibly scheduled ECEC is a unique context for parent partnership.

*flexibly scheduled ECEC, educator-parent cooperation, nonstandard care hours, discursive psychology, chain of care*

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## **B 20**

### **MAKING CHILDREN COUNT IN MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES**

Self-organised symposium

Museums are one of the ways that society has of representing and reflecting on itself. Actively engaging children in these dialogues acknowledges their right to participate fully in public and cultural life. This symposium will introduce a variety of different projects involving young children and museums. Themes explored will include how we might enable children's multimodal communication within museum and gallery spaces and be attentive to what they are telling us, and how we use their contributions ethically to raise the status of young children within museum and gallery spaces and more widely.

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**Chair: Nicola Wallis, Fitzwilliam Museum, United Kingdom**

### **Lines of enquiry: Thinking about young children in museums and galleries**

Nicola Wallis, Fitzwilliam Museum, United Kingdom

Building on findings of the University of Cambridge Museums' 'Nursery in Residence' project we hosted a research seminar series supporting dialogue between practitioners, researchers and stakeholders. We reflected on increasing the visibility of young children in museums and identified several areas for further investigation. DeWitt et al.'s (2018) and Hackett et al.'s (2018) explorations of children engaging with cultural spaces and Mai and Gibson's (2011) conception of children as cultural citizens in museums informed our research. Praxeology (Pascal and Bertram, 2012) guides our democratic approach. Participants are experts in their own contexts with the right to contribute. The resulting exchanges are potentially transformative as they feed directly back into practice. The project is based on a constructivist view of learning. However, we adopt a critical stance which acknowledges unequal power relationships that privilege some interpretations over others. We used participatory seminars and focused discussion groups to gather information. Transcriptions were analysed using grounded theory to identify themes, which informed further plans in an action research cycle. Discussion groups aimed to bring together those with different backgrounds to disrupt traditional hierarchies of expertise. Care was taken to ensure that participants felt empowered to speak freely. Researchers checked in regularly enabling ongoing informed consent and participant wellbeing. Key themes identified in work with young children in museums were: the juxtaposition of strangeness and familiarity; multimodal communication; making the invisible visible; community. Reflective interdisciplinary professional development is critical to future development. Further work in this area should have professional learning at its heart.

*museum education, professional development, collaboration, practitioner research, participation*

## **The use of GoPro technology and photo-elicitation to explore young children's museum experiences**

Ben Burbank, Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom

This study aims to explore six young children's (4/5 years) perspectives of their everyday museum visit experiences and innovative methods that are suitable to access them. Kirk (2014) advocates for methods to explore young children's perspectives of museum visits. This research builds on her photo-elicitation study to explore methods that provide a more holistic window on a child's time in a museum. Hackett (2014) foregrounds young children's movement as a non-verbal form of meaning making within museum spaces. Initial findings indicate that verbal representations provide a skewed view of young children's museum experiences (Hackett and Somerville, 2017). In light of this these data are analysed through multi-modal and post-human lenses. This focussed ethnography is aligned with childhood studies in considering children's lives to be of present value (Qvortrup, 1987). Chest-mounted GoPro video and post-visit photo-elicitation interviews were employed to collect data (Burbank et al. 2018). Ethical considerations were complex, but in brief participants (adults and children) were told that involvement was voluntary and they could withdraw at any time up to two weeks after data collection. Children's assent was also closely monitored throughout the research process. The methods, although not without limitations, provide intimate insights into young children's visits, including privileged access to self-talk, movement, perspectives, social interactions, and intra-actions (Barad, 2007) with the material world, all of which contribute to shaping children's museum experiences. Listening to children's perspectives can inform museum professionals and parents in their quest to provide opportunities for young children that have both educational and experiential impact.

*museums, post-human, children's perspectives, GoPro, multi-modal*

## **Exploring young children's museum experiences as a measure of their developing literacy and social skills**

Elaine Bates, Manchester Museum, United Kingdom

The aim was to document young children's affective and physical responses to objects and spaces as well as their social interactions with adults and peers during a series of museum visits and to explore the ways they communicate them. The research draws on existing studies of young children's experiences in museums (Dockett et al. 2011; Hackett, 2015; Kirk, 2013) and cultural capital theory (Bourdieu, 1986; DiMaggio, 1982) as research was undertaken with parents and their 2 year old children (with funded places) who had not visited the museum before. This practitioner based, qualitative research was undertaken alongside parents, children and practitioners as co-researchers using a variety of methods including; written observations, informal interviews and photography. A major ethical consideration was to ensure that young children's ongoing verbal / nonverbal assent was obtained using developmentally appropriate methods (Dockett et al., 2009; 2012; Phelan and Kinsella, 2012.) Outcomes reveal the breadth of children's verbal and non-verbal literacies in communicating their museum experiences. These are typically characterised by physical exploration (running, jumping, crawling and climbing) and by revisiting objects and spaces they have a particular connection to, either cognitively, affectively or socially. Findings suggest that these experiences can support developing literacies and confidence both in an early years setting and in the home. Longitudinal research focussing on outcomes in these 2 key areas of development is needed and how outcomes can be used to support a more holistic measure of young children's development.

*young children, museums, co research, children's literacies, personal social and emotional development*

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## **B 21**

### **'DIVERSATTUDE', THE SEARCH FOR SOCIO-CULTURAL AWARE PROFESSIONALS IN CULTURE SENSITIVE ORGANISATIONS**

Self-organised symposium

Every child and adult has the right to develop in an environment of equity and with respect for diversity {...} without distinction or discrimination {...} whether of himself or of his family (UN declaration of the rights of the child, 1989). Educational professionals, steered by their perspective on reality (Golombek, 2015), have significant impact on the behavior of children in contexts of diversity (Vandenbroeck, 1999). In this context it's important that educators develop stronger insights in both their own and children's cultural identity. In this symposium we explore narrative and art-based methods that support professionals and their organization to work with the diversity of society. We introduce the notion of diversattude (Verhaeghe & Den Haese, in press), in which diversity is approached in a positive way. This attitude enables professionals to create a pedagogical climate that gives 'narrative space' to be and to belong.



**Creating 'diversattude' through narrative imagination**

Kaat Verhaeghe, Joke den Haese, Erasmus University College Brussels, Belgium

Educational professionals, steered by their perspective on reality (Golombek, 2017), have significant impact on the behaviour of children in contexts of diversity (Vandenbroeck, 2001). A clear understanding of meaning and values, helps to clarify the goals that govern these actions (Stelter & Law, 2010). Creating a 'diversattude' (Verhaeghe & Den Haese, in press) and deepening the coachee's cultural awareness is the aim of the research. The development of a narrative coaching method (Verhaeghe et al., 2017) showed the potential of using narratives in professionalisation. A lot of coaching methods are goal or problem oriented (Stelter, 2009). However, it is essential to professionalise with attention for norms and values (Verhaeghe, Den Haese & De Raedemaeker, 2016). Educators working in Early Childhood need to acquire a 'diversattude' (Verhaeghe & Den Haese, in press). To foster this attitude, we use narrative (imagination) (Nussbaum, 2016) and art-based methods. Art contributes to our consciousness and identity-awareness (Van Heusden, 2010). Narrative coaching focusses on a holistic approach using life stories to change beliefs and attitudes (Stelter, 2007). A qualitative research design, using collective case study with ethnographic data-collection was used, in practice, testing in three pilot organisations. Informed consent of all participants was gained. Through the use of narrative and art-based coaching, a stronger cultural awareness is established and this results in socio-cultural responsive interactions in which children, regardless their background, can flourish. The implications for practice are that professionalisation must change from a focus on behaviour to a focus on awareness, norms and values.

*diversattude, narrative imagination, narrative coaching, socio-cultural awareness, art-based*

**Being in times of becoming, giving voice to children in context of diversity**

Joke Den Haese, Kaat Verhaeghe, Erasmus University College, Belgium

This research gives voice to children in context of diversity. Through artful activities, children show what they think and feel, they show a repertoire of meaning making marks (Wright, 2007). The research makes visible how children feel understood and seen so they experience a liberating sense of belonging. Through art, children actively construct understandings of themselves and their worlds (Van Heusden, 2010). When young children are encouraged to express themselves, they embody their own identity. Identity is a key concept when discussing how to deal with diversity (Verhaeghe & Den Haese, in press). In the sociology of childhood, 'the being child' is seen as a social actor, actively constructing childhood. In contrast, the 'becoming' child is seen as an 'adult in the making', lacking competencies of the 'adult', that he or she will 'become' (Uprichard, 2008). Art making and its narrative description of the here and now (Kallman, 1995) allows children to share the day-to-day details of their lives with others (Wright, 2010). Participative observation and interviews to obtain insight in how 'the three pedagogues' deal with diversity. A child-centred research using art-based data-collection. Working with children age 4-6, a creative informed consent has been used. Additional consent of parents was granted. Awareness of the researcher about biases is needed. Preliminary results show that the use of art-based methods supports children to discover their narratives and make their thoughts and controversial issues visible. The active involvement of children in research about themes that concerns them is necessary.

*identity, sociology of childhood, art-based methods, narrative, meaning making*

**How organisations can create educative professionals with 'diversattude'**

Bert Wastijn, Leen Rosiers, Erasmus University College Brussels, Belgium

This Practice-Based Design research develops a method for organizations to create (pre)conditions needed for the "Diversattude" (Verhaeghe, et. al, 2017) of educative professionals. The method works through the institutional level to endorse individuals in a positive way of working with diversity. Deardorff (2015) describes a lifelong process in developing (inter)cultural competences in which the competent system (Urban, et al., 2012) also puts responsibility at institutions and policy makers. For schools, the teachers' commitment to professional and school development is linked to a positive school culture, policy and leadership (Engels, et al., 2008; Aelterman et al., 2002). The perspective of the socio-technical approach of organisational behaviour (Acker & Demaertelaere, 2014) was used to deepen the competent system (Urban, et. al., 2012) and applied on stimulating a "Diversattude" (Verhaeghe et al. (2017). It includes the idea of intercultural competences (Deardorf, 2015), school climate (Cohen et al, 2009), leadership and policy (Engels, et al., 2008). The Practical Research uses ADDIE. After a literature study, analysis of collected data (surveys, interviews, focus groups), the method was developed in co-creation. All participants signed an informed consent. Anonymity is assured and data was analysed by multiple researchers. The research elaborated a practice-based translation of the

"Diversattude" (Verhaeghe et al., 2017) complemented with a method to support organizations in creating/adapting the necessary conditions to perform this "Diversattude", using a socio-technical approach on an institutional level. After testing, the method will be available for use in educative contexts and aims for school conditions and policy makers.

*diversity, organisational behaviour, leadership, (inter)cultural competences, competent system*

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**B 22**

## **FAMILY SUPPORT, EARLY INTERVENTION AND INTEGRATED SERVICES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Melissa Bonotto, UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, NUI Galway, Ireland**

### **Together supporting vulnerable children through integrated early childhood services: Lessons learned from the Portuguese INTESYS pilot**

Maria Assunção Folque (1), Alexandra Marques (2), Mónica Mascarenhas (2), (1) Universidade de Évora / Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Portugal; (2) Aga Khan Foundation, Portugal

INTESYS project focuses on piloting new approaches to ECEC systems in Europe to ensure that children and families in vulnerable situations have access to better integrated services across different sectors (education, health, and welfare), professions, age groups and governance levels avoiding fragmentation of services. Project drives from the Transatlantic Forum on Inclusive Early Childhood and the Portuguese Pilot focus was on the Integration of different sectors: care, education, health, family/social services, cultural, etc. The study is based on a holist and systemic view of the child and families lives (Bronfenbrenner) understanding the way all elements in the system impact each other vertically/horizontally, affecting transitions across age, sector, services, and from service delivery to policy. Mixed methods were used to monitor the action-research project: Interviews to different stakeholders, literature review (local mapping); questionnaires to families and professionals; an integrated index (before and after the pilot of a toolkit) evaluated the impact of the integration journeys by a Community of Practice (CP) with professionals from ECEC services from different sectors, with qualitative processes documentation. All professionals/families involved in the project were fully informed about the aims and voluntarily participated in all the activities, including dissemination. Professionals increased their competence, particularly to listen to other professionals, and to focus their work in the families' needs. Services increased joint and integrated actions with services from different sectors, particularly the ones with higher participation of professionals in the CP. Policy recommendations at national and European levels were driven from the 4 pilots

*quality ECEC services, integrated services, community of practice, families and children, systemic*

### **Integrated services to support children and families: Perspectives of service providers and coordinators**

Catarina Leitão, Joana Guerra, Clara Barata, University of Coimbra, Portugal

The objective of this study was to identify facilitating factors, barriers, and impacts related to the integration of services aimed to support children and families. The targeted services were focused on promoting social inclusion, operating in fields such as education, health, social work, and welfare. Integrating services is increasingly recognized as important to develop effective policies aimed to promote social inclusion (Vargas-Barón, 2016). However, evidence on best practices and impacts in this scope is still limited (Barnes et al., 2017, 2018). Following Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model (1979), the integration of services aimed at multiple environments influencing children's development can potentiate the provision of effective support. Data was collected through 61 semi-structured interviews with heads of service providers, coordinators, and local government representatives in nine countries. Participants' views were analysed employing a qualitative methodology and a pragmatic paradigm. Written consent was collected, the possibility to exit the interview was ensured, and data was anonymised. The most frequent facilitating factors included a hybrid top-down and bottom-up approach, and professionals' receptivity to integrated work. The most frequent barriers were lack of funding, and problems with staff recruitment. The most frequent impacts on services included improved coordination, referral of families, efficiency, and service specialization. The most frequent impact on families was the easier access to the necessary services. The impacts on children were less frequently mentioned. Identifying facilitating factors, barriers, and impacts regarding service integration can contribute to develop effective policy and practice aimed to support children and families.

*services coordination, service provision, social inclusion, educational policy, integrated governance*

## **Early intervention in the family support preschool**

Melissa Bonotto, UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, NUI Galway, Ireland

Examine the concept of early intervention as 'happening early in the child's life' within the Family Support preschool context. It was part of the "Child and Family Support Networks and Meitheal" work package evaluation plan conducted by the UNESCO Child and Family Research including prevention and early intervention developed through a Family Support approach, what is a style of work based on integrated programmes (Pinkerton et al. 2004). This study is embedded in the Bioecological Model (Bronfenbrenner/Morris, 2006) which establishes the importance of proximal process as engines of development: the PPCT model. It is also guided by the Irish National Policy Framework for Children (2014). Constructivist paradigm. Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews with parents and focus group with preschool teachers. The Mosaic approach (Clark 2005) was used to capture preschool children with additional needs' views and experiences. Quantitative data was collected through the My Family Star (Early Years) scale with parents. Ongoing informed consent/assent; anonymity assured; free to withdraw at any time; and no harm to participants are included. Currently in the findings and analyses phase. What is the role of a Family Support preschool and what children and parents perceive as significant/ meaningful interactions to support their additional needs are being explored? Particularly, the crucial role of preschool settings supporting families can be seen: "I could bring my child on her pyjamas to preschool, so supportive they are". It intends to recommend a policy and practice ecological framework of early intervention to support Family Support preschool.

*preschool children, meaningful interactions, early intervention, family support, preschool settings*

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## **B 23**

### **MODELS OF ECEC TEACHER PREPARATION: AUSTRALIA, CHILE AND SOUTH AFRICA**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Hasina Ebrahim, University of South Africa, South Africa**

#### **Determining the quality of early childhood teaching degrees for high quality early childhood educational programs**

Wendy Boyd, Southern Cross University, Australia

This research aims to identify effective early childhood teacher preparation models. Practices and expertise of early childhood teachers lead to better outcomes for children (Whitebook, 2003), and the higher the qualification of educators the better the outcomes for children (Hu, Torr, Degotardi, & Han, 2017; Sylva et al., 2010). But critically it is recognised the early childhood workforce is of poor quality (Kagan & Roth, 2017). The conceptual framework views learning as socially constructed enacted through interpretation of external policies and accreditation bodies for teacher degrees. Academics responsible for early childhood teacher programs should know the strengths and areas for improvement within their program. This study is grounded in Darling-Hammond's (2010) statement 'we need highly effective, adequately researched models of preparation for all teachers without exception' (p.39). 29 course coordinators and four from Australian and Nordic universities were interviewed respectively. Analysis of data was conducted with reference to key literature regarding effective teachers, interpreting literature to back one's own claims, and addressing counter claims. Ethics approval was obtained from the researcher's university. Participants' gave consent for data collection - and assured anonymity and confidentiality when publishing. Key findings will be presented, synthesised and discussed regarding academics' perspectives of strengths, areas for improvement, professional experience models, challenges and enablers for quality programs; and optimal models of early childhood teacher programs. This research provides a starting point for further research into how to structure early childhood teacher programs: recommendations are made for models of programs, and for future research.

*early childhood teacher preparation programs, effective early childhood teachers, preparation for early childhood teachers, provision of quality through effective teaching, strengths of and challenges in early childhood teacher preparation programs*

#### **A bottom up notion of professionalism in the early years in South Africa**

Hasina Ebrahim, University of South Africa, South Africa

Professionalism is engaged with using a bottom-up approach with multiple early childhood stakeholders in the EU-DHET funded Project for Inclusive Early Childhood Care and Education (PIECCE) in SA. The paper is in concert with the voices that disable universal top down notions of professionalism (Urban & Dalli 2010; Ebrahim 2016). Through concerns for re-forming teacher education in SA, the paper shows the contestations around professionalism. Berger and Luckmann's (1966) and Burr's (2003) ideas are used to show how professionalism is constructed by social practices in an Ubuntu sense. This lens is suitable to show the

struggles to make professionalism a verb. The study is located in the critical paradigm. Site visits, observations, dialogue sessions and reflections informed this qualitative study. The stakeholder group ranged from lowly qualified practitioners to professors. The power relations had to be addressed. A situated ethics approach (Ebrahim 2010) helped to engage with moment by moment encounters. Professionalism in the early years in SA is complex and contextual. This being the case it requires a workforce that is critically reflective in its work with and for young children. The construction of bottom up professionalism through multiple stakeholder participation is a shift from the technical approach to early childhood work. The development of a critically reflective professional must be approached through a continuum that is responsive to the variety of entry points from which access to the profession will be gained.

*professionalism, South Africa teacher education, context, critically reflective*

### **Undergraduate preparation of ECEC teachers in Chile: A long way towards professional recognition**

Marcela Pardo, Centre for Advanced Studies on Education, University of Chile, Chile

To describe the evolution of the plans of study of undergraduate ECEC teacher programs in Chile, regarding the professionalisation of the field. International literature on the history of ECEC teacher preparation and professionalism (Hinitz et al., 2015; Thompson, 1992). Theoretical perspectives on professionalism, emphasizing the relevance of plans of study as an operationalization of the profession's knowledge base (Freidson 2001), as well as the influence of diverse actors on the professionalisation process (Burrage et al. 1990). This allows for an analysis of how the sociocultural and political context has influenced the construction of plans of study in tertiary teaching programs (Furlong et al., 2000). Multiple case study focused on five consolidated ECEC undergraduate programs in Chile. Data was composed of these programs' plans of study (1944-2015), as well as semi-structured interviews to faculty members (n=35). Cross-case analysis used both a priori and emergent categories (Stake, 2006). Confidentiality, anonymity and voluntary participation were guaranteed to all participants. The evolution of the plans of study of undergraduate ECEC programs in Chile has gone through three consecutive phases: Technical (1944-1967); Teaching specialty (1968-1998); Professional (1999-2015). It resulted from the influence of increase in female participation in labour market; greater social valuation of ECEC; and intensification of state regulations on teaching programs. Although long established at the university level, recent professional recognition of ECEC undergraduate programs in Chile required the convergence of several actors beyond the field itself. This exhorts ECEC teachers to undertake a leading role in pursuit of a stronger professional status.

*ECEC teachers, professionalisation, undergraduate preparation, history, Chile*

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## **B 24**

### **VISIBLE VOICES: USING NARRATIVES TO EXPLORE IDENTITY, EMOTION, ATTACHMENT AND DISSONANCE.**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium involves researchers from the UK and Israel engaging with narratives, in different forms, to illuminate the human condition. At a time when practitioners and parents are encouraged to participate in warm, reciprocal relationships with young children, there is also robust evidence that informs us of emotional stress and emotional labour impacting on practitioner well-being. You are warmly invited to engage with us in a critical discussion around the strength of narratives to articulate the complexity that exists in early year's work; the social and cultural structures that define and constrain us, often leading to dissonance and conflict with personal values. What do narratives uniquely contribute to ECEC research and how might we further develop their use to build a platform that raises the profile of those who live and work with young children and our intention to provide a responsive, caring, high-quality provision for our children?

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**Chair: Elizabeth Henderson, Aberdeen City Council, United Kingdom**

### **Borderland Narratives: Agency and activism in early childhood education**

Nathan Archer, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

Early educator professional identity construction is a 'site of struggle' (Sachs 2003) in which multiple, conflicting institutional discourses meet the agentic positioning of educators themselves. This research considered how educators respond to this struggle through resistance and activism. Extant research literature analyses structural (Osgood 2009, 2012, Payler and Locke 2013) and agentic (Miller 2008, Fenech, Sumsion & Shepard 2010) discourses which frame early educator professional identities. This study explored this discursive landscape and the discourses between agency and structure. Working in the borderlands of critical, third space (Bhabha 1994) and border (Anzaldua 1987) theories, I have sought to conceptualise how professional identities are contested and (re)formed in an interstitial space. This qualitative study is located at a meeting place of critical policy analysis and

narrative inquiry. Following a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of recent English early childhood workforce policy, empirical data collection comprised professional life story interviews (n=18) and an online focus group (n=1). Ethical approval was secured from University of Sheffield and the study ensured there was informed consent from participants. Issues of anonymity, confidentiality and data protection were addressed and assured. Additional guidance informed online data collection, storage and analysis. In a borderland space between structure and agency, these narratives vividly articulate the resistance, the activism, the hope and potential of early childhood educators in twenty-first century England. The study privileges the multiple stories of participants as a counter to policy dominance - 'the tyranny of a single story' (Bruner 2002) – raising awareness of policy/practice dissonance.

*professional identities, policy critique, narrative, activism, resistance*

### **Building blocks of emotional attachment: Understanding emotional intimacy between Israeli secular Jewish mothers and their children – what can practitioners learn from this?**

Alex Poll, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

To identify traditions and customs within the context of Israeli culture, which may contribute to the formation of strong attachments between mothers and children. The literature reviews Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory and Bowlby's (1952; 1960; 1982) attachment theory followed by an analysis of Israeli society highlighting the importance of the family unit, motherhood and the strong sense of national security located within the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict and the legacy of the Holocaust. Consideration is given to the need to further explore attachment formations within the Israeli sociocultural context. The cultural environment shape attachment formations (Bornstein, 2012); of the features identified in this research can any be decontextualized and utilised by practitioners in their work? This qualitative research utilises narratives and semi-structured interviews to explore the experiences shared. A thematic analysis of data was employed. Ethical approval was secured from the University of Sheffield ensuring informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality and data protection. Post-interview support was offered in the form of counselling. Findings revealed the complexities of motherhood for the Israeli Secular Jewish mother and highlight how an open and honest style of talk results in the discussions of conflicts and tensions supporting the development of reflectiveness and more confident parenting. Findings further emphasise the profundity of the emotional bond between mother and child signifying the role of the sociocultural and historical context in which this bond develops. Findings recommend adopting an approach which explores the variety of sociocultural and historical experiences which shape the emotional and intimate bond.

*emotional intimacy, sociocultural context conflicts, narrative, reflectiveness*

### **Humanising data: Exploring emotional labour in a time of increasing accountability using autoethnography as methodology**

Elizabeth Henderson, Aberdeen City Council, United Kingdom

At a time of ever-increasing demands on practitioners to engage in warm reciprocal relationships, to nurture children's emotional development, this performative autoethnographic narrative explores the incongruous nature of policy guidelines and personal/professional values in early childhood practice. Autoethnography, an arts-based methodology, is used to foreground the embodied working practice in a pedagogical space, articulating perceived tensions and their impact on practitioner well-being; building on work by Madrid and Dunn-Kenney (2010) on emotional labour and self-regulation, the relationship between Wellbeing and context (Cumming and Wong, 2018), Singh's (2018) pedagogic identity and Sumsion's (2001) emotional landscapes. Focusing on the body as a social construct denies the importance of embodiment, yet emotion is lived within a body (Hockey and Allen-Collinson, 2009) and context. Lenz Taguchi (2010) highlights the need for embodied, practical knowledge. Adopting a post-modern phenomenologically-inspired lens elicits power dynamics inherent in a pedagogical context; complex layers leading to embodied emotional dissonance become visible through autoethnographic use of narrative. This research follows Tolich's (2010) ten ethical guidelines for autoethnographers; protecting all involved, including the researcher, to avoid duress (BERA, 2018). Contextualizing raw data from the narrative affords critical considerations of the implications of socio-cultural structures; their limitations and the visceral impact on the practitioner at the intersections of identity and power. Research evidence aligns emotional stress with burnout. Speaking not only to the mind but also the heart, we can discuss what practitioners, researchers and policy-makers might gain from autoethnographic narratives that voice realities beyond the reach of other methodologies.

*autoethnography, emotional labour, embodiment, professional identity, professional and personal values*

# Symposium Set C

09:00 – 10:20, Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2019

## C 1

### **QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN AUSTRALIAN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE: LENSES AND LESSONS**

Self-organised symposium

This year marks seven years since the introduction of Australia's first National Quality Framework (NQF) for education and care. Central tenets include critical reflection, ongoing learning and continuous quality improvement, principles that apply equally to policy and practice. This symposium explores the interrelated roles and responsibilities of government and the profession in driving and sustaining quality improvement. We report on three Australian research projects, each applying a different lens to quality improvement. Taking a big picture perspective, the first paper reports on analysis of longitudinal national data collected by the Australian Education and Care Quality Authority to track and inform quality improvement. The second paper provides unique insights into implementation of the NQF in Australian community not-for-profit services. Looking at local implementation, the third paper investigates leadership that enables quality practice in centre-based long day care. We argue to effect change, quality improvement must be a shared responsibility and endeavour.

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**Chair: Susan Irvine, Queensland University of Technology, Australia**

#### **Quality improvement in Australian ECEC: The policy lens**

Rhonda Livingstone (1), Ann Farrell (2), (1) Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), Australia; (2) Queensland University of Technology, ACECQA Board, Australia

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) leads continuous quality improvement in early childhood education and care (ECEC). Drawing on seven years of assessment data, this paper reports on Australia's progress towards enhanced quality in ECEC. In 2012, Australia introduced the National Quality Standard (NQS) and assessment and rating process for ECEC services. The NQS was informed by the landmark Starting Strong II report (OECD, 2006), best practice regulatory models and extensive consultation. Services are assessed and rated against seven quality areas addressing structural and process quality (Ishimine et al., 2010). Recognising multiple spheres of influence (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), the conceptual framework for the research is continuous quality improvement at all levels in ECEC: educator, service, system. The research is based on analysis of aggregate data from assessment and ratings visits to more than 15,000 ECEC services over the past seven years. The assessment protocol employs a mixed method approach, with trained assessors using a standardised instrument to collect practice examples across seven quality areas and rate these using a four-point Likert scale. Services receive detailed information about the quality standards and assessment process and service ratings are published on a national register to support informed parent choice. Analysis of longitudinal data shows significant growth in the ECEC quasi-market and provides evidence of quality improvement linked to the introduction of the NQS. The research provides a robust evidence base to inform sector initiatives to support quality improvement, and a basis to continue to refine supporting policy settings.

*quality, regulation, national, quality improvement, measurement assessment*

#### **Quality improvement in Australian ECEC: The community not-for-profit lens**

Julie Price, Daniela Kavoukas, Community Child Care Association, Australia

The Trends in Community Children's Services Survey (TICCSS) investigates how community not-for-profit (NFP) education and care services have responded to changes under the National Quality Framework (NQF). There is evidence that NFP service providers play an important role in quality improvement in education and care, at service and system levels (Cleveland et al., 2007). Seeking to support implementation of the NQF, peak organisation Australian Community Children's Services (ACCS) initiated research to track implementation and provide the NFP perspective on quality improvement. The conceptual framework underpinning this research draws on understandings of quality in education and care, in particular, structural and process quality (Ishimine et al., 2010). This is a longitudinal study that uses survey research design. Four waves of TICCSS have been undertaken, averaging 620 respondents per wave, with two more planned. Hosted on Survey Monkey, the questionnaire comprises open and closed-ended questions, including Likert scales. The survey is voluntary and can be completed anonymously. To enhance research practices, ACCS has partnered with Queensland University of Technology and has ethical approval for waves four to six. The research identifies quality improvement within the NFP sector, most notably, number and level of qualified staff, adult-to-child ratios, above

award wages and more stable workforce. The research continues to support and inform quality improvement, making visible NQF positive outcomes and challenges requiring further attention.

*community, not-for-profit, advocacy, quality improvement,*

#### **Quality improvement in Australian ECEC: A centre lens**

Susan Irvine (1), Jo Lunn Brownlee (1), Amanda McFadden (1), Karen Thorpe (2), Vicki Sullivan (2), Jane Bourne (3), Laurien Bean (3), (1) Queensland University of Technology, Australia; (2) University of Queensland, Australia; (3) Early Childhood Australia, Australia

The research aim was to identify leadership strategies that enable educators' professional practice in centre-based long day care. Australia has high expectations of educators working in early childhood education and care (ECEC), which are articulated in national quality standards (ACECQA, 2018). Building on a national ECEC workforce study (Irvine, Thorpe et al., 2016), case studies of three exemplary centres were conducted to deepen understanding of effective leadership and its impact on educators' engagement, morale and retention in ECEC (Irvine et al., 2018). The conceptual framework underpinning this study draws on theories and research relating to effective leadership in ECEC (Heikka et al., 2013) and policy implementation science (Fixen et al., 2005). Three long day care centres in diverse locations were selected as case studies for effective leadership practice. Adopting a 360-degree view of leadership, the study employed a mixed-method design. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected through in-depth interviews with Centre Directors (N=3) and facilitated questionnaire with educators (N=32). Thematic and statistical analysis identified effective leadership approaches and their association with professional practice and staff retention. Ethical considerations included respect for persons and informed voluntary consent. The study provides practical insights into enabling leadership strategies and the nature of support these educators valued the most. Analysis showed that enabling leadership strategies had positive impacts on educator engagement, morale and retention. The study findings are informing workforce development policy and sector strategies to drive quality improvement in ECEC.

*leadership, long day care, Centre Director, professional practice, retention*

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## **C 2**

### **VIDEO DOCUMENTATION**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Leslie Rech, University of Georgia, United States**

#### **Films and cultures: Understandings of ECEC pedagogical practices from Brazilian and Danish experiences**

Lenira Haddad, Federal University of Alagoas, Brazil

Acknowledging and making visible central understandings and values inherent in the practice of ECEC by those directly involved with it. The research is a replica of a European study conducted by Jensen (2011) in which half-hour films of everyday life in ECE centres in Denmark, England and Hungary are shown to focus groups of pedagogues and others professionals. The method used was called SOPHOS Second Order Phenomenological Observation Scheme. The method was inspired on Tobin, Wu and Davidson (1989) in which the films figure neither as data nor as description but instead as rich nonverbal cues used to provoke critical reflection. A day in an ECE centre was videotaped in two contrasting realities, Brazil and Denmark; the videos were edited down to 30 min each; the two films were shown for 12 different focus group discussions. The sessions were videotaped, transcribed and analysed using content analysis. The research project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Alagoas. All involved were invited to sign different free and informed consent terms. Four dimensions on the power of the method will be highlighted: the exotic and aesthetic effects of the film; the balance of power between researcher and participants; the level of reflexivity provided; and its potential to drive change. The research generated a significant number of reactions and opinions on themes such as: ECE conception, gender, parents' involvement, age integration, environment, which can highly contribute to the debate of quality and process of change in ECEC.

*early childhood education and care, films, Brazil, Denmark, SHOPOS*

## **Capture the efficacy of project approach in a Japanese ECEC curriculum – a video documentation of "Play-shops" in three academic years at a kindergarten**

Mikiko Tabu, Seitoku University, Japan

This study aims to enhance our understanding of the Japanese preschool children's learning experiences in project work, and show the variability across the globe in implementing project approach. Ethnographic studies on Japanese preschools between 1980s and 2000s highlighted uniformity of curriculums in developing social skills and group identity (Ben-Ari, 2005) as well as diversity in a mixed economy (Tobin et al, 1989, 2004: Peak, 1992). Starting Strong II (OECD, 2006) advocated the importance of project work in early years. Although Japan has a long history of conducting project approach, no such study is found that focuses the efficacy of it in Japanese curriculums. Based on socio-cultural theory, this study presents the video-documentation of a girl engaging in "Play-shops" in her three years at a Kindergarten. It will provide contextually situated accounts of learning experiences in a project work in Japanese ECEC contexts. With the consents of the teachers and the parents', the presenter video-recorded "Play-shops" in 2000, 2001 and 2002. The anonymity and confidentiality were considered. Japanese national curriculum guidelines require play-based, age-appropriate approaches that enhance individual and group activities in enabling environment. This study indicates maturing nature of learning experiences and group dynamics in the project designed to construct an over-arching spiral curriculum of three academic years. It makes a good contrast with the Reggio's emergent, inquisitive and meaning-making projects. Video-documentation with a cross-cultural lens will let us see project approach more diversified ways than perceiving it as a method to make children active and creative.

*project approach, national curriculum, spiral curriculum, video -documentation, Japan*

## **Exploring the benefits of the analysis of videos in promoting inclusive education practices in ECEC services in Emilia Romagna (Italy)**

Lucia Balduzzi, Arianna Lazzari, Valentina Migliarini, Università degli Studi di Bologna Alma Mater Studiorum, Italy

This paper explores the possibilities of video-analysis as tools to generate reflective spaces whereby ECEC professionals can co-construct inclusive environment and teaching practices, grounded in the context. Drawing on "TRACKs" a funded E + program project, involving Italy, Belgium, Poland, initial findings from a case study based on analysis of videos and observations in two services in Bologna will be presented. Building on literature that focuses on video-analysis as a tool for professional development (Tobin & Davidson, 1990, Bove, 2009), and on successful application of video-coaching methodology (Bracke et al., 2018), this paper highlights the potential of using video as a mean to nurture environment and practices rooted in the inclusive paradigm. Neoliberal reforms in education normalized social, economic and racial inequalities (Migliarini, Annamma, forthcoming). ECEC professionals may feel unequipped to reduce such systemic inequities in their constant demand to re-frame educational practices to be able to engage with and meet the growing needs of diverse groups of children and families (Lazzari, Vandenbroeck, 2012). Research paradigm is based on video-analysis to enhance professional development in socially inclusive terms. Using qualitative methods, ethnographic observation, video-analysis, collective discussion, the study gave rise to nuanced data from which insights have been sought. Informed consent was constantly negotiated with practitioners and parents. The preliminary findings highlight how the researchers in the study become facilitators in the process of co-constructing collectively practices that benefits all the children (Balduzzi, Lazzari, 2018). This research can sustain more inclusive practices in ECEC services and professional in-service training.

*professional development, video-analysis, inclusive education, ECEC, video-coaching*

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### **C 3**

#### **ART IN CHILDREN'S LIFE (AINCL): AN INTERVENTION PROGRAM OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE DEPARTMENT, GREECE – STUDENTS IN COLLABORATION WITH TEACHERS AND FAMILIES**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium brings together children, student teachers, preschool teachers and families aimed at the harmonious collaboration of all, facilitating learning and providing students with experience of professional program implementation. Starting from the notion that art expands the spirit and culture and promotes healthy habits for both people and the environment, symposium raises questions of self-esteem, trust, dialogue and ongoing training. As the debate around the Symposium cannot provide complete solutions and answers, the participants make it clear that with the sensitivity and good co-operation of all actors, including universities, the targets that are mainly for children are easier to achieve.

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**Chair: Eleni Tympa, University of Ioannina, Greece**

**Developing positive peer-relationships and tolerance towards difference through systematic use of art during the 'Art in Children's Life' (AinCL) program**

Athina Charissi, Theodosia Kanakoglou, Ioanna Psatha, Polyxeni Triantafyllou, Parthena Tortopidou, Eirini Tzini, Maria Eleni Konstantopoulou, University of Ioannina, Greece

The aim of this study was to investigate children's perceptions of friendship and difference and the effects of the systematic use of art on these issues. A number of research programs (Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education) highlight the significance of art in cultivating critical thinking through early years. Philosophy for children movement provides supporting evidence about developing, in practice, reflective skills in children through systematic exploration of the narratives included in artworks (Haynes, 2009, Gasparatou, 2014). Aesthetic experience permits the symbolical processing of delicate meanings and emotional situations (Gardner, 1973, 1983, 1990). Transformative learning through aesthetic experience constitutes a theoretical and methodological framework for the design of art-based interventions enabling learners' creativity and critical reflection upon stereotypical assumptions (Kokkos and Associates, 2011, Kokkos, 2013). 83 children from five preschool settings were involved in this study. They were asked to systematically explore artworks of aesthetic value, engage in creative activities and reflective dialogue based on emerging meanings. A questionnaire with images before and after the study was applied to all children. All parents were informed in advance of the purposes of the study. Children had the right to withdraw in any time and were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. The findings suggest that post-intervention children had a more enhanced understanding of friendship and difference, an increased level of mutual acceptance, a better appreciation of socializing positively with peers. Systematic use of art through early years education is discussed in terms of raising children's self and social awareness, empathy and wellbeing.

*friendship, difference, critical thinking, reflective dialogue, art-based interventions*

**Students and teachers experience and perspectives following an art tool implementation program 'Art in Children's Life' (AinCL) in preschool settings**

Vasiliki Karavida, Malvina Bitzidou, Xristina Freri, Irini Kostaki, Eymorfia Koliou, Filomeni Vlastou, Aikaterini Veziri, University of Ioannina, Greece

The aim of the study was to perceive the challenges and anxieties students face when engaging in practice of an AinCL program in the preschool classroom and to record the experiences and concerns of the teachers, who are supposed to support the education of the students, as well as their perceptions of co-teaching. Literacy provides the correlation between quality early childhood education, teacher qualifications and quality practices in teaching and learning (Garbett D. 2003, Bessette H. 2008). The relationship between experienced teachers and teacher candidate is influenced by the training of candidate teachers, Knowledge, cooperative intent, patience and obedience to the issues of education and care for young children (Karen M. et.al. 2018). The study was based on a mixed methodology that included an AinCL pre-intervention questionnaire on students' attitudes, event recording during implementation, post-implementation questionnaire and teacher interviews after the end of the program. Ethical procedures ensured that participants have given informed consent and their identities have been protected with the right to withdraw. The pre-intervention findings showed that the students felt inadequate for the implementation of the program because of the limited knowledge on the use of art in the educational process. The post-intervention results expose that students had a more enhanced understanding of AinCL in practice, and felt more confident and capable of having teachers' support and knowledge. The high-quality teaching and learning opportunities, support structures, and trust building are critical factors in strengthening students' skills. Links between studies and the reality of practice are discussed.

*student teachers, art, professionals, practice, early years settings*

**The impact of art and art activities on children's' healthy life style and recycling attitude during the 'Art in Children's Life' (AinCL) program**

Eleni Tympa, Vassiliki Filippa, Maria Koziou, Maria Giannou, Stavroula Kontara, Giota Mystakidou, University of Ioannina, Greece

The aim of this study was to investigate children's knowledge on healthy eating habits and recycling materials' use, as well as to explore the role of art and art activities on these issues. Several studies provide the value of nutrition and environmental education programs as well as arts participation early in life (Joseph L. 2015, Bautista A. 2017). Art activities stimulate creativity, build brain capacity by providing new problems to solve and attest positive social, emotional and healthy outcomes in early childhood (Zarobe L. 2017, Thomas E. 2008) 111 children were involved in the study (55 in the art & nutrition program and 56 in the art & recycling

program) from five preschool settings. A questionnaire with images before and after the study was applied to all children. All the children took part in a three months educational program, with nutrition-based and recycling activities, with basic artwork and specific well-known paintings. All the parents were informed in advance of the purposes of the study, children had the right to withdraw in any time and were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. The findings suggest that post-intervention children had a more enhanced understanding of healthy and nutritional choices, a better perception of recycling materials either at home or at school and a critical appreciation that art and art activities can have an important place in daily schedule. The study highlights the need for more involvement in art education as a tool for healthy and environmental issues and result in all-sided development.

*healthy lifestyle, recycling, art activities, educational program, childhood*

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#### **C 4**

#### **CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES ON THEIR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Tijana Borovac, University of Osijek, Croatia**

#### **Young children's experiences with their ECEC environment: The three elements of space**

Eleni Katsiada, University of West Attica, Greece

This paper presents an account of the affordances of the nursery environment and how these are experienced by ten children under the age of three. It draws on findings from an ethnographic case study, conducted in two Greek ECEC settings, which aimed to research children's relationships with adults, peers and their environment. Research evidence regarding young children's perspectives on their ECEC environment such as how it should look and what it should include, is limited (Cobb, Danby & Farrel, 2005). This study followed the interpretative paradigm having received influences from the new sociology of childhood and sociologists like Corsaro (2011). An adaptation of the Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss, 2001) was used in order to achieve children's active participation and research their perspectives. The generated data was analysed using data-driven thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998). Parents' consent was obtained prior to seeking children's assent (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Amongst the indications suggesting that children were providing their assent were that they looked happy to participate and were not experiencing discomfort (Cocks, 2007). The study's findings suggest that the nursery's space consists of three elements: a) space marked by a room or outside area (floor, ceiling and walls), b) space marked by nursery toys and furniture, and c) space marked by the positions of actors, adults and children, within this space. These findings have implications for theory and practice indicating that children's views are influenced and shaped by the way they experience these elements of space.

*children under three, ECEC space, Mosaic approach, environment affordances, Greek ECEC settings*

#### **Children's perspectives on ideal preschool classroom community**

Tuğba Aladağ, Bogaziçi University, Turkey

This study aims to understand how young children construct their ideal preschool classroom community. The study also aims to reveal children voices by involving them in making changes to classroom community. Young children are competent meaning-makers and explorers of the environment (James & Prout, 1997). The study draws from children rights movement, the new sociology of childhood, and interpretive reproduction theory (Corsaro, 1997). This was an ethnographic case study conducted in a university preschool centre in Turkey. A classroom of 10 children, aged 5-6, along with the classroom teacher participated the study. The study has two parts: (1) Children constructing their ideal classroom in the first half of the day and, (2) describing their ideal classroom via child participatory activities in the second half. Child participatory activities are situated in multi-method mosaic approach in which children's own photographs, tours and maps are investigated as to gain deeper understanding of their ideal early childhood settings (Clark & Moss, 2012). Data include classroom observations, interviews with children, reflection notes. Consent form was given to all participants. Consent of children was re-negotiated during the time research took place. Pseudonyms have replaced the names of participants. Children and families were informed about opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. According to the ongoing thematic content analyses, the preliminary results point to a child-centred preschool classroom model. The study will give examples and provide implications on children participation and child-centred paradigm in early childhood education for practitioners.

*Children's participation, listening to children, Mosaic approach, classroom community, children agency*

## **Participatory design of school playgrounds as transformative educational practice: Are children's voices to be heard?**

Anna Iakshina, Tatiana Le-van, Moscow City University, Russia

The aim of research is to develop the model of participatory design of school playgrounds as an educational practice for preschoolers and primary students. The study is related to the works of Waller (2018), Iversen, Leong (1992), Scaife (2004), Pinskaya et al. (2018). Participatory design is considered as a part of resilient school culture that creates conditions for emotional wellbeing and respectful interaction, gives children the opportunity to be heard, to learn to take active position in democratic society. Theoretical framework relies on cultural-historical theory (Vygotsky), dialectical psychology (Veraksa), participative approach (Bertram, Pascal, Fthenakis). We consider transformation "change the playground you dislike into the one you would like" as the means for easier presenting of children's preferences and values. Interpretative paradigm and qualitative methods of non-participant structured observation, semi-structured interview, priority selection, commented drawing were used. All the methods were designed according to specificity of participants' age. 30 school playgrounds were observed and analysed. 80 preschoolers, 200 primary students, 12 pedagogues took part in the study. Parental consent is obtained after providing written information. Children were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The data shows that playgrounds don't match children's psychological needs and interests. Children's drawings are narratives, which reflect their meaningful experience. Dialectical transformation and problem-solving paradigm can be useful tools in PD. Pedagogical interpretation of drawings is fruitful to find out the development priorities of students. Outcomes may be used in preschool and school education and collaboration with architects of city environment.

*participation, participatory design, children's voices, playgrounds, public spaces for children*

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## **C 5**

### **EMERGING QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES TO TECHNOLOGIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Individual Paper Symposium

For decades discussions of digital childhoods focused on screen-based technologies. Now with advances in manufacturing technologies, the possibilities of STEM education as part of digital childhoods have moved beyond the screen towards including tactile, interactive and intelligent technological toys. The properties of these no-screen-based resources offer the possibility to position technologies as valuable and engaging pedagogical tools for STEM education. It allows us to explore how technologies can be integrated in a more experiential and tangible manner that coincides with the founding principles of play-based and child-centred pedagogy. This symposium focuses on this progression in technological learning and describes the multimodality of children's digital learning experiences. The three papers presented help us to understand the place of innovative technologies – from 3D printers to coding robots and hybrid games - in early childhood education as a bridging tools between digital and traditional modes of learning.

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**Chair: Lorna Arnott, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom**

### **Emerging questions about human-digital interactions in the drive to account for learning and teaching in early childhood education.**

Alexandra C. Gunn (1), Joce Nuttall (2), E. Jayne White (3), Tonya Rooney (2), Claire Wyatt-Smith (2), (1) University of Otago, New Zealand; (2) Australian Catholic University, Australia; (3) RMIT University, Australia

This research explores teachers' work and assessment practices, specifically human-digital intra-actions and notions of evidence for teaching and learning. Teachers' assessment work is routinely mediated by technological tools and in many cases digital assessment platforms. In Aotearoa, New Zealand, teachers' use of digital tools, has grown to practically normative standards (Bolstad, 2004). In an increasingly visual culture which is also being understood as post-digital (Jancrić, Knox, Besley, Ryberg, Suoranta & Hayes, 2018), educators must remain cognisant of how such tools are shaping understandings of children and teaching in ECEC assessment. This qualitative pilot study used activity theory to examine teachers' assessment work. Activity theory aims to understand relationships between human consciousness and practical activity (Nardi, 1996) and how cultural tools mediate the realisation of objectives. The study involved video observation and traditional field notes of teachers work as they produced assessment documentation. Semi-structured interviews then employed the video footage to stimulate teachers' sense making about their practice. This paper presents the case of one of the participant teachers. Informed consent from participant teachers was provided. Permissions from children's families to discuss assessment information in the presented case were granted. Oversight for human ethics was provided by each researcher's employing university. This presentation focuses on teachers work

in the post-digital age and how teachers' accountability is increasingly a product of digital-human interaction in practical and psychological activity. We ask emerging questions of human-digital interactions in accounts of learning and teaching in ECEC.

*assessment, human-digital interaction, activity theory, teachers' work, post-digital*

### **Teachers as designers to support young children's technologically assisted experiential learning using IoT**

Sarika Kewalramani (1), Lorna Arnott (2), Ioanna Palaologou (3), Maria Dardanou (4), (1) Monash University, Australia; (2) University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom; (3) University College London, United Kingdom; (4) UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

This paper presents findings from an on-going international study of Early Childhood (EC) teachers' and children's use of internet-connected toys (IoT) across Scotland, England, Northern Ireland, Greece, Australia and Norway to understand digital pedagogies in supporting young children's experiential learning and creativity. Research has shown how important it is for all EC actors (such as teachers and parents) to blend teaching and learning practices that may involve traditional and digital play situations for spurring children's creativity and imagination (Edwards & Bird, 2015; Fler, 2017). Working from a social-ecological theoretical frame (Bronfenbrenner, 2009) and using Vygotsky's (1978) mediation theory, this study considers that cognitive development results from social interaction of children with teachers being the 'more knowledgeable other' in the child's socio-ecological environment. Using case study methodology, data collection involved participant observation Plowman and Stevenson (2012) of teachers' and children's play experiences with the IoT, alongside semi-structured interviews with teachers and children's photo voice sessions were video recorded. Consent forms were sought for the researchers to actively engage with the play experiences. Children's safe internet use was ensured. Findings showed that the teachers, although novice and hesitant to engage children's play with the robotic toys, believed IoT enhanced children's creativity and design thinking. Children's active engagement and experimentation motivated the teachers to plan for more such experiences. Implications lie in the need for transforming teachers' technology innovation practices whereby teachers need not take a didactic approach, rather sensitise and learn together alongside children about how to best integrate IoT for experiential learning.

*internet enabled toys, digital pedagogies, young children's experiential learning, creativity, technology innovation practices*

### **iDesign therefore iLearn: Young children's design thinking skills in makerspaces**

Maria Hatzigianni, Matt Bower, Michael Stevenson, Garry Falloon, Anne Forbes, Macquarie University, Australia

This project examined how maker activities using 3D design and 3D printing technology could enhance children's learning outcomes. Paucity of empirical research investigating the pedagogical strategies surrounding learning in makerspaces and design thinking skills for younger children (Fierst, Diefenthaler, & Diefenthaler, 2011; Papavaslopoulou, Giannakos & Jaccheri, 2017) exists. Constructionism (Seymour Papert) is the conceptual framework behind makerspaces and design thinking. Constructionist thinking draws on constructivism, a widely-accepted learning theory that considers how learners construct knowledge through interaction with their experiences and ideas. Adopting an interpretive paradigm and mixed methodology, sixteen focus group interviews were conducted with 34 children (5-8 years), 24 video observations and two online surveys with 27 teachers. Children orally reflected on their experience with a 3D design app and 3D printing (during their interviews). Their responses were thematically analysed following the IDEO design model. The project was approved by the university ethics committee and the State's Department of Education (written consent forms and right to withdraw included). Pseudonyms are used to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Children could successfully identify creativity, critical thinking, problem solving and development of content knowledge in their design activities. Children enjoyed directing their own learning in the lessons and viewed their learning experiences as an exercise in collaboration. Overall, the very positive views of young children on their design endeavours support the implementation of design activities from a young age. This research will advance our knowledge of how makerspaces and design thinking skills can be integrated in early childhood and early primary education.

*design thinking, makerspaces, 3D design, 3D printing, IDEO*

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**Chair: Kathryn Peckham, Centre for Research in Early Childhood, United Kingdom**

**Young children's friendships: Connections and commonalities across continents**

Jodi Streeklasky, University of Victoria, Canada

This study examines the ways 26 Canadian and Tanzanian children are forming relationships with each other based on their common valued school experiences. The study began when the children were four-years-old; the participants are currently seven-years-old. The objectives of this research are to acquire an understanding of children's valued school experiences in international settings, and to examine how sharing children's texts across contexts is impacting children's cross-cultural knowledge. The methodological and theoretical details of this study have been shared in the *International Journal of Early Years Education*. This research also supports the work of previous studies (e.g., Harcourt & Einarsdottir, 2011; Murray, 2019) that focus on children's voices and perspectives in research. The study draws on sociocultural theory, multimodality, and critical literacy - which support children's multiple forms of expression. This cross-case comparative research used narrative and multimodal approaches to acquire insights on children's experiences. The study adhered to Articles 12 and 13 from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 12 addresses children's right to express their views, and Article 13 acknowledges children's right to impart information through any mode(s). Across contexts, the data revealed more commonalities than differences. This study also enabled the participants to feel a sense of kinship with each other, and revealed the importance they placed on outdoor learning and play. This study has the potential to inform practice on children's participation in international collaborations, and addresses how global partnerships can impact children's cross-cultural understandings, disrupt stereotypes, and transform children's worldviews.

*narrative, friendships, international, multimodal, global citizenship*

**Understanding the importance of learning for life**

Kathryn Peckham, Centre for Research in Early Childhood, United Kingdom

This research aims to identify the impact of pedagogical styles on the facilitation of learning dispositions, thus promoting development of life-long learning skills and an awareness for the environments and opportunities required. Echoing the work of Carr & Claxton (2002) this research explores the importance of learning dispositions and offers an alternative to current measuring, computerisation and standardisation of young children's abilities (Blair et. al, 2005; Howard & Okely, 2015). With echoes of the work of Erikson (1959, 1968), it sits within a social interactive framework that considers the influence of afforded opportunities and experiences on children's acquisition of learning dispositions. This phenomenological study utilises reflexive, multisensory interviewing processes to explore the importance of nurturing key learning dispositions within experiences of highly successful adults. These findings are then compared to the complex realities of early learning through naturalistic observations of children in preschool and reception classrooms. Following full disclosure of procedure and intentions, consent was obtained from all parties (adults and children) with ongoing assent secured weekly. Fluidity built into the methods allowed for dissent, and feedback loops in place at every stage retained the integrity. With the significance of learning dispositions appearing clearly through the adult studies, the contrast in their affordance within differing pedagogical styles is clear. Discussion centres on these dispositions and the practices that are limiting them. Through an appreciation of learning dispositions and practices affording them, this study suggests more effective nurturing of children within these formative years.

*methodological approaches, children's perspectives, learning opportunities, lifelong learning, experiential learning*

**Wellbeing of children in flexible child daycare**

Sabina Schutter, Dana Harring, University of Applied Sciences Rosenheim, Germany

Child daycare at off-peak-times is gaining importance. This is due to the flexibilisation of working hours and workplaces as well as the increase in the number of people employed in the service sector. This flexibilisation requires a flexibilisation of child day care in order to reconcile work and family life. The project investigates how children develop practices in flexible child day care to ensure their wellbeing and how Wellbeing expresses itself. In previous research no correlation between flexible care and negative social-emotional behaviour of children could be found. However, instability, e.g. among staff, peers and/or the schedule in

(flexible) care facilities, shows negative effects on the behaviour of children (Schipper et al. 2003; Schipper et al. 2008). Children's Wellbeing in flexible care still presents a gap in research (Schäfer 2015). Theoretical framework is built on reconstructive childhood research. Drawing on the concept of relational agency (Raithelhuber 2016) children are thought to maintain or establish Wellbeing within flexible day care. An ethnographic approach is applied, in order to include children as experts of their lives and experiences. Participatory observations and ethnographic interviews are conducted, both within and outside flexible day care. To triangulate the data children's Wellbeing is additionally assessed with a standardised instrument. Research with children in the public and private sphere is based on informed consent of all participants. Preliminary results from the assessment of Wellbeing will be discussed. Ensuring children's rights to leisure and play as well as of privacy in long duration child care settings

*child care duration, children's rights, ethnographic research, children as a social group, reconciliation of work and family*

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## C 7

### **DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE ON INCLUSION**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Mary Ellen McGuire-Schwartz, Rhode Island College, United States**

#### **Supporting family diversity in early care and educational settings: Examining cultural competence, social studies, and funds of knowledge in teacher training**

Mary Ellen McGuire-Schwartz (1), Janet S. Arndt (2), (1) Rhode Island College, United States; (2) Gordon College, United States

Supporting and involving families are crucial to making the early years count. Building mutual understanding and trust through communicating, listening, and respecting cultural and family differences promote parent-teacher partnerships (Author & Author, 2012; Bredekamp & Copple, 2012; Epstein, J., 2010). Training supporting families through cultural competence, social studies, and funds of knowledge are examined. Research demonstrates that family involvement is crucial to children's success in schools, therefore knowledge and experience with families is included in teacher training (Epstein, J., 2010; Hiatt-Michael, D., 2010; Powell, D.R., et al, 2010). Funds of knowledge refers "to the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001, p. 133). Culture includes the values, norms, traditions expressed through language affecting interactions and thinking (Lynch & Hanson, 2011). Theoretical framework includes Bronfenbrenner's Theory (1979), Vygotsky's Theory (2012), Cultural Competence (Lynch & Hansen, 2011) and Funds of Knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001). Students (10) conducted family-community case studies integrating family interviews, observations, reflections, and research with advocacy plans. Case studies assessed for patterns and understandings (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). All participants provided informed consent with understanding of risks, use of pseudonyms, and opportunity to withdraw from study at any time. Multiple methods added trustworthiness. Research results demonstrate role of Funds of Knowledge, social studies, and cultural competence in teacher training to support diverse families through case study with advocacy plan. Research provides a teacher training model.

*early childhood teacher training, cultural competence, promoting family-teacher partnerships, funds of knowledge, social studies*

#### **Preschool teacher's training of children with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds: A content analysis of student's reports in the afterschool "Multicultural Playshop" program**

Sachiko Uchida, Takasaki University Health and Welfare, Japan

This study investigated how the Multicultural Playshop (Uchida, Hasumi & Ishiguro, 2019) effectively fostered Japanese university students' understanding of children with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Multicultural Playshop is a play-based afterschool program used for Japanese-Brazilian preschoolers in the Brazilian community of Gunma, Japan. The philosophy of the practice is inspired from two successful programs, UC Links of Fifth Dimension (Cole, 1990) and La Clase Magica (Vasquez, 2003). Multicultural Playshop developed on the formative experimental method (Vygotsky, 1930/1979). As a curriculum for preschool teacher's training, thirteen university students aspiring to become future preschool teachers were required to plan, conduct, and evaluate play activities. This was followed by the preparation of reports stating their experiences and observations. Activities involved multimodal expressions for the children. Children with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds tend to show weakness in the dominant language of the host country. This can result in low self-esteem as well as low academic achievement. We conducted content analysis of the students' reports of their experiences with twenty-five preschoolers from 2018 to 2019. The study's consent from students and a Mayor of facility, parents of children were obtained before an investigation. The results showed that the students discovered the children's high communicative capabilities and realized the importance of body language

and facial expressions for communication. This study can have an impact about preschool teacher's training for children with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

*children with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, play activity, afterschool programme, training for preschool teachers, multicultural playshop*

### **Emotional availability of kindergarten teachers towards children with developmental delays: Contribution to gains in children's development and adaptive behaviour**

Smadar Dolev, Efrat Sher-Censor, Esther Zach, Michal Shalem Gan-Or, Haifa University, Israel

We examined whether kindergarten teachers' emotional availability towards developmentally delayed children contributes to children's socio-emotional and academic functioning. Teachers' emotional support promotes children's learning experience (Newberry & Davis, 2008), and is considered essential for fulfilling their developmental potential (Verschuere & Koomen, 2012). However, its effects on the development of children with special needs received little research attention. This study is based on the notion offered by Zigler (2002) and the Emotional Availability model (Biringen, 2014) which suggest that caregivers' emotional support shape the development of children with and without special needs. The study employed quantitative methodology and a longitudinal design. Participants were 47 special-education teachers and one child from their kindergarten. Teachers' emotional support during a videotaped teacher-child play interaction was rated using the Emotional Availability Scales (Biringen et al., 1998). Kindergartens' therapists (e.g., occupational therapists) reported twice over a 12-month period on the child's communication, socialization, motor and daily living skills (The Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scale; Sparrow, & Cicchetti, 1989), peer acceptance and school performance (The MacArthur Health and Behaviour Questionnaire; Essex et al., 2002), and externalizing behaviour problems (Teacher Report Form; Achenbach, & Rescorla, 2000). The study was approved by the participating university's Ethics committee and the chief scientist of the Ministry of Education. Teachers' and parents' informed consent was obtained in writing. Teachers' emotional availability predicted gains in all examined aspects of child functioning over 12 months. Training and supervision of teachers of children with special needs should focus on enhancing teachers' emotional availability.

*kindergarten, developmentally delayed children, teachers' emotional availability, developmental gains, adaptive behaviour*

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## **C 8**

### **FAMILY WELLBEING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium is part of the SIG on Holistic Children's Wellbeing and explores the needs of families and children through lens of social justice as a paramount element in culturally-responsive early childhood education. Wellbeing of families and children makes society and early childhood educators accountable for their success. Critical to efforts supporting their wellbeing are culturally-responsive educational experiences anchored on social justice emphasizing equitable consideration and attention to their holistic needs accordingly with their cultural and social realities and experiences. Presenters explore influence of culture on the families' views about early education and care and ways for early childhood educators to appropriately respond to their unique perspectives. Consideration to realities of young immigrant children and imperative for socially-just practices essential to support their learning and sociocultural is also discussed. Also explores educators' knowledge needs on social justice practices ensuring equitable experiences of child immigrants.

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**Chair: Wilma Robles Melendez, Nova Southeastern University, United States**

### **Mothers and childcare experts - deconstructing the separation?**

Clionagh Boyle, Liverpool Hope University, United Kingdom

This research considers the ideological separation of mothers and childcare experts and explores the co-existence and contradictions of these identities. It draws on critiques of parenting science and contemporary parenting culture studies including the work of MacVarish (2016), Lee et al (2014) and Furedi (2008). Whilst acknowledged that parenting is a cultural concept, a neo-liberal agenda has foregrounded a technological understanding of parenthood (Zilberstein, 2016). Parents are positioned as in need of expert advice whilst cultural or traditional practices of child rearing are considered inadequate, dangerous or morally wrong. Parents are positioned as ignorant and in need of expert intervention (Macvarish, 2016). Thus discourse distances parents and experts from one another. This research explores the consequences of this separation of roles and how they might be reconciled within the same individual. A naturalistic methodology is employed, looking at experience and interpretation through a phenomenological lens in order that multiple perspectives can be embraced (Walker, 2017). Objects of analysis include found documents, reported conversation, description, and self-reflection. The casting of parenting as a relationship which may either

succeed or fail means that research into it is inherently sensitive. In accordance with EECERA guidelines, particular regard is given to potential emotional impact. Discussion centres on the interconnection and contradictions of the personal and professional and contrasts the epistemologies which underlie conflicting understandings of parenthood. This has implications for professional / parent relationships and the ways in which parents are viewed in contemporary parenting discourse.

*parents, phenomenology, naturalistic methodology, parent / professional relationships, parenting culture*

#### **Supporting immigrant children's sociocultural wellbeing through socially just representation and portrayals in children books**

Audrey Henry, Nova Southeastern University, United States

Given impact of stories on children's cultural wellbeing and emerging sense about self, project aimed at determining the nature of representation and portrayal of immigrant realities in children's books. It also targeted at identifying topics and authenticity of storylines. This project expands work (Bishop, 1997; Boles, 2006; Myers, 2014) on socially just representation and its impact on children's views about self. It is a part of a collaborative work with colleagues on social justice issues and culturally-appropriate practices for child immigrants. Framework based on Moll's funds of knowledge, Banks' multicultural stages, and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner) delineating need for socially-just practices and influence on the immigrant child's view about self. Paradigm addressed role of stories as socially-just practices supporting sociocultural wellbeing of child immigrants. Aimed at determining nature of representation, portrayal of immigrant realities and storylines authenticity. Stories about Hispanic and Caribbean families were selected using researchers-created criteria to determine authenticity of imagery and portrayals. Unstructured interviews with teachers with diverse backgrounds teaching immigrant preschoolers yielded views and comments on fairness of portrayals from stories. Data-analysis generated profile of portrayals, recommendations for intentional selection of culturally-fair authentic stories. Project purposes explained following ethical guidelines. Informed consent obtained from participants. Analysis generated recommendations for well-informed selection of culturally-authentic stories. Revealed need for appropriate selection to avoid misleading views about immigrant cultures. Data provided need for intentionally-consistent selection of culturally-fair stories. Adds to knowledge base on practices supporting immigrant children.

*wellbeing, diversity, immigrant children, social justice, literacy*

#### **Teacher, I am here! Addressing the wellbeing of young child immigrants through culturally and socially responsive practices**

Wilma Robles Melendez, Wayne Driscoll, Nova Southeastern University, United States

Project aimed at determining social justice practices addressing/supporting sociocultural and developmental needs of child immigrants from perspective of children's rights to equitable experiences. Also intended to give a voice to educators and families on defining views, knowledge needs for effective socially-just teaching. Using social justice perspective, expands work on responsive practices for child immigrants previously conducted by presenters. Anchored in social justice tenets spearheaded by Banks (2015), Nieto (2012), and Gonzalez, Moll & Amanti (2005) pertaining socially-just, culturally responsive approaches addressing wellbeing of culturally-diverse children. Framework anchored on social justice principles (Freire, 1970, Nieto, 2012) Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Gonzalez, Moll & Amanti (2005)funds of knowledge; Copple and Bredekamp (2009) developmental practice for responsive teaching in early childhood. Paradigm addressed rights of immigrant children to culturally and socially equitable teaching experiences. Meta-analysis of literature provided parameters determining policies and nature of social- just teaching practices for immigrant-preschoolers. Unstructured interviews conducted at selected programs serving Hispanic immigrant children provided accounts, revealing best practices, expectations from teachers and families. Data gathered through classroom observations, interviews with teachers, families, administrators was analysed determining "what works" and knowledge needs for improvement. Followed research ethics (EECERA, 2015) obtaining informed consent from participating educators and families. Data from observations, interviews provided narratives revealing best practices, impact of program and teachers' responsive role delivering socially-just experiences for immigrant preschoolers. Provided constructs defining social-justice practices addressing child immigrants' experiences. Contributes to repertoire of culturally-based practices.

*wellbeing, social justice, immigrant child, cultural diversity, teacher practices*



**Chair: Alice Di Leva, University of Turin, Italy**

**Preschool-aged children's media use and its relationship to their prosocial and aggressive behaviour**

Seçil İnanlı, Ayşegül Metindoğan, Bogaziçi University, Turkey

Using diaries, we aimed at collecting detailed descriptions of what, how much and in what contexts preschool children watched and played on the screens and also focused on exploring how children's time spent for developmentally enriching activities were related to their time spent for media use. Based on (Anderson & Bushman, 2001; Huesmann, Moise-Titus, Podolsk & Eron, 2003; Ling-yi Lin, 2015) evidence that exposure to violent video-games decrease time-spent on developmentally enriching activities and are correlated negatively with prosocial and positively with aggressive behaviours, we focused on media-use and social-emotional outcomes. Social-cognitive theory (Huesmann & Taylor, 2006; Bandura, 2001) and the Displacement theory (Neuman, 1988) had both informed the current research. Parents of 52 children ( $M=5.02$ ,  $SD=.69$ ) reported on children's media use on a media diary throughout a weekend. These dairies assessed children's media use (all screens) for type, content and the context. Children's prosocial skills and aggression were measured by Child Behaviour Scale (Ladd & Profilet, 1996). Written parental consents were used and confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were established. The time children spent for engaging developmentally enriching activities decreased as the time they spent for playing video games increased,  $r(50) = -.44$ ,  $p < .01$ . Age and media use were positively correlated,  $r(50) = .40$ ,  $p < .01$  and there was a significant positive relationship between children's aggression scores and the time they spent for video games/apps,  $r(50) = .32$ ,  $p < .05$ . Diaries are useful to explore media effect and factors, such as duration, content, and context, all need to be explored to understand media effects.

*child media, violent media, prosocial media, aggression, prosocial behaviour*

**First gestures, first words: Contents and contexts of media devices usage from zero to three, what influences on development?**

Alice Di Leva, University of Turin, Italy

The aim of this work is to review scientific publications and papers dealing with the topic of the supposed relationship between late development and the use of mobile devices in children aged between zero and three. Given the peculiarity and rapid evolution of touch-screen technologies, this work examines published literature after the year 2012. The corpus of research are also based on the analysis of the conclusions of the American Paediatric Academy, Canadian Paediatric Society and Italian Paediatrician's Association. The need to turn the eyes to the field of paediatric medicine is dictated by the fact that medical implications related to the use of mobile devices are today verifiable and demonstrated. Conceptual framework of this research, evidence based education (Giuliano Vivanet) and early childhood study with the perspective of systemic pedagogy (Laura Formenti) EBE, systematic review, and comparative research. Today, the use of screen technology in the early years of life represents an educational and ethical urgency which is necessary to respond. In the face of numerous alarms and popular articles published on the subject, scientific and specialist literature is very cautious in judging the use of new technologies during early childhood. Research has highlighted two crucial variables that it is our task to communicate to the family to transform into best practices. This research has the merit of being referred to a literature based on evidence-based literature. Exclude from reasoning on the new technologies old data concerning research on television. Translate results into best practices.

*media education, screen technology, development, mobile device, ECE*

**The impact of screen viewing time on 5-year-old children's school adjustment after the preschool to primary school transition in Ireland**

Elizabeth Tobin, University College Dublin, Ireland

The aim of the study was to examine whether screen-viewing time impacts school adjustment during Irish children's transition to primary school and if socio-emotional wellbeing partially accounts for this relationship. The Growing Up in Ireland (GUI) longitudinal government study of children in Ireland previously demonstrated a connection between 5-year-olds' screen-viewing time and problematic socio-emotional development (GUI, 2013). Socio-emotional skills are fundamental to children's successful school adjustment, and thus influence children's academic achievements and struggles as well as their mental health and

wellbeing through adulthood (Blankson et al., 2017). The research was framed through Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta's (2000) Ecological and Dynamic Model of Transition. The study analysed secondary data from GUI Wave 3 study of 5-year-old children. H1 stated screen-viewing time will negatively influence school adjustment, and the inclusion of socio-emotional wellbeing mediates the relationship between screen-viewing and school adjustment (H2). The current study availed of an anonymised secondary dataset from GUI, which is ethically beneficial as it avoids collecting additional information from participants/vulnerable populations. Furthermore, GUI provided participants consent forms and underwent a rigorous ethics procedure. Findings indicated screen-viewing time has a significant impact on children's school adjustment. Both H1 and H2 were supported. After controlling for gender and socioeconomic status, the effect sizes were small, indicating that screen-viewing is only one of many predictors of school adjustment. The study provides insight into the ways parents and schools can counter screen-viewing time's negative impact on children's adjustment to primary school in an environment seeing an increase in screen-viewing device usage.

*school transitions, screen viewing time, school adjustment, socio-emotional well-being, quantitative analysis*

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## **C 10**

### **MATHEMATICAL SKILLS AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Maria Papandreou, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece**

#### **The interconnections between the quality of preschool educational environment and the development of children's executive functions**

Anastasiya Belolutskaya (1), Aleksandr Veraksa (2), Daria Bukhalenkova (2), Margarita Gavrilova (2), (1) Moscow City University, Russia; (2) Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia

The aim was to see relations between the quality level of educational environment at preschool settings measured by Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R) and the level of children's executive functions measured by NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT (NEPSY-II). 657 children of 5-6 years old in Moscow were involved. The interconnections between the quality of preschool educational environment and executive functions were discussed in researches by Duval (2016), Williford (2013) etc. ECERS-R is an international valid instrument of quality assessment in education. It was used in many cross-cultural researches (Sheridan, 2001; Tietze & Schuster, 2005; etc.). NEPSY-II covers individual parameters which predict future academic achievement at school (Friedman & Miyake, 2005). Miyake's model of executive functions including working memory, inhibition, cognitive flexibility; Educational Environment Quality Assessment. An expert observation during 6 hours at each preschool setting; individual psychodiagnostics with children. ECERS-R measuring 43 environmental parameters and NEPSY-II uniting such psychodiagnostic tools as «Memory for designs»; «Sentences repetition»; «Inhibition»; «Dimensional Change Card Sort». A consent form and information sheet were provided to all participants. Pseudonyms have replaced the names of participants. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The most important environmental factors for executive functions development turned out to be the conditions for rest and relaxation, equipment for gross motor skills development and the character of horizontal communications among children and between children and adults. The results show the directions to improve the preschool environment quality in Russia. Research was supported by RSF grant #17-78-20198

*ECERS-R, executive functions, quality of preschool educational environment, cognitive flexibility, inhibition*

#### **Mathematical skills development and executive functioning in preschool age: Intervention study**

Aleksander Veraksa, Margarita Simonyan, Darya Bukhalenkova, Margarita Gavrilova, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia

The aim of this research was to compare the progress of mathematical abilities of preschoolers (6 years) as a result of the intervention study aimed at the formation of the concept of square using different strategies (based on model, symbolic image and combination of both) and their initial level of executive functions (EF). Research shows importance of mathematical skills development in preschool age and its relation to EF. However there is no research showing the effectiveness of different teaching strategies according to the level of EF. Theoretical framework is cultural-historical approach of Vygotsky and research that shows link between the ability to non-verbal representation and the success of mathematical education (Jordan et al, 2010, Dulaney et al. 2015). Intervention study with 6 year old preschoolers (N=100) consisted of 7 meetings, during which concept of square was studied using either model (group1), symbolic image (group2), combination of both (group3). Before the start a pre-test, then post-test and delayed post-test were administered aimed at measuring ability to solve tasks, based on the concept of square. The research was carried out in accordance with the Code of Ethics of the Russian Psychological Society. Results show, that

kindergarten children with a low level of EF show a low results in using model, but model turns to be most effective for children with high EF. Children with a high level of EF show low results in the traditional class. A program for development of the concept of square was elaborated. Research was supported by RSF grant.

*model, symbolic image, executive function, mathematical skills, concept of square*

### **Exploring young children's emergent semiotic activity during meaningful data investigations**

Maria Papandreou, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

The overarching aim of this study was to contribute in understanding young children's semiotic activity in the context of data investigations. Recent research on early statistics, acknowledges preschoolers as 'critical composers' and 'critical readers' of statistical texts (Within & Within, 2011). Considering the paucity of such studies, researchers argue that further research is needed involving children in the whole process of meaningful data activities (English, 2012; Makar, 2018). This study was informed by sociocultural ideas related to children's appropriation of signs through their participation in cultural practices and to the key role the young learners' mathematical semiotic activity may have as mediator for their mathematical learning (Carruthers & Worthington, 2011; Van Oers, 2010). The study drew on principles of educational design research and the data reported here was collected through participant observation, which included audio-recordings, keeping field notes, and children's graphic representations. Upon receipt of ethical clearance from the school scientific committee and after informing the children and their parents about the study, their voluntary participation and options of withdrawing, their consent was requested. Three aspects of the children data representations were analysed: the overall structure, the inscriptions included, and the kinds of information conveyed through them. The insightful way of utilizing their inscriptions demonstrated how the children apart of inventing their own signs adapted broadly accepted symbols to their needs and made them part of their personal tool kit for handling data tasks. Implications for practice relate to both statistical learning and enhancement of mathematical semiotic activity in ECE.

*Informal statistical knowledge, semiotic activity, data representation, mathematics, cultural practices*

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## **C 11**

### **OUTDOOR PLAY AND LEARNING SIG SYMPOSIUM 2: CROSS NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON ATTENTION TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium forms one of three organised for the Outdoor Play and Learning SIG. The papers presented here consider various aspects of the physical environment used for and by children for playful activity in Greece and Norway. The papers variously explore the ways teachers understand and use spaces available for play, why adult-child interaction in the outdoors can be limited and how children's use of the outdoors can be documented to contribute to sustainable city planning.

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**Chair: Jane Waters, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, United Kingdom**

#### **Tension and Attention on the School Grounds: From a Greek case towards where?**

Aristea Kyriakou (1) (2), Donald Gray (2), Laura Colucci-Gray (3), (1) Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation Scholar, United Kingdom; (2) University of Aberdeen, United Kingdom; (3) University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

This study investigates the use of school grounds by five teachers at two public primary schools in Greece. This project is supported by a revised definition of outdoor education; an alternative approach that aims to provide learning in an interplay between experience and reflection based on concrete experience in authentic situations (Nationellt Centrum Utomhuspedagogik 2014). The revised "outdoor education" borrows modern philosopher Jan Masschelein (2010) & anthropologist Tim Ingold's (2014), argument that "e-ducere" stands for leading out, liberating and displacing our view, in comparison to "educare" which stands for teaching. The research was experienced as constant movements, physical and conceptual: from a tree, the ground, the river, the weather and the human movement, the five constituents of landscape architecture as described "In conversation with Tim Ingold" (2014). Within the paradigm of constructive pragmatism, these movements became methods, including a much rewarding mobile interview with the teachers named "talking whilst walking". During this activity, the teachers video-recorded the guided tour they gave me on their school grounds and discussion emerged. The overarching methodology is critical discourse studies. Information and consent forms were provided to all participants. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The confidentiality and anonymity of the teachers and their schools are paramount. The results provide a deeper

understanding of the conditions within which a school community feels more empowered to create, use, learn, produce, adapt and interact with all the spaces a school consists of. Interdisciplinarity, sustainability and hope are pillars for school-making.

*school grounds, Greek primary schools, teachers' agency, critical pedagogy, critical discourse studies*

### **Documentation of children's paths and places - sustainable planning and children's rights**

Kari Anne Jørgensen-Vittersø, University of Southeast Norway, Norway

Aim: Develop and review documentation methods for children in early years, moving and dwelling in their local environments. Elucidate discourses on social and environmental sustainability and children's landscapes. The study is based on "Children's tracks" used in primary-school as online documentation of children's movements, dwellings and opinions of landscapes in their nearby environments. This paper elucidates and suggests how this system can be developed for ECE. This connects to studies on children's voices and children's places (Clark and Moss 2005, Clark 2017), children's places, sustainable landscapes (Bateman 2015, Jørgensen 2016) and children in urban areas (Horton & Kraftl 2017, 2018). Central theories are ecology of perception (Gibson, 1978) and the concepts affordance of landscape and theory on landscape places and movement (Ingold, T 2011). Children are seen as active citizens in their own right. The ontological framing is embodied experiences and creation of meaning (Merleau Ponty, M 1963). Methodology is inspired by theories on moving and dwelling (Ingold, T 2011). Methods used are mapping children's movements and affordance of the landscape is used in the analyses. There are no traceable data and no photos of children. However, developing documentation tools must include awareness of blind spots. To develop documentation methods for the youngest children we must move with them mapping their places and paths, include photos, observations, conversations and bodily expression. Mapping children's traces can enhance inclusion of ECE children's rights to play and move in land-use planning. The documentation gives substantial contributions to discourses on modern childhood and sustainable city planning.

*children's paths and places, children's rights, affordance, land-use planning, sustainability*

### **ECERS-R as a tool for developing quality in outdoor play in Norwegian ECEC**

Karen Marie Eid Kaarby, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

The aim of this study is to investigate possible scores on ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised edition) on the items connected to outdoor play. Norwegian children spend much time outdoor and the quality of the outdoor play is questioned (Moser & Martinsen, 2010, Kaarby & Tandberg, 2017). The holistic approach to children's learning, wellbeing and development seems to be highly rewarded. Nevertheless, questions concerning the excellence have been raised (OECD 2015). The study has a socio-cultural perspective on outdoor play and learning, and views gross motor play as important in promoting children's health and development (Moser 2013). Critical analysis is used in a detailed interpretation of the results on specific items in ECERS-R. The ECERS-R observations were conducted in 206 ECEC-groups by the research project. Better provision for Norway's children in ECEC". The critical discourse analysis is based on paradigms connected to the outdoor play and learning in Norwegian context. The project followed strict guidelines to ensure that ethical considerations were made from collecting consents to storing data. Anonymity of the empirical material is secured. Results from ECERS-R indicate that the space affords children gross motor play but child-staff interaction in gross motor play has low scores. The discussion points out different reasons for why the staff do not seem to supervise nor adapt for learning and challenging gross motor play. The philosophy of gross motor play seems to be relating to traditions more than professional and educational justifications.

*play, outdoor play, space for gross motor play, ECERS-R, supervision*

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## **C 12**

### **PARENTS: EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT, AVAILABILITY AND SUPPORT FOR THE DISADVANTAGED**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Sara Barros Araújo, Polytechnic Institute of Porto, Portugal**

### **Support programme for disadvantaged families applying Video Intervention Therapy**

Maria Ferrer-Ribot, Maria-Antonia Riera-Jaume, Josep Perez-Castelló, Carmen Touza-Garma, University of Balearic Islands, Spain

The main objective was to improve the parental strategies of interaction and bonding between a group of children and parents. It consists of a psychoeducational intervention directed towards families with children under 5 years of age who live in vulnerable contexts. The study evaluates the application of Video Intervention Therapy (VIT, Downing et al., 2014) in a group programme

(Ferrer & Riera, 2014) following the Dynamic-Maturational Model (DMM, Crittenden, 2008; Steele et al, 2014). The theoretical foundations of the program are based primarily on ecological, systemic and affective ties (Bronfenbrenner, 1987; Bowlby, 1986). To evaluate the quality of the interaction between parents and children we have used the Dynamic-Maturational Model (Crittenden, 1995) A quantitative methodology has been followed through the application of psychometric tests: (PSOC, Johnston & Mash, 1989, PSI, Abidin, 1995, e2p, Gómez & Muñoz, 2015, ECSA, Gleason, Zeanah & Dickstein, 2010), an experimental design pre-and post. For the treatment and analysis of the information, the statistical data treatment software SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) has been used in its latest version. Participants allowed the use of images and personal data for educational research purposes before the data collection was completed. At this time, the intervention program has finished, and we are ordering and starting to analyse the data. During the conference, we will have all the information for the public. The data collected, once analysed, could serve to instruct parents in the use of better strategies of interaction and bond with their children.

*programme, family, video intervention therapy, parental competence, dynamic-maturational model*

#### **Parenting style and emotional adjustment of child**

Veronica Raspa, Elisa Delvecchio, Livia Buratta, Claudia Mazzeschi, University of Perugia, Italy

The research investigates parenting styles (PS) in a large sample of Italian parents of children attending nursery school and kindergarten and links with the functioning of the child. Research conducted over the last twenty years has shown that the authoritative PS is a predictor of good psychological and behavioural adaptation (Confalonieri et al, 2010). PS refers to "attitudes that creates the emotional climate within which the behaviour of the parents is expressed" (Darling & Steinberg, 1993, p 493). Authoritative and authoritarian PS are like protection factors on the child's developmental outcomes (Baumrind, 1968). The participants were 608 parents of 608 children aged  $M=2.72$  ( $SD= 1.55$ ). Parents filled in the Parenting Style Dimensions Questionnaire (Robinson et al, 2001) and the Strengths Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman, 1997). Participants were taken to Italian nurseries. 250 brochures of invitation to participate with information have been delivered, the request with informed consent and information pursuant to the treatment-protection of personal data. The research was conducted according to the Ethics Code AIP (2015) and the UniPg Scientific Committee. The results show that both the mothers and the fathers present a more authoritative PS than authoritarian. There were no significant differences in PS with respect to the age of the child. For mothers and fathers there was a positive correlation between the authoritative PS and the pro-social behaviour of the child. The results include a perspective of continuity of development and suggest a greater inclusion of specific aspects of parenting for better quality of services for childhood.

*authoritarian, authoritative, parenting styles, emotional adjustment, parenting*

#### **The relationship between emotional availability of the mother and behaviour problems in the child**

Yaara Shilo, Efrata College, Israel

The aim of this study is to evaluate the relations between emotional availability of the mother during free play and behavioural problems of the child in early childhood. Previous studies examined how the child learns social skills from the family structure (Bronfenbrenner, 1989), as well as the links between the structuring actions of the parents and the infant's modes of interaction with the world (Kang, 2006). This study detects various types of parental behaviour with respect to behavioural problems. It postulates that the greater the emotional sensitivity, maternal structuring, and lack of intrusiveness in the mother's interaction with her child, the fewer the reports of behaviour disturbances on the part of the child. The research uses two scales of the Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL) and observations of emotional availability (Biringen 2000). The participating mothers signed informed consent forms. Results: Two of the hypotheses were confirmed: Heightened sensitivity and lack of intrusiveness on the part of the mother displayed correlation with a reduction in problems on the part of the child. The third hypothesis - pertaining to a significant measure of structuring actions on the part of the parent - yielded no significant results Implications for practice/policy: the research is a further milestone in the development of knowledge on the links between emotional availability of the mother and behavioural problems on the part of children. Its results will have implications for intervention programs on the part of therapeutic personnel who come in contact with parents and children.

*emotional availability, behavioural problems, social skills, mother during free play, child in early childhood*

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**Chair: Christina Pernsteiner-Koller, PH Burgenland, Austria**

**Being swept away. Transition rituals between kindergarten and primary schools**

Christina Pernsteiner-Koller, PH Burgenland, Austria

Transitions between educational institutions can be understood as social processes which are highly influenced by teachers, parents and children themselves. A conscious planning can contribute to the coping of life changes caused by transitions. Hereby rites of passages can highlight the end and beginning of a development. The research aim is to take a closer look on such interactions. In recent years numerous publications have highlighted the importance of transitions for the learning and wellbeing of children (OECD 2017, Perry /Dockett / Petrivskyi 2014). Often the focus is on pedagogical and institutional challenges like including educational continuity. There is less research about how rites of passages are designed and how children view them. The main framework is in ethnographical studies of rituals (Turner) and the new childhood research where children are seen as experts on their living and learning as much as adults (Kellet 2015). Qualitative Interviews with 12 children and 14 teachers within 9 kindergartens and primary schools in Austria. Interviewing children is essential to gain insights, giving enough time, reducing language barriers and power imbalance between researcher and participants are key elements to understand their views. Children enjoy taking part in rituals such as "swept away with brooms" as a way of showing their changed status from kindergarten child to pupil. Parents often take a part which shows them as constant link between children and changing educational institutions. The discovered rituals can foster the wellbeing of children and can be organized without much additional resources.

*transition, ECE, kindergarten, primary school, rituals*

**Transitions in ECEC**

Hilde Dehnæs Hogsnes, Reidun Larsen, June Berger Storli, University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) in Norway are to facilitate smooth transitions for children both from home to kindergarten, within the kindergarten, and from kindergarten to school (Ministry of Education 2017: 33-34). This presentation will focus on how kindergarten teachers aim for supplying children with positive transitions. The study is a part of a research project involving students, kindergarten teachers and lectures in ECE. A review (Hogsnes, Larsen & Storli, in press) on research literature finds limited research on transitions in Norway. This study is based on cultural history activity theory (Vygotskij, 1978; Ackerman & Backer 2011). Students, lecturers and kindergarten teachers cooperate in developing knowledge regarding transitions in ECEC. The material consists of students notes from their interviews with kindergarten teachers (Mertens, 2010). Kindergarten teachers contribute by sampling written stories based on their own experiences. Both students and kindergarten teachers will be involved in the process of analysing the material. Ethical considerations are taken care of through institutional ethical procedures regulating research in Norway (NSD). Consent to participate is seen as an ongoing process. We found that boundary objects can serve to help children experience continuity in all kinds of transitions. Dialogue and interaction with children and parents around boundary objects may allow the children to participate in the transition. Cooperation on boundary objects may contribute to the development of better bridging practices in ECEC. While transitional objects may contribute to a sense of security, boundary objects may give the children the opportunity for active participation.

*Transitions, cooperation continuity, boundary objects, transitional objects*

**Do early childhood transitions count in the longer-term?**

Aline-Wendy Dunlop, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

This longitudinal study aims to identify what counts as a "good" transition to school, and its impact on longer term wellbeing and attainment. Children's trajectories through life are launched very early and remain very stable after the first two years of school: beginning school is a distinctive life-course transition (Alexander, Entwisle & Olsen, 2014). A new iteration of ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2005), in a socio-bio-psycho-ecological model provides a research framework for meaning making across, and in the spaces between, systems. Interrelationships of person, context and processes across time and place are embraced. Methodological choices rest on the researcher's ontological and epistemological positions (Waring, 2017). This longitudinal exploratory-interpretive study uses observation, assessment, teacher records, parent and teacher interviews and video recording

over two 3 year periods of educational transition. 150 students, including 22 focal children, were involved for the 14-year study lifetime. The complexity and intersectionality of qualitative and quantitative data generated over time is recognised. In a study spanning 14 years the ethical issues move from assent to consent to participation to influencing the research process. Ethical approval was therefore sought at four strategic points in the study development. Reflecting on the variability of the 22 case study children's school leaving outcomes, a range of influencing factors including environments, relationships, individual attributes and the children's sense of themselves as learners, copers and friends were identified. Given there is lower wellbeing and persistent under-achievement in Scottish school leaving populations, transition to school remains a site for policy change.

*transitions, wellbeing, attainment, long-longitudinal methodologies, policy change*

## **C 14**

### **PROFESSIONALS' BELIEFS, PRACTICES AND SELF-EFFICACY CONCERNING CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY**

Self-organised symposium

Increasing cultural and linguistic diversity poses challenges for professionals working in early childhood education and care (ECEC) provisions. Professionals' beliefs and feelings of self-efficacy can affect their daily practices. Especially beliefs concerning multiculturalism and multilingualism are related to classroom practices and the diversity policy in the organisation (first presentation). Moreover, the degree of diversity (i.e. percentage of children with low-SES or immigrant background or speaking another home language) in the classroom might play a role in the relationship between beliefs and practices as well (second presentation). Lastly, professionals self-efficacy (in a general sense and specifically related to dealing with diversity) plays a role in their culturally sensitive practices.

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**Chair: Pauline Slot, Utrecht University, Netherlands**

#### **What is the role of professionals' diversity beliefs in shaping their practices and organisational policies?**

Thomas Moser (1), Helga Norheim (1), Pauline Slot (2), Bodine Romijn (2), Olga Wysłowska (3), (1) University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway; (2) Utrecht University, Netherlands; (3) University of Warsaw, Poland

The current paper analyses the relation between staffs' beliefs, practices and organisational policies towards cultural and linguistic diversity in ECEC institutions in Netherlands, Norway and Poland. Previous research showed mixed findings concerning educational staffs' attitudes towards cultural diversity and rather negative views on multilingualism (Slot, Halba, & Romijn, 2017). However, little is known about staff' diversity practices and organisational policies. The overarching theoretical frame of ISOTIS is based on Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological perspective of development and following a framework proposed by Slot et al. (2017) indicating that professionals' everyday behaviour and practices are shaped by their beliefs. A quantitative, cross-sectional and cross-national survey was carried out to conduct comparative analyses based on a post positivist paradigm. The online survey included 148 ECEC professionals from the Netherlands (n=41), Norway (n=51) and Poland (n=56). Permission from the university's ethical committees was obtained and all participants provided active consent for the data collection and analyses. Preliminary results show that professionals reported more positive attitudes towards cultural diversity (mean=4.65; sd=.39) than towards multilingualism (mean=3.26; sd=.65). Multicultural and multilingual beliefs showed a positive relation ( $r=.20$ ;  $p=.015$ ). There was a positive association between diversity beliefs and diversity policy ( $r=.54$ ;  $p=.000$ ), but beliefs appeared unrelated to multicultural practices. Further, in-depth analyses will be carried out. This cross-national comparison provides information on the role of professionals' beliefs in shaping their practices and the organisational policy, and, as such, can have interesting implications for professional development initiatives aimed at improving culturally sensitive practice.

*multicultural and multilingual beliefs, culturally sensitive policies and practices, cross-national study, diversity policy, multicultural practice*

#### **The role of classroom diversity in the relations between professionals' beliefs and practices**

Olga Wysłowska (1), Krzysztof Bulkowski (1), Pauline Slot (2), (1) University of Warsaw, Poland; (2) Utrecht University, Netherlands

European professionals completed a survey on their work environment, attitudes, beliefs and practices. This paper investigates the role of diversity in the classroom context in the relationship between professionals' diversity beliefs and practices in Poland, the Netherlands and Norway. Previous research showed relations between professionals' beliefs and practices (Fang, 1996). However, little is known about the importance of classroom diversity as a moderator between these aspects. This inquiry is built on the assumptions that cross-national research allows for a better analysis of the studied phenomena due to variation between contexts (Penn, 2011). Moreover, professionals' beliefs have shown to be important for their behaviour and daily practices (Slot et al. 2017). A total of 233 professionals (PL=95; NL=73; NO=65) took part in the quantitative online staff-survey with a cross-

sectional design. The ethical committees of universities involved in the study approved the study and all participants provided active consent. The first results reveal that professionals' classroom context differed between the three countries (PL- low share of children with multilingual and multicultural background and moderate level of socially disadvantaged children; NL- high share of children with multilingual and multicultural background and moderate level of socially disadvantaged children; NO- moderate share of socially disadvantaged children and with multilingual and multicultural background). Further, moderation analysis will be conducted to investigate the role of this context in the relations between professionals' beliefs and practices. Research findings may support in shaping policy and practice concerning professional development actions aimed at promoting sensitive practices in diverse classrooms.

*beliefs, practices, classroom context, diversity, cross-national study*

### **Relations of classroom diversity and multicultural beliefs with teachers' self-efficacy: A country comparison**

Bodine Romijn, Pauline Slot, Paul Leseman, Utrecht University, Netherlands

A cross-national staff survey was conducted to gain information on staff's attitudes, practices, and work environment. This paper analyses the relationship between cultural diversity in the organization, multicultural beliefs and self-efficacy of staff in the Netherlands, England, Italy, and Poland. Teachers indicate that they find it challenging to work with diverse populations and they feel ill-prepared in dealing with cultural and linguistic diversity in the classroom (Slot et al., 2017). Numerous studies show that teachers' sense of self-efficacy predicts overall teacher effectiveness (Von Suchodoletz et al., 2018). However, teachers' self-efficacy in light of growing cultural and linguistic diversity in classrooms is an understudied subject. Research shows that teachers' multicultural beliefs positively predict their self-efficacy (Gutentag et al., 2018), but evidence on the role that cultural diversity in the classroom plays in teachers' sense of self-efficacy is mixed (Geerlings et al., 2018). A quantitative cross-sectional design was used to carry out comparative analyses on the data collected through an online survey among N = 340 professionals in four countries. The survey was ethically approved by the university's ethical committees. Moreover, professionals provided active consent before participation. Preliminary findings show positive relations between the level of diversity in the organization and self-efficacy ( $r = .45$ ). Mediation analyses will be used to explore the impact of diversity in classrooms on self-efficacy and to what extent this is mediated by teachers' attitudes. The results give insight in teachers' self-efficacy in today's culturally diverse classrooms and can thus inform professional development aimed to improve practice.

*multicultural and multilingual beliefs, teachers' self-efficacy, diverse classrooms, teacher attitudes, cultural diversity*

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## **C 15**

### **MEASURING QUALITY**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Chrisa Nitsiou, Frederick University, Cyprus**

### **Effective interactions in early childhood education in Cyprus: Measuring quality**

Chrisa Nitsiou, Frederick University, Cyprus

Effective teacher-child interaction in early childhood education are essential to ensure quality in early childhood contexts. The main objective of this study was to measure the quality of teacher-child interactions in kindergartens in Cyprus, in an attempt to identify dimensions of educational encounters that promote a nurturing environment for all children involved. The importance of effective teacher-child interactions has been established before, as well as the importance of assessment of the dimensions of teacher-child interactions, using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System, CLASS (Pianta, La Paro, Hamre, 2008, 2012). Specifically, children in classrooms in which teachers displayed more instructional and emotional support, showed significant gains in social competence, as well as in their academic performance (Mashburn et al., 2008, Burchinal et al., 2010). Data were collected using an adaptation of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System, CLASS, which assesses three broad domains of teacher-child interactions: emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support. For the purposes of this presentation, data that involve the emotional and instructional support displayed by future educators in kindergartens in Cyprus will be presented. Future educators were able to withdraw from the study at any time. The results of the present study will help identify the importance of observing and documenting the dimensions of effective interactions that take place in early childhood education



programs. Finally, this research study may well have an impact on educational policy and university practices, as we aim to underline the importance of promoting responsive and cognitively-stimulating early childhood educational environments.

*quality early childhood education, effective teacher-child interactions, measuring quality, future educators, responsive educational environments*

#### **Development of a Quality and Regulatory Framework (QRF) from inception to implementation**

Fiona Mc Donnell (1), Helen Rouine (2), (1) Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Ireland; (2) Tusla, The Child & Family Agency, Ireland

The aim of this research was to identify and bring together evidence based national and international research and best practice to underpin the Child Care Act 1991(Early Years Services) regulations 2016. The study is underpinned by theories on quality in ECEC as outlined in the findings of the CoRE report (2011), the European Commission (2014), Eurofound (2015) study. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 are the legislative underpinning for this study. The Quality Regulatory Framework sits within the Irish and European context in early years service provision where the benefits and contribution of regulation to the quality of ECEC provision have been documented, (Department of Children and Youth Affairs (2013), European Commission, (2014). Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected to explore the changing paradigm of quality ECEC provision. A comprehensive systematic and participative approach including a wide ranging consultation process with key national and international stakeholders, organisations, ECCE providers and parents in 2017/ 2018 underpinned the development of the Quality Regulatory Framework. Ethical considerations of informed consent, freedom to withdraw from the process, anonymity, participant safety and wellbeing were adhered to at all times. The revised Early Years regulations (2016) & enhanced enforcement powers of the inspectorate have transformed how Early Years services are regulated in Ireland. This study was conducted to identify supports to aid compliance and quality ECEC provision. The QRF was launched in 2018 with supporting resources Development of a QRF inspection tool is in process.

*regulation, quality, inspection, compliance, reflective practice*

#### **Observational scale to measure the interaction quality between professionals and families**

Theresia Hummel, Franziska Cohen, Juliane Schünke, Yvonne Anders, Freie University, Germany

This study describes the validation of a new observation instrument to measure the interaction quality between professionals and families during morning drop-off in preschools. International studies have provided evidence on the benefits of ECEC education for children's development (Melhuish et al., 2015). The quality of the educational programmes plays a key role for the size and persistence of ECEC effects (Roßbach et al., 2008; Vandell et al., 2010; Anders, 2013). The structure-process model of quality in ECEC defines family collaboration as an important component of early childhood education (in press, Anders & Roßbach). Due to a lack of measures, little is known about this quality dimension. We worked in positivism paradigm and used a quantitative research design in our study. 342 interactions between staff and families were observed in 38 classrooms through a 1h observation time by trained data collectors. We did not collect identifying information on the families. The coding scheme focused just on the professional. All professionals signed informed consent forms. Data has been anonymized. The structure of the interaction quality was investigated using confirmatory factor analysis. We compared (1) a g-factor model to (2) a three-factor model, with three factors: willingness of interaction, communication strategies and send-off. The three-factor-model shows the best model fit (RMSEA = 0.083, CFI = 0.911). Preliminary results reveal high internal consistency coefficients. Further analyses investigate correlations between the interaction quality and structural factors. Implications of our findings will be discussed in the light of the theoretical background and conceptual framework of the instrument.

*family collaboration, interaction quality, communication strategies, observation instrument, morning drop-off*

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## **C 16**

### **STEM: ISSUES FROM THREE COUNTRIES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Ahmet Simsar, Kilis 7 Aralık University, Turkey**

#### **The change of perceptions of preschool teachers' science concepts: Lesson planning, science teaching, and science method class**

Ahmet Simsar (1), Sara Beth Tours (2), Yakup Doğan (1), Fatih Bektaş (1), Michelle L. Amodei (2), (1) Kilis 7 Aralık University, Turkey; (2) Slippery Rock University, United States

The aim of the study is to evaluate changing of preservice early childhood teachers' perceptions of science contents during their science method course. There are several studies that showed early childhood teachers spent little time on teaching science, unqualified to teach science and lack science teaching skills (Tu, 2006). One possible way of doing this is by providing them with more teaching experiences and modelling how to teach science (Putman, 2012; Simsar, 2016). The Bandura's Social learning theory inspired current study and conceptual framework aid in guiding in this study. In this study, case study method were used. The preservice teachers' changing on perceptions of science contents were collected during science method courses and their lesson plans. All student voluntarily participated in study. Preservice teachers only write their thoughts about scientific concepts that they know and use during science teaching. The scientific concepts were organized by researcher by the modifying Children Attitudes Towards Science (Simsar, 2013) survey. Their participation of study did not impact their final scores. It is found that, the preservice early childhood teachers' perceptions on the science contents were changed during their lesson planning, teaching science, and Science method courses. There were several chances seem on the contents areas which are related with Earth and Space Science, Life Science, and Physical Science. The results of the study showed that preservice early childhood teachers' perceptions on science contents may impact by more teaching, planning science lessons, and science method courses.

*science contents, preservice teachers, science teaching, lesson planning, science method course*

### **How preschool teacher students create meaning about teaching for sustainability in preschool**

Jonna Larsson (1), Eva Ärlemalm-Hagsér (2), (1) Gothenburg University, Sweden; (2) Mälardalen University, Sweden

The objective of this study is on how preschool teacher students, in written text, create meaning about teaching for sustainability and STEM related issues in relation to a preschool teaching practice. Researchers argue that education for sustainability is a marginalized area within teacher education (Ferreira, Ryan & Tilbury, 2014), especially within the field of preschool teacher education (Davis (2015). The students' ontological and epistemological understandings have been studied through their descriptions of children, sustainability (Davis, 2014), globally and locally aspects and STEM (Osborn & Dillon, 2008) within thematic work. This qualitative research draws on a methodological frame (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008) where a critical theoretical approach (Ideland & Malmberg, 2015) is put forward. The analytical method used is critical text analysis (Sterling, Warwick & Wyness, 2016). The study is based on nineteen essays written by preschool teacher students, who actively accepted to share essays via e-mail. Students participated after completing their pre-school teacher training. All essays were de-identified, as per the Swedish guidelines for research practice (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017). The study reveals (1) how students create meaning about teaching for sustainability in preschool based on coherent and fragmentary thematic outlines, (2) the relationship between the global and the local in the students' essays and (3) how STEM appears in sustainability focused thematic work. This creates diverse conditions for children to develop complex thinking and impacts teaching for sustainability. This study offers insights about organisational aspects, possibilities and challenges when working with sustainability in preschool.

*sustainability, STEM, preschool, global and local, thematic work*

### **Knowing the (mathematics) part in order to know the (STEM) whole**

Caroline Cohrsen, Frank Niklas, MGSE | University of Melbourne, Australia

Early childhood education in Australia is guided by the National Quality Standard and by the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF). In the Northern Territory of Australia, a preschool curriculum further elaborates the EYLF. The 'NT Preschool Maths Games' address the M in STEM. They draw on the learning trajectory approach (e.g. Clements & Sarama. 2014): play-based activities provide 'drop-back' and 'extension' options to enable differentiated teaching. There is growing emphasis on the importance of STEM teaching and learning in prior-to-school settings to support school readiness and later achievement (Duncan et al., 2007; Thomson, de Bortoli and Buckley, 2013). A Vygotskian emphasis on the role of the more capable other underpinned the design of small-group play-based activities. Immediate and delayed implementation classrooms were identified. Teachers received professional learning in using the activities. Pre- and post-implementation data were gathered using Number Naming, Number Counting and Applied Problems (WJIII; Mather & Woodcock, 2001). The study received full University ethics approval and was endorsed by the NT Department of Education. Consent was received from school principals, teachers and parents. All were advised that they were at liberty to withdraw at any point. Children were free to decline. The immediate intervention group showed greater gains than the delayed intervention group. This suggests that highlighting the 'big ideas' assists preschool teachers to recognise, consolidate and extend early mathematical thinking. Improved child outcomes is the goal of education. Making more explicit which mathematics ideas to teach and how to teach them, playfully, is critical.

*play-based mathematics, preschool, maths games, early childhood education, Northern Territory (Australia)*

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**Chair: Anna Strycharz-Banas, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand**

**The predictive effect of self-regulation skills on competition styles of preschoolers**

Ezgi Aksin Yavuz (1), Dilan Bayındır (2), Emine Ahmetoğlu (1), (1) Trakya University, Turkey; (2) Balıkesir University, Turkey

The aim of the research is to investigate the predictive effect of self-regulation skills on the competition styles of preschoolers. Although competition is a common phenomenon among preschoolers (Sheridan & Williams, 2006; Tsiakara & Digelidis, 2012; 2014), the number of the studies investigating this concept in preschool years seems inadequate (Balat, Akman & Çiftçi, 2017). Individual differences are observed in children's self-regulation skills, duration of attention and behavioural patterns beginning from the very early years (Carlson, Mandell & Williams, 2004). Children who experience difficulties in regulating their own thoughts, emotions, attention, and behaviour may be at greater risk of social problems later in life (Eisenberg, Fabes, Guthrie & Reiser, 2000; Kochanska, Murray & Harlan, 2000; Ramani, Brownell & Campbell, 2010). Children's learning of competitive behaviour is also a part of the socialization process and self-regulation skills could shape the competition styles of preschoolers. The sample of the study is made up of 261 preschoolers and their 19 teachers. Demographic Information Form that was developed by the researchers, Self-regulation Skills Scale (Bayındır & Ural, 2016) and Preschool Competition Scale (Paquette, Gagnon, Bouchard, Bigras & Schneider, 2013) were used for data collection. Survey model was employed. A consent form with information about the project was provided to parents. The findings indicated that self-regulation skills significantly predicted the competition styles of the participating preschoolers. The findings emphasize the development and implementation of self-regulation programs and materials to be used in schools from the very early years, which may draw the attention of policy-makers.

*self-regulation, competition styles, control, preschool period, regression analysis*

**Conflict is bad, but maybe it's not: Negotiating belonging in a new EC setting**

Anna Strycharz-Banas, Miriam Meyerhoff, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

This paper uses the concept trajectory of belonging to explore social functions of conflict in one child's use of linguistic and embodied practices to negotiate his belonging in the community of practice (CofP) of his EC setting. While the impact of conflict cannot be predetermined (Laursen & Hafen 2010), in EC it is often seen as destructive (Johnson & Johnson 2009), and needing to be resolved. However, our data suggests that 'disruptive' activities were an integral part of this child's belonging journey. The concept of trajectory (Dreier 2003; Wortham 2005) allows to contextualise the child's entering into a CofP (Lave & Wenger 1991), enabling us to understand them as productive contexts for (re)negotiating belonging and entering into dialogue around the politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis 2011) with peers. Our data comes from a larger longitudinal study investigating naturally-arising conflict interactions among children aged 2-5 in a multi-ethnic early childhood setting, using video recordings, observations, teacher journaling and focus group discussions with teachers. Using interactional sociolinguistic tools we analysed the child's interactions with his peers and his teachers over a 6-month period, from his first entry into EC. Data are anonymised and used with permission. By plotting the child's trajectory of belonging, we observed that he explored 'constructive' interactions alongside seemingly 'disruptive' or 'anti-social', (conflict) using both as potentially constructive contexts, to gradually enter into more complex social interactions and move from the periphery to the centre of the community. This has implications for teacher's understanding of and interventions into children's conflict.

*conflict, belonging, interactional sociolinguistics, peer interactions, community of practice*

**Images and interpretation: Educators' reflections on children's belonging in educational settings across borders**

Anna-Maija Puroila (1), Anette Emilson (2), Hrönn Palmadóttir (3), Barbara Piskur (4), Berit Tofteland (5), (1) University of Oulu, Finland; (2) Linneaus University, Sweden; (3) University of Iceland, Iceland; (4) Zuyd University, Netherlands; (5) University of Stavanger, Norway

This study aims to investigate the potential of visual methodologies when exploring children's belonging in educational settings in five countries: Finland, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden. Previous research calls for methodological reflexivity in cross-cultural studies (Puroila & Johansson, 2018; Rubenstein- Ávila, 2013). There are studies indicating that images can supplement verbally based methods (Jung 2012; Woodhouse, 2011). The study is inspired by research literature that calls for a

critical approach when employing visual methodologies in human research. As Rose (2007) notes, images are never innocent but they operate as active parts of interaction. The study applied an interpretive paradigm where the interpretation of meanings is in the forefront (Pouliot, 2007). The data was collected through ten group discussions of educators, two in each country. An image was provided to help educators discuss children's belonging in educational settings. All participants signed an informed consent form and their anonymity was ensured by using pseudonyms. The image inspired lively discussion about children's belonging in all participating countries. Regardless of different societal contexts, the educators recognized both familiar and unfamiliar elements of daily life in educational settings in the image. Three interrelated themes were identified: people, environment, and educators' reflections on how the image related to their own context. The findings revealed that the image provided a common space for group discussions in the context of cross-cultural research. Rather than making direct comparisons between the countries, the image enabled exploring how meaning-making took place in between educators, researchers, and the image.

*belonging, educator, image, interpretation, visual methodology*

## **C 18**

### **ASPECTS OF THE EFFECTIVE ECEC ENVIRONMENT**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Maire Corbett, Early Childhood Ireland, Ireland**

#### **Universal Design creating nurturing spaces for all**

Maire Corbett, Early Childhood Ireland, Ireland

To develop a publication on Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care settings in Ireland to guide and support planners, architects and ELC professionals during the design or retrofit of settings. Research relates to publications - "We like this place" (NCNA, 2002), Greenman, J., (1988) Caring Spaces, Learning Places: Children's Environments That Work, in addition to the suite of Universal Design guidance from Centre of Excellence for Universal Design (<http://universaldesign.ie/>) In 2016 the Access and Inclusion Model was developed by Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) Ireland. DCYA commissioned Early Childhood Ireland and partners (Trinity Haus, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick and Nathan Somers Design) and Centre of Excellence in Universal Design to develop Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care (ELC) settings, to ensure rich, nurturing environments for children, parents and educators that are easy to access, use and understand. A systematic literature review took place and onsite visits to a diverse typology of ELC settings across Ireland. Parents and practitioners were surveyed, and a random sample were interviewed. Children's views were sought using their drawings and photographs taken by them. Ethical considerations of informed consent from adults and assent from children, freedom to withdraw, anonymity, participant safety and wellbeing were adhered to. The Literature review and case study visits led to development of Universal Design Guidelines and a self-audit tool for ELC Settings. Inclusion and ease of use for all supported by use of guidelines. Need for capital funding to ensure this.

*universal design, inclusion, environments, parents and families, community*

#### **Sleep practices in early childhood education and care in Japan: From the practitioners' perspectives**

Sachiko Nozawa, Kiyomi Akita, Yumi Yodogawa, Toshihiko Endo, Midori Takahashi, University of Tokyo, Japan

This study aims to investigate practitioners' perceptions of sleep practices in Japanese ECEC settings. Nap time is an essential part of an ECEC program because sleep affects a child's behaviour and wellbeing (Thorpe et al., 2018). Although individual differences have been observed in children's sleep needs and behaviours, nap time in group settings tends to be scheduled at the same time for all children (Staton et al., 2017). It was indicated that the mandatory long nap sleep could have a negative effect on night time sleep at home (Fukuda and Asaoka, 2004). Contemporary ECEC philosophy emphasizes a responsive pedagogical practice that respects children's decision-making and characteristics (Bae, 2010 etc.). According to this approach, Thorpe et al. (2018) suggested the importance of responsive sleep practice, which considers each child's sleep needs and behaviours. In this study, Japanese practitioners' perceptions of sleep practices were examined by using a quantitative approach under the positivist framework, and 3,727 practitioners in a class of children aged 0–5 years responded to our questionnaire. Voluntary participation and privacy protection were ensured for all participants. The results indicate that sleep practice with younger (aged 0–2 years) children tends to be more flexible and responsive to each child's sleep needs. By contrast, nap time for older (aged 3–5 years) children tends to be mandated and putting children to sleep could burden practitioners. The findings suggested the need for reconsideration of sleep practice for older children in Japanese ECEC settings from the perspective of responsive pedagogical practice.

*sleep practice, nap time, responsive pedagogical practice, practitioner's perception, ECEC setting*

## **Upgrading the quality of the preschool environment: Design, implementation, and effects of a teachers' Professional Development Program**

Styliani Gidari, Domna Kakana, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

This study investigates the impact of a teachers' Professional Development Program (PDP) to improve the quality of preschool education. Research findings suggest that teachers' education and training is a key factor in improving the preschool quality (Ackerman, 2005; Manning, Garvis, Fleming, & Wong, 2017). The paper is guided by the notion that teachers' qualifications can lead to high-quality preschool education and positive developmental outcomes for children (Moiduddin, Aikens, Tarullo, West, & Xue, 2012). The research is sited in a pragmatic paradigm, using quasi-experimental and action research methodology and quantitative and qualitative research methods. Quality was evaluated in 23 Greek kindergartens using the scale ECERS-R. Kindergarten teachers were divided into an experimental group, which took part in the PDP and in a control group. The 5-month PDP was based on the results of the assessment of the quality and the educational needs of teachers and has been co-designed by the researcher, external speakers and teachers. At the end of the PDP the quality of kindergartens was re-evaluated using the ECERS-R. The survey was approved by the Institute of Educational Policy and all participants have signed the informed consent. The results show that after the implementation of the PDP the quality of kindergartens of the experimental group was increased significantly more, although the quality of kindergartens in the control group had also improved. The findings can contribute to the knowledge on a teachers' professional development, with the aim of improving the quality of preschool education.

*preschool, evaluations of quality, quality improvement, professional development, ECERS-R*

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## **C 19**

### **CONSIDERING SELF-REGULATION, AUDITORY MEMORY AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTION IN ECEC**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Daria Bukhalenkova, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia**

#### **PedaSens intervention - The effects of the early childhood education professionals' emotional availability on children's self-regulation**

Sivi Harkoma (1), Nina Sajaniemi (1), Eira Suhonen (1), Jukka Mäkelä (2), Mari Nislin (3), (1) University of Helsinki, Finland; (2)

National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland; (3) The Education University of Hong Kong, Finland

The aim of the research is to study whether the pedagogical intervention can be used to support early childhood education (ECE) professionals' emotional availability (EA), and indirectly support children's self-regulation in kindergarten. Pedagogical interventions can be useful in increasing ECE professionals' sensitivity and emotional availability in interaction with the children (Egert, Fukkink & Eckhardt, 2018; Biringen, 2012). However, there is still much unknown about the effectiveness of these interventions on children's self-regulation. Emotional Availability theory explains the emotional features of adult-child interactions (Biringen, 2000). Self-regulation is a part of the conscious and unconscious processes by which individuals manage their behaviour and emotions, and it shapes in social relationships (Vohs & Baumeister, 2016). Self-regulation skills have short and long-term effects on school readiness and academic skills (McClelland et al., 2013). This is an experimental study with a paradigm of educational and psychological research. The video data was assessed by using the Emotional Availability Scales. The Preschool Behavioural and Emotional Rating Scale was used to measure children's self-regulation. The research data was collected before and after the intervention, and it was analysed by using SPSS program. The study was approved by the Ethics Committee on Human Studies (University of Helsinki), and consent forms were received from children's parents and professionals. The results of the study will offer new knowledge about the connections between ECE professionals' emotional availability and children's self-regulation. The knowledge about the quality of ECE professionals' interaction and practices can be used to support children self-regulation and school readiness.

*pedagogical sensitivity, emotional availability, self-regulation, adult-child interaction, quality of early childhood education*

#### **Interrelations of dialectical thinking and executive functions in preschool age**

Nikolay Veraksa (1), Dastan Turebaev (2), Elena Dorofeeva (2), (1) Moscow City University, Russia; (2) Moscow Academy of Preschool Education, Russia

Study was aimed at development of dialectical thinking and its connection with the executive functioning of preschoolers. Dialectical thinking (Piaget, 1982; Riegel, 1973; Basseches, 1984, 2005), as well as executive functioning in preschool age (Rose et al., 2011; Miyake, Friedman, 2012) have a long tradition of research. Dialectical thinking is a process of achieving equilibrium of

formal logical structures (Piaget, 1969). Riegel (1976) emphasized importance of the post-formal stage of intellect. According to Basseches (2005), dialectical thinking allows one to break through this closeness to new knowledge. The study of dialectical thinking, based on the understanding of dialectical logic as a special kind of formal logic, was started in Russia in 1980s (Veraksa, 1981). It was shown that there are formal dialectical operations that differ from those of formal logic. Dialectical thinking is the ability to operate with the relations of the opposite. As executive functions form the basis for thinking processes (Baker et al., 2010), they can relate to the development of dialectical thinking. 270 children 5-7 y.o. took part in the study. Dialectical thinking measures (ability to operate with the opposites) as well as measures of all components of executive functions (working memory, inhibition, switching) took place. The design was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Russian Psychological Society. Relations between component of the executive functions and dialectical thinking were found. Dialectical thinking is an instrument of creativity development. Its activation should take into consideration the level of executive functioning of children. Research supported by RFBR#19-013-00475

*dialectical thinking, executive functioning, creativity, preschool age, formal logic*

#### **Language proficiency and executive functions development in preschool children**

Daria Bukhalenkova, Olga Almazova, Aleksander Veraksa, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia

The goal of this research was to study the connection between all of the three main executive functions (EF) components (working memory, inhibition and cognitive flexibility) and various spoken language skills in the senior preschool age. According to numerous studies, EF development is a predictor of the successful acquisition of reading and writing skills (Cantin et al., 2016; Yeniad et al., 2013). However, the data on the relationship between verbal speech and EF in preschool age are insufficient and contradictory (Pazeto, 2014). We have based on the Miyake model of EF (Miyake et al., 2000) and on cultural-historical approach to language development in childhood (Vygotsky, 1962; Luria, 1976). The study used NEPSY-II complex subtests and DCCS aimed at assessing the EF level. Language skills (vocabulary, phonemic awareness, verbal fluency) was measured by neuropsychological methods (Akhutina et al., 2018). The procedure was approved by the Board of Ethics Faculty of Psychology Lomonosov MSU. The parents gave their written informed consent for their children's participation in the study. The results of the study of 279 children aged 5-6 years showed that oral language skills are more closely related to the level of development of verbal working memory and cognitive flexibility than with inhibition or visual working memory. Children with low level of EF have difficulties with language development. Our results provide important details about understanding the relation between EF and language development in the senior preschool age that can help to improve both abilities. Research was supported by the RFBR Grant â„– 17-29-09112.

*preschool age, executive functions, language development, vocabulary, verbal fluency*

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## **C 20**

### **EFFECTIVE ELEMENTS OF TEACHER EDUCATION; AN EXPLORATION OF INNOVATIVE RESEARCH**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Sri Tatminingsih, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia**

#### **International applied learning experiences in ECE teacher preparation: Documenting student learning through innovative methodologies**

Meredith Jones, Susan Catapano, University of North Carolina at Wilmington, United States

First, this study explored the phenomenon of an international applied learning experience on ECE pre-service teachers' (PST) development. The second aim explored the use of innovative qualitative data to improve ECE teacher preparation programs. The impact of international experiences for PSTs suggests students gain broader global perspectives and personal and professional growth (Stairs et al., 2011). Applied learning experiences are also an effective teaching strategy (Ash & Clayton, 2009). However, the phenomenon of an international applied learning experience has not been explored. This study is grounded in a social constructivist framework. Vygotsky (1978) identifies social constructivism as the process of learning through, and reflecting on, interactions with others. This study follows Yin's (2014) case study methodology grounded in the social constructivist paradigm. Methods included observations, analysis of written artifacts, anecdotal notes, and focus groups. PSTs were fully informed about the study through informed consent. They were told participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any point in the study. All data were kept confidential and PSTs were given pseudonyms. This study was approved by the university's IRB. Our main finding suggests international applied learning experiences offered unique opportunities for PSTs to demonstrate their knowledge and skills while also being an environment where they gained first hand experiences working with culturally diverse

children. This innovative approach to teaching and documenting PSTs' learning has implications for teacher prep programs who wish to create opportunities to develop effective 21st century ECE teachers.

*international applied learning experiences, teacher preparation, qualitative methodology, innovation, cultural sensitivity*

### **Online practice learning patterns in early childhood teacher education curricula in long distance education in Indonesia**

Sri Tatminingsih, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

The purpose was develop a pattern of teaching practice in teacher ECE online using the moodle. Indonesia is a country that has varying demographics with residents spread across 13,677 islands, online learning (OL) is one solution. Subjects: students in EC teacher education at Universitas Terbuka with independent, OL and distance systems. The impact of practice learning experiences on the views of prospective teachers in an ECE pre-service education program (Undiyaundeye, 2018). Microteaching helps teacher to overcome problems related to getting ready for class and presenting the lesson (Billen, 2015) Microteaching is based on Bandura's (1982) social learning theory. Micro teaching was first developed in Stanford University in 1960 as a part of an experimental program that aimed to increase quality in teacher training (Demirel, 2000) Paradigm is qualitative research with survey methods and using structured interviews and questionnaires. The research subjects were 20 students (2 classes) who took online teaching practice courses. The number of respondents is very limited, because the people of Indonesia still not familiar with OL, and this online teaching practice program was only opened in 2018. The findings obtained were teaching practices carried out using videos made by students and uploaded into OL applications to be assessed by tutors. The results can help students in teacher ECE programs who have distance and time constraints so that they can obtain a bachelor's degree through OL. The learning pattern found is also quite simple, with eight initiations and only requires an internet network.

*online teaching practice patterns, early childhood teacher education curricula long distance education, education in Indonesia, microteaching and teaching practice*

### **Knowledge, application, and articulation of child development theory: Who's accountable?**

Jerri Kropp (1), Keliesha Jones (2), Kelley Cowan (3), (1) Georgia Southern University, United States; (2) Memorial Health's Dwaine & Cynthia Willett Children's Hospital of Savannah, United States; (3) Boys and Girls Club of Bulloch County, United States

Students, teachers and directors sometimes lack the knowledge to apply and articulate child development theories. Objectives: a) examine the role of child development theory, b) assessment of knowledge of theory, c) introduce strategies to enhance knowledge of theory. One principle of learning is "to develop mastery, students must acquire component skills, practice integrating them, and know when to apply what they have learned (Ambrose, S.A., et al., 2010, p. 95). Also used is Bloom's Taxonomy, a classification of objectives and skills. This taxonomy, has recently been updated to include six levels of learning: a) remembering, b) understanding, c) applying, d) analysing, e) evaluating, and f) creating. According to Jshabatu (2018, p. 1-2) this tool helps develop learning objectives by: \* To understand a concept, remember it. \*To apply a concept, understand it. \* To evaluate a process, analyse it. \* To reach a conclusion, complete a thorough evaluation. To assess college students' knowledge of child development theory, a 40 question quiz was developed and given to seven classes (N = 176) in 2018-2019. Average scores were below 60%; scores increased with more education and experience. Creative and engaging learning strategies were developed to help students and professionals learn and apply child development theory. Participants taking the quiz were not identified by name. Knowledge of child development theory is crucial to understand children's development in all domains. Students, teachers, administrators, and stakeholders are all accountable for the education of children. Knowledge of child development theory is necessary for best practices.

*theory, development, strategies, accountability, application*

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## **C 21**

### **EMPIRICAL WANDERINGS: PROVOCATIONS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDIES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Josie Gabi, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom**

### **Power, identity, belonging - norms and the 'other' in ECE settings - my journey, the students' journey**

Jayne Mugglestone, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

This paper explores the concept and feeling of belonging in relation to LGBT+ identity in ECE. Cis- and hetero- normative practices are still routine in ECE settings (Robinson 2010), complicated by discourses of childhood, sex and sexuality. Theoretical approaches to the exercise of power (Foucault, 1972) to maintain norms and create the 'other' through the construction of walls invisible often those unaffected by them (Ahmed, 2017), is used to explore both the students' experiences in ECE settings and my own journey through this research and so consider the potential implications for LGBT+ children/families in ECE. An interpretivist paradigm, qualitative methodology and semi-structured interviews formed the research approach. Safety was the key ethical consideration with LGBT+ identity still a focus of social and legal persecution internationally. Care was taken therefore to conduct all stages of the research with this in mind. 'Consciously we teach what we know; unconsciously we teach who we are.' (Hamachek, 1999: 209). Identity and belonging are core to who we are and who we are is considered, created and curated according to the context that we are in. As a lesbian/dyke/queer/LGBT+ (re)searcher, practitioner and pedagogue, I found that my experience of conducting the research, mirrored that of the students' experiences in ECE. As practitioners and pedagogues, we have a duty of care to the children, families and students who we may inadvertently 'other' and a responsibility to know the mechanisms by which this happens and identify the processes by which we create accepting spaces in ECE.

*power, identity, LGBT+, belonging, hetero/cis-normative*

### **Decolonial pedagogy in the early years foundation stage in England**

Josie Gabi, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

This paper explores BAME children's experiences of belonging and identity in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It draws insights on how pedagogical practices and processes may help contribute to feelings of togetherness (Rutter, 2017) by radically transforming the ways in which children develop a sense of identity, and relate to others, to place and to ideas. Decolonisation theory is utilised as a conceptual tool to consider the restorative potential of a decolonial pedagogy to destabilise conventional ways of knowing, being and doing that may perpetuate the subjugation of BAME children's experiences in order to shape educational encounters in ways that foster a sense of belonging and identity. This study involved participant observation within an ethnographic orientation that seeks rich understandings of the school cultures and contexts within which notions of belonging and identity are materialised. Ethnographic studies confirm that young children are 'extremely active in the construction and negotiation of their lives' (Pollard and Filer, 1999: 304-5). Qualitative data of intra-actions in the classroom and other school locations were collected via video and audio recordings. A consent form was provided to all participants. Informed consent was negotiated with the children involved since it has been argued that even young children are able to understand such concepts (David, 2001). Participant names have been anonymised to protect their identity. It challenges us to (re)think schools as possible sites for leading the community cohesion agenda. This research has implications for practice particularly how the social space of classroom might be perceived and sense of belonging realised.

*decolonisation, BAME, belonging, early years, EYFS*

## **C 22**

### **EVERYDAY EVENTS THROUGH NEW APPROACHES: LOOKING DIFFERENTLY AT FOOD, SPACE AND MESS**

Individual Paper Symposium

From Australia, Indonesia and the UK, we present alternative ways of looking differently at ordinary events: eating, playing hide-and-seek and messing with mud. Our interest is in making sure that matter matters. These accounts, from different places and spaces, tangle with philosophy and theory based on work including Deleuze and Guattari (1987); Lenz Taguchi (2010); Barad (2007) and MacLure (2013). We propose that ideas change taken for granted practices. Moss (2017) urges new stories and we are sharing stories here about food, trees, buildings, young children, mud, and focus on activity in a forest school, in a nursery and in an early years' classroom. Educators and researchers are encouraged to share our considerations of affective moments and embodied and agentic knowing together with the disruptions that arise from thinking differently and from counting everything in as we talk through ideas about love, tradition and play.

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**Chair: Mark Sackville-Ford, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom**

### **Diffraction eating relationships in an early years setting: The 'more-than-a-kiss' event**

Thekla Anastasiou, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

This paper aims to show how young children's embodied engagements with food encouraged a researcher to think, feel, read and write along with food, young children, textures, liquids and theory. Being inspired by the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), and drawing on post-humanism (Haraway, 2008), I have attempted to open up the ways entities are implicated in a world of symbiosis, generating interesting opportunities for rethinking early years' eating practices. The theoretical framework of this study draws on



representations of childhood (Haraway, 2016; Taylor, 2013; Mills, 2000; Murris, 2016) in an attempt to articulate some of the complex ways that human and non-human entities continue to influence nursery pedagogies, practices and children's eating behaviours. Post-qualitative research and a diffractive methodology works to decentralise the 'I' in the making of relations (Taylor and Iverson, 2013). Embodied more-than-observations were carried out to 'capture' many of the elements involved when young children experience eating in a nursery. Ethical concerns included informed consent of parents and professionals following BERA and EECERA code of ethics. Photographs and videos were stored safely and securely onto a hard drive. Children are perceived as emerging from, with and through these multiple connections, as the intra-actions produce entities in a mutual process of becoming (Barad 2007; Deleuze and Guattari 1987). This research makes possible ways of understanding how matter comes to matter in relationships, the relationship young children have with food, and how matter makes us, as humans, as children, practitioners and as researchers, matter (Youngblood Jackson, 2013).

*assemblage, diffractive analysis, intra-actions, embodiment, becoming*

### **Becoming-mud, becoming-child; messiness in the accountability of early childhood**

Helen Davenport, Mark Sackville-Ford, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

This paper interrogates educational practices of Forest School through new materialist readings of mud. We explore the 'messy' in theoretical and literal ways, disrupting accountability regimes in early childhood. We build upon a growing field of feminist materialisms and Deleuzian concepts, thinking with data through movement and intensities within the event. Tuning into the non-human allows affective elements to shimmer in a growing body of research (Maclure, 2015; Holmes, 2016; St Pierre, 2016). The work emerges from new critical movements around Forest School (Sackville-Ford and Davenport, 2019). The intention here is to demonstrate the value of democratised renderings of new materialism and ways that 'mess' pushes beyond tolerance and sensitivity and into embrace, opening educational possibility. A new materialism methodology opens up an onto-epistemological paradigm, enabling a diffractive reading of the data. Data is drawn from ethnographic fieldwork at Forest School sessions, including observations and reflective writings. Ethics of care allows a sensitive approach, including protecting the anonymity of all participants (including child-participants), informed consent, the use of pseudonyms and the right to withdraw from the study. Our exploration of mud in the play assemblage troubles traditional understandings of what it is to observe children and what 'counts' in learning. The reflections enable a sensitisation to mess in the observational regimes through which we assign value in classrooms. In doing so, we claim new materialism as a powerful device for the everyday practitioner, not just an asset of the theorist.

*forest school, mud, messiness, new materialisms, accountability*

### **Movement in the everyday spaces – what creates engagement and motivation for all the employees in ECEC related to changes and transformations of the everyday spaces**

Anette Sofie Bernsen (1), Margareth Eilifsen (2), Amund Langøy (1), (1) NLA University College, Norway; (2) Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

The primary goal of this research is to add more to our understanding of reflection around the everyday spaces in ECEC. Through working with the entire staff in a Norwegian ECEC we wanted to add more to our understanding about the pedagogical reflection around changes in the children's everyday spaces and the implications of these changes. Elisabeth Nordin-Hultman (2004) has researched the effect of the educational environment on children's subject creation, and how children create their own identity. The theoretical framework for the research is based on Self-determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and on the Experiential Learning Cycle of David Kolb (2015). The data is based on meetings and conversations with the staff during a period of a year, reflections on two different courses, a single group questionnaire, two focus group interviews and pedagogical documentation from the work in the kindergarten. Through artistic research strategies, an interdisciplinary research project is carried out at the intersection of drama, pedagogy and physical education. The study was approved by the Norwegian Centre for research data. Active consent was obtained from the participants. The teachers see themselves as working according to routines. Employers seem to become autonomously motivated. The children seemed to be excited when exposed to the new playrooms. Some diversity was indicated according to gender and age. It seems that the lack of a certain time limit was a criteria of success. This study underlines the importance of interaction between the entire staff if changes are to be made.

*physical environment, the entire staff, motivation for changes, interaction, play environment*

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**Chair: Andrea Adelman, Florida International University, United States**

**The impact of directive and non-directive teaching on prospective kindergarten teachers' group dynamics, personal and professional development**

Alekos Georgopoulos, Maria Geka, Costas Vouyoukas, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

This research study investigates the impact of directive and non-directive teaching on prospective kindergarten teachers' group dynamics, personal and professional development. This work is part of a research project on university students' personal and professional development through experiential/non-directive teaching. The research work is based on group dynamics and experiential education as proposed by Lewin's Training Group theory (Bradford, Gibbs & Benne, 1964) and Rogers' (1970) encounter groups. Approximately 40 students participated in three university courses (n: 120). The directive teaching was adopted as the organisational principle of the two courses, and the non-directive teaching inspired the third one. Three questionnaires were constructed and distributed to the students by the researchers in order to explore students' group dynamics, personal and professional development. Participants have been informed about the study's purpose and agreed to participate. Results show the efficiency of the non-directive teaching in group dynamics. Personal and emotional involvement of the students, an increased interest on participation in the experiential education activities, relationships creation in the group and personal development changes were ascertained. Introducing courses in tertiary settings where students would be learners themselves acquiring personal meaning would be useful, and experiential learning can serve to that direction.

*group dynamics, experiential education, professional development, early childhood education, personal development*

**Linking emotional intelligence and social interactions: The impact of an emotional intelligence curriculum on at-risk prekindergarten students' behaviour and social skills**

Andrea Adelman, Daniela Foerch, Florida International University, United States

We are examining both the impact of the emotional intelligence curriculum comprised of the RULER, visible thinking, and global thinking routines on at-risk young students, their families, and the instructional staff involved. The RULER is a powerful vehicle to foster Emotional Intelligence in children and their families (Brackett, 2016). The emotional intelligence curriculum used in this research project is guided by two conceptual frameworks; the RULER approach (Brackett, 2016; <https://www.rulerapproach.org/>) and the Global/Visible Thinking Routines (Boix-Mansilla and Jackson, 2011; Ritchhart, Church, Morrison, 2011). This research is a combination of positivism and constructivism; we are using a quasi-experimental, control group design, but also conducting focus groups and observing curriculum implementation, which allows the construction of knowledge in an inductive manner. Data consisted of a comparison of VPK/CLASS scores, monthly teacher focus groups, and yearly parent interviews. The VPK and CLASS scores were collected after each administration and analysed through ANOVA. Qualitative data were analysed using Strauss and Corbin's (1998) grounded theory analysis. All participants signed an informed consent form approved the university IRB, after receiving a clear written and verbal explanation of the research project. All data is de-identified and placed in a password protected virtual storage system for confidentiality. Participants are aware they can withdraw at any time. Data indicated an increase in emotional intelligence, a generalization of these skills to new environments, and improved behaviour and academic outcomes. The overarching implication is training professionals in EI can positively impact students' behaviour and academic outcomes.

*emotional intelligence, emotions and behaviour, emotions and classroom interactions, emotional intelligence curriculum, visible and global thinking routines*

**An evaluation of the effectiveness of Community Reading Garden Programme in supporting children's language and social-emotional development in China**

Lynne Zhang, Happy Future Connections Children and Family Research Centre, China

The research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of Community Reading Garden (CRG) Program in supporting children's language and social-emotional development by providing more books, activities and emotions' workshops for parents in a suitable and interactive learning environment under the social background with more new cities and mostly "only-child" families in China. The

research builds on the findings of previous comparative research of ours (China Parenting Style and Home Learning Report, 2014, 2018) in China with questionnaires of 2000 families. This is first research report upon sociocultural perspectives and home learning environment in China. The research draws on Vygotsky's social-cultural theory and Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model as well as Laevers' theory of engagement and involvement. Parents' involvement is related to the literacy development of their children (Baker, 2003, Levy et al., 2006). This research uses an action-research approach (Kemmis and McTaggart 2000) that includes qualitative methods based on questionnaires, interviews and document reviews. This is interpretivist research employing a qualitative methodology approach involving observation, case studies and semi-structured interviews with parents and practitioners. All the participants were assured that their identities and data would be anonymised and protected respectively and that they could withdraw from the research at any time. The effects of parents reading books with their child, the numbers of children's book, child's ability of word recognition and social –emotional development at Community Reading Garden at were significant. There are implication for policy and practice regarding supporting community reading program, particularly in view of concerns on literacy levels in China.

*family and community learning, parents' involvement, language development, social–emotional development, sharing books*

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## **C 24**

### **LEARNING STORY NARRATIVE ASSESSMENTS AND THEIR RELEVANCE ACROSS CULTURES. EXAMPLES FROM NEW ZEALAND, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CHINA.**

Self-organised symposium

Learning Story narrative assessments (Carr, 2001), because of their socio-cultural theoretical framework, have travelled the world. They have relevance cross culturally because they offer a narrative context within a formative, credit based process that enables multiple voices to be listened to. Families, children and teachers all work together to ensure children are able to lead their own learning within a social setting that invites curious exploration through the nurturing of life long learning identities. This means they are able to tell the stories that are meaningful to each child in their cultural setting. These narrative assessments drive relational connection and their ability to enhance 'self concept', as they enable valued learning to be made visible, offers insight for all those involved. This symposium looks at how Learning Stories have developed in New Zealand, China and the United States as diversity, empathy, collaboration and agency are nurtured.

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**Chair: Lorraine Sands, Educational Leadership Project, New Zealand**

#### **Learning Stories: A New Zealand perspective on an assessment process that nurtures lifelong learner identities**

Lorraine Sands, Educational Leadership Project, New Zealand

This paper investigates the way Learning Communities tune into children's energies, passions and spirits differently when children consistently explore in play focussed, mixed age environments designed to stretch learners' identities. This paper is part of ongoing research focused on children's working theories and learner identity (Davis & Peters, 2011; Brunner, 2002) developed at an early childhood centre in New Zealand (ECCE, 2012). Research methodology is narrative inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Carr & Lee, 2012, Lee et al. 2013). A qualitative case study was used to examine children's learning dispositions in the construction of learner identity (Carr et al, 2009). New data from teachers' interviews, documented assessments and teacher inquiry were introduced as an integral part of this study. Participants were given information sheets and consent forms. Teachers, families and children (younger children's parents gave informed consent), provided their permission for this research and could withdraw at any time. When children are able to consistently explore challenging, vibrant learning experiences with children older and younger than themselves, they expand their love of learning and design and pursue goals that go far beyond what teachers could set for them. Findings show NZ's Te Whāriki curriculum has shaped teachers' vision of children as learners. Dispositions like empathy, courage, imagination, resilience, persistence, skills and knowledge, catapult to the surface as the natural result of sustained, playful, thoughtful, co-operative inquiry. This study highlights the importance of teachers' drive to embed practices that support the acquisition of children's learner identity through play.

*narrative assessment, play, dispositions, agency, learner identity*

## **Impact of Learning Stories in Chinese ECE settings**

Wendy Lee, Educational Leadership Project, New Zealand

My objective is to show how documentation of formative assessment has changed and strengthened Chinese teachers' views of what it is to be a learner in today's world and thereby enhanced their teaching pedagogy. This paper builds on research-based exemplars described in (Kei Tua o te Pae: Carr, Lee and Jones 2005, 2007, 2009), on formative assessment provided in Black et al. (2003) and on Hattie's (2009) research on the importance of feedback. The conceptual framework is provided by the narrative approaches of Brunner (1996), the sociocultural approach used by Rogoff (2009) and the dispositional frameworks in Perkins (2009). The NZ assessment practice of Learning Stories provides the platform to explore pedagogy (Carr and Lee, 2012, Lee et al. 2013) I use the action research methods developed by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000). New data from Chinese teachers' interviews, documented assessments and reflections are introduced. Qualitative methods based on questionnaires, interviews and document reviews are used to identify links between narrative assessments and pedagogical development. Consent forms and information sheets were provided to all participants. Informed consent was negotiated with the teachers involved and participants could withdraw their data from the research at any time. Chinese teachers' reflections on learning are used to illustrate the ways in which revisiting documentation makes a powerful contribution to informing and engaging teachers in children's education. In turn, this engagement enhances pedagogy. Learning Stories documentation has the capacity to change pedagogy, recognise learning journeys and raise expectations for teachers, children and their families.

*narrative assessment, play, agency, learner identity, changing pedagogical practice*

## **Transforming Relationships: Learning Stories, a New Pathway in the USA to Strengthen Relationships with Homeless Young Children and Families**

Annie White, California State University Channel Islands, United States

Young children in the United States of America (USA) who are homeless are in jeopardy of not experiencing trusting, caring relationships (Thompson, Meyer, & McGinley, 2006). The objective of this study was to examine the influence of Learning Stories on relationships of young children who are homeless, living in transitional housing, or at risk for stable housing. Learning Stories, a narrative assessment approach (Carr, 2001) is being used in the USA to strengthen relationships between teachers and children with families who are homeless (White, 2016; White, 2018). The study draws upon the theoretical framework of "Ghosts and Angels in the Nursery" (Lieberman, Padrón, Van Horn, & Harris, 2005) to understand how young homeless children benefit from supportive adult relationships through the sharing of narrative stories between teachers and parents. This qualitative case study, approved through Internal Review Board (IRB), include participant interviews with teachers and homeless parents. Interviews were audio recorded, professionally transcribed, and analysed using software to evaluate, interpret and code to identify key findings. Informed consent forms were provided, reviewed and signed by all participants. At any time, participants could withdraw their data from the research. Pseudonym names were used to protect and ensure participant confidentiality. Findings show families who struggle to provide secure and stable housing, Learning Stories is a powerful collaboration tool that supports children's developing sense of self and identity as a learner. Learning Stories has transformed assessment practices in the USA and created authentic dialogue and reciprocity between teachers and homeless children and families.

*narrative stories, homeless, family engagement, collaboration, relationships*

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# Symposium Set D

10:50 – 12:10, Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2019

## D 1

### **PROFESSIONALS' ROLE IN PREVENTING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR IN ECEC**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium address the professionals' role in ECEC, more specific their role in preventing bullying behavior. The presentations correspond with strand 8: Professionalism & Pedagogues/Educators Role. The three papers emphasize different issues concerning how professionals in ECEC understand and prevent bullying behavior, and how they can develop professionally through a common project.

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**Chair: Randi Myklebust Søvik, University of Stavanger, Norway**

#### **Professionals' role in preventing bullying behaviour in ECEC**

Henning Plischewski, Elin Nesvoll Vangsnes, University of Stavanger, Norway

The aim of this session is to present a professional development project facilitated to secure good and safe learning environments in Norwegian Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). The Learning Environmental Project (LEP) was initially developed to meet challenges according bullying and other violations in Norwegian schools. However, research indicates that bullying and other violations often starts in the ECEC. Therefore, the Norwegian government decided to include ECEC in LEP in 2017. Through a two-year project period, the ECEC staff develop competence on identifying and managing emerging bullying behaviour, and on the importance of high-quality learning environments for children aged 1 to 6 years, emphasizing friendship, play and social competence. There are four main phases within the Project: 1) Bullying and other violations 2) How to prevent bullying 3) Inclusion 4) Continuation and sustainability. The project attends a "whole-ECEC approach" involving all the staff, as well as parents and children. A local project group at each ECEC setting, facilitate and lead the implementation of the project. Supervisors from the Learning Environment Centre supervise the project group, and are responsible for facilitating the professional development through lectures, trainings, supervisions and discussions. Participation is voluntary. Comprehensive information about content, tasks and responsibility to secure children's best was provided to all participants. Bullying is negatively correlated with children's health, wellbeing and learning outcome. This session address the professionals' role in preventing bullying behaviour in ECEC settings. This project is part of the Norwegian policy in reducing bullying and violation in educational settings

*bullying, wellbeing, professional development, learning organisation, learning environment*

#### **Exploring the understanding of emerging bullying behaviour in ECEC**

Svanaug Lunde, Marianne Martinsen, University of Stavanger, Norway

The aim of this study is to explore ECEC staffs understanding of emerging bullying behaviour, in order to better prevent, detect and manage bullying behaviour in ECEC. Different theoretical frameworks on bullying leads to different ways of understanding bullying as a phenomenon. Research on bullying behaviour has traditionally been carried out in school settings. Children's age and school as context therefore highly influence our traditional understanding of bullying. Research has shown how bullying behaviour also emerge in ECEC, acknowledging the need for a deeper understanding of emerging bullying behaviour between younger children Bullying behaviour is understood within a social cultural approach, where children and adults create and share meaning through their initiatives and responses. The data collection is ongoing, and are collected through teacher's written narratives. The analysing process will be qualitative and start spring 2019. The participants received information about the Project. In the analyses, neither the names of the informants nor the kindergarten will appear. The Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. Analyses of the staff's understanding of emerging bullying behaviour will be discussed and related to already established definitions of bullying behaviour. How the staff understand and define bullying behaviour influence how they act and react upon children's at-risk behaviour. How the staff understand and define bullying behaviour influence how they act and react upon children's at-risk behaviour. How staffs understanding of bullying have pedagogical implications in practice will be discussed as well as the need for further research.

*Bullying behaviour, ECEC, Staffs role, professional development, fostering peer-interaction*

## **ECEC staffs role in fostering peer interactions to prevent bullying behaviour in toddler groups**

Ellen Elvethon (1), Helene Berntsen Brennaas (1), Ingrid Midteide Løkken (2), (1) Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioural Research in Education, Norway; (2) University of Stavanger, Norway

The research aims to investigate how the staff foster peer interactions between toddlers to prevent bullying behaviour. There are many negative consequences related to both being bullied and to expose others to bullying behaviour. A central factor to decrease bullying behaviour is increasing children's social competence. Social competence is developed in everyday practices with the staff and peers in the toddler groups. Several studies point out the importance of quality interactions between staff and children. There is little attention on how the staff foster peer interaction between the toddlers, especially in a Norwegian context. Studies show that peer interactions is of significant importance for children's social competence, emotional well-being, inclusion and friendship. These are central factors in preventing bullying. Where the staff engage in peer interactions, and how staff facilitate community with "a common third", contributes to prevent bullying behaviour and create dialectic relationships among peers. Based on a social cultural approach, and it is a qualitative study where the data is based on observations of how the staff foster peer interactions in their everyday practices in ECEC in six toddler groups. We ensured that the ethical guidelines was followed when the observations was conducted in the ECEC settings. The consent was free and informed, and during the observations we respected both the children and the staffs integrity, dignity and motives. The data collection is ongoing, and we will start analysing the data this spring. Implications for staffs pedagogical practices and research and implication for policy will be discussed

*bullying behaviour, ECEC, staffs role, professional development, fostering peer-interaction*

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## **D 2**

### **PARTICIPATION APPROACHES IN ECEC**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Mallika Kanyal, Anglia Ruskin University, United Kingdom**

#### **Developing participatory practices through pedagogic mediation; rethinking continued professional development**

Helen Lyndon, CREC, United Kingdom

This research project focuses on the development of listening practices through a process of pedagogic mediation (Oliveira-Formosinho and Formosinho, 2012) which provides context-based professional development. Pedagogic mediation sits within a broader field of professional development within ECEC and within Kennedy's framework (2005, 2014) as transformative. It concurs with previous research utilising a mediated and participatory approach (e.g. Fochi and Sousa, 2017) in the development of practice. Pedagogic mediation, as developed by Formosinho and Oliveira-Formosinho (2008), is influenced by Freire (1996) and seeks a liberating and empowering approach to education; it recognises that lasting change can only come from the practitioner themselves. It has democratic values (as defined by Dewey, 1916) as a central theme. This praxeological study encompasses ethnography of empowerment (Robinson, 1994) using ethnographic techniques to develop a case study (Stake, 1995). Researcher reflections were recorded over a two year research period and mapped against the four stages of pedagogic mediation; openness, listening, suspending and encountering. Praxeological research holds ethics centrally (Pascal and Bertram, 2012) and here power was mitigated over time and trust developed between the researcher and practitioners. Consent was ongoing and anonymity guaranteed. EECERA ethical guidelines were adhered to throughout the research process. The greatest shifts in practice were experienced during the encountering stage of mediation during which trust had developed. This research affirms the notion that pedagogic mediation provides an effective approach to professional development; this however takes time and is based on the individual relationships that the mediator forges with practitioners.

*pedagogic mediation, professional development, praxeology, participatory pedagogy, pedagogic isomorphism*

#### **Using participatory approaches with early childhood studies students in higher education: Reflections on the different stages of doctoral work**

Mallika Kanyal, Anglia Ruskin University, United Kingdom

This reflective paper analyses the use of participatory approaches to knowledge construction, while working in partnership with Early Childhood Studies students, studying at a UK university. Students' participation and its conceptualisation and definitions are underdeveloped in higher education (Seale, et al., 2014). Neo-liberal policies commercialise education by quickly training adaptable manpower (Buchanan, 2014). Students studying early childhood courses are taught the principles of participation and democracy (Clark, 2010) but applying same principles in universities encounter challenges (Carey, 2013). The study builds upon

the common ideals of critical theory and social constructivism- critical social-constructivism. Critical constructivism allows students to take the role of researchers, and tutors, co- researchers (Steinberg and Kincheloe, 2005). Social constructivism allow mediation in the form of dialogue and reasoning, encouraging a culture of enquiry (Wegerif, 2016). The interpretivist study draws from qualitative research methods- working and research group meetings- which respect students' knowledge and experiences and enable rich insight exchange amongst all participants. My dual role as a lead researcher and tutor was an ethical challenge. Carefully chosen methods such as open meetings in informal environments provided students with enabling conditions where they were able to speak for themselves. On reflection, participatory approaches do not sit comfortably with the rigid structures of neo- liberal education. We must invest time and resources in fostering a vision of education that is more powerful and a vision of students as co-constructors of knowledge. Alternative conceptions of students' participation, especially the ones with a more pedagogical foundation, need to be encouraged.

*participatory research, student voice, higher education, early childhood studies, student participation*

### **Participatory institutional self-evaluation of the early childhood education in the city of São Paulo: The participants' perspective**

Monica Pinazza, Meire Festa, University of São Paulo, Brazil

This research focused on the implementation of 'Participatory Institutional Self-evaluation' of early childhood education as a public education policy in São Paulo (2013-2016). Its purpose was to analyse how this process was experienced by practitioners. It was developed within the scope of the studies of the research group "Integrated Contexts of Early Childhood Education" (Pinazza, 2014) and draws on the concepts of participatory processes of evaluation of the quality of contexts (Formosinho; Pascal, 2016; Moro, 2017) and participatory institutional self-evaluation (Campos; Ribeiro, 2017). The democratic principles of participatory pedagogies (Oliveira-Formosinho; Kishimoto; Pinazza, 2007), the ethics of praxeological research (Formosinho, 2016) and the concept of quality evaluation in terms of the contextual paradigm (Bertram; Pascal, 2006) informs the framework established in this study. It is a case study (Yin, 2005). It involved the application of questionnaire and interviews as well sessions of observation and documentary analysis. The quantitative approach defined the study sample and the statistical treatment of numerical data. Qualitative data was considered in light of the analysis of the contents (Bardin, 1977). It was performed with the permission of the Municipal Department of Education of São Paulo and all participants involved. The criteria established by scientific investigation took into account data treatment and divulgation. The data indicates that the participatory institutional self-evaluation was validated by the practitioners involved in the process, with emphasis on their formative character and transformative power of practices. It presents recommendations favourable to participatory institutional self-evaluation of ECE as a public policy, promoting formative processes of educators and leaderships.

*participatory institutional self-evaluation, quality, early childhood education, practitioners training, pedagogical practices*

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## **D 3**

### **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE EARLY YEARS**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Ithel Jones, Florida State University, United States**

#### **Adding to the science toolkit: Piloting early childhood science research instruments in Australia**

Cristina Guarrella, Caroline Cohrsen, Jan van Driel, The University of Melbourne, Australia

This pilot study trials three data collection instruments, namely the SciDoc, a teacher questionnaire and the Early Childhood Science Padlet. The tools were developed to examine high quality early childhood science assessment, teachers' attitudes towards teaching science, and collaborative professional learning. The research aimed to test the functionality of the instruments with teachers of three- to five-year-old children, prior to their application in the second phase of a doctoral project. Science, as one component of STEM, is increasingly under the spotlight and the importance of science learning in early childhood education is well established (Eshach & Fried, 2005). However, there is a need for empirically tested data collection tools in research and to inform teacher practice (Brenneman, 2011). Drawing on ecological systems theory, the tools explore teaching practice as a proximal influence on child learning and development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). This pilot study takes an exploratory approach to examine multiple cases (Yin, 2018). Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to interpret field notes and teachers' use of the instruments. University ethics approval preceded teacher and service directors' provision of informed consent. Findings demonstrate that (i) the SciDoc supported teachers' assessment of child science learning, (ii) the teacher questionnaire captured teachers' varied attitudes towards teaching science, and (iii) the Early Childhood Science Padlet offered an opportunity for

collaboration and reflection. Refined tools will be applied in an up-scaled research project that will include teachers in diverse early childhood education settings in the Northern Territory of Australia.

*science education, formative assessment, teacher professional learning, teacher attitudes, research instruments*

#### **Preschool science talk study**

Ithel Jones, Florida State University, United States

The study seeks to investigate the effects of two different preschool science instructional approaches on the ways in which children use language to describe, explain, interconnect, and reason about science phenomena. The study also examined potential gender bias when preschool teachers talk about science with preschoolers. Despite rich pedagogical materials for teachers and extensive teacher education focused on science teaching, many early childhood teachers struggle to adopt an inquiry-based paradigm. Instead, they often resort to a knowledge transmission approach (Siry et al., 2012). Consequently, there has been a call for studies that address the nature of science investigations and science learning at the early childhood level (e.g., Fleer & Robbins, 2003; Robbins, 2005; Tyler & Peterson, 2004). It is through oral language that preschoolers come to understand science concepts. When young children engage in inquiry-based science, their conversations and explanations are more likely to involve abstract decontextualized meanings. The effects of instructional context (explicit vs implicit) as well as gender on preschool students' use of decontextualized language was examined in a 2 x 2 within-subjects naturalistic study of teachers and their students. Ethical issues were considered including adhering to appropriate university procedures and guidelines for the ethical conduct of research. Informed consent was obtained from all of the participants. The use of decontextualized language enable young children to reflect on the meaning of their observations, and to re-contextualize their science experiences. The findings provide information concerning the ways in which teachers should engage with preschoolers during science instruction.

*preschool education, science teaching, classroom interaction, classroom talk, teacher child interaction*

#### **Executive functions training comparing augmented reality technologies with new technologies in early childhood and primary school children: Literature review and a study design**

Zoe Bablekou (1), Dimitrios Pnevmatikos (2), Persefoni Karamanoli (1), (1) Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece; (2) University of Western Macedonia, Greece

The presentation discusses: 1) the theoretical background of an augmented reality (AR) intervention program in comparison to other new technologies, to train four executive functions (EF) in children aged 5 and 7 years and 2) a study method, for investigating the effectiveness of the intervention program in question. Training of EF's using technological tools has resulted in significant improvements (Diamond, 2013). Education has started to use AR applications, while AR use in programs aimed to train EF's is still at its infancy (Juan et al., 2014; Wu et al., 2013). The EF's of our interest are inhibitory control, cognitive flexibility, updating, and working memory (Miyake et al. 2000). Executive function training is of great importance, as they account for the cognitive control of behaviour and school success. Two other important factors when developing interventions are ecological validity and positive use of digital technologies (Wilmer et al. 2017). An AR program will be developed, to train the four key EF's. Two experimental and one control group per age will be used. Parents' and children's informed consent will be ensured and data will be stored anonymously in a locked space. The project will create a new method of improving EF's in the ages selected. An AR software package will be developed for this purpose and an open access software guideline booklet will be made available to educators. The study results are expected to illustrate the significance of interventions designed to strengthen executive operations in early childhood and primary school age children.

*augmented reality, executive functions, children, intervention programs, digital technologies*

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## **D 4**

### **BEING AN ECEC PROFESSIONAL**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Jackie Brien, Department of Education and Training, Australia**

#### **Making early years count - Raising the profile and visibility of ECEC in networks**

Sarah Girlich, Robert Jurleta, LakoS - Institute of Language Promotion Saxony, Germany



In the current project, we aim to raise the profile and visibility of ECEC in various networks to make it count in the corridors of power and the EC-system itself. Bringing together people with different professional backgrounds (e.g. policy makers, educators, practitioners) brings many challenges. Miller (2013) emphasized the challenge for every participant in a network to act between the formally organized systems they work in and the network itself. LakoS is a project working with partners from across the federal state of Saxony and Germany to provide EC-professionals and policy-makers with information they need to support children's language development and to raise the importance of ECEC. We initiate networks and coordinate federal programs and state language programs. Networks and discussions are central to make early years visible. This requires competent motivated network partners and opportunities to meet. Our project opens up innovative ways for everyone to meet and exchange ideas. EECERA ethical code was followed alongside each network partners own ethical code and discussed during several meetings. Time is a crucial factor - every network partner needs time to implement the results of the network. With the right partners it is possible to make the importance of ECEC visible, e.g. in families, physicians, policy makers or even the EC-professionals themselves. A main issue in our networks is to find the balance between accountability and responsibility at all levels. Our findings and experiences have important implications for further projects and may be useful for future implementations of networks.

*network, ECEC visibility, language promotion, professionalism, policy and administration*

### **Being accountable as an early childhood professional: The role of professional reading**

Jackie Brien, Department of Education and Training, Australia

What should early childhood professionals be accountable for in their work? How can early childhood professionals demonstrate accountability? This research aims to explore the perceptions and experiences of a range of professionals in the early childhood sector regarding ways that professional reading supports them to engage with evidence-based practice to improve accountability for the learning and development outcomes of young children. Although there is currently a gap in what we know for the early childhood profession, existing research literature identifies links between professional reading, knowledge, learning, and work practice for many other professionals. The early childhood policy and ethical context requires understanding of how to best support children's learning, development and wellbeing (Council of Australian Governments [COAG], 2009, Early Childhood Australia, 2016; United Nations, 1989). Conceptually, the research is underpinned by ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Qualitative research methodology is used, including questionnaires, personal interviews and focus groups. Confidentiality of participants is maintained, demonstrating respect for the privilege of recording personal experience. My research findings confirm that professional reading is a useful tool to support professional knowledge and learning in ways that affirm, challenge, change and improve professional practice with young children. Research participants report that professional reading is integral to their professional identity, motivation and practice, and is a support for accountability to children, families and legislative expectations, by informing understanding of effective practice that supports the best interests of young children. Professional reading may have a role in increasing knowledge, understanding and accountability for positive outcomes for young children.

*professional reading, learning, evidence-informed practice, accountability, outcomes*

### **The formation of health literacy in early childhood education**

Melinda Csima, Judit Fináncz, István József, Kaposvár University, Hungary

The aim of our quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive research is to map the health literacy of early childhood educators through the exploration of their health behaviour characteristics, focusing on the manifestation of health literacy in their health-related habits. Health literacy has been at the forefront of scientific interest in recent years (Nutbeam 1998, Schulz and Nakamoto 2005). The concept was interpreted in a multidimensional model by Sorensen et al (2012), in which, besides health-care-related competences, elements in connection with prevention and health promotion also appeared. From the aspect of establishing a prevention-related attitude, early childhood is a particularly sensitive period, during which professionals dealing with young children play a key role, providing a model with their conduct, furthermore, they have a crucial function regarding habit and behavioural formation (Csima et al 2018). Data collection was conducted among professionals working in Hungarian kindergartens and nurseries (n=1,010), anonymously, in accordance with EECERA Ethical Code principles. Based on our results, no significant differences can be observed between the health behaviour of early childhood educators and of kindergarten teachers ( $p < 0,05$ ), despite the fact that the medical subject-matter plays a more important role in early childhood educators' training, which could contribute to the foundation of their health literacy. In respect of the examined population, the existence of the declarative knowledge component of health education (the factual knowledge on health and its maintenance) does not guarantee the activation of procedural knowledge related to the ability to use the factual knowledge.

*health literacy, health behaviour, prevention, early childhood education, Hungary*

## **BUILDING RELATIONS THROUGH PLAY: A CROSS-NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON PLAYING-2-GETHER**

Self-organised symposium

Playing-2-Gether as an intervention was originally developed at the KU Leuven Belgium and has shown its efficacy for children at risk. The Playing-2-Gether project aims to improve teacher sensitivity for both pre-service and in-service teachers, focusing on their interactions during play with pre-schoolers in the classroom, particularly with children with challenging problem behavior. The project is conducted as a multiple case study in Slovakia, Portugal and the Netherlands. We investigated if interaction skills are suitable in these different contexts, in what way teachers can be helped to apply Playing-2-Gether in the context of their classroom. The overarching questions are: if we believe in 'high quality' programs and services, what qualitative and quantitative measures do we need to evaluate the results of intervention and what are the significant 'impacts' and 'outcomes' and how can these be universalized into metrics or curricula to provide global comparative data and professionalism?

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**Chair: Ineke Oenema, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands**

### **A case study on building a qualitative teacher - child relationship using Playing-2-Gether as an intervention**

Annerieke Boland, Ilse Nuijens, University of Applied Sciences - iPabo Amsterdam, Netherlands

This presentation describes the case of a Dutch ECE-teacher who uses Playing-2-Gether (Vancraeyveldt et al. 2015) with a child in her group with challenging behaviour. The aim of this study was better understanding of how and why Playing-2-Gether effects the quality of the teacher-child relationship. In Vancraeyveldt et al. (2015) teachers reported enhancement of their relationship with at-risk preschoolers when they used the Playing-2-Gether interaction skills as an intervention. But how can this effect be explained? According to Attachment theory a secure bond with care-givers is crucial for the development of young children. This also holds for the bond between teacher and child (Pianta et al. 2003). Sensitive responsive interaction is an important tool for establishing a secure environment. In this study, an adaptation of the teacher-child relationship interview (Spilt & Koomen, 2009) was used, before and after the intervention. Video-recordings were made of the teacher interacting with the child during play and these recordings were discussed in coaching sessions. Qualitative analyses of the interviews and the videos were made. EECERA ethical guidelines were followed, e.g. the child only participated in play if she was willing to. The narratives of the teacher show changes in relational conflict and closeness in the relationship. The videos show that the interaction strategies created space for new behaviour, both for the teacher and the child, which stimulated feelings of positive affect and diminished feelings of anger and helplessness by the teacher. This case underlines the importance of qualitative teacher-child interactions for realizing inclusive education.

*interaction skills, teacher-child relationship, play, attachment, challenging behaviour*

### **Enhancing the quality of teacher-child interaction through Playing-2-Gether: Introductory aspects and overall results in four countries**

Sara Barros Araújo (1), Caroline Vancraeyveldt (2), Manuela Sanches-Ferreira (1), Maai Huyse (2), (1) Polytechnic Institute of Porto, Portugal; (2) UC Leuven Limburg, Belgium

The Playing-2-gether project aims to improve teacher sensitivity for both pre-service and in-service teachers, focusing on their interactions during play with preschoolers in the classroom, particularly with children with challenging problem behaviour. Previous research has shown its efficacy for children at risk (Vancraeyveldt et al., 2015) and in practice-based research (Vancraeyveldt et al., in press). Playing-2-gether is based on attachment (Driscoll & Pianta, 2010) and learning theory (Cowan & Sheridan, 2009). The elaboration of Playing-2-Gether in four countries (Belgium, The Netherlands, Portugal and Slovakia) encompassed: (i) In-depth characterization of preschool teachers' conceptions, emotional experience and practices through videotaped interviews (using the Teacher Relationship Interview, Pianta, 1999) and collection of video fragments of children's free play; (ii) Training process on the Playing-2-Gether framework encompassing prevention and intervention competences; (iii) Try-out of Playing-2-Gether competences, accompanied by collection of video fragments; (iv) Final videotaped interviews with professionals on the process, focusing on the effects of the try-outs. The study followed the EECERA Ethical Code, namely in what concerns ongoing informed consent. The main findings highlight: (i) Professionals' difficulties in interacting with children that present challenging behaviours; (ii) Individual differences in approaching these behaviours; (iii) Difficulties in distancing oneself from an adult-centred and stimulating approach and adopting a child-centred, non-interfering interaction, and (iv) The added-

value for children and for the teachers of the implementation of the Playing-2-Gether interaction strategies. Implications for the professional training/education of preschool teachers in each country will be discussed.

*play, inclusion, interaction competences, professionalisation of preschool teachers, cross-national perspectives*

#### **A case study on professionalisation: Perspective of a teacher**

Soňa Grofčíková, Anna Klimentová, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia

The study focuses on Playing-2-Gether (P2G) aimed at improving teacher's interaction skills in working with children with challenging behaviour (Vancraeyveldt et al., 2015). In this study we investigate whether it is possible for teachers to gain higher professionalisation through use of a P2G MOOC (massive open online course). P2G is based on attachment (Pianta et al., 2003) and learning theory (Cowan & Sheridan, 2009). P2G is originated on ideas presented by Vancraeyveldt, et al. (2015); Pianta (2015); Hamre, et al. (2013). Built on an evidence-based framework and previous research, the MOOC focuses on teacher intervention and prevention through P2G. Video recordings of teacher-child interactions and a coaching manual will provide the tools and methodological sources for pre/in-service teachers. Attachment provides opportunities for improving child inclusion into preschool. Based on elaborated materials in four countries, videos of teacher-child interactions were recorded and followed by qualitative analysis and discussions. Interviews with the participating teachers before and after intervention were discussed as case studies. The study follows the EECERA Ethical code. All involved parties agreed with participation in the program P2G, supported by informed consent. Results show that teacher sensitivity in working with a child with challenging behaviour can be improved by using P2G. Case studies in participating countries refer to the positive effects of P2G for both the child and the teacher. Implications are visible in professional teacher training. P2G can be disseminated at a European level through a MOOC, which serves as a tool for higher professionalisation of preschool teachers.

*interaction skills, professionalisation of preschool teachers, cross-cultural perspectives, teacher sensitivity, MOOC (Massive open online course)*

## **D 6**

### **CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES ON DISABILITY AND INCLUSION**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Konstantia Polyzopoulou, University of Western Macedonia, Greece**

#### **Reconstruction the "lame and ugly" Hephaestus: An inspiration to encourage positive attitudes towards disability**

Nasia Poyiadji (1), Andria Christodoulou (2), Helen Phtiaka (1), (1) University of Cyprus, Cyprus; (2) Cyprus Kindergarten, Cyprus;

This paper presents a new intervention programme regarding young children's disability awareness. The starting point was the class teacher's reflection on the children's views regarding deviation from the norm, during their project of the Gods of Olympus in Ancient Greece and god Hephaestus. Recent studies (Symeonidou, 2002, Phtiaka, 1999) show that young learners' beliefs towards disability are characterized as stereotypical and are based on a charity model. We therefore need an intervention programme to deal with disability as a state of life rather than a problematic situation. Similar programmes in other countries (Vlachou, 1987) indicate that positive disability models help children understand principle of education equality for all. This study draws on Oliver's social model of disability (Oliver, 1999) where it is argued that disability is an attitude model problem. It also builds on the feminist literature (Thomas, 1999), which treats disability as a personal affair, without the pathology stigma. The activities are designed in collaboration with the class teacher through the action research paradigm (Elliot, 1991). The data collected is based on classroom activities such as story-telling, disability biographies, video viewing, all related to disability issues, Parents and children's written consent was ensured. Findings indicate that through the appropriate intervention program young learners can easily become aware of the problems faced by disabled children at school. The results support the fact that young learners can redefine their thinking about disability with the appropriate intervention. Similar programmes are therefore necessary in order to get rid of existing stereotypes among young children (Liasidou, 2008).

*inclusive education, stereotypes, innovative/alternative approaches, disability issues in school, create positive attitudes towards disability*

### **Preschool children's views on inclusion. The ISOTIS international participatory research with and for children**

Giulia Pastori (1), Itala Ballaschk (2), Kari Anne Jørgensen (3), Lenka Kissová (4), Konstantinos Petrogiannis (5), Jana Obrovská (4), Geir Winje (3), Olga Wysłowska (6), Alice Sophie Sarcinelli (1), Valentina Pagani (1), (1) University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy; (2) Freie University Berlin, Germany; (3) University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway; (4) Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic; (5) Hellenic Open University, Greece; (6) University of Warsaw, Poland

The ISOTIS ([www.isotis.org](http://www.isotis.org)) participatory study 'Feel good: Children's views on inclusion' was carried out in highly culturally/socially diverse preschools and primary schools in 6 countries, aimed at collecting children's perspectives on: their thoughts about differences; what they identify as quality indicators of school inclusiveness; their ideas to make their school more welcoming and inclusive. Few studies have explored younger children's (3-6) views on these sensitive themes (Due, Riggs & Augostinos, 2014; Sime, 2017). The study aimed at addressing this gap, focusing on the voices of preschoolers. The theoretical framework built on the research areas of the Sociology of Childhood (Qvortrup, 1987; Corsaro, 1997), Socio-Constructivist Early Childhood Pedagogy (Clark & Moss, 2001; Mantovani, 2007; Oberhumer, 2005; Katz, 1999) and Student's voice (Cook-Sather, Grion, 2013; Colinet, Grion, 2013; Fielding, 2006, 2012), recognizing children as competent actors, reliable informants and active citizens able to contribute valuable ideas regarding all matters affecting them. Set within a qualitative and phenomenological paradigm of research (Denzin, Lincoln, 2015), a participatory methodology and a multi-methods approach was adopted to provide, besides data triangulation, a richer and more comprehensive possibility of expression to the children involved. As the study dealt with delicate issues, greater sensitivity and critical reflectivity were necessary to balance the children's right to participate with the need to ensure a worthwhile and positive experience, shifting from a "research on children" to a "research with and for them" (Mayall, 2003; Mortari, 2009). Key points will refer to the viewpoints and ideas of preschoolers and to methodological and ethical challenges encountered during the research process. Impacts regard children's ideas to change their preschool and professional development for teachers in connection to the participatory research involving very young children.

*children's voice, inclusion, wellbeing, participatory research, preschool*

### **Knowledge, sentiments and behaviour of preschool children regarding disability in the Greek general preschool system**

Konstantia Polyzopoulou, Helen Tsakiridou, University of Western Macedonia, Greece

Studying the beliefs and reactions of typical students toward their disabled peers remains a main factor influencing the social relationship development. Preschool aged children define disability as a different appearance (Smith & Williams, 2004) and difficulty in participating in play activities (Diamond, Furgy, & Blass, 1993). Attitude is defined as a continual system containing a cognitive, emotional and behaviour element. The Greek Act 3699/2008 defines that "Special education is oriented to a round development of the personality of students with disability". A revised version of The Primary Student Survey of Handicapped Persons, assessing students' knowledge and sentiments toward their peers with disabilities. Data were collected through 12 public general preschool units, and It was adopted the method of data analysis with sequential content analysis. Following the instructions of the Greek National Ministry of Education, Research and Religion, the Education Directors and the head preschool were informed. After the parent consent forms were completed, the preschoolers were informed about the authors' presence, were asked to declare their withdrawn from the research. The interview contacted individually, in the preschool unit and each child gave a personal consent. Children interpret disability as physical difficulty, need for assistance and equipment support, expressing their biased attitudes. Research about inclusive education in preschool units has specified a particular number of preschool inclusive structures for typically developing students and students with disability.

*inclusion, disability, preschool, children, attitudes*

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## **D 7**

### **COMPETENCE FOR DEVELOPING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC) INSTITUTIONS' INDOOR- AND OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS**

Self-organised symposium

Physical environments play an essential role in children's development and learning. Children learn best in environments that provide them with meaningful context for learning and a diversity of choices and possibilities for following their interests. Factors concerning educational environment, such as the ECEC institutions' physical features, are important for children's well-being, participation, development, and learning outcomes.

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**Chair: Rune Storli, Queen Maud University College, Norway**

**Children's involvement in ECEC institutions' outdoor environments: facilitating spaces, places and materials**

Rune Storli, Ellen Beate Hansen Sandseter, Queen Maud University College, Norway

In this study, we focus on children's involvement in play as a means of investigating their opportunities for deep level learning in the ECEC outdoor environment. Environments that provide children with meaningful contexts for learning and a diversity of possibilities for following their interest are where children learn best (Hirsh-Pasek, Golinkoff, & Eyer, 2003). Thus, environments that support children's involvement in play have the potential to promote learning. Laevers (2000) describes how learning takes place when children are in a mode of high involvement, and argues that to promote optimal learning environments it is important to provide for a high level of involvement in children's play and activities. The project is within a pragmatic paradigm and involves 8 ECEC settings in a Design experiment in education (Hartas, 2010). Within each institution, 10 children (5 boys and 5 girls) were randomly selected and video-recorded in free outdoor play. The presentation consist of quantitative analyses of how children's involvement in play relates to environment features. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. All data and information related to the project are treated in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Norwegian Social Science Data Services. The data is currently being analysed and preliminary findings show that play in nature is positively correlated with involvement. Knowledge of how high involvement in play connect to environmental features in ECEC institutions' outdoor environments will be particularly relevant for stakeholders and professionals involved in the ECEC sector.

*outdoor play, learning, involvement, outdoor environment, play materials*

**Children's non-play during their time for free play in Norwegian ECEC institutions**

May Liss Tobiassen, Nasjonalt kunnskapssenter for barnehager, Norway

The aim is to explore what children do during periods of non-play in ECEC. The secondary aim is finding relevant categories of non-play for further research. This study is based on earlier results in the larger project 'EnCompetence' showing that 30% of children's time for free-play in ECEC is non-play and that non-play is negatively related to children's well-being, involvement and physical activity (Storli & Sandseter, 2019; Sando, 2019). Research documents the importance of play for children's development, learning, health and quality of life (Cheng & Johnson, 2010; Gleave & Cole-Hamilton, 2012), both as value for childhood in itself and in a more long-term perspective. This study is part of a larger project using a design experiment in education approach (Hartas, 2010) where the aim of is to explore how children interact with and use the physical environment in ECEC. 80 children's free play was randomly video-recorded and analysed in terms of what kind of play children engaged in. This presentation is based on analysis that explore what non-play consists of, and in what physical environments non-play usually occurs. Norwegian Social Science Data Services approved the study; informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity are secured in the project. Data is currently being analysed; preliminary findings show that children's non-play can be divided into 9 different categories of that can be used for further analysis. Further relationships between categories of non-play, well-being, involvement, physical activity and physical environment will be presented. Results are relevant to the ECEC-sector, architects/landscape architects, and undergraduate/graduate students.

*free-play, non-play physical environments, involvement, children's development*

**Rooms for transformation? – Do Norwegian ECEC institutions afford good and inspiring indoor environments for symbolic play?**

Randi Evenstad, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

This presentation focuses on the physical conditions for symbolic play in ECEC institutions and how to provide indoor environment that affords good and inspiring conditions for such play. Wolf (2014) found a lack of equipment for symbolic play in Norwegian ECEC. Greve and Kristensen (2018) found that symbolic play has poor conditions in ECEC institutions and blame this both on the physical conditions and on staff's competence. This study draws on theories emphasizing symbolic/pretend play and its importance in human life, development, art and culture (Winnicott, Vygotsky, Huizinga, Slade, Olofsson), and theories/concepts that highlight material conditions and relation between human/children and environments (Gibson, Rinaldi, Latour). The study is part of a larger project using a design experiment in education approach where the aim is to explore how children interact with and use the physical environment in ECEC. 80 children's free play was randomly video-recorded. This presentation is based on quantitative and qualitative analysis exploring symbolic play, as well as floorplans and photos before/after transformation of environments, and staff/child interviews. Norwegian Social Science Data Services approved the study; informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity are secured in the project. Quantitative analyses reveal that 21% of a total 72% play activity during indoor playtime is symbolic play. Qualitative analyses indicate many poor and open spaces that neither affords materials for

symbolic play nor shelter to develop and protect this play. ECEC teachers may need better competence about symbolic play and how to create inspiring and transformative places for such play in kindergartens

*symbolic play, indoor environments, ECEC institutions, physical conditions, transformative places*

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## **D 8 CONNECTING MOTOR AND LANGUAGE SKILLS - CONCEPT AND EFFECTS IN MOVEMENT - BASED KINDERGARTENS (BEWEGUNGSKINDERGARTEN) AND IN PARENTAL SETTINGS.**

Self-organised symposium

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**Chair: Renate Zimmer, University of Osnabrück, Germany**

### **The German concept of Bewegungskindergarten – What could be the effect on children and their development?**

Peter Kessel (1), Renate Zimmer (1), (2), (1) Niedersächsische Institut für frühkindliche Bildung und Entwicklung (nifbe), Germany; (2) University of Osnabrück, Germany

Different concepts of Bewegungskindergarten exist in Germany. The presented contribution discusses the extent to which these concepts differ and what is essential to have an impact on the children's development. The analysis of the different concepts in the German counties aims to figure out relevant aspects. The first Bewegungskindergarten in Germany had been founded in the 1970s. Since then, it is discussed whether the children benefit from this new concept that associates promotion with an enhancement of movement activities in the kindergarten (Jasmund, 2009; Schwarz, 2017). Zimmer (2006) gives an overview to the basic idea of the Bewegungskindergarten concept. Building on this, it can be observed that the different counties in Germany draw their own guidelines to call a childcare centre Bewegungskindergarten. To figure out essentials, different concepts were compared using a discourse analysis approach. Further investigated Bewegungskindergarten in Berlin were classified after these essentials. The analysis only took official papers and publications into account. All involved Bewegungskindergarten participated voluntarily as all tested children did. The Bewegungskindergarten concept in Berlin stands out with a psychomotor background. The promotion of movement is not only redeemed by more sportive activities. More important is a different educational view on children's activities and the appreciatively accompaniment by the reference persons. With regard to another study which is also presented in the symposium, the Bewegungskindergarten in Berlin are beneficial to the children's motor and language skills. This leads to assume that a specific concept of Bewegungskindergarten might be more efficient.

*childcare centre concept, children's development, physical activity, language, Bewegungskindergarten*

### **"Ready to hand" – Griffbereit Mini – Evaluation of a German parenting programme for families with different cultural backgrounds and their young children (0-1)**

Nadine Madeira Firmino, Flinedner Fachhochschule Duesseldorf, Germany

The paper presents the evaluation of "Griffbereit Mini" – a parenting program for families with different cultural backgrounds and their children (0-1). The study analyses effects on the children's development (non-verbal and motor skills), the interaction, the parental involvement and the networking strategies. The project "Griffbereit Mini" is promoted by the Ministry of Children, Family, Refugees and Integration of the State of NRW and takes part in six different German ECE-Institutions. Previous studies have so far shown the effect of early parental involvement programs in several countries, most of them focusing an older age-groups (>1) (Averroes, 1996; Madeira Firmino, 2015). Language is regarded as a key competence for educational success and active participation in social life. To reach families with different cultural backgrounds, developmental offers should be low-threshold (Sann & Thrum 2005). Video-interaction-observations (T1-T2-T3) as well as open-ended questionnaires were used to assess information considering networking and transfer into daily family routines. Previous findings were thereby considered (Roorbach Jamison et al., 2013; Reppenhorst & Madeira Firmino, 2017). Ethical considerations on the process were discussed and decided by the parents, the educators and the child daycare providers. The presented paper shows that the participation of the "GriffbereitMini" has an impact on the interaction skills. Furthermore, it could be observed that families got more connected towards each other and also to quarter management offers. The first findings led to the assumption that parents raising their toddlers multilingual should be involved in early language promotion approaches even before their children visit a regular kindergarten.

*parental involvement, development, early language promotion, evaluation, videography*

## Effects of Bewegungskindergarten – Possible influences of socio-spatial factors and a psychomotor profile

Carolin Machens, Peter Kessel, University of Osnabrück, Germany

The study looks at a positive growth in the motor and language development of children who attend a German pre-school with a specific focus on movement, a so-called "Bewegungskindergarten". Within a year, over 200 children aged 4-6 years were examined. Further socio-spatial factors were assessed. Previous studies have so far failed to prove advantages resulting from visiting Bewegungskindergarten (Jasmund, 2009), possibly due to the inconsistent profiles of these pre-schools (Schwarz, 2017). In contrast, all investigated kindergartens showed a psychomotor background. Psychomotricity (Zimmer, 2012) focuses on developing a positive self-concept and takes the interaction between the educator and the child into account. Regarding this, Prohl & Seewald (1998) proved that the level of psychomotor qualification was linked to effects in motor and cognitive skills among children. Motor and language skills were assessed at two different times using the MOT 4-6 and the standardised observation method BaSiK (Zimmer, 2014, 2016). The participation was voluntary and required the approval by the children and parents. The findings show a significant growth in the assessed skills. Furthermore a significant interaction resulted: Children with second language acquisition benefit the most from visiting a Bewegungskindergarten when they live in areas of the quarter management, whereas children with first language acquisition benefit the most when they live elsewhere. The results indicate that Bewegungskindergarten with a psychomotor background can indeed improve motor and language skills. The interaction between language acquisition and social-spatial factors leads us to assume, that the examined Bewegungskindergarten are best promoting their individual majority of children.

*motor development, language skills, pre-school profiles, socio-spatial factors, second language acquisition*

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## D 9

### EARLY YEARS EDUCATION FOR ALL: INCLUDING RIGHTS AND SUSTAINABILITY IN CONVERSATIONS AROUND 'QUALITY' (PART 1)

Self-organised symposium

Scotland currently finds itself at a critical point in terms of future directions for Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). Based on an election promise made in 2016, the Scottish Government is in the process of doubling children and families' entitlement to funded childcare hours by 2020, requiring large increases of qualified staff and infrastructure. The implementation of 'the childcare expansion' has resulted in a high profile public conversation around early years education, and stimulated academic debates on what 'quality' ELC looks like and how it can be achieved in the context of significant structural change. Part 1 of this Symposium brings together researchers from Scotland who engage with some of these debates. The Symposium invites a critical discussion around what 'quality' is considered to be, and extends conversations around quality to include both children's rights and learning for sustainability as critical to meet the needs of all children.

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**Chair: Marlies Kustatscher, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom**

#### Quality for whom? - Perspectives on 'quality' in the context of the Scottish ELC expansion

Lynn McNair, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

The aim of this project is to conduct exploratory research on what 'Quality' means to young children and professionals. The Scottish Government is currently expanding early learning and childcare (ELC) Quality, although high on the agenda, lacks a definition. This research will offer a deep critique of the political status quo in the liberal use of the word 'Quality' in ELC (Moss, 2002; McNair 2016). The research will draw from debates around Quality (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005) and listening to children (McNair, 2016; Davies, 2014; Tisdall, Davis and Gallagher 2009). A small-scale ethnographic study in five early years settings will take place. The study will use creative/participatory methods (e.g. short participant observations, informal conversations with the children and parents). An information sheet has been created for parents and professionals. Those taking part will sign a consent form. Throughout the data collection children will be consulted; they will also be invited to participate in the dissemination. The findings suggest that the Scottish ELC expansion's aspiration for quality cannot succeed unless a broader conversation about the topic is opened up which includes children, families, practitioners and communities. This research raises important implications for policy and practice as it defines, and contests current understandings of quality based on children and professional views. The research will provide a benchmark of quality which is fundamental to practitioners and policymakers, who are currently being asked by local authorities to work in 'quality' settings with up to 200 children (Scottish Government, 2016).

*early childhood, quality, ethnography, participation, children's rights*

### **Young children's rights in 'tough' times: Implications for quality early learning and childcare provision**

Kristina Konstantoni, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

This project aims to explore the effects of the current 'double' humanitarian crisis on young children and their families within the Greek context, providing in this way a conceptual understanding of interacting experiences of childhood inequalities and rights. Within childhood studies scholarship, there is an emergent call for research to understand to a greater extent the intersectional experiences of inequalities that different groups of children face due to interactions between race/gender/class/ethnicity/age/disability etc. (Konstantoni and Emejulu 2017). The presentation thus, analyses the effects of the current 'double' humanitarian crisis on children, and children's experiences of 'living rights' in such 'tough times'. It then provides a conceptual understanding of interacting experiences of childhood inequalities and rights with implications for policy and practice. The concept of living rights highlights that children 'while making use of notions of rights, shape what these rights are- and become- in the social world', challenging in this way that children's rights are 'exclusively ...defined by international institutions or states' (Hanson and Nieuwenhuys 2013: 6). The presentation draws on ethnographic research (participant observation, interviews, informal discussions, play-based methodologies) with children (0-5) and families (7 families) in Greece. Information leaflets about the study were provided and informed consent was secured from both parents and children (written and verbal). It is argued that children's rights and challenging intersecting inequalities should be critical elements of debates around quality and early years provision. The presentation raises significant implications for policy and practice in relation to understanding and challenging interacting childhood inequalities.

*children's rights, intersectionality inequalities, social justice, participation*

### **Learning for sustainability: Young children's perspectives, entanglements and embodied wisdom in nature spaces**

Luke Addison, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

This research aims to bring young children's perspectives to the fore of Education for Sustainability. Contemporary approaches to EfS often position children as future saviours to overcome our 'legacy of inaction' (Mackenzie & Rousell, 2018), tending to focus on building children's knowledge of environmental issues, structured around adult-inspired goals. Children's perspectives are often unheard and we must find better ways to unlock their voices (Kellet, 2005). This research explores how we might understand children's tacit, embodied experiences of nature, and how adults might carefully and sensitively observe the child's complex entanglements and meaning-making to each other, nature, materials and more. Through this, children are understood not just in a human-centred socio-cultural context, but in "complexly entwined and collectively agentic more-than-human worlds" (Rooney, 2018). An ethnographic approach and participant observation is used to develop stories of meaning using the Froebelian concept of 'living-with' children in nature spaces. A 'Common World' framework (Haraway, 2016) and an unfolding sustainable ethics (Aitken, 2018) are explored as a means of enquiry and data analysis, situated within a critiquing of new-anamist and new-materialist studies, to include 'the political' and 'the ethical' through their drawing on feminist science studies (Taylor & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2018). Initial and ongoing consent was gained from children and parents using consent forms and an 'ethical listening' approach. I argue for methodologies which contribute to a sustainable pedagogy rooted in sustainable ethics and the trusted, embodied wisdom of children. This research intends to disrupt the adult-led EfS research field, contributing to growing sustainable pedagogies.

*sustainability, pedagogy, sustainable ethics, geographies, quality*

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## **D 10**

### **EXPLORING AND DEVELOPING EARLY YEARS MATHS**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Piia Parviainen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland**

### **Mathematical generalisation in early childhood**

Evangelia Papadopoulou, Marianna Tzekaki, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

This presentation reports results related to the development of generalization in early childhood, coming from a longitudinal study in 4 fields of early mathematics education (shapes, patterns, measurement and numbers). Generalization, as an necessary prerequisite for mathematical development, is presented in studies that examine how children recognize common elements (Kaput, 1999) or starting from specific situations, proceed to more general ideas and conclusions towards the development of



different mathematical concepts (shapes, patterns, etc.) Radford, 2006)). The study combined theoretical approaches related to generalization (local and general) with approaches related to the development of relevant mathematical concepts and based on an initial three-stage generalization model. 23 preschoolers were pre and post examined with task based interviews related to all mathematical fields, before and after a teaching intervention aiming at encouraging children to express their conclusions related to their activity. The study had the ethical approval from the Greek Ministry of Education. Parents of participants had been informed about the study's purpose and provided written consent to the participation of their children. The findings suggest that preschoolers have the potential to move from a local to a wider and, thus, more general level regarding mathematical ideas relevant to their age, when they participate in teaching that encourage reflection and discussion. The initial three- stage was developed into a seven- stage model, indicating different levels of early generalization. Encouragement of relevant generalizing discussion in the teaching of early mathematics.

*mathematical generalisation, mathematical concepts, early childhood mathematical education, teaching tools, generalisation development*

### **Teaching mathematics in early childhood education - A systematic literature review**

Benita Berg, Karin Franzén, Malardalen University, Sweden

The aim of the study is to find similarities and differences concerning the new formulations on teaching in revised curriculum in Swedish preschool and international research in early childhood education, Teaching is more clarified in the revised curriculum. Swedish preschool education is moving towards a more formalized approach where teaching is more visible (Helenius, 2018). There is a consensus that early mathematics is important in policy and research but there is no agreement on how mathematics education should be implemented. There are differences between and within countries, a clear difference is the relation between play and teaching (Palmér & Björklund, 2016). The concepts of classification and framing are used to discuss the visibility of pedagogics in the formalization of teaching mathematics in preschool (Bernstein, 2000). This is a literature review regarding research on teaching mathematics in early childhood education. It draws from a number of scholarly research article conducted between 2014 and 2019. The data collection is in progress. Qualitative and quantitative content analysis will compare emerged codes. The expected results will consist of empirical research. Ethical consideration is met by showing respect and responsiveness to other researchers work. This literature review is based on peer-reviewed articles. Preliminary findings indicate differences in how teaching mathematics in preschool is described. Preschool in Sweden has a tradition of a play-based pedagogy and no formal assessment of children as many other countries. Perhaps, the change may push teaching to become more visible and formal (Helenius, 2018). Implications for policy and practice will be discussed.

*mathematics, teaching literature review, early childhood education, teacher*

### **Early mathematical skills - A theoretical framework for holistic model**

Piia Parviainen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

This study introduces a comprehensive theoretical model of early mathematical skills. The aims were first to conduct a global research literature review exploring early mathematical skill categories, and second, based on the literature review, to build a holistic theoretical model showing the interrelation between these different skill categories. Although the importance of early mathematical skills is acknowledged, there exists only a few literature reviews on this domain. Clements and Sarama (2007) and Sarama and Clements (2009) have composed the development of early mathematical skills. A review that would address a holistic framework of early mathematical skills is still lacking, and the present study targets this gap in literature. In this literature review the development of early mathematical skills, including numerical skills (Aunio & Räsänen, 2016), spatial thinking skills (Jones & Tzekaki, 2016), and mathematical thinking and reasoning skills (Mulligan, 2015) is outlined. This data of this qualitative, systematic literature review comprised 134 articles of early childhood mathematics, which were analysed by thematic content analysis. The ethical considerations included systematic data collection and careful data analysis. Throughout whole research process standard ethical principles were followed and evaluated. Based on the literature review three early mathematical skill categories were formed 1) numerical skills, 2) spatial thinking skills and 3) mathematical thinking and reasoning skills. In the holistic model the interconnectedness of these skill categories, number sense and spatial sense were outlined. This holistic model promotes early childhood education teachers understanding of the interrelation of mathematical skills, which benefits mathematics teaching.

*early mathematical skills, numerical skills, spatial thinking skills, mathematical thinking and reasoning skills, holistic model of early mathematical skills*

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**Chair: Clarice Bourscheid, UFRGS, Brazil**

**Music with preterm infants in a neonatal intensive care unit in Greece**

Lelouda Stamou, Faiy Evaggelou, University of Macedonia, Greece

The study aimed at investigating the effects of singing on the bio-physiological functions of preterm infants in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in Greece, and on mothers' emotional state. Previous research has underlined the benefits of music on premature hospitalized infants (Azarmnejad, et al., 2015; Loewy et al, 2013; Gooding 2010; Whipple, 2008; Beal, 2007; Standley, 2003, 2002). We hypothesized significant positive effects of live lullaby-like singing, and significantly greater effects of mother's singing compared to music therapist's singing. We followed a mixed-methods approach investigating 42 preterm infants and their mothers. Intervention consisted of 15' minutes of singing daily for 14 consecutive days during afternoon pre-feeding time, by the mother or the music therapist for Intervention Group 1 and 2 respectively. The Control Group received no intervention. All interventions took place under supervision of NICU medical staff, following permissions by the Hospital's Scientific Committee, NICU Director, university department General Assembly, and mothers' written consent. Participation was allowed for infants who met specific criteria of age, weight, health state, and prospective stay in NICU, and was temporarily or permanently paused in cases of disturbances and health aggravation according to the research protocol and medical staff suggestions. Singing had significant positive effects on infants' heart rate and oxygen saturation in blood, with no significant differences between the two IGs. Mothers' stress levels, emotional state and bond with infants were also positively affected. Findings underline the significant role of music in NICU for infants' health state and mothers' well-being.

*Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), preterm infant, singing, mother, bio-physiological functions*

**Poetic listening of musical interactions with babies in nursery school: Aesthetic experience between sonority and silence**

Clarice Bourscheid (1), Sandra Richter (2), (1) UFRGS, Brazil; (2) UNISC, Brazil

The aim of this investigation was to study possibilities of playful coexistence in nursery school through poetic listening of babies in their aesthetic interactions with music. MALAGUZZI (2004), VECCHI (2010) RICHTER and BARBOSA (2010), allow us to think about educational actions in collective coexistence between adults and babies. The phenomenology of the poetic imagination (BACHELARD, 2001) and the sensitive body (MERLEAU-PONTY, 2011) support the intention of non-fragmentation of language experiences. From the conception of language as existential condition for experience of the world (GADAMER, 2005), sound experience is understood as thought that emerges from the movement of the body within the world (HELLER, 2006). Silence resonates as the poetic power of the exceeded significance of a language (KOVADLOFF, 2003) in which the aesthetic experience of the extraordinary and the value of existence prevails. Based on complexity paradigm (MORIN, 1999), methodology was the study of weekly meetings towards sensations, wonders and expressions in interactions with musical instruments, sound objects, repertoires and silence, in a confident and inviting environment. School board, teachers and families were informed about the research and agreed to it. In sensitive listening and observation of babies, their needs and interests have been respected. The inseparability between aesthetics/poetics, silence/music, feeling/acting, in the plurality of manifestations, contributes to an education that does not simplify its encounter with art and childhood. Offering opportunities, babies with adults, build repertoires and amplify possibilities of thinking, imagining, communicating, feeling, expressing, playing, socializing and dreaming in the collective.

*music in nursery school, music with babies, aesthetics, poetics, research with babies*

**Dance teaching in preschool**

Anna Lindqvist (1), Tone Pernille Østern (2), Märtha Pastorek Gripson (3), (1) Umeå University, Sweden; (2) Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway; (3) University of Borås, Teacher Education, Sweden

The aim of this presentation is to develop knowledge about teaching in dance in preschool. What characterise preschool teaching in dance? How can dance education in preschool be understood? Based on the current revisions in the preschool curriculum, physical activity such as dance is important. All children should develop their creative abilities and the ability to express and communicate impressions, thoughts and experiences. Vallberg Roth (2018) points the need to explore how the concept of teaching is used and understood by preschool teachers. Swedish teacher education has been changed with less academic credits in aesthetic subjects (Lindgren & Ericsson, 2013). Previous studies of preschool teachers and students show that they feel insecure

in relation to aesthetic subjects e.g. dance and music (Ehrlin, 2014; Lindqvist, 2019). This paper will discuss "teaching" and "didactics" guided by Selander (2017). The aim is to analyse didactics from a broad historical, intellectual and critical understanding of learning. This can help us to understand different theories about education and learning. Within a qualitative research paradigm, the material consists of focus group discussions with preschool teachers in Sweden. Interviews were taped, transcribed and analysed based on a discourse psychological approach. A consent form including information about the project and informants rights was provided to managers and preschool teachers. Written consents were collected from the preschool teachers. Interviews were anonymised. The preschool teachers' didactic thinking is central according to high-quality activities. This study provides discussions of teaching quality and competence in dance and bodily learning among preschool teachers.

*dance, teaching, didactics, bodily learning, dance education*

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## D 12

### **PARENTAL INVESTMENTS IN CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Self-organised symposium

Parental Investments in Children's Learning and Development

Studies on family investment have shown that families differ in their investments in young children's learning and development, depending on their ethnic-cultural and socio-economical background (Conger et al., 2010). This symposium addresses important aspects of family investments, such as the Home Learning Environment (HLE), the educational partnerships with the (pre)schools, and parental aspirations and orientations. Three presentations, using data from the collaborative European research project ISOTIS ([www.isotis.org](http://www.isotis.org)), will focus on the possible determinants of family investments for four groups of disadvantaged families: Roma, Immigrant (Turkish and Maghrebian) and Low-income native-born families with young children (age 3-6 years) from different countries in Europe. What structural, socio-psychological, and/or linguistic family factors might explain the differences in parental investments? The findings and similarities of the studies, and their implications for ECEC policy and practice, will be discussed by Prof. Yvonne Anders, an acknowledged expert in the field of early childhood and family support.

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**Chair: Paul Leseman, Utrecht University, Netherlands**

#### **Parental wellbeing as a buffer of material deprivation: Differential results for four disadvantaged groups of families**

Katrin Wolf (1), Rianne Francot (2), Paul Leseman (2), Yvonne Anders (1), (1) Freie University, Germany; (2) Utrecht University, Netherlands

With this study, we want to examine the mediating role of parental wellbeing in the relationship between material deprivation and informal learning activities (ILA) frequency comparing four groups of disadvantaged families (Turkish/Maghrebian/Roma/Low-SES families). Children's ILA with their parents predict their academic development (Leseman & DeJong, 1998). According to the family stress model (e.g., Cooper & Stewart, 2013), risk factors like poverty lead to stress in the family, which affects the parenting behaviour. Database are N=3,899 structured family interviews that have been conducted in nine European countries. We investigated the direct and indirect effects of material deprivation (MD) with parental wellbeing (PWB) as mediator separately for each group. The participants' consent was collected electronically without signature. All data has been anonymized. MD predicted both ILA frequency and PWB in all groups. PWB proved to be a significant mediator for the effects of MD on ILA frequency in the Turkish, Maghrebian and the low-SES native-born group, but not in the Roma group. These findings illustrate the negative impact of material deprivation on parental wellbeing and the frequency of informal learning activities in the home as evidence for the family stress model. They also highlight the mediating role of PWB, which has implications for family support practice to promote the parents' well-being. The deviating result for Roma families, that PWB is not related to the ILA frequency, might be a consequence of the extraordinary high degree of material deprivation in this group. This could indicate a non-linear relationship among the considered variables.

*home learning environment, parental wellbeing, disadvantaged families, structural equation modelling, comparative study*

#### **Parent-preschool partnerships: Families with a migrant background in Europe**

Rianne Francot (1), Martine Broekhuizen (1), Katharina Ereky-Stevens (2), Thomas Moser (3), (1) Utrecht University, Netherlands; (2) University of Oxford, United Kingdom; (3) University College of Southeast Norway, Norway

The current study uses data from a large-scale interview study from the EU-funded ISOTIS project ([www.isotis.org](http://www.isotis.org)). The aim is to examine the relationships between several family factors and the experienced parent-preschool partnerships among parents with an immigrant background. Educational partnerships between parents and preschools are especially important for children with

an immigrant background, since education plays a vital role in their integration and upward social mobility (OECD, 2015). However, cultural and linguistic differences, diverging beliefs about education, and diverse acculturation orientations can pose significant challenges for building trustful educational partnerships (Crozier & Davies, 2007). The importance of educational partnerships traces back to the bio-ecological model of Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The Family Investment Model (Mayer, 1997) explains parents' ability to invest resources in their children's education. A quantitative cross-sectional comparative design was used. Participants are mothers of 3-5-year old's with a Turkish (N=366) or Maghrebian (N=420) immigrant background from five countries: England, Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Italy. The interview-study was ethically approved by the ethical committees in all countries. Parents signed informed consent forms and data were anonymized. Preliminary analyses show relatively high levels of parent-preschool relationships, and parents participate in their child's early education. However, there is substantial within-group and between-country variation, and first analyses show that these partnership indicators are related to some structural family characteristics (e.g., educational background), though more strongly to linguistic and socio-psychological factors (e.g., language proficiency and acculturation views). Implications for ECEC practice, integration policy, and theories on educational partnerships will be discussed.

*educational partnerships, parental involvement, ECEC, Immigrant families, Integration*

### **Greek Roma home environment: What kind of activities are available to Roma children?**

Ioanna Strataki, Konstantinos Petrogiannis, Hellenic Open University, Greece

In the present paper, based on the European research project "ISOTIS", we aim to describe aspects of the home learning environment and examine the activities that parents from native Greek Roma and non-Roma low-income families provide to their children at home. Due to the high levels of marginalisation of Roma population in Europe, policy makers and practitioners have recognised the need to support Roma children with particular emphasis to psychosocial and academic domain (Dimitrova & Ferrer-Wreder, 2017). Nonetheless, studying of the psychological aspects of Roma families is very limited (Penderi & Petrogiannis, 2011). The proximal environment of children, the provided activities at home, and parents' beliefs constitute children's developmental niche following Super and Harkness' theoretical approach (Super & Harkness, 1986). The analysis is based on semi-structured interviews with 92 Greek Roma and 81 non-Roma parents that have a 3-6-year-old child and live in the same sites of broader metropolitan Athens area. With emphasis to the Roma families, these findings will be combined with the data of 12 in-depth interviews with Greek Roma mothers. The interview-study was approved by the university's ethical committee. Parents signed informed consent forms and data were completely anonymised. Preliminary analyses show that Roma score lower on the HLE than the non-Roma. The findings from the in-depth interviews will provide a more detailed description of the pattern of everyday activities of Roma children. This comparison enables to reveal potential differences and similarities of these two contexts and could provide, in turn, more efficient approaches of social-educational interventions.

*developmental niche, Roma families, low- income families, ECEC, home learning environment*

## **D 13**

### **PRE-SERVICE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Silvia Barros, Instituto Politécnico do Porto, Portugal**

### **Caregiver pre-service education and in-service training and caregiver-infant interactions in Portuguese child care**

Silvia Barros (1), Joana Cadima (2), Manuela Pessanha (1), Carla Peixoto (1), (3), Vera Coelho (2), Ana Isabel Pinto (2), Donna M. Bryant (4), (1) Instituto Politécnico do Porto, Portugal; (2) Universidade do Porto, Portugal; (3) Instituto Universitário da Maia, Portugal; (4) Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, United States

This study examined caregiver education and training and its association with quality of caregiver-child interactions. Considering that Portuguese infant classrooms have more than one caregiver, with varying levels of education, and are not required to have a qualified teacher, we examined pre-service education and in-service training of the lead caregiver, whether she is exclusively assigned to one classroom, and pre-service education of all caregivers. Research linking caregiver education/training to ECEC quality has been mixed, with some studies showing positive associations (e.g., Slot et al., 2015) and others not (Pianta et al., 2005). Nonetheless, caregiver education and training are frequently among the adopted policies to improve quality. High-quality infant/toddler classrooms may have important effects on child outcomes (e.g., Burchinal et al., 2015). To support development and learning, contexts must include responsive and cognitively stimulating caregiver-child interactions (e.g., Jamison et al., 2014). Ninety infant classrooms participated in this study. Main instruments were the Class-Infant (Hamre et al., 2011) and a structural characteristics questionnaire. Instruments and procedures were approved by the National Data Protection Authority. Informed

consents were obtained from directors and professionals. Classrooms with one lead caregiver holding at least a bachelor degree showed higher levels of quality in facilitating learning and stimulating language. Attending workshops was associated with higher levels of facilitation of learning in the subset of non-qualified lead caregivers. Results will be discussed in light of the main characteristics of the Portuguese ECEC system, such as the existence of a split system, structural aspects of care, and required qualifications.

*caregiver education, in-service training, teacher-child interactions, ECEC quality, infant classrooms*

### **Preservice teachers developing of self-efficacy for sense of self as early childhood professional**

Robyn Babaeff, Sharryn Clarke, Anne Keary, Monash University, Australia

Early childhood pre-service teachers' sense of professional self can be problematic as they challenge social and contextual performativity for internalizing what future actions will involve for teaching practice. The study aimed to discover self-efficacy development to lead and pursue professional action visions with future EC educators. Present-day policy and curriculum documents of EC professionalism conflicts with dominant-traditional discourse. Current aims are to inspire innovation and advocacy for teachers of Australia (Sumsion & Grieshaber, 2012) and Singapore (Lim-Ratnam, 2014). Leadership and professionalism is identified to be in early stages of developing effective practice actions through self-efficacy. Sims, et al (2015) research identifies initiative and innovation as a struggle for early childhood teachers. This feminist paradigm study identifies performativity-in-progress (Barad, 2003) through Australian and Singaporean undergraduate EC student perspectives. The multimodal data (Hesse-Biber and Griffin, 2015) of this qualitative interpretivist study, was generated in 3rd year PSTs' workshops. Monthly reflections and visual-imagery was gathered over a semester comprising of ongoing reflexivity, coursework, professionalism and ethical dilemma activities. Through student consent, maintaining anonymity for confidentiality. The 2018 Australian and Singaporean findings represent PSTs perceptions of professional self, additionally signifying contextual influences affect self-efficacy. Data indicates confidence variations and highlights hesitancy, trepidation, and conformity for conceptualising a professional sense of EC teacher self. Self-efficacy inspires individuals to challenge themselves and discourse beyond traditional meaning-making for professionalism and leadership, moving undergraduate preliminary views of professional beyond politeness, dress code, and punctuality.

*self-efficacy, professionalism, performativity, multimodal, pre-service teacher*

### **My narrative, your narrative, our narrative: Pre-service early childhood teachers' training model**

Anat Porat, Tal Ben Tov, Kibbutzim College, Israel

This research reflects a process led by us, two pedagogical advisers, undertaken by third year pre service ECE students aimed at transmuting our intuitive teaching into a training model and shedding light on narrative pedagogy. Narrative pedagogy endorses curriculum development within the dialog of learners and teachers (Dvir, 2017). The dialog emerges around narratives that students bring from training to the classroom, which are used to construct new knowledge through the integration of personal and relevant theoretical knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Narratives of training ECE students are scant as are records of their contribution to students' professional development (Henderson, 2018). Stories presented in class, build the training curriculum and become shared knowledge. Thus, allowing students to voice themselves and foster a feeling of competence (Goodson & Gill, 2011). This practice is based on the narrative approach (Bruner, 1987), sociocultural theories (Vygotsky, 1978; Lave & Wenger, 1991), and women's ways of knowing (Belenky et al., 1997). The methodology draws on a qualitative collaborative self-study approach. Data were collected throughout two years, including conversation recordings, email exchanges, and mutual interviews. The joint investigation, where we each served as "critical friend" exposed tacit knowledge while facilitating research validation (Peercy & Troyan, 2017). The findings reflect an ECE teachers' training model relying on experience-based narratives. The model is both a practical tool for ECE teachers and a worldview that facilitates understanding of multiple perspectives and needs of all partners to the pedagogical situation.

*narrative approach, ways of knowing, collaborative self-study, early childhood education, Pre service training*

## WHERE IS EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER EDUCATION? PERSPECTIVES FROM AUSTRALIA, NORWAY AND FINLAND

Self-organised symposium

This symposium reports on studies from Australia, Norway and Finland that investigated whether, or how, early childhood teacher education (IECTE) supports Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). The Australian report, based on two systematic search and review studies found that uptake of ESD is, at best, patchy, and that there is little literature to support teacher educators who wish to engage with ESD. Nevertheless, some research is emerging. For example, the second paper reports on a mixed methods study of Norwegian and Finnish EC student teacher views on the importance of ecological literacy, seen as central to understandings about environmental sustainability. The third study presents data from a multi-methods investigation exploring the rhetoric-reality gap in Finnish early childhood teacher education programs despite national education policy asking for ESD to be an integral aspect of early education. The symposium will explore possibilities for strengthening ESD in IECTE

**Chair: Julie Davis, Queensland University of Technology, Australia**

### Missing in action: Two Australian studies of education for sustainable development in early childhood teacher education

Julie Davis (1), Juliet Davis (2), (1) Queensland University of Technology, Australia; (2) Griffith University, Australia

This paper reports on education for sustainable development (ESD) in initial early childhood teacher education (IECTE) through two studies: 1. Auditing ESD in IECTE programs in Australian universities; 2. Examining international ESD research in IECTE. Study 1 looked for sustainability-related terms in Australian university policies, agreements, and strategic plans (Evans, Stevenson, Lasen, Ferreira & Davis, 2017), showing limited influence on Education faculties and IECTE programs. Study 2 reviewed literature that might guide early childhood teacher educators to embed ESD into programs. We found only a small number of ad hoc studies i.e. Agut, Ull & Minguet (2014). Studies align with systems change theorists (Meadows, 2009) who seek root causes to issues and ways to build new relationships/power structures to facilitate change for sustainability, breaking through barriers and resistance (Evans, Ferreira, Stevenson & Davis, 2017). Our paradigm is critical theory, challenging mainstream practices that exclude ESD in IECTE. Methodologies were audit study (Gaddis, 2018) (Study 1) and systematic literature review (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006) (Study 2), using rigorous search, analysis and synthesis protocols. Ethical concerns were potential over-simplification and lack of comprehensiveness (Grant & booth, 2009), overcome by searching multiple databases, reviewing possible publications manually, and having a third researcher validate selections. Lack of programs and published studies illuminate the disquieting state of ESD in IECTE practice and research. We argue for urgent commitment to ESD in all IECTE programs globally, and for comprehensive research/policy agendas to support new practices for ESD in our TE programs.

*sustainable development, initial early childhood teacher education, education for sustainable development, systematic literature review, program audit*

### Knowledge, understanding and values – Early childhood student teachers' views on species knowledge in the context of ESD

Tuula Skarstein (1), Lili-Ann Wolff (2), Frode Skarstein (1), (1) University of Stavanger, Norway; (2) University of Helsinki, Finland

The aim of this study is to investigate Norwegian and Finnish EC student teachers' views on the importance of species knowledge. Several researchers have expressed concerns on the poor species knowledge of today's children and adults (Palmberg et al., 2015). Ecological literacy, including species knowledge, is important for understanding environmental sustainability (Wolff et al. 2015). Knowledge of species also increases interest in nature and engagement in environmental issues (Lindemann & Matthies, 2005). This study used a mixed methods approach and the paradigm is realistic (quantitative method) and transformative (qualitative method). We collected information through an anonymous questionnaire, with close- and open-ended questions, and focus groups interviews. The quantitative data was analysed statistically (SSPS) and the qualitative through inductive content analysis. The study followed the national ethical guidelines of Finland and Norway. All participants gave their informed written consent and we used pseudonyms to protect the participants. Our results show that the majority of the students had use of their species knowledge during practice periods in kindergartens and considered species knowledge important for EC teachers as well as for sustainable development. In the open-ended answers, many students refer to nature excursions, curious children with many questions, the importance of being able to answer and further discuss children's questions about nature, as well as the importance of strengthening the children's relationship with and understanding of nature. Hopefully our study, through the voices of EC student teachers, can illustrate the importance of species knowledge as a part of ESD in EC teacher education.

*education for sustainable development, environmental education, early childhood teacher education, species knowledge, nature*

## **Sustainability in Finnish early childhood teacher education: Why does policy fail?**

Lili-Ann Wolff, Ann-Christin Furu, University of Helsinki, Finland

According to national policy, Finnish ECEC should promote sustainability. However, the implementation is slow. Our aim is to investigate why the reality fails to meet the recommendations. The teachers are central in the implementation (UNESCO, 2014), but there is a lack of research in this field (e.g., Hedefalk Almqvist & Östman 2015; Davis 2015; Somerville & Williams, 2015), especially in Finland (Wolff & Furu 2018; Wolff & Suomela, 2018). We base the study on policy documents and research literature on sustainability in ECEC settings (Ferreira & Davis 2015; Reunamo & Suomela 2013, etc.) and in ECEC teacher education (Evans, Ferreira, Davis & Stevenson 2016, etc.). We use triangulation of paradigms (multi paradigm inquiry, Kezar & Dee, 2011), of data collection methods and analysing methods. The paradigm is critical hermeneutics combined with realism. The data consist of 1) a questionnaire among staff at the Finnish universities offering ECEC teacher education, 2) mind maps drawn by 200 students, 3) learning diaries written by 28 students, and 4) a course evaluation questionnaire among the same 28 students. The study follows the Finnish ethical research guidelines (TENK). We asked the students for permissions and handled the data confidentially. The results show that the Finnish ECEC teacher education neglects sustainability and new students have marginal knowledge of sustainability. Yet, even a short course influences their understanding of the topic, and how they view their role as sustainability promoters. A comprehensive understanding (theoretically & practically) of sustainability must be the aim in ECEC teacher education.

*sustainability education, sustainability course, mind map, multi paradigm inquiry, Finnish sustainability education policy*

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### **D 15**

#### **NEW DYNAMIC ROLES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS AND CHILDREN INSPIRED BY TECHNOLOGY**

Self-organised symposium

Steering away from a deficit view on early childhood teachers' efficacy in implementing new technologies new research has revealed that even with the youngest of our children teachers are capable of integrating, reflecting and reconceptualising learning. Sociocultural approaches emphasising holistic development are driving this change in teachers' attitudes and beliefs. Teachers now see themselves as co-constructors and co-communicators whereas children from a very young age are considered to be competent explorers and designers of their own multidimensional and multifunctional learning. Learning and thinking are not considered personal, internal mental actions any more but rather social, situational and co-operational. Knowledge becomes fluid, negotiable and open to interpretations with the help of technology. Finally, in these studies pedagogies are revisited to emphasise creativity, diversity, sense of belonging and identity building.

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**Chair: Maria Hatzigianni, Melbourne University, Australia**

#### **Early childhood educators' insights in how to integrate the use of touchscreen technologies with children under three years of age in the UK, Norway, Australia and Greece.**

Torstein Unstad (1), Olga Fotakopoulou (2), Maria Hatzigianni (3), Jane O'Connor (2), Maria Dardanou (4), (1) University of Tromsø, United Kingdom; (2) Birmingham City University, United Kingdom; (3) Melbourne Graduate School of Education, Australia; (4) UiT - The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

The study explored the views and experiences of early childhood practitioners across four countries in relation to the use of touchscreen technology with children in their settings. This study builds on previous work from O'Connor and Fotakopoulou (2016), Hatzigianni and Kalaitzidis (2018) which explored parents' and Australian educators' views on the use of touchscreens by very young children (birth -three). Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory is used as an interpretative framework for the collection and presentation of data. This presentation will report on the qualitative data of the study. Focus group interviews were conducted with practitioners from the four different countries. Interviews were semi-structured, recorded and lasted for approximately 45 minutes. Inductive, thematic analysis was performed across data. The project was approved by the university ethics committee in each country (including consent forms and right to withdraw). Pseudonyms are used to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Findings suggest that practitioners are supporting the integration of new technologies in their everyday practices with very young children. They provide interesting examples on how they do this in their settings and elaborate on ways which could further guide their digital capabilities, understandings and implementations in the future (e.g., professional development; collegial and leadership support and others). This research will advance knowledge on how new technologies are utilised in diverse early childhood settings with the youngest of our children at the beginning of their educational journey. It will also provide insights into educators' needs, concerns and recommendations for relevant policies and research.

*early years settings, touchscreen technology, toddlers, infants, integration*

## **Designing multimodal digital stories in kindergarten: Teacher's pedagogical actions when using digital technology creatively with children**

Marianne Undheim, Margrethe Jernes, University of Stavanger, Norway

In this paper, the research aim is to explore what pedagogical actions are observed when two kindergarten teachers involve a group of six children in digital design processes. The study relates to previous research where teachers and young children are designing multimodal digital stories together (Fleer, 2014, 2017; Hesterman, 2011; Klerfelt, 2004; Skantz Åberg, 2017; Skantz Åberg et al., 2015). Most of these studies focus on multimodal digital stories made individually or in pairs, not in groups. The theoretical framework is within a social cultural paradigm, using concepts as guided interaction (Plowman & Stephen, 2007), sustained shared thinking (Siraj-Blatchford & Sylva, 2004), and spacious and narrow interactional patterns (Bae, 2012). The methodology is qualitative, with a multiple-case study design approach, focusing on contemporary events. The data material consists of field-observations of the design process, from the first inspiration to the finished product. The study is approved by Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD), and the participants have given their informed consent. Trust, loyalty and confidentiality have been essential in the interaction between the researcher and participants, both teachers and children. Preliminary findings show a complex interplay in the process where the teachers use a variety of methods to involve the children, e.g. explaining, instructing, inviting, motivating and supporting. There are indication towards the use of both closed and open dialogue in the making, which seems to be important for the results. Implications indicate the need for more knowledge on creative use of digital technology in ECEC and teacher education.

*multimodal digital stories, digital design processes, teachers, young children, creative use of digital technology*

## **Constructing togetherness around multiliteracy pedagogy: A case study of digital making**

Satu Valkonen (1), Reijo Kupiainen (1), Michael Dezuanni (2), (1) University of Tampere, Finland; (2) Queensland University of Technology, Australia

In this paper, we explore whether digital making can enhance togetherness by providing meaningful learning opportunities for children with diverse needs and interests. We approach digital making as design process which consist of available designs, the designing and the redesigned (Cope & Kalanzis, Kalanzis & Cope 2012). In Finnish Core Curriculum for ECEC (2016), multiliteracy is defined as a transversal competency and it is approached as a repertoire of different competencies and literacies. We suggest that multiliteracy should not be approached only as distinct skill-based activities delivered through direct individual instruction. Instead the focus should be more on social interaction and social experiences embedded in multiliteracy learning. Accordingly, this paper draws from sociocultural literacy research tradition where literacy is seen as socially constructed through talk and other language practices (Mills 2016). The data is based on participant observations and teaching experiences from multiliteracy workshops implicated in a low socio-economic suburban kindergarten in the Helsinki metropolitan area during autumn 2017. In this paper, we analyse the data collected from workshops dealing with tablet computers and smartphones with 17 4–5-years old. All the participants were informed on the purpose of the study and the informed consent were acquired properly. According our findings, engaging with digital making can easily deconstruct sense of togetherness and therefore teacher's acquirements to implicate inclusive pedagogy is salient. The quality of children's ICT and multiliteracy experiences are entwined with teachers' know-how to implicate new technology pedagogically and their knowledge to maintain positive and caring atmosphere amongst children.

*multiliteracy pedagogy, design, ICT, digital making, togetherness*

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## **D 16**

### **TEACHER WELLBEING AND BURNOUT**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Meera Oke, National College of Ireland, Ireland**

### **Burnout and work-life experience of Irish early childhood educators - Implications for policy and practice**

Meera Oke (1), Nóirín Hayes (2), Jonathan Lambert (1), Katarina Filipovic (1), (1) National College of Ireland, Ireland; (2) Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

To explore burnout and areas of work life among early childhood educators. Studies suggest that Early Childhood Educators experience stress and exhaustion (Løvgrén 2016). Some occupational features contribute to stress (OECD 2014). Burnout disrupts relationships, attachment and trust between children and educators, which play a critical role in learning and development of



young children (Ahnert, et.al. 2006). Bio-ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) and Burnout (Schaufeli, Leiter & Maslach 2009) underpin the study. This post positivist, mixed method research studied 170 Early Childhood Educators, using Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach, et.al, 2017) and Areas of Work Life (Leiter and Maslach, 2011). FGDs with 36 participants further provided insights. Typically experienced female, fulltime, working in a mix of settings participated. Participation was through dissemination of an electronic questionnaire, where responses could not be traced back to individuals or settings. FGD participants were provided with an information sheet and consent form. Participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time. While early childhood educators felt a positive sense of accomplishment they were emotionally exhausted. We found a statistically significant negative correlation between emotional exhaustion and satisfaction with workload and reward. An hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis predicted that, greater satisfaction with workload and better reward and recognition of work, has a reducing effect on levels of emotional exhaustion. These findings are discussed in light of the current Irish ECEC context. The study has implications for ECEC professional training, policy and practice to strengthen the quality of service delivery in Ireland.

*Burnout (Maslach Burnout Inventory MBI), areas of work life (AWL), Irish ECEC context, workload recognition reward, relationships*

### **The relationship between teacher wellbeing, child outcomes and program quality: An exploration of early childhood teacher educators' beliefs and current practices in teacher educator programs**

Amanda Moon, Angela Baum, Kerrie Schnake, Medical University of South Carolina, United States

This research investigates early childhood teacher (ECT) educators' beliefs regarding the importance of teacher well-being, connections between teacher well-being, child outcomes and program quality, and the ways in which ECT preparation programs address teacher well-being. While existing research documents a relationship between teacher wellbeing and child outcomes, little information is available regarding how ECT preparation programs address teacher wellbeing within their curricula. Previous research demonstrates that low teacher wellbeing predicts higher rates of child suspension and expulsion (Gilliam & Shahar, 2006), decreased emotional expressions (King, 2016) and lower academic outcomes (McClellan, 2015), suggesting the need for wellbeing content to be addressed in ECT preparation programs. Drawing on research on teacher wellbeing and child outcomes (Hall-Kenyon, 2014), researchers administered an exploratory survey to all members of a national ECT educator professional organization, of which 101 members completed. As part of the consent process, participants were informed that their responses were voluntary and anonymous. Results indicate that ECT educators believe teacher wellbeing is an important consideration related to program quality and agree that wellbeing has an impact on student outcomes, teacher turnover, class climate, and teacher relationships. However, respondents indicate that the ways in which their ECT preparation programs address wellbeing varies widely, if at all, and often in ways that are not systematic. It is critical that teachers are aware of the relationship between wellbeing, child outcomes, and program quality, and that wellbeing become a part of early childhood teacher preparation curricula.

*teacher wellbeing, early childhood teacher preparation, program quality, beliefs, perceptions*

### **Talking with attention to feeling: What do nursery practitioners have to say about participating in work discussion?**

Antonia Zachariou, Peter Elfer, University of Roehampton, United Kingdom

This paper aims to evaluate the impact of Work Discussion (WD), which was offered as a professional discussion forum for nursery practitioners. Young children are dependent on close emotional engagements with adults (Panksepp, 2013). This can become stressful for the practitioners, who may seek to protect themselves by distancing themselves from the children (Datler et al., 2010). WD facilitates a process of discussion, while probing to elicit further thoughts and feelings (Rustin, 2008). WD has been employed to strengthen practitioners' engagement with children and families (Elfer et al., 2018). An interpretive paradigm was adopted. This was a case study of a WD intervention with 14 practitioners in a nursery. Semi-structured interviews were carried out at the start, middle and end of the project, and were coded using theoretical thematic analysis. The interviews were conducted by an independent researcher and the participants' confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed. Despite practitioners mostly expressing negative dispositions before the start of WD, during the intervention they appeared satisfied with WD. Even though some participants expected more advice from the facilitators and less depth on exploring uncomfortable issues, all participants found the WD groups had benefits in their work with children, such as opening up emotionally, being less judgemental, and thinking more deeply about the children. WD made a clear contribution to the support and development of practitioners. We

suggest that WD is more widely adopted, to create a respectful and reliable space for nursery practitioners and subsequently strengthen the accountability of their practice.

*work discussion, professional reflection, nursery practitioners, intervention, impact*

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## **D 17**

### **STEM: PERCEPTIONS AND TRANSITIONS**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Tatiana Le-van, Moscow City University, Russia**

#### **Views of preschool teachers about their science centres in classrooms**

Ahmet Simsar, Yakup Doğan, Kilis 7 Aralık University, Turkey

Teachers should create science centres which have include different type of materials and this centres should be easily to reach by children. This study aimed to reveal the views of preschool teachers about quality and use of science centres in pre-school classrooms. Research literature on study about science education and science centres stated that preschool teachers have different issues related to create and use science centres which have sufficient materials (Aydın, 2004; Ayvaci, Devocioğlu, & Yiğit, 2002; Güler & Bıkmaz, 2002; Kıldan & Pektaş, 2009). The role of the science centre is significant for children's mental and cognitive development ((Dere & Ömeroğlu, 2001). Materials in science centre are so important to develop children scientific skills and learning concepts of science. Therefore, there are many materials that can be used in the pre-school science centre (Bredenkamp & Rosegrant, 1995). In this study, the case study was used. The study group consisted of 30 pre-school teachers. Twenty classrooms were observed in this study. The data were collected through a personal information form, science centre material observation form, and semi-structured teacher interviews form. All teachers were invited to participate. However, the study group selected from teachers who had permission. It was found that most of the preschool classrooms have science centres. Additionally, the most of children were interested in science activities but observations showed that there were not enough materials to do the science activities in their classrooms. It is suggested that science centres should be improve by real materials by teachers.

*science education, science centres, science activities, preschool teachers, children*

#### **Inquiry based STEM activities in transitions**

Stine Mariegaard (1), Bob Perry (2), (1) University of Southern Denmark, Denmark; (2) Charles Sturt University, Australia

This presentation draws on a study exploring children's learning of science in an inquiry based approach. It aims to analyse children's learning journeys as they make the transition from kindergarten to preschool class in Denmark. Recent study builds on the work in transition to school undertaken in European and many other countries and is stimulated by the current drive for STEM learning in early childhood. Transition has been characterized by van Gennep (1986) and others as movement between two states of 'safety and security' across an interval of uncertainty and change. The base of the analysis in this study of transition is the conceptual framework of learning journey by Wilder and Lillvist (2018). The paradigm in this study is action research. Inquiry based marble run activities were conducted in three kindergartens in spring, 2017 and in preschool classes in autumn, 2017, enabling the same children to be followed across the two settings. All inquiry classes were video-recorded and directed qualitative content analysis was conducted. All institutional requirements for ethics clearance, informed consent and participation were strictly adhered to. The learning journey model was applied to the analysed data and extended through the addition of new elements ensuring progressive transition. Inquiry based STEM activities can be used to assist in effective transitions between educational levels

*transition, learning journey, STEM, kindergarten, preschool class*

#### **STEM professional learning: The impact of the Little Scientists program in Australia**

Amy MacDonald, Shukla Sikder, Carmen Huser, Lena Danaia, Charles Sturt University, Australia

The Australian implementation of the Little Scientists STEM professional learning program has been evaluated to examine its impact upon: 1. the educators; 2. the context of the early childhood setting, including its culture; and 3. the children within the setting. There is a growing interest in the integration of STEM into early childhood education. This interest is driven by several factors, including the later pursuit of STEM professions, or equipping children with skills for the digital age. However, existing STEM-related professional development has targeted school educators, rather than early childhood educators. In this respect, the

Little Scientists program appears to be addressing a gap in the research literature. The evaluation study is informed by Murphy et al.'s (2018) effective STEM education framework, which encompasses STEM capabilities and dispositions, equity, transitions, educational practices, and educator capacities. The study uses a mixed-method explanatory sequential design that encompasses four phases: 1. Program content analysis; 2. Online surveys (Partner Organisations and Trainers' Survey, and Pre- and Post-Occasion Educator Surveys); 3. Professional Learning Networks; and 4. Program delivery context analysis. Informed consent has been gained from all participants in the research. The Little Scientists program has helped educators develop their confidence in implementing inquiry-based STEM activities. There is a significant difference between the pre- and post-occasion samples in the participants' perceptions of their STEM knowledge. The program has fostered educators' positive attitudes towards STEM and inquiry-based learning. The program appears to have impacted positively upon children's STEM learning opportunities in early childhood settings.

*STEM education, professional learning, evaluation research, educator confidence, inquiry-based learning*

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## **D 18**

### **TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT CHILDREN'S LEARNING: WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN (INTER)NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION RESEARCH?**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium will focus on the question of the benefit of international comparative studies in early childhood research. It also raises the question whether there is a consensus within the national frameworks between the actors (educators, teachers, children, heads of day-care centres) on what they understand by children's participation and learning. These questions will be explored by summarising the results of recent and previous studies on the views of the various actors involved in children's educational processes (cf. Sandberg et al., 2015; Brostrøm, 2015).

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**Chair: Anja Seifert, University of Education, Germany**

#### **How preschool children's learn: Different beliefs (Russian data)**

Igor Shiian, Irina Vorobyeva, Nikolay Veraksa, Evgeniy Krashenninnikov-Khait, Moscow City University, Russia

The aim of this comparative study is to investigate and compare, how early childhood teacher students, school and pre-school teachers from reflect and describe children's learning and participation. The study is an extension of previous comparative international studies of the beliefs of preschool teachers about children's learning and participation (Veraksa, Shiyan 2014, Bröström et al, 2012). The theoretical background are socio-constructivism by Vygotsky theory of, constructivism by Piaget, idea of participation childcare by Bertram. The research was conducted as a quantitative study using a structured questionnaire. Content and quantitative analysis were used for the data interpretation. All participants of every sub-study were informed about aims and content of the study. The confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed. Preschool teachers are more attached to organized forms of learning with the leading role of adult than students, who estimate more the role of child's community and free play. From the other hand pre-school teachers are more likely to see free play and situations build on child's initiative as characteristics of learning comparing to the school teachers, who tend to underestimate these factors. At the same time they both mention all items in "how children learn" and "preconditions of learning". In general representations of teachers can be characterized as overly patronizing (or at least underestimate) the actual activity of children. The research opens up opportunities for comparison of the questionnaire results and the tools of evaluation of the quality of preschool education and developing new competences in preschool teacher training.

*preschool learning, belief, child's activity, participation, teacher*

#### **Children's learning from different viewpoints in Estonia**

Aino Ugaste, Maire Tuul, Tallinn University, Estonia

The aim of this study is to investigate similarities and differences in children's, students, teachers and heads' views on children's learning and participation in preschool. The study is a part of large study aimed to ascertain teachers', children's and heads' view on children's learning and participation in Germany, Estonia and Russia. The theoretical framework of the study is social-cultural with reference to Dewey, Vygotsky, and Rogoff. According to the social-cultural theory adults play essential role in promoting and supporting children's meaningful learning. We used questionnaire as a research method. Adults filled the paper-based questionnaire and with children we carried out questionnaire-based interviews. The respondents were guaranteed non-maleficence, confidentiality, anonymity and with possibility to withdraw and not to complete particular items. The study revealed

that preschool teachers, heads and students understood children's learning and participation quite similarly valuing children's own initiative and play more than direct teaching. School teachers stressed adults' role in children's learning slightly more and play slightly less than preschool teachers while children perceived learning mainly as a teacher-led activity. Knowledge about different parties' ideas is important for supporting teachers training and their professional development.

*Estonia, learning, participation, adults, children*

#### **Children's learning from different viewpoints in Germany**

Christa Kieferle (1), Anja Seifert (2), (1) Staatsinstitut für Frühpädagogik, Germany; (2) PH Ludwigsburg, Germany

The aim of this study is to explore whether there is a common understanding of children's learning and participation among those involved in the child's educational process. These questions will be explored by summarizing the results of recent and previous studies on different groups of professionals. The German data will be compared with the results of other countries. The study is an extension of previous international studies on learning and participation (Johansson & Sandberg 2010), investigations of preschool teachers (Bröstrom et al. 2015), elementary teachers (2011, 2012, 2013, 2015), children (Sandberg et al. 2015), heads of preschools (2016) and students of early childhood pedagogy (2017, 2018). The theoretical background is a complex of socio-culturally oriented learning theories dealing with activity, participation and social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978; Stetsenko, 1999; Säljö, 2005; Carlgren & Marton, 2000; Damasio, 2004; Lave, 1993). Data comes from mixed method studies, group interviews, guided single interviews and quantitative studies. Content and quantitative analysis were used for interpretation of data. All participants of every sub-study were informed about aims and content of the study. Their (and the parents' of the children) permission were obtained for interview and voice recordings. The confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed. The German data show a mixed picture of the views on learning and participation of actors involved in the child's educational process. The research will open for theoretical discussions about the benefits of international comparative studies and it shows the need for further training for staff of educational institutions.

*learning, participation, preschool, education, professional development*

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**D 19**

#### **THE IMPACT OF AGE AND GENDER ON PEDAGOGY**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Maria Birbili, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece**

#### **Pedagogy of gender differences for early childhood education: Italy-Brazil dialogues**

Daniela Finco (1), Francesca Marone (2), (1) Federal University of São Paulo, Brazil; (2) University of Naples Federico II, Italy

The objective is to investigate the gender perspective in early childhood education and teacher education, identifying links between public policies in Italy and Brazil, identifying future challenges. In the history of Pedagogy there was a late discovery of the gender relations that permeate the educational processes of children, as well as the teacher training process (CAMBI, 2000). Thus, the Critical Feminist Pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy are the areas that support this research. Education for the emancipation of gender relations (LEONELLI, 2011; SEVESO, 2016) should be of relevance in the initial training of all education professionals (ULIVIERI, 2013; ROSEMBERG, 2011), for their potential for social transformation as pointed out by researchers. Participatory action-research seemed relevant for inquiry that can advance knowledge about educators. Bibliographic research on gender, teacher training and public policies and interviews, conducted by authors, with gender researchers, focus groups with educators and pedagogical coordinators. The study was conducted with a Brazilian and Italian school that work on this subject. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants involved. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The information collected is used only for the purposes of this research and related scientific work. It shows the challenge is the inclusion of young children, girls and boys, in the development of gender policies for education. Research has an impact on educational practices of the emancipation of gender relations, respect, and appreciation of diversity and to favour practices of activism political.

*gender, public policies, diversity, teacher training, human rights*

## **University training of early childhood educators: A longitudinal retrospective on motivations for course choice, attendance and completion among male students, to aid understanding of future career trajectories**

Elisa Truffelli, Lucia Balduzzi, University of Bologna, Italy

Although benefits deriving from the mixed gender composition of educational teams in ECEC are widely recognised (Drange, Rønning, 2017; Huber, Traxl, 2017; Van Polanen, Colonna, Fukkink, Tavecchio, 2016), male workers are a minority. The aim of this study is to better understand the experience of male participants in training for this profession, based on an analysis of career indicators among men enrolled in ECEC teacher training. The proportion of male students enrolled in Italian degree courses in Education Sciences remains low (ISTAT 2018) and the male presence in ECEC work teams is even more marginal (Eurostat, 2018). Nevertheless, studies undertaken in Italy on this topic are scarce, especially empirical studies. Based on theories of gender segregation in education (Passeron, Bourdieu, 1970) and deploying mixed methodology, this study undertook longitudinal analysis of 8 students' cohorts (1569 individuals) from the degree course "Educator in Childhood Services", University of Bologna. We processed the data in aggregated form and made it anonymous. The research design adopted a sequential mixed method model. Firstly, a correlational study revealed significant differences in career indicators by gender. Then a qualitative enquiry through semi-structured interviews explored reasons for non-completion among male students. To increase the male presence in ECEC work teams, effective intervention is needed in the university learning paths leading to this profession, not just within the profession itself. Therefore, it's important to monitor levels of engagement and reasons behind non-completion among male ECEC students, with a view to considering how to mitigate the latter.

*males in ECEC teachers training, dropout rate, reasons of non-completion among male ECEC students, longitudinal study, mixed methodology*

## **Perceived benefits for mature early years' educators of degree level academic studies on their professional and pedagogical practice**

Annette J. Kearns, Patsy Stafford, Maynooth University, Ireland

This research aims to study the perceived benefits for mature early years' educators of degree studies on professional and pedagogical practice. Mature early childhood educators come to undergraduate degree programmes with funds of knowledge (Moll, et al., 2005) garnered over years of practice. Research indicates that experience is the richest resource for adults' learning (Knowles, 1984). The rapid rate of change in the ECEC sector in Ireland means professionals have to constantly upskill and improve their knowledge (Urban, 2017). Transformative learning theory and Mezirow's work (1995) inform this research. Qualitative research was undertaken with mature students on an early years' degree programme which aims to sustain a rich, vibrant discourse of theory to inform the pedagogical practice. Data was collected through the use of questionnaires, focus groups and interviews. Analyses of data was independently interpreted by each researcher using the three dimensions of the professional profile: knowledge(s), practice and values (Urban et al. 2017). Informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, the power relationships between participants and the researchers were key ethical considerations and ethical approval was sought from the University. Results indicated that mature students perceived they had attained enhanced professional and pedagogical practice through integration of reflective skills and theoretical knowledge. Early years' undergraduate programme providers should acknowledge that practicing mature students' capacity for reflection on theoretical underpinnings combined with their funds of knowledge from practice can have a transformative effect on their future professional practice.

*mature students, funds of knowledge, transformative learning, professional and pedagogical practice, theoretical knowledge*

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## **D 20**

### **THE ROLE OF THE ADULT IN SUPPORTING LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Zlatica Jursová Zacharová, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia**

#### **Literacy and language competencies among children from excluded rural communities in Slovakia**

Zlatica Jursová Zacharová, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia

The study was aimed to monitor how to implement the narrative format (NF) model in school education in the primary level (6-8 years). The results of the reading competencies in Slovakia and abroad indicate insufficient reading competencies, especially among young children from excluded rural communities (Kyuchukov, 2000). Story-telling and story-reading contribute to the improvement of classroom relationships, developing narrative competences, vocabulary (Snow, 2001; Ahren, Garcia Bermejo, & Fleta, 2017) and children's memory (Sarica & Usluek, 2016). In the previous series of research, we found that working with the NF

model helps to develop narrative and reader competencies in children. Insufficient social conditions and poor competencies in the language of instruction limit the possibilities of developing literacy and may cause early school leaving (FRA MIDIS II, 2016). The teachers were trained to apply a narrative format model with Roma children in the Slovak language. Prior to introducing the NF model into education, pupils' competencies were assessed by the teachers. During the NF education, children's activity was continuously video-recorded. The teachers were interviewed about the children's improvement. The children participated voluntarily and anonymously in the NF education programme with their parents' informed consent. The teachers engaged in the project concluded, that using the NF in education helps to motivate their pupils, the children paid more attention also in the other subjects, they perceived more information and had better verbal memory. These results may suggest that story-telling could help primary pupils from excluded rural communities to develop some key-competencies to improve school achievement.

*literacy, Roma children, narrative competencies, teacher training, primary pupils*

### **Language development in early childhood**

Maria David, Katalin Zsuzsa Kecskeméti-Székely, Boglarka Farago, Eszterhazy Karoly University, Hungary

We aimed to investigate the vocabulary development of children between 2-3 years, according to environmental effects. The language development basically have big variability. Kauschke's (1999) Minimal criteria of typical language development are 50 words expressive vocabulary in 18 month. Rescorla's (1989). Normative criteria: late talker is a child, if don't have 50 words expressive vocabulary until the age of 2. Newbury (2005) emphasis that genes influencing SLI (Specific language impairment), interact with one another and the environment. The conceptual framework based on the model of Newbury (at all, 2005). According to them behind of SLI (specific language impairment) stands three different factors. One of them is the environment, and there are two more genetic factors. In our research we focus on the environmental factor. We suggest that, behind different expressive vocabulary level is different social background of children. Participants are parents of 1–3 years-old children, who were asked to fill in questionnaire the Hungarian version of MacArthur Bates Communicative Development Inventory-III. (Kas et al. 2017). The sample of parents more than 500. This study has low ethical risk. Participating in this study is voluntary and anonymity. Participants are adults, get acquainted with the aims and terms of the research and sign an informed consent. We found typical development of vocabulary, quantitative jump of words after 18 month. We found significant correlation between vocabulary development of children and mothers' qualification level. Those children, who were care in nursery, had richer vocabulary. Important to improve the competence of parents about vocabulary development.

*language, vocabulary, development, environment, early childhood,*

### **The potential of Swedish school-age edu-care to support pupils' language and literacy development**

Birgit Andersson, Umeå University, Sweden

This presentation focus on how Swedish school-age educare (SSAE), from staffs' perspective, can contribute to pupils' language and literacy development and what it takes to comply. A new part in the curriculum clarifies purposes of teaching in SSAE wherein one core content area is Language and communication (National Agency for Education, 2016). A previous project noticed SSAE's ability to compensate for language-weak home environments and to support pupils with other mother tongue (Magnusson, et.al, 2016). But the last quality inspection emphasize that the communicative learning environment must be improved (The Schools Inspectorate, 2018). In a sociocultural perspective (Vygotskij, 2001) analysis draw on Illeris' (2015) learning theories and concepts. Within a qualitative research paradigm and to obtain richer empirical material (Fontana & Frey, 1994) data is gathered through observation to cover staffs' actions and interviews to cover their experiences, interpretations and views (Wilson & Sapsford, 2006). The interviews were recorded and transcribed. A consent form, including information about the project and informants rights was provided to all staff involved. Informed consent was negotiated with the participants and pseudonyms replaced their names. Preliminary findings show that in the staff's ambitions to contribute to the pupils' language and literacy through planned activities, many informal learning opportunities seem to be lost. It can relate to the staffs' awareness of learning environments and interpretation of SSAE's assignment, the local organization and the position the staff take and receive. By making staff's contribution obvious may pupils' language and literacy development and the quality in SSAE increase.

*interaction dimension, formal and informal learning, complete school, everyday language and school language, pupils 6-9 year*

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## **D 21**

### **CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES**

Self-organised symposium

Children born in adverse circumstances, where poverty and stress limit possibilities needs to be protected with the purpose to promote their rights and guarantee their wellbeing. For this reason, it is important to measure and understand how children's development evolves from a comprehensive perspective in their sociocultural contexts. This symposium debates the role of

nutrition, quality of education and ICT in the early years of children who lived in developing countries, especially focused on the Colombian contexts.

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**Chair: Elsa Escalante, Universidad del Norte, Colombia**

#### **Psychometric Analysis of the Engle Scale in Colombia**

Mery De Jesus (1), Elsa Escalante (1), Hermy Quiroz (2), Marilin Barros (2), (1) Universidad del Norte, Colombia; (2) Deutsch School Barranquilla, Colombia

This research aimed to conduct a psychometric analysis of the Engle Development Scale in a sample of six municipalities of the Colombian Caribbean Region with the purpose to assess the reliability of this scale validated by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) examine item difficulty and understand whether the Engle scale is cultural relevant for a population at risk living in the Colombian Caribbean Region. The study showed consistent results with the literature review related to the validation studies of this scale in Paraguay, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Peru. (BID, 2011); (Vegas, BID 2014). PRIDI is a regional initiative to evaluate wellbeing of children and families in Latino America based on a brief set of appropriate and culturally applicable indicators of children's core development dimensions (Verdisco, 2014; Landers, 2014; Raikes, 2016). The paradigm was positivistic. This quantitative research is a correlational study that explored the psychometric properties of Engle Scale. The sample was 200 children and their primary caregivers; for a total of 400 subjects IDB provided permission to use the Engle Scale. Ethical approval from Universidad del Norte Institutional Review Board was obtained. The study was approved by the regional Office of Child Welfare and providers of public ECE services. Parents provided consents for their children to participate. Alphas were: cognition 0.79, motor 0.67, and language 0.78. CFA showed that the minimum function test statistic =497.62, DF=206, P-value<0.0001 Cultural adaptations are required to provide reliable results for the Colombian Contexts that can addressed by political decisions.

*child development, measures, Colombia, culture, policy*

#### **Digital leisure and the development of reading competences: Practical implications for educational agents co-responsible for the quality of life of the second childhood**

Laura Villarreal, Valeria Devoz, Elsa Escalante, Julitza Mendoza, Shadya De la Hoz, Maria Carmona, Andrea Rojas, Universidad del Norte, Colombia

This article analyses the relationship between the use of ICT in children's development, specifically in reading competence. Research has reported positive and negative aspects of the use that children give to ICTs and the way this affects the performance of reading during the second childhood. Digital Leisure was associated with videogames, internet, television and computers. Researchers, policy makers, and practitioners may understand how children spend their digital leisure time outside the regular school day and identify their association with academic outcomes (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2019) The study was illuminated by the Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), which is an ecological systems theory explains how human development is influenced by different types of environmental systems. The present correlational quantitative study explored the national results of TERCE 2013. The sample included 4,018 children. Data were collected through questionnaires completed by students, their parents and teachers. This is a secondary data analysis from the public TERCE microdata from the Colombian national sample (Third regional comparative and explanatory study) 2013 Results of the multilevel analysis showed that children who spend more hours using video games and computers during their digital leisure time presented higher increase of TERCE reading scores. Parents and teachers would need to take into consideration the importance of digital leisure time of children for the development of language skills. From this perspective, it is necessary to reflect about educational strategies to create safe and enriched environments for children's use of ICT tools in family and educational contexts.

*ICT, language, TERCE, Colombia, digital leisure*

#### **Association of the duration of breastfeeding and the development of eating behaviours in children in vulnerable condition: Case Colombia**

Marilyn Anturi (1), Elsa Escalante (1), Carlos Rincón (1), Jesús Estrada (1), Sonia Suarez (2), Alejandra Herdenez (1), (1); (2) Ministerio de Educación de Paraguay, Paraguay

In this quantitative research, we look for an association between exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) and BMI and the risk of overweight. It is a non-experimental, correlational design of the duration of breastfeeding, with scales of satiety, responsiveness and BMI. An interesting study conducted in Netherlands concluded that children who were ever breastfed in their early infancy had lower BMI and a lower fat mass index than those who were never breastfed (Vogelezang et al., 2018); also, two meta-analysis found an

inverse correlation between longer breastfeeding and BMI and overweight risk (Harder et al., 2005; Yan et al., 2016). According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (1), exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) is defined as the practice of only giving breast-milk for the first six months of life to the infant, excluding any other type of food or liquid that does not come from the mom's breast. Authors such as Sparks & Radnitz, and Birch, Fisher, Grimm-Thomas, Marke, Sawyer & Johnson illuminated the study. The paradigm is positivistic. The present correlational quantitative included a sample of 175 boys and girls living in the Colombian Caribbean Region. Logistic regression analysis was conducted. Ethical approval from Universidad del Norte Institutional Review Board (IRB) was obtained. Parents provided consent to participate in the study. The data do not allow to identify a statistically significant association between the duration of breastfeeding with the scales indicated. Consequently, it is necessary to extend this research using a larger sample than the participants with diverse contextual characteristics.

*nutrition, breastfeeding, children, eating behaviours, Colombia*

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## D 22

### **CURIOSITY, JOY AND HUMOUR; THREE KEY CONCEPTS FOR ECEC?**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Eleni Loizou, University of Cyprus, Cyprus**

#### **Curious on curiosity - Discipline-based curiosity in early childhood?**

Anne Lynngård, Marianne Presthus Heggen, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL), Norway

Research question: How is curiosity constituted among teachers from different disciplines in early childhood teacher education? Both the Norwegian Framework Plan for Kindergartens, and earlier research point to children's curiosity as the foundation of scientific exploration and understanding of natural science. No exact definition of curiosity exist, and there is little research on the nature of curiosity. Although curiosity and wonder are considered as fundamental for development in any society, there is a lack of knowledge and ideas on how pedagogy can nurture or inhibit curiosity. Former work on this area of are e.g. Lindholms (2018) paper on promoting curiosity, but also Jirout and Klahr's categories on curiosity (2012). In a cultural-historical context we also discuss if there is a discipline-based understanding of curiosity. As Natural science teachers in early childhood educations, we may have different views on curiosity then Teachers from other disciplines. We are using in a cultural-historical framework (e.g. Fler & Pramling 2014). Our analysis is based on different theoretical understandings and categories of curiosity and Wonder (Jirout and Klahr, 2012, Lindholm 2018) Cultural-historical context. We used semi-structured interview. The interviews were analysed using a conventional qualitative content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). The participants get full anonymity and the results are treated confidentially according to ethical standards. The Teachers view on curiosity are not funded in a particular theory. There are some signs of discipline-based understanding of curiosity. There is a need to distinguish between curiosity and wonder, and more knowledge on how to promote both

*curiosity, wonder, early childhood education, science education, discipline-based understanding*

#### **Multiple creative methods to explore young children's humor**

Eleni Loizou, Evi Loizou, University of Cyprus, Cyprus

The aim of the study is to provide methodological insights into how we can best investigate and describe children's, 4-8 years, abilities to produce and appreciate visual/verbal humour. Theories explain why people laugh (e.g. Superiority Theory, La Fave, Haddad and Maesen, 2007; Incongruity Theory, Martin, 2007). McGhee suggests that children's humour development is closely related to their cognitive skills (McGhee, 1979). The Theory of the Absurd and the Empowerment Theory (Loizou, 2005) describe how children laugh at what violates their existing schemata and at situations which make them feel empowered. Specific published studies on young children's humour, using the framework of the Theory of the Absurd and the Empowerment theory, were analysed and contrasted based on the stimuli used, their data collection methods; drawings, cartoons, photos and narratives, and humour findings; elements of humour appreciation and production. Consent forms were used in the original studies, and in this study the use of quotes and artefacts as originally provided respond to research ethics. The data and processes analysed suggest that stimuli used to study young children's humour appreciation need to be carefully chosen and their impact on the outcomes to be acknowledged. The use of visual data collection methods provide opportunities for children to exhibit humour within the Theory of the Absurd, while, the choice of verbal data collection methods can provide more opportunities for data that relates to



the Empowerment Theory. A list of new methodological suggestions is proposed, which researchers can consider when planning to study young children's humour.

*young children's humour, research tools, verbal humour, visual humour, research with children*

### **Emotional affordances of multiliteracies pedagogy: A case study of young children's joyful interaction in literacy learning endeavours**

Alexandra Nordström, Kristiina Kumpulainen, University of Helsinki, Finland

The purpose of this paper is to research how young children's joy is interactionally constructed in literacy learning endeavours. Understand how joyful interaction emerges is important, as joy is acknowledged as an important component for learning and human functioning in general. There is little published research on social contexts that create opportunities for children to joyfully engage in learning activities (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014; Lewis et al., 2008). We investigate how a pedagogy of multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996) creates opportunities for children's joyful interaction during their literacy learning activities. The theoretical framework is based on a socio-constructivist perspective and joy is approached as culturally embedded and socio-materially constructed in interaction (Fleer et al., 2017; Stone & Thompson, 2014). In this study, we use the notion of joyful interaction to underscore the social and situational origins of emotions. The methodological approach is embedded in an ethnographic perspective (Gee & Green, 1998). Observations are guided by the Mosaic approach (Clark & Moss, 2011), where multi-method and visual research tools are applied in exploring joyful interaction. The research follows the ethical guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity. Matters of positioning oneself as a researcher in the context, and reflexivity towards the research process are considered. This paper argues that joy is an important feature of children's engagement in educational activities. Joyful interaction can generate novel thoughts, activities, and relationships, all of which potentially mediate children's learning and wellbeing. Our work has implications for researching and understanding children's joyful interaction, and for pedagogical practice in early childhood education.

*emotions, joy, multiliteracies pedagogy, interaction, case study*

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## **D 23**

### **STRATEGIES FOR A BETTER GENDER BALANCE IN ECEC**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium informs about recent research on strategies for the involvement of men in early years provision in the US and the UK. Although the issue of men in ECEC has been discussed in both countries already two decades ago (Cameron, Moss & Owen 1999; Nelson & Sheppard 1992), the proportion of male workers remained low in both countries, whereas strategies for a better balance in Norway and Germany showed at least some results (Peeters, Emilsen & Rohrmann 2015). New approaches position projects for a gender-mixed workforce within contexts of inclusion and diversity. The developments presented in the symposium build up on recent governmental initiatives as well as grass-root initiatives. Research results point out that positive collaboration, reflection on gender biases, and gender sensitive leadership within ECE settings are keys to the successful recruitment, support and retention of male practitioners.

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**Chair: Tim Rohrmann, University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Hildesheim, Germany**

### **Open the front door and close the back door: Making recruitment and retention intentional and inescapable for men in early learning programs**

Jean-Yves Plaisir, Borough of Manhattan Community College, United States

This three-year inquiry aims to uncover effective strategies for engaging more men in the early learning (EL) workforce in the United States (US). It evolves at a time of major restructuring in American EL programs. This study draws on research that previously analysed male teachers' impact on fulfilling young children's social and emotional needs (Provost, 2011; Burn & Pratt-Adams, 2015) with focus on gender inclusion in EL programs (Flouri et al., 2015). Theoretically, male teachers challenge gender stereotypes while also expanding social and emotional experiences for young children in curricular activities (Sumsion, 2000b; Hedlin & Aberg, 2013). Since the American EL system is undergoing major reform while the study unfolds, the researcher utilises qualitative designs that include place-based observations and interviews with 16 male educators of differing ethnic backgrounds (i.e., Black, Latino and White) to collect timely empirical data and formulate actionable recommendations for guiding policies and practices about gender inclusion in early years programs. APA (2018) standards were applied to ensure confidentiality, and identifiable information was coded and encrypted for human subject protection. The data suggest that intensive trainings on gender bias, societal challenges, culturally mediated behaviours, and inclusive teaching practices for EL administrators and

teachers are key for making recruitment and retention intentional and inescapable for increasing men's participation in early-years programs. Lastly, ongoing analyses of early learning staff compositions focusing on inclusionary policies and practices as well as massive recruitment and retention of mixed-gender staff may reduce the dearth of men in early years settings.

*men teachers, early learning, recruitment, retention, gender inclusion*

#### **Lessons learned! Exploring the efforts of partners to build a mixed gender EYE workforce**

Simon Brownhill, University of Bristol, United Kingdom

The aim of this research set out to explore the lessons that can be learned from practising professionals, educational settings, training institutions, support groups and policy makers in their efforts to build a mixed gender EYE workforce. Research by Peeters et al. (2015) and Brody (2015) recognise various endeavours undertaken in international contexts to increase the number of men who work in sector equivalents in EYE but acknowledge the limited success that these have had. This research considers practical ways in which different partners can effectively help to improve male representation in the EYE workforce. Underpinning this research are the works of Erikson (1963), Vygotsky (1978) and Bronfenbrenner (1979) which collectively provide a theoretical foundation for understanding the role of males in childhood development, thus emphasising their importance in EYE settings. With a strong subscription to the interpretivist paradigm, the research embraced a mixed-methods approach to data collection, conducting semi-structured individual telephone interviews with four male professionals in the EYE sector (35 minutes each) and analysing contributions (n9) to an online special interest group post. Of the ethical considerations applicable to this research, informed consent and participant anonymity were carefully managed through the use of detailed written consent forms and gender-appropriate pseudonyms (BERA, 2018). Analysis of the findings stress the importance of positive collaborations, the sustained investment of time and available funding, and 'creativity and ingenuity to enlist men into participation in early childhood settings' (Honig, 2006: 686). The research has positive implications for policy and practice at all levels.

*men in early years, mixed gender, partners, lessons learned, workforce*

#### **Gender diversification of the early years workforce: Recruiting, supporting and retaining male practitioners**

Jo Warin, Joann Wilkinson, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

We identify the barriers that prevent more men taking up employment in ECE and we develop a workable theoretical framework to rationalise the value of including men within ECE. Only 2% of the UK's ECE workforce are male (DfE, 2017). The inclusion of more male pedagogues in ECE can make a vital contribution to the development of a more gender egalitarian society. There has been a growing recognition that the greater involvement of men within the caring professions has the potential to transform gender relations (Connell, 1995; Brownhill, 2011; Warin and Wernersson, 2016). In England the DfE have recently asserted that "we want more men to choose to work in the early years sector" (2017 p24). The study will apply a new theory of gender flexible pedagogy (Warin and Adriany, 2015). This concept draws on Butler (1990) to emphasize how early childhood educators, both male and female, can model a flexible approach to the performance of gender, disrupting prescriptions for men to model masculinities and women to model femininities. The study draws on interviews and focus groups with ECE practitioners, managers, training providers and careers/ECE advisers. Assurance of confidentiality and informed consent was necessary for all participants. The study was approved by Lancaster University Ethics Committee. Preliminary findings indicate that leadership within ECE settings is key to successful recruitment, support and retention of male practitioners. The study will contribute new knowledge as the basis for developing a clear theoretical rationale and practical resources to create more gender-diverse, gender-sensitive approaches.

*men, gender, ECE workforce, recruitment, support*

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## **D 24**

### **ENABLING PEDAGOGIES AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LEARNING**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium will offer critical reflections on evidence-based pedagogies and professional practice to support children's learning. Established research shows that the quality of education and care that children experience at an early age offers immense opportunities for their development. However what is not yet fully known is the intersections of factors that constitute quality early childhood care and education, and how best to improve the quality of provision at scale to support children's learning. The papers in this symposium present a range of inter-related studies and themes on practitioner agency, democratic education, pedagogical practices and engagement with children to initiate critical reflections on the important issue of supporting quality

pedagogies and practices. The discussion will draw on the breadth of expertise of the early years and primary academic team from UCL Institute of Education and their rich portfolio of national and international work in early childhood and primary education.

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**Chair: Lynn Ang, UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom**

**Facilitated action research as a methodology for developing quality ECE through practitioner agency**

Amanda Ince, Eleanor Kitto, Trevor Male, UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom

The research project aimed to explore the influence of Facilitated Action Research (FAR) on practitioner agency and pedagogical leadership with a view to considering the implications for developing quality early childhood education (ECE). Facilitated action research (FAR) is a scaffolded approach to action research based upon Carr and Kemmis (1986). It promotes self-reflective enquiry with a view to improving practice (McNiff, 2002). This study adopts a socio-cultural view of professional learning within the complexity of the current Early Years contexts drawing upon a re-conceptualisation of pedagogical leadership (Male and Palaologou, 2018) in the wider debates over the nature of and measurement of quality practice in early childhood education (Moss, 2014). A qualitative, interpretative paradigm is adopted in analysing practitioner narratives to consider their perspectives on professional learning and its influence on improving practice, through their participation in the FAR. Informed consents were gained following EECERA ethical guidelines. Ethical issues were identified in balancing the dual roles of facilitating and researching professional learning. This was addressed through the methodological decision making process and through awareness in interpreting the data. Analysis of data highlighted FAR as an empowerment strategy in developing practitioner agency. Pedagogical leadership was enhanced through dialogue and reflective evaluation of practice. Participating in FAR as a professional learning tool could support introspective measures of quality and practitioner agency in contrast to external accountability agendas.

*facilitated action research (FAR), practitioner agency, professional learning, quality in ECE, pedagogical leadership*

**Two-year-old and-three-year-old children's writing: The contradictions of children's and adults' conceptualisations**

Helen Bradford, Wyse Dominic, UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom

This paper reports findings on two-year-old and-three-year-old children's writing. It uncovers what children of this age already know about its functions and purposes. There is evidence to suggest that children as young as two are beginning to demonstrate their understanding of writing; yet this remains limited in comparison with evidence which relates to children from the age of three upwards (Rowe, 2008; Rowe and Neitzel, 2010; Lancaster, 2012; Quinn and Bingham, 2018). Building on Foucaultian understanding of discourse, where discourse encompasses conceptualisations of individuals in relation to phenomena associated with their world (Veyne, 2010), a discourse of writing was uncovered incorporating both children's and adults' conceptualisations of writing. The research took the form of an in-depth qualitative study located in the community of an early years setting in the UK. Data sets included field notes, classroom observations, analyses of writing, and interview transcripts. Parents were asked to give consent to participation for themselves and their child in the study as a legal safeguard (Alderson, 2009). Dockett, Einarsdottir and Perry's (2012) concept of assent and dissent (involving a combination of verbal, behavioural, and emotional signifiers) was adopted throughout. Contradictions were found between the knowledge that was evident in the extent, depth and confidence of the two-year-old and three-year-old children's knowledge about writing and the adults' lack of knowledge and lack of recognition that children were writing. The paper illuminates how the confidence of very young children's understanding of writing can be matched by pedagogy which authentically and productively extends their understandings.

*young children writing, effective writing pedagogy, two-year-olds and ECEC, curriculum policy, pre-school provision*

**Creating professional learning communities to enhance children's learning from an international perspective**

Lynn Ang, UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom

This paper presents a critical reflection of the variety of ways in which professional learning communities are created across a range of international contexts to enhance children's learning. The paper will draw on the findings and conceptual ideas of research undertaken in two contrasting settings in England and Japan. The research aimed to understand practitioners' perceptions of their role as facilitators and enablers of children's learning; the opportunities and challenges they face in developing a shared community of practice. The study is informed by evidence which shows the importance of professional learning communities as a critical space for enhancing practice to impact on children's learning (Pianta et al 2017 Early Childhood Professional Development). A sociocultural ecological framework underpins the paper. The study conceptualises professional learning within an ecological model defined by the mediating role of practitioners and their close relationships with the children and families in supporting learning. The research is based on a qualitative semi-ethnographic methodology using practitioner

interviews, observations and document analysis of practitioner activity records as methods. Participants' informed consent were sought at the start of the study. The paper will offer ethical reflections of participants' role in the research and the complexity of obtaining ongoing consent. The findings showed the important role of professional learning communities in supporting and enhancing practice. It is also showed the context-specific nature of professional learning. The study highlighted the need for further research on professional learning and how it is conceptualised across different contexts, and the impact on children's learning.

*professional learning, children's learning, practitioner, ecology of practice, qualitative*

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# Symposium Set E

13:30 – 14:50, Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2019

## E 1

### EXPLORATIONS OF LEADERSHIP

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Gerry Mulhearn, Charles Sturt University, Australia**

#### **An exploration of leadership in high quality early childhood education services**

Sene Gide, Boundary Lane Children's Centre, Australia

The aim of this study was to explore directors' and educators' inside-out (Harrist et al., 2007) perspectives on leadership in ECEC services rated as Exceeding National Quality Standards. Effective leadership is widely accepted as a key component of high quality ECEC (Colmer, Waniganayake & Field, 2015). According to Siraj-Blatchford & Manni (2007) implementing effective leadership practices without skilled and committed leaders is difficult. The constructivist paradigm which emphasises inductive and interpretive methods, assumes that absolute realities are unknowable (Hatch, 2002), reality is socially constructed (Merten, 2005), and there are multiple realities available (Punch & Oancea, 2014) was used as theoretical framework for this study. Constructivist researcher rely on participants' views/opinions and the impact of their own background/experiences about the research topic (Creswell, 2003). Given this study's constructivist paradigm, pre-prepared/pre-defined research instruments were not used as they do not allow for in-depth exploration of individual perspectives. The researcher developed her own qualitative interview schedules as data collection tool and data analysed thematically. Confidentiality, privacy and rights of participants explained verbally and with information and consent forms. The six themes emerged from this research are: Making a difference; who can be a leader?; conflation of management and leadership; recognising, utilising and developing strengths; demonstrating leadership attributes; bringing out the best in staff. Another important revelation of this empirical study was that distributed leadership is the most commonly practiced leadership in the participant services. These findings can be used to clarify the roles of ECEC leaders and to improve teachers' training programs.

*effective leadership, early childhood education, distributive leadership, high quality ECE, national quality standards*

#### **Inclusive attitudes and leadership in early childhood education**

Paula Laakso, Päivi Pihlaja, University of Turku, Finland

The aim of the study is to find out what kind of views early childhood education managers have about inclusion, how to integrate inclusive education into the leading of education? In Finnish education system is going on an inclusive reform, which starting point contain values like equality and respect of diversity. The Finnish National Agency for Education has renewed national core curriculum for ECEC (2016, 2018). Inclusion is influenced by attitudes, participation, structures, professional knowledge and skills (Bricker 2000; Jones 2004; Odom 1998). The theoretical framework for this study draws upon inclusive education (Ainscow 2007; Booth 2011; Naukkarinen 2001) and leadership theories, especially pedagogical leadership (Fonsén 2014; Juuti 2013). The key values of inclusive education are equality and participation (UNESCO 1994). Attitudes and leadership affect differences between municipalities (Pihlaja 2009). This study uses mixed method. Quantitative material was gathered by questionnaires (n=120) and qualitative material by interviews ECEC managers. Analysis is statistical SPSS and content analysis. The permissions to this study came from municipalities and all the respondents gave permissions to take part this study. The respondent's identity is not recognizable. The results showed that top level ECEC leaders job descriptions varied a lot. An inclusive way of thinking was unclearly understood, and the implementation was not easy. Leadership-concentrated have a more positive attitude towards inclusive values than those prefer management. Changing the traditional working practices takes time and requires new methods to lead change. Inclusive education accepted, but it requires professional skills, resources and a pedagogical discussion.

*early childhood education, inclusion, leadership, attitudes, participation*

#### **Professional development for Icelandic preschool principals – A historical perspective**

Juliana Tyrfingsdottir, Arna H. Jonsdottir, University of Iceland, Iceland

The aim of the research is to investigate the professional development of Icelandic preschool principals from 1946 until 2018, by using historical analysis. Very few research on preschool principals' professional development has been using that method. This research defines formal and informal professional development according to Richter, Kunter, Klusmann, Lüdtke and Baumert

(2010) and how it is presented in the literature. Kochan, Bredeson and Riehl's (2002) conceptual framework of principals' continuing professional development sheds light on improvements to their leadership role. The methodology used historical analysis to examine the past to understand the present (Wynche, Sengers & Grinter, 2006). Various data, e.g. records of minutes, books on the history of schools of education and other documents were used to establish a timeline (Jupp, 2006; Wyche, Sengers & Grinter, 2006) for a clearer view of the history. As all data were open and official public records, no permit was required from Iceland's Office of Data Protection. Findings support the view that preschool principals need professional development to lead successful schools and to cope with rapid social and school changes. However, they need optimal conditions and opportunities to develop in their careers. This research contributes to the literature on professional development of preschool principals for all stakeholders in further educational reform and policy implementation.

*professional development, preschool principals, leadership, career, historical analysis*

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## E 2

### GOVERNING THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF ECEC IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Self-organised symposium

In this symposium, we examine governance and everyday life of early childhood education and care in three different contexts: In Finland, in Australia and in Hong Kong. Especially, in this symposium, we will focus on exploration of data based governing and outcomes based governance in each country. We will address the question of what kinds of governance tools organise the everyday life of ECEC in Finland, in Australia and in Hong Kong.

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**Chair: Maiju Paananen, Tampere University, Finland**

#### Mapping governance in Australian ECEC

Susan Grieshaber, La Trobe University, Australia

International literature has identified the increasing regulation of ECEC but there is little information about how governance tools impact Australian ECEC settings. As an initial step, this presentation draws on policy and regulatory documents to map data and outcomes based governance in Australian contexts. How children encounter institutional governance in different ECEC settings has been documented in Finland (Paananen, 2017) where multiscale analysis (Noyes, 2013) was used to connect information about governing tools, teachers' explanations of how they made decisions, and descriptions of children's perspectives. The conceptual frameworks drawn on includes the datafication of ECE (Roberts-Holmes & Bradbury, 2017), professionalism in ECE (Osgood, 2006), and the critical study of digital data and education (Selwyn, 2015). This qualitative document analysis (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018) identifies the kinds of governance tools that organise the everyday lives of those who inhabit ECEC settings in Australia. Governing instruments such as policy documents, and the requirements of quality standards, professional development and early childhood education plans are classified according to whether they are outcome-based, information governing, regulative, or other types of governing tools. Document analysis requires no ethical approval. Discussion centres on (i) the identification and classification of specific types of outcome-based, information governing, regulative, and other types of governing tools; and (ii) postulation of how governance tools might organise everyday life in ECEC settings. Implications for practice and policy include identification of how governing practices influence everyday life, and how they may potentially lead to policy changes or changes in everyday routines.

*governance, Australia, document analysis, outcome based governance, regulative governance tools*

#### From grassroots to governance of ECEC: Stress and wellbeing in Hong Kong kindergartens

Mari Nislin (1), Maiju Paananen (2), (1) The Education University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong; (2) Tampere University, Finland

This study discusses the relations between governance of ECEC, teachers' occupational wellbeing and children's stress and sense of belonging in kindergarten. Teaching can be an emotionally loaded profession, and burnout among teachers is a worldwide problem (Lieu, He & Yu, 2014; Zhai, Raver & Li-Giring, 2011). This might partly relate to intensifying demands set for teachers by data based governance (Ball, 2003). Already preschool children in Hong Kong experience distress due to competitive school culture including testing and academic pressure (Wong, 2018). The study takes systemic perspective in wellbeing examining both micro and macro level and bringing two studies into a dialogue. The first study maps governing system of ECE in Hong Kong. Drawing from stress contagion theory (Wethington, 2000), the second study aims to detect the social nature of wellbeing and stress in kindergarten classrooms. The study utilizes a multidisciplinary perspective and a mixed methods approach. Document analysis is used for examining governing context of Hong Kong. Participants of the second study are 50 teachers and 150 children from K3

kindergarten groups in Hong Kong. Teachers' wellbeing, self-perceived stress and sense of belonging are measured with surveys and children's sense of belonging with a drawing task. Hair samples are collected to measure chronic stress. Ethical approvals were gained and informed consents were obtained from teachers and parents. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. Data collection will be completed by May 2019. The findings can be later used in planning governing systems that support both teachers and children wellbeing in preschools.

*wellbeing, stress, sense of belonging, governance of ECEC, kindergarten*

#### **Outcome-based governance and data-based governance in Finnish ECEC**

Maiju Paananen, Tampere University, Finland

The aim of this presentation is to map governance tools that organize the everyday life of ECEC in Finland. Governing of ECEC has been changing throughout the Global North. For example, international trends of both data-based and outcome-based governance have diffused rapidly. Data-based governance is not neutral, but influenced by practical issues such as an ease of measurement (Selwyn 2015). Yet, the current literature is lacking the systematic analysis of these governance practices and their local variations in different countries. In this presentation, governance refers to the collective processes of decision-making concerning current and future actions within an institution. Within institutions, governance is founded upon different kinds of material entities such as documents - from legislation and institutional norms and guidelines to memos or calendar markings (Ferraris, 2013; Paananen, 2017). The research leans on transparadigmatic research approach. It uses qualitative methodology: policy documents and interviews of 8 preschool managers and 8 preschool teachers working in Finland. Participants have given the informed consent for participation. The anonymity of participants will be ensured by giving them pseudonyms and only revealing the amount of contextual information that is needed to understand the logic of the analysis. The results underline the importance of examining the use of governing tools such as data-based governance in local contexts as they are applied varying ways. Mapping the governing tools that are in use in different contexts enables further research and discussion on their consequences in the everyday life of ECEC.

*governance, accountability, Finland, governing by numbers, policy*

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### **E 3**

#### **LEARNING THROUGH MOVEMENT: INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Anne Lynngård, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL), Norway**

#### **Doing Learning – Social Practices of Learning done by children in kindergartens of the People`s Republic of China – displayed by movement**

Andrea Manno, BayWISS, Germany

Reconstruction of "how" learning is done in the institutional setting of learning situations in kindergartens of the People`s Republic of China reveals the underlying concept of education behind. Non-verbal communication of physical movement of agents woven into concrete situations forms cases to understand and interpret. Mannheim`s sociology of knowledge (Mannheim 1952:33-83; 1982) incites Bohnsack`s Documentary Picture -and Video interpretation Method documenting tacit knowledge (Mannheim 1980; Bohnsack 2003: 59ff) to understand social routines by contrastive case comparison (Nohl 2013:271-293 in: Bohnsack, Nentwig-Gesemann; Nohl 2013). Bohnsack (2009:12) shows video and picture in immanent logic as their own transcript based on formal structures out of artistic picture science ( Imdahl 1994:300-324), Panofsky 1951:51-81). Theoretical frame is Symbolic Interactionism. I follow Ralf Bohnsack with Documentary Method. Goal is to interpret tacit knowledge, routines concerning social practices of learning by using visual data. Qualitative hypothesis generic paradigm wins visual data by filming and structuring through contrastive case interpretation. The cohort of four to seven year olds in 13 kindergarten groups of four Chinese cities are analysed from 2014 to 2018. Filming required consent of hosts, institutions, teachers and children. Anonymity was guaranteed by written document, additionally the visual data were shown to actors for possible intervening. Documentary Method produces valid information for intercultural research interest. Partial findings show that movement displays setting immanent hierarchical orientations in relationships and roles observing and empowering learning displayed by movement in children can change didactics for learning settings and actual learning orientations from social imposture to intrinsic processes.

*visual data, intercultural research, children as actors, documentary method, qualitative paradigm*

### **Learning maths by moving! Effects of interdisciplinary teaching approach to PE on children's numeracy skills**

Sara Wawrzyniak (1), Ireneusz Cichy (1), Magdalena Kaczmarczyk, Andrzej Rokita (1), (1) University School of Physical Education in Wrocław, Poland

The study aimed at presenting the effects of physical education (PE) with EDUballs on first-grade elementary schoolchildren's numeracy skills. The interdisciplinary model of teaching PE (Cone, Werner, & Cone, 2009) seems to be an effective teaching approach to implement in early years education due to the positive effects of the integration of academic and motor performances (Marttinen et al., 2017). The EDUball is an innovative approach based on interdisciplinary model of teaching PE. The EDUball approach uses 100 balls with letters, numbers and mathematical signs to integrate PE with academic learning (language and math exercises) through active play and movement (Rokita & Cichy, 2013). The research used a pedagogical experiment method and a parallel group's technique: experimental (N=19) and control groups (N=15). Experimental group followed a standard PE programme enhanced with EDUballs (twice per week at the gymnasium). Control groups followed the standard PE programme but without EDUballs. The EDUball programme merged PE with numeracy activities in an effort to reinforce lessons previously taught in classroom. Mathematical skills were diagnosed by a standardized test. Data were collected in pre-and post-tests. The research obtained the written consent from the University Ethical Committee, school's headmaster and children's parents/guardians. The results showed that experimental group participating in PE with EDUballs attained higher scores than control group. The findings demonstrated that PE with EDUballs significantly improved children's math skills ( $p<0.05$ ). The interdisciplinary model for PE with EDUballs is an effective teaching approach to improving children's math skills.

*mathematics, interdisciplinary teaching, physical education, elementary school, EDUballs*

### **Tumbling room: Children's wellbeing and physical activity in the indoor environment**

Ole Johan Sando, Queen Maud University College, Norway

The aim is to describe how access to tumbling rooms for bodily play influences children's levels of wellbeing and physical activity in ECEC settings. There is a lack a studies assessing the impact of ECEC institutions on children's wellbeing (Holte et al. 2014). Using the indoor space for motor activities is found to be positively associated with physical activity (Sugiyama et al. 2010). Building on theory of affordance (Gibson, 1979), the physical environment can be hypothesized to be important for children's play because the physical environment affords children actions and behaviours that may influence outcomes such as wellbeing and physical activity. The project is situated within a mixed-method design (Creswell, 2013) and a post-positivistic paradigm. The sample consists of 943 video observations of 80 children's free play in 8 ECEC institutions at two data points. A tumbling room was established in four of the institutions in an intervention. Children's levels of wellbeing and are measured using the Leuven wellbeing Scale (Laevers, 2005), and physical activity is measured with OSRAC-P (Brown et al., 2009). Norwegian Social Science Data Services approved the study. Informed consent is received from all participants and confidentiality and anonymity is secured in all phases of data collection and publication. Preliminary results indicate that there is a positive effect of having tumbling room on children's wellbeing and physical activity. Detailed results and descriptions on how children utilize the tumbling rooms are given in the presentation. The results are relevant for developing and designing indoor environments in ECEC settings.

*wellbeing, physical activity, indoor environment, health, bodily play*

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## **E 4**

### **THE ROLE AND PURPOSE OF REPORTING TO PARENTS**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Victoria Bamsey, University of Plymouth, United Kingdom**

### **What do teachers write about children when they assess them? Research conducted in the context of French-speaking part of Switzerland**

Isabelle Truffer Moreau, Gabriel Kappeler, Haute Ecole Pédagogique VD, Switzerland

This communication is a part of a research on assessment written by Kindergarten teachers. The aims are to identify and to describe what are the contents being evaluated and to link them with the curriculum of the French-speaking part of Switzerland. This research is based on work conducted in French-speaking part of Switzerland on the negative effects of assessments in Kindergarten (Clerc-Georgy & al., 2016). This research relies on the work done on dynamic assessment (Bodrova & Leong, 2012), teacher' assessment approaches and types of formative assessments (Dunphy, 2010). Kindergarten teachers are helpless in assessment and therefore they turn to traditional, assessment methods (Clerc-Georgy & al., 2016). Gilliéron & al. (2014) denounce these new assessment practices and call it the primarisation of Kindergarten. Assessing children in authentic situations is a



challenge (Dunphy, 2010) and teachers turn to assessment of micro-objectives that do not reflect the whole process of the child's cognitive, emotional, social and motor development. Play is considered as the main activity at this age because it promotes the development of developmental gains. Unfortunately, it seems to be little used to assess child development in Kindergarten. 84 reports written by 8 teachers. A content analysis is conducted to identify the main skills and knowledge assessed. Parental consent, Teachers and pupils are made anonymous. The knowledges identified in the comments are on low taxonomic level. The division of the curriculum into disciplinary fields reinforce the invisibility of the skills that are fundamental. These results have a direct impact on the initial training and our current curriculum.

*assessment, Kindergarten, dynamic assessment, formative assessment, curriculum*

### **The accountability of choice in pre-compulsory education**

Victoria Bamsey, University of Plymouth, United Kingdom

The accountability of local authorities to evidence performance and financial viability highlights a marketised approach to education. This paper highlights the complexities of parental choice in English early education through an investigation into the influences on choice for children entering education. A review of existing research reveals a focus on childcare as opposed to education (Sandstrom & Chaudry, 2012; Vincent & Ball, 2001). However links can be made to choice in secondary education such as Coldron and Boulton's (1991) 'happiness criterion'. Anchored within the work of Leontiev (2005) the use of Activity Theory with a Bourdieusian lens allows for an examination and articulation of the sociocultural and historical influences at work. Taking a social constructionist stance, I seek to tease out the unconscious. Facet methodology allows for the 'multi-dimensionality of lived experience', directing 'scrutiny towards the rather complex ways' (Mason, 2011, p.75-79) in which choice might be influenced. Parental and setting interviews within six case studies representing different settings highlight the role of materials and society in educational choice. The University ethical protocol has been followed. Confidentiality has been maintained throughout, participants review transcripts before data is included. Parents are not always interested in neo-liberal forms of accountability. I argue that schools should be held accountable for the happiness of children in their care, avoiding 'a total preoccupation with academic standards' (Coldron & Boulton, 1991, p.178). My findings will contribute to the school choice discourse by focusing on the relational aspect of choice in pre-compulsory education.

*CHAT, facet methodology educational choice, relational, happiness criterion*

### **Early childhood education and children's assessment**

Eliana M Bhering (1), Cristiano Alcântara (2), (1) Fundação Carlos Chagas, Brazil; (2) Secretaria Municipal de Educação de São Paulo, Brazil

The research aim is to identify aspects described in pre-school children's annual reports that indicate how children benefit from everyday practices, interactions and play. There is current pressure towards assessing young children's achievement to inform educational systems, impacting ECE curriculum and practices (Campos, 2017; MEC, 2012). It was designed so as to find alternative to young children's school tests/exams, as Brazilian literature strongly disputes that approach. Considering legislation/documents/reports, the study is based on guidelines and theoretical background provided. Since all indicate that ECE must work from the perspective of children's rights and active participation, it takes into account ECE documents on conceptions, practice and policy. The research analyses 600 children's reports, from 56 public pre-schools in São Paulo, randomly selected. Data was analysed qualitatively to identify activities/projects developed in relation to children's learning and expressions. As the municipality is used to be involved in process of designing/developing the study, as in this case, it is used to dealing with such ethical procedures. Reports/teachers/schools were not identified and municipality has taken adequate measures towards this. Municipality professionals participated in the analysis process. The research intended to suggest that children may be more effectively heard/assessed within the realm of their learning processes and yet being able to provide educational systems with sound information. Since this project was designed in order to help school management and policy makers take effective decisions, it is believed research results will directly impact ECE and primary teachers' in-service training at the levels of policy, practice and reports.

*preschool education, children's reports, activities and projects, children's assessment, policy for in-service training*

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**Chair: Ida Somolanji Tokić, Faculty of Education, Croatia**

**Family approaches in supporting children's learning and wellbeing: Parental perception of access to resources in promoting school readiness in Australia**

Gerarda Richards (1), Sivaness Phillipson (1), Shane Phillipson (2), (1) Swinburne University of Technology, Australia; (2) Monash University, Australia

This study explored parental perceptions of access to resources during the early years of learning prior to and transitioning to school. It is to be noted differences in families' engagement with their children's learning at home may be influenced by parental educational attitudes and expectations (Phillipson, Richards & Sullivan, 2017). The Actiotope Model states children learn better when they have better access to resources (Ziegler & Phillipson, 2012). Educational capital comprises of all external resources such as knowledge of learning as influence by parents (S. Phillipson & Phillipson, 2017). An interpretivist approach is applied to explore the perceptions of 448 families with children aged between 1-8 years attending early childhood learning settings or primary school across Victoria, Australia. The 65-item questionnaire survey was used. Ethics approval was obtained from the Monash University Human Ethics Committee, Department of Education and Training as well as the Catholic Education Office of Melbourne. Creswell (2009) states ethical issues need consideration at all stages of the research and addressed if possible before they become an issue, hence at each step of the research has been carefully thought through. Parents considered themselves to be their children's first teacher in partnership with educators. And their beliefs may impact learning engagement. This study highlights how parental perception of their children's capacity to resources can be an effective way in promoting school readiness. Suggesting, rather than being a liability, parents can take collaborative responsibility with educators. And educators can find ways to support parents in engaging in learning.

*parental support, families' perceptions, resources, Actiotope model, learning at home*

**Children's hundred languages lost in transition – Methodological shortcomings of assessment of school readiness**

Ida Somolanji Tokić, Faculty of Education, Croatia

This paper explores the prevailing methodology of assessment of children prior to starting school (aka, school readiness) in Croatia and its connection to ECEC teachers' professional identity. In light of the socio-constructivist theory, present assessment methodology is being seen unsuitable at the least. The overall need for datafication of children (Roberts-Holmes, 2015), binary construction of children readiness (Vandenbroeck, De Stercke & Gobeyn, 2013) and stigmatizing strategies in the educational system (Petriwskyj & Grieshaber, 2011) makes it difficult to construct a comprehensive understanding of children, an image of children as capable learners since birth and as agents of their own development. Theoretical research on assessment of children in Croatia indicated that the school pedagogue is the main facilitator of the assessment practice. Somolanji Tokić (2018) showed that ECEC teachers during the preschool year tend to adjust their image of a child, and consequently their practice, toward the expectations put on by the CSE system and the assessment process. Quantitative data will be acquired by using questionnaires on the sample of 210 school pedagogues. Initial analysis will be presented (descriptive). Questionnaires will be collected on-line taking into account GDPR regulations and anonymity. Collected data will be presented en masse. Data on the methodology used by school pedagogues will give clearer perspective on how and why the ECEC teachers negotiate their professional identity and lose their professional stand to school readiness paradigm. If we want a change of the dominant transition practice, we need to empower the ECEC teachers and address the problem of their professional identity.

*transition to school, assessment methodology, school pedagogue, ECEC teachers' professional identity, quantitative data*

**Teachers' views on supporting children's school readiness - examples from Estonia**

Kerli Stein, Tiia Õun, Marika Veisson, Tallinn University, Estonia

Transition from early childhood education to primary school is a complex phenomenon. Smooth transition to primary school helps children feel secure, relaxed and comfortable in their new environments. Current study highlight how Estonian preschool teachers comprehend their pedagogical activities in supporting children's school readiness. In the last thirty years the concept of school readiness has risen internationally to the focus of educational scientists and politicians (European Commission 2014; Gredler 1992; Mashburn and Pianta 2006; Murray 2014; NEGP 1995; OECD 2012; OECD 2017; UNICEF 2012). Currently, the concept of school

readiness can also be referred to as a process which is contributed by different systems. This knowledge is mainly based on the ecological systems theory by Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1995). A review of the school readiness literature reveals a significant theoretical shift away from dominant developmental stage theories, towards contemporary interpretations of sociocultural theories (McGettigan and Gray 2012). Present study was conducted with using qualitative method, individual semi-structured interviews with 15 preschool teachers. Interpretation of results on the given research were based on phenomenology. The questions of this study were formed based on the basis of theoretical foundations and results of different researches. Main ethical concern was teachers' anonymity. For that, participants read and signed the form of acceptance to participate in the interview. What clearly emerged from the participants answers, is a lack of collaboration methods between preschools, schools and local neighbourhoods. Also, how to develop collaboration in deeper level between ECEC and school system.

*school readiness, transition, preschool teacher, preschool, supporting methods*

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## E 6

### CHILDREN'S AGENCY, CITIZENSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Hannah Kaihovirta, University of Helsinki, Finland**

#### **Global citizenship, children and sustainability**

Barbara Maria Sageidet (1), Marianne Presthus Heggen (2), (1) University of Stavanger, Norway; (2) Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

This paper will explore the concept of global citizenship education for sustainable development. Specifically, this paper will explore children's role in this connection, theoretically, and by presenting a research projects under development. Global citizenship is a multiple perspective concept, related to the political, economic, cultural, social and ecological dimensions of sustainability. It refers to 'a sense of belonging' to a broader community, with connections between the local and the global. Global citizenship education has become familiar in many nowadays' education contexts, from early childhood education to higher education (Lee & Fouts, 2005; Sund & Öhman, 2011; UNESCO, 2013). The planned study will use various theories to link the conceptual framework of global citizenship to learning for sustainable development, for example the 'key competences in sustainability' (Wiek, Withycombe & Redman, 2011; UNESCO, 2017). According to socio cultural and situated learning theories, people are searching meaningful relationships to places in social contexts (Lave & Wenger, 1991). By means of observations, inquiry based activities, and conversations, the planned project "Children and a smart sustainable city" will explore, document and develop children's understanding and knowledge during their peripheral, nevertheless active participation in processes related to the establishing of a smart sustainable city in Stavanger, Norway. The planned conversations and interactions with children will follow national and international ethical guidelines. The expected findings may confirm that global citizenship is a way of understanding and acting. Childrens' acting of citizenship, their perspectives and voices may expand our understandings of various aspects of global citizenship and sustainability.

*global citizenship education, education for sustainability, children, belonging, urban childhood*

#### **Desires of the other – Multi-modality and aesthetics in sustainability education**

Hannah Kaihovirta, Ann-Christin Furu, Lili-Ann Wolff, University of Helsinki, Finland

The aim is to articulate aesthetic patterns of child centred practice in contemporary early childhood education. The study investigates how sustainability education takes form and what the outcomes imply for future child centred practice (Pramling-Samuelsson & Park, 2017). It builds upon recent research in sustainability education (Ärlemalm-Hagser & Elliot, 2017). The framework is underpinned by a 21st century re-reading of Vygotsky's (1925) reasoning on imagination and Dewey's (1934) concepts on art as experience. From a Nordic perspective we juxtapose socio cultural theory and pragmatism as paradigms. Within this approach we test and explore how Vygotsky's and Dewey's theories on imagination and art as experience echo into contemporary early childhood education (Lim, 2004). The approach uses abduction as methodological frame and bricolage of documented teacher student learning diaries is the data. Method is based on explorative and rhizomatic relations (Kaihovirta 2018, Irwin et. al 2006). We suggest that re-reading robust concepts, and challenge them with present lived practice and research, can generate knowledge beyond expected. Research ethics base is Finnish TENK responsible outlines. The students are informed of research and confidential data use. Findings implicate that students' interpret child centred practice with focus on imagination and creativity as shared experiences. Sustainable purpose emerges as something to be worked on and negotiated, rather than as

something that is stated. Sustainability education where children's desires are put into action connected to their desires of the other (Biesta, 2017) are central for developing policy as well as practice for future early childhood education.

*imagination, socio cultural theory pragmatism, aesthetic processes, rhizomatic relations*

#### **Agentic culture in early years educational environment**

Heidi Sairanen, Kristiina Kumpulainen, Anu Kajamaa, University of Helsinki, Finland

This study investigates 5-years-old children's (n=8) agency and how it manifests itself with their teacher through interaction in joint multimodal activities. Although young children's agency has aroused researchers' interest increasingly (Rainio, 2010; Hilppö, 2016) there is little research focusing on how a culture which supports children's agency and agentic endeavours (i.e. agentic culture) is built in early years educational contexts. This case study follows sociocultural notion of agency (Vygotsky, 1978; Kumpulainen & Lipponen, 2010) where agency is understood as a context-dependent activity. The study draws from socio-constructivist theory. It took place in a Finnish early childhood education centre and the activities included reading books, exploring nature and documenting it with tablets, playing, discussing, doing crafts, and creating and performing animations. The data were collected by videoing and observing these activities. The video data were transcribed and analysed with interaction analysis method taking account children's peer interaction and children's and teachers' mutual interaction (Jordan & Henderson, 1995). The research permissions were sought from the children, their parents and teacher, and the participants had the possibility to withdraw from the study at any time. Names mentioned in the research are pseudonyms. The results bring forward different structures of how in this operational culture children's agency is composed and how children with different interaction strategies contributed to the creation of an agentic culture together with their teacher. The study engages with the notion of the importance of agency in early years educational contexts and how it should support children's agency and agentic experiences.

*children's agency, agentic culture, multimodal activities, sociocultural perspective, interaction analysis*

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## **E 7**

### **CHILDREN'S VIEWS ON THEIR CURRICULUM AND THEIR EDUCATORS**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Alexandra C. Gunn, University of Otago, New Zealand**

#### **Canadian early learning frameworks: a critical-democratic analysis**

Dasha Shalimo (1), John P. Portelli (2), (1) Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning, Canada; (2) University of Toronto, OISE, Canada

We explore how in-depth the Early Learning Framework texts are in providing practical recommendations for educators to employ the UNCRC articles related to young children's participation in curriculum decision-making. Following the argument for children's participatory pedagogy, several world-wide organizations (e.g. UNESCO, UNICEF) as well ECEC scholars have increasingly recommended young children's participation (Clark & Moss, 2011). The analysis is guided by the principles of a critical-democratic framework (Kincheloe, 2008; Portelli, 2001, 2012). We apply three levels of CDA to offer a three-dimensional framework (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 2007; Gee, 2011), for interpreting ELF texts, beginning with a discourse-as-discursive-practice analysis to provide the historical overview of the ELF documents' development while situating them in the Canadian context. This is followed by a discourse-as-text analysis, where we explore the pedagogical vocabularies of ELF documents in an effort to understand how these texts communicate their theoretical tendencies. And finally, we apply the third level of CDA, discourse as social practice, asking whether the documents' theoretical reasoning guides educators to employ key democratic principles of participatory pedagogy. We provide document analysis. Our work here reveals that in Canada, there is a growing need to expand on the current knowledge base regarding participatory pedagogy. There are also calls to explore different ways to apply the principles of participatory pedagogy in practice, considering the international recognition it has garnered. We recommend for ECEC policy-makers, research scholars, and educators to revisit the ELF texts and incorporate the current ECEC vocabularies while addressing the children's right to participate effectively.

*critical-democratic pedagogy, critical discourse analysis, young children as rightful citizens, young children's participation, early learning frameworks*

### **'They do not want to play': Children's views of educators' roles in play**

Sara Margrét Ólafsdóttir, Johanna Einarsdóttir, University of Iceland, Iceland

The aim of this study is to understand educators' roles in children play from the children's own perspectives. Previous research has indicated that children find it important for educators to observe their play and to remain nearby so that the children can seek their support and can share their discoveries with their educators (Einarsdóttir, 2014; Löfdahl, 2014; Pramling Samuelsson and Johansson, 2009). The study is built on the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child and Corsaro's (2015) sociology of childhood construct, which views children as competent and active participants in the preschool society. Research with children aims to learn from children's knowledge and experiences. Video-stimulated recordings were used to support children conversations about their play activities in their preschool settings. Ethical issues, including power relations, were considered in every level of the research process. All gatekeepers gave their written informed consent and child friendly approaches were used to explain the study to the children who gave their written assent. The children chose their own pseudonyms. The children's status in their peer group influenced how they explained the educator's role in their play. The children who were leaders in the play did not see how the educators could participate without ruining it. However, the children who followed the leaders needed the educator's support and wanted them to take part in their play. By listening to children's ideas about play and observing their status in their peer group, educators can reflect on their roles in children's play and learning.

*children's perspectives, play, educators' roles, peer culture, preschool*

### **What is the place of children's subjects of interest in preschool curriculum?**

Iris Levy, Sigal Tish, Michaella Kadury-Slezak, Sivan Shatil Carmon, Levinsky College of Education, Israel

The aim of this study is to examine the awareness of student teachers in ECE program at Levinsky College of education to children's subjects of interest, and the ways they implement children's ideas in an emergent curriculum which is constructed in heterogeneous group. This study highlights student teachers' ways of using "hundred languages" (Rinaldi, 2001) to enable the children to express themselves and to create bridges to children, families and communities (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This study is based on emergent curriculum approach (Rinaldi, 2001), Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and Rogoff's (2003) claim of children, families and communities. The methodology is multiple case studies based on mosaic approach. Participants were ten student teachers in their third year in the ECE programme in Levinsky College. Tools were: students teachers' self-written reflections, posts in personal blogs, documentations of photographs, video and children's expressions in 'hundred languages'. All student teachers agreed to participate in the study and their identities remained confidential by using pseudonyms. We found that most of the projects addressed children's self interests and emerged from their initiatives rather than from the student teachers' proactive planning. Moreover, the discourse constructed within the small group enabled the children to be exposed to their peer's various perceptions, habits, family structures and cultural costumes. Listening to children and families is a crucial factor in promoting children's well-being. Emergent curriculum contributes to students' listening and communication skills and to their understandings of children's needs, thoughts and cultures.

*ecological perspective of practice family-school-college collaboration, ECE preparation, emergent curriculum, scalability, hundred languages*

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## **E 8**

### **COMPETENCE, CO-OPERATION PERCEPTIONS AND DISCOURSE: TEACHERS AND PARENTS**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Adrijana Visnjic Jevtic, University of Zagreb, Croatia**

### **Care and education in Norwegian early childhood education and care: Educators' and parents' views**

Anne Grethe Baustad (1), Elisabeth Bjørnstad (1), (2), (1) Nord University, Norway; (2) Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

This presentation explores educators' and parents' views on quality in Norwegian early childhood education and care, focusing on 'care' and 'education'. The study is related to the ongoing EU project 'European Quality Seal', and previous research on quality in Norwegian ECEC, the BePro project. The study draws on Sheridan's (2001) pedagogical perspectives on quality in ECEC; particular those of the society, including values and ideologies (Sheridan, 2007). This study is a part of a European stakeholder survey regarding quality in ECEC, based on a questionnaire rating different quality aspects in ECEC. Educators and parents from 30 Norwegian ECEC institutions participate in the study. Educators and parents also describing their five most important factors for care and education in ECEC. The study follow ethical and privacy policies standards approved by the Norwegian Social Science

Data Service. The survey is anonymous and include no sensitive information, only ID codes related to region and type of ECEC institutions can be identified. The survey is sent by mail with return envelopes, so no IP addresses can be tracked. We will present and discuss preliminary findings from the survey focusing on 'What kind of aspects do educators and parents highlight as most important regarding care and education?' 'How can their views be linked to previous research and theories on high quality in ECEC?' The Norwegian framework plan highlight collaboration between educators and parents and our findings can contribute to the discussion about what is quality from different perspectives and how to implement in practice.

*quality in ECEC, care and education, educators' views, parents' views, Norwegian context*

#### **Teachers' competence for parental cooperation**

Adrijana Visnjic Jevtic, University of Zagreb, Croatia

The aim of the research was to determine the teachers' self-evaluation of the competence for cooperation with parents and its correlation to the teachers' education and professional experience. Teachers' competence for cooperation with parents is defined as competence that enables the establishment and retention of cooperative relationships with parents of all children involved in an educational institution (Grant & Ray, 2010; Hornby & Laffaele, 2011). The teachers competence for cooperation with parents is discussed as a construct of knowledge (on strategies and techniques for working with parents, challenges to cooperation, support to families), skills (communication, active listening, organization, cooperation), and attitudes (toward parents and cooperation). Research was based on qualitative and quantitative research paradigm. Determined key factors of teachers' competence for cooperation with parents were used to develop two research instruments, survey and semi-structured interview. The survey included 600 kindergartens teachers who evaluated their own competence for cooperation with parents. Eight participants participated in interviews discussing their competence, views on cooperation with parents and ways of acquiring the competence. Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. Participants evaluated themselves as competent for cooperation with parents. They perceived communication skills to be crucial for cooperation with parents. Research didn't find statistically significant correlation between competence for cooperation with parents and participants age or work experience. There is a statistically significant correlation between self-perception of the competence and participants' education. The results can be used to improve the teachers' education for cooperation with parents either initial or lifelong.

*competence, families, kindergarten, co-operation, teachers*

#### **Elaborating 'The best interests of the child' - Professionals' goals in co-parenting discourses**

Johanna Terävä, Marja Leena Böök, Jyväskylä University, Finland

We address this research by focusing on two questions: How do family professionals construct post-divorce co-parenting? What features of co-parenting do professionals prioritize? Co-parenting is neither self-evident nor easy and may require external help and guidance. Co-parenting at its best has been described as "an enterprise undertaken by two or more adults working together to raise a child for whom they share responsibility" (Hock & Mooradian 2013). This study is constructionist in orientation (see. e.g. Berger & Luckmann 1994). The preliminary findings of this qualitative study are based on nine thematic group discussions with 31 family professionals. Respondents were participants in a "Parenthood after divorce" training program organized by one of the largest national child welfare NGOs in Finland. Qualitative content and discursive analyses are used. Informed consent was asked from every participant and when the interviewed data was transcribed, each participant was assigned a pseudonym. The preliminary results indicate that the professionals focused heavily on the nuclear family and its three agents: child, parent and ex-spouse. The most highlighted theme was the best interests of the child and was twofold: the rights of the child (child as active) and protecting the child (child as object). An often-repeated phrase was 'the freedom to be a child'. The research will give family professionals' tools and increase understanding to support divorced/divorcing parents and the wellbeing of their children.

*co-parenting, divorce, professionals, The best interests of the child, qualitative research*

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## **E 9**

### **DIVERSITY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD; A QUESTION OF MARGINALISED GROUPS?**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Anja Pesch, UiT, The Arctic University of Norway, Norway**

#### **Attitudes toward adoption as a function of child sex, location, and sexual orientation in Turkey**

Ayşegül Metindoğan (1), Zeynep Sağlam (1), Elif Kevser Dereli (1), Ceyda Sicakbas (1), Ryan Macey Wise (2), (1) Bogaziçi University, Turkey; (2) Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey

This study investigated young adults' attitudes toward the adoption of young children by diverse familial units in Turkey. There are still numerous barriers, legislatively, attitudinal, and cultural, that either formally or informally prevent or hinder same-sex adoption (Montero, 2014; Takacs, Szalma, & Bartus, 2016; Yerkes, Sani, & Solera, 2018). This study employed an ecological model to investigate influences toward adoption (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This study used a non-random convenience sample. Each participant was randomly assigned to a treatment condition. Each participant completed an informed consent document and no conflict of interest was reported. Participants (N = 610) were randomly assigned to conditions read a vignette describing an adoptive situation. A three-way ANOVA yielded a non-significant main effect for the adopted child gender,  $F(12, 601) = 1.43$ ,  $p = .15$ . There was a main effect of location,  $F(12, 601) = 1.93$ ,  $p = .03$ , the main effect of sexual orientation was significant,  $F(12, 601) = 13.86$ ,  $p = .00$ . None of the three interaction effects were significant. A two way factorial ANOVA showed a main effect of religion,  $F(12, 607) = 10.59$ ,  $p = .00$  and sexual orientation,  $F(12, 607) = 14.04$ ,  $p = .00$ . The interaction effect was significant,  $F(12, 608) = 2.46$ ,  $p = .00$ . Results are discussed within the framework of the cultural components, especially macro system forces (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) in Turkey that lead individuals to show less willingness to support same-sex couples' adoption of young children.

*adoption, same-sex, Turkey, ecological model, parenting*

### **Kindergartens in Northern Norway as semiotic landscapes**

Anja Pesch, Maria Dardanou, Hilde Sollid, UiT, The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

The aim of this study is to investigate how cultural and linguistic diversity in the semiotic landscape of two Norwegian kindergartens is constructed. In addition, we investigate the relationship between visual and pedagogical practices, our etic researcher perspectives and the emic perspectives of the kindergarten teachers. The study relates to studies on schoolsapes in educational institutions (Brown, 2012, 2005; Laihonon & Szabó, 2017; Szabó, 2015). The study is based on theory from the field of language ideology (Irvine, 2012; Irvine & Gal, 2000; Brown, 2012) and Bakhtinian concepts of ideology, dialogue and utterance (Bakhtin, 1986; Holquist, 2000; Ongstad, 2004). The project's design has a micro-ethnographic research approach (Le Baron, 2011) using a tourist guide technique (Szabó, 2015). The data material includes photographs of the ECEC's schoolsapes and interviews with ECEC teachers connected to the photographs. Informed consent was collected from all participants and it was possible to withdraw at any time. An important finding is that there is a difference between the way conceptions of modern diversity and the indigenous Sámi are created, which again points to a difference in how issues related to modern and traditional diversity are integrated in the pedagogical practices. The discussion evolves around these differences and the question of diversity as a shared or individual value. Findings have implications for practice in ECEC through questioning discourses in visual practices in ECEC institutions and the way they relate to pedagogical practices. They may also contribute to increase reflections on how diversity may be a shared value.

*semiotic landscapes, diversity, multilingualism, language ideology, researcher's perspective*

### **Parents view on diversity and indigenous culture in Norwegian ECEC as a prerequisite for curricula making related to the Sámi content in teacher education**

Ellinor Myrvang, Kristin Anne Østrem Fløtten, Nord University, Norway

The overall aim of this study is to gain knowledge of what parents highlight as most important related to diversity and indigenous culture in ECEC, and how their view can contribute in the implementation of diversity and indigenous in ECEC teacher programs. Our study is closely linked to the ongoing EU project "European Quality Seal" and previous research on 'Engaging the voices of Sámi children sustaining traditional knowledge through kindergarten, school and community transfer' and the Northern Norway Diversity Project 2014. The study draws on sociocultural theoretical perspectives and critical theory and indigenous perspectives in the curricula development (Jannok Nutti, 2016). This study is a part of a stakeholder survey involving Norwegian ECEC educators and parents from 30 ECEC institutions describing what they consider most important regarding care and education in ECEC. The study follows ethical standards and privacy policies approved by the NSD - Norwegian Centre for Research Data and The Norwegian Data Protection Authority. Participants' confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed. Preliminary findings from the survey will be presented and discussed. What kind of aspects do parents highlight regarding the kindergarten curriculum, especially considering contents such as diversity and indigenous knowledge? The recent years the authorities have decided deeper and broader requirements regarding diversity and indigenous questions and knowledge in the curricula and frame plans. Findings from the survey may influence and contribute to the discussion regarding the national ECEC-teacher curricula.

*diversity, indigenous perspectives, parents' views and wishes, pedagogic quality, ECEC-education*

## **EARLY YEARS EDUCATION FOR ALL: INCLUDING LOVE, EMOTIONS AND PROFESSIONALISM IN CONVERSATIONS AROUND 'QUALITY' (PART 2)**

Self-organised symposium

Scotland currently finds itself at a critical point in terms of future directions for Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). Based on an election promise made in 2016, the Scottish Government is in the process of doubling children and families' entitlement to funded childcare hours by 2020, requiring large increases of qualified staff and infrastructure. The implementation of 'the childcare expansion' has resulted in a high profile public conversation around early years education, and stimulated academic debates on how 'quality' ELC can be achieved in the context of significant structural change. Part 2 of this Symposium brings together researchers from Scotland who engage with debates on professionalism and emotions in the context of this expansion. The three studies consider the deeply personal experiences at the heart of what it means to be an early years practitioner, whilst highlighting as a common theme how structural issues shape the experiences of the workforce.

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**Chair: Kristina Konstantoni, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom**

### **The Politics of professionalisation: The changing role of practitioners within early learning and childcare in Scotland**

Liz Latto, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Set within the context of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in Scotland, this study aims to examine how practitioners' backgrounds influence their philosophy, practice and ideas of quality within ELC. Within Scotland's ELC sector staff are drawn from two distinct qualification backgrounds: teaching or early years practitioners. Building on research by Siraj and Kingston (2015) and work by Dunlop et al. (2016) this study explores how established roles and hierarchies are being challenged. Using a standpoint framework it is argued that gender/age/class/race are elements of existing social structures resulting in hierarchical power structures within ELC (Hill Collins, 2004). How practitioners negotiate these power relations are examined through analysis of their lived experiences shared through their stories (Clandinin, 2016). Taking an interpretative approach, this research uses elements of ethnography and auto-ethnography to explore how practitioners perform roles within their settings. In depth interviews were conducted over an extended period and a reflexive diary kept, detailing my own changing role and my responses to others' lived experiences. Ethical considerations included ensuring anonymity, sharing research aims, negotiating consent throughout, adopting a sensitive approach and agreeing feedback format. Initial findings reveal that for many practitioners, experience and relationships form the heart of their practice, but further study strengthened links between educational theory and practice, deepening their understanding of quality within ELC. The findings in this study have important implications for the implementation of ELC policy, training and education programmes for practitioners and ELC praxis.

*professional identities, hierarchical power structures, quality, relationships, lived experiences*

### **Love-led practice and governmental policy development**

Lynn McNair, Jane Malcolm, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

The aim of my study was to examine the role of "love" in delivering professional services for children and families. Studies carried out by Page (2011a) developed the term "Professional Love" to help practitioners to understand the intricate nature of love in early learning and childcare. I drew upon Prout's theory (2011) of the middle ground to understand that love is neither one thing or the other, but recognise that emotions and feelings of love seep into everyday professional practice and we should embrace the fluidity of love (Robinson, 2003). I take an ontological and epistemological approach which incorporated reflexivity, reflection, relationships and evidence based practice. My methods of data collection built knowledge from the ground up, through interviews, focus groups and reflective diaries. During the interviews some of the participants shared personal stories it was clear there was some distress around thinking about personal experiences of love. Participants signed gave informed consent prior to interview, this ensured everyone knew how support would be given if required (Webster et al, 2014; Bryman, 2008). The first of my 3 key findings was to define love-led practice, then I examined the impact of personal experiences on love and finally the implications of love on early learning and childcare policy. The framework for love-led practice developed in my study will also give policy makers and politicians a model by which they can think about how best to include love in national policy and guidance.

*early learning and childcare, government, love-led practice, policy, love*



## **The complexity of emotional labour in early years: Emotions, embodiment and social inequalities**

Marlies Kustatscher (1), Elizabeth Henderson (2), (1) University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom; (2) Aberdeen City Council, United Kingdom

This paper explores the complexity and politics of emotional labour provided by Early Childhood Learning and Care (ELC) practitioners in Scotland, particularly those working with children facing complex inequalities and in the most under-resourced areas. The role of emotions in ELC has been a controversial topic in academic debates. In the past, highlighting emotional aspects of ELC was seen as undermining the growing professionalisation of the sector (Taggart 2011). However, a growing amount of research stresses the importance of loving and caring relationships in ELC (Malcolm 2019, Page 2014). This is increasingly reflected in Scottish policy and practice guidance, and seen as key to tackling early childhood inequalities (Sosu and Ellis 2014, Scottish Government 2017). This research utilizes Hochschild's (1983) concept of emotional labour to explore how practitioners manage their own feelings in order to evoke particular feelings in others (children, parents, colleagues). Employing a narrative research approach, the study draws on twelve in-depth qualitative interviews with ELC practitioners, juxtaposed with relevant policy texts to present a complex multi-layered narrative. Standard ethical procedures (informed consent, confidentiality, participant wellbeing) were followed. The findings reveal the complex emotion cultures in ELC settings and highlight the everyday politics at the heart of practitioners' emotional labour, particularly with regards to the social identities and cultural biases of those who provide it. This has implications for practitioners in terms of embodied reflexivity and self-care and for policymakers in terms of providing appropriate support mechanisms and compensation that values the emotional labour of the workforce.

*emotional labour, emotions, love, social inequalities, embodiment*

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## **E 11**

### **ECEC PROFESSIONALS' SKILLS FOR THE PROMOTION OF INCLUSIVE PLAY**

Self-organised symposium

Play is unavoidable for child development (Piaget, 1945; Vygotskij, 1976) and for children with disabilities too. However, they experience obstacles to enjoy the benefits of inclusive play activities, due to physical barriers, restriction of social policies, lack of educational culture, low awareness on accessibility and adaptability issues (Besio et al., 2017; Barron et al., 2017). The role of adults in structuring the educational contexts and in organizing effective play activities, taking part as "expert companions" has become crucial. The symposium develops along three intertwined topics: 1) A proposal of a training school model for educators and practitioners, designed and validated within the EU COST Action "LUDI - Play for Children for Disabilities" 2) A systematic classification of the adult's roles within inclusive play, developed by the Italian project GioDi (Play and Disability); 3) A study report on supportive strategies for inclusive play in ECEC, built on educators' reflections and practice.

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**Chair: Daniela Bulgarelli, Università degli Studi di Torino, Italy**

### **A systematic classification of the adult's role to support and improve inclusive play. The Italian project GioDi (Play and Disability)**

Nicole Bianquin, University of Aosta Valley, Italy

The study aimed at developing a model about the roles that educators can assume to improve play for children with disabilities (CwD). When CwD are involved in play situations, the adult's intervention is fundamental (Lester, Russell, 2010). Without educators' competence, play could often unfold at lower levels. With careful and appropriate support, play can move through naive towards complex and challenging play situations (Bianquin, 2018). The adult must grant the right to play, the main dimension of every child's life (Besio, 2018) and he should create a playful framework (Perino, 2006) through a scaffolding process (Wood et. al., 1976). Within the frame of the right to play for CwD, a systematization of the role assumed by the adults in play situations was conducted. The play sessions, realized in the Italian project Giodi-2 (30 sessions: 10 CwDs/ educators) have been analysed through the Test of Environmental Support, in particular in relation to the type of support provided by the adult. Parents, children and educators have given their consent to the project, to video recording and data usage. The intervention of the adult in supporting play for CwD is essential, both to enrich it and make it more inclusive. The educator can support play assuming three different roles that refer to the concept of scaffolding: observer, activator or partner; each of these roles involves specific features and actions. Only adequate and competent educators' support could realize the right to play for CwD, ECEC services could thus become inclusive play spaces for everyone.

*inclusive play, adults' role, scaffolding, children with disabilities, right to play*

## **Supporting play for children with disabilities in ECEC services. The experiences of Italian practitioners**

Daniela Bulgarelli, Università degli Studi di Torino, Italy

The study aimed at collecting the educators' experiences in promoting inclusive play for children with disabilities (CwD) in nursery schools. Play has a crucial role in nursery schools (Bondioli, 1987; Borghi, 2015), because it is conceived as the main drive for motor, cognitive, affective and social development (Piaget, 1962; Vygotskij, 1976). The educator can support play assuming three different roles (observer, activator or partner; Bianquin, 2018), addressing the scaffolding process (Wood et. al., 1976). Within the frame of the ICF-CY (WHO, 2007), a self-report questionnaire investigated the strategies to support inclusive play for CwD, through multiple choice or open questions. Ninety-three respondents from 10 services filled the questionnaire in 2017. A deductive content analysis was performed on the answers to two open questions (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). Two independent observers coded the sentences (percentage of agreement = 68%). The respondents' privacy was protected: the questionnaire was anonymous. Each gave an informed consent. To support play, the practitioners reported to act as scaffolders (assuming the role of observer, activator or partner). They described didactic strategies that involved contextual adaptation (ratio adults/child; working in small groups, etc.). Some respondents reported to use no strategies to promote play (N = 15). The lack of strategies to facilitate inclusive play could be alarming. Maybe, practitioners did use strategies they were not aware of; or they did not use strategies at all. To address such issue, training devoted to reflecting on the way practitioners are used to foster inclusive play of CwD could be helpful.

*inclusive play, nursery schools, scaffolding process, didactic strategies, reflective practitioner*

### **Play and toys for all - Validation of the "LUDI" training school**

Daniela Bulgarelli (1), Rianne Jansens (2), Serenella Besio (1), (1) Università degli Studi di Torino, Italy; (2) Zuyd University, Netherlands

This study presents the validation process of methods and contents of the Training School (TS) "Play and Toys for all", created within the COST Action TD1309 "LUDI-Play for Children with Disabilities (CwD)". Play is unavoidable for child development (Piaget, 1945; Vygotskij, 1976) and for CwD (Besio, 2018), who experience obstacles in play, due to physical barriers, restriction of social policies, lack of educational culture, low awareness on accessibility and adaptability issues (Besio et al., 2017; Barron et al., 2017). The role of adults as play companions and the environment in organizing effective play activities has become crucial. The LUDI framework promoted methods and tools to assure CwD the right to play for the sake of play (PSP), in inclusive contexts. Following the ICF model (WHO, 2001), despite functional limitations, human activity and participation may happen through environmental changes on individual basis. Universal Design, accessibility issues and inclusive approaches are involved in this process, disseminated by the TS. Two editions of the TS ([https://www.ludi-network.eu/training\\_school/](https://www.ludi-network.eu/training_school/)) involved 18 trainers, 95 trainees, 10 users, who filled out a set of questionnaires addressing its quality of content/methodology and its perceived effectiveness. Questionnaires were anonymous; consent forms signed by participants. The TS achieved the goal (90% of answers) of spreading the LUDI perspective; methodology and contents were effective. It improved the participants' knowledge about play for CwD; they sustained it partly changed their professional approach. The LUDI TS is an effective tool to promote inclusive play. Trainees and users found it powerful for disseminating inclusive culture.

*play for the sake of play, children with disabilities, adult training, accessibility, inclusive play*

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## **E 12**

### **INNOVATIVE USES OF IT IN ECEC PRACTICE**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Anniqa Lagergren, Halmstad University, Sweden**

#### **Using tablets in free play. The implementation of the digital play framework in Greece**

Sofia Chatzigeorgiadou (1), Ioanna Karagiorgou (2), (4), Maria Hatzigianni (3), Athanasios Gregoriadis (4), (1) University of Nicosia, Greece; (2) 2nd Experimental Kindergarten School, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece; (3) University of Melbourne, Australia; (4) Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

To investigate the use of tablets by young children during their free play in preschool centres. The digital play framework was designed and implemented in Australia. Its aim was to enhance educators' understanding of how children learn to use technology through play (Bird & Edwards, 2015). Adopting the Vygotskian theory on play, the "digital play framework" was adapted for the Greek early childhood context. The digital play framework was used as an observational tool. 16 kindergartners (4-5 years old) were observed ten times (written and video recorded sessions) in pairs. The project was approved by the Ethics committee of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Principals and teachers were informed about the study's purposes. Parents completed written

consent forms about their child's participation. Most of the children entered ludic-symbolic stage of play easily but not all of them reached the advanced, 'innovation' stage. Children went through the different stages of the framework using social scaffolding as their most dynamic strategy. Teachers easily understood and followed the framework during their observations and the implementation in a different cultural context was successful. The study contributes to the field of digital play by providing insights on how new devices can be integrated into children's free play and how to assess children's play more efficiently. Iterations of the framework to become less linear and more flexible are also proposed. Further exploration of the framework in other cultural settings is recommended.

*touch screen device, tablets, Vygotsky, free play, young children*

#### **Children as knowledge-producing citizens in action- Digital recording of and by physical activity as a methodological approach in ECE research and practice**

Anniqa Lagergren, Kalle Jonasson, Halmstad University, Sweden

The aim is to study children's physical/digital activities simultaneously. The contemporary literature on physical activity comprises two strands, focusing on either development (Helander, 2012) or expression (Lind, 2005). An emergent approach is to regard physical activity as a knowledge asset (Olsson, 2014). Insights from the literature based on a post-humanist conception of the world (Taguchi, Palmer & Gustafsson, 2016) point to the importance of non-human agency, such as of digital technology. This is combined with the agency of children, as conceptualized in socio-cultural theory (Wertsch, 1998). Both forms of agency are activated in the study by utilizing physical activity as a methodological asset. The empirical visual data was collected in collaboration with children age 3-5 year old and preschool teachers in three different Swedish preschools. Taking the intersection of post-humanist and sociocultural theory as a point of departure, the study has a broad methodological approach. This enables a stance in which children's bodies are central for production of knowledge and ethics, but without focusing them as loci of health, risk and measures. Ethical standards were assured through written informed consent by parents and personnel, and oral consent from participating children. Preliminary results show that new possibilities of action and agency are unlocked when young children get to access digital technologies, such as, for instance, cameras. When combined, physical activity and digital technology inform each other as both drivers and describers of change, and as something connecting children to the places and areas in which they live.

*children, agency, knowledge-producers, physical activity, digital technology*

#### **Translanguaging with the tablet - Children's agency in multilingual preschools using digital tablets**

Petra Petersen, Stockholm University, Sweden

This study explores children's different expressions of agency when using digital tablets in preschools in multilingual areas. Drawing on the problematizing of the mono-lingual norm in western education (Garcia, 2009; Björk-Willén, Gruber & Puskás, 2013; Kultti, 2012), the understanding is broadened of children's use of e.g. multilingual applications in ongoing projects. From a social semiotic approach (Kress, 1997; Selander & Kress, 2010) children's multimodal communication is in focus, combined with the notion of translanguaging (Garcia, 2009), to explore both multimodal and multilingual aspect of young children in day-to-day activities. Qualitative video observations of children and multimodal focus groups with teachers were used to reflect multimodal interaction between peers as well as the tablet, consolidating formal ethical guidelines (Vetenskapsrådet, 2011), ethical problems concerning informed consent when filming children was addressed actively involving the children in the collection process. Incorporating other modes than verbal majority language using the affordances of digital tablets, children were able to express agency in both multilingual and multimodal ways. Photographical and portable modes were used by the children to create their own documentation and verbal minority language content in applications including online and locally created resources where parents were co-producers. The double difficulty of exerting agency as young children as well as minority language speakers is discussed and how multimodal, digital resources used by the children might overcome these challenges, creating translanguaging activities. In a diverse world, where multilingual children have a right to communicate multilingually, the results could propose interesting ways of creating translanguaging activities in preschool.

*agency, digital tablets, multilingualism, translanguaging, multimodality*

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**Chair: Sara Tours, Slippery Rock University, United States**
**Global Perspectives: Through the Eyes of Early Childhood Education Undergraduate Students**

Sara Tours (1), (1) Ahmet Simsar (2), Linda Zane (1), Michelle Amodei (1) Laura Kelley (1), Yakup Doğan (2), Slippery Rock University, United States; (2) Kilis 7 Aralık University, Turkey

As educators, we strive to instill global connectedness among undergraduate students, particularly pre-service educators. It is valuable to not only provide international experiences that expose students to diverse cultures, but to continuously assess the effectiveness of those experiences to insure optimal learning. The aim of this study was to compare and contrast perspectives of American and Turkish undergraduate students' experiences visiting and interacting in early childhood settings abroad. Overall, research literature on study abroad programs reflects pre-service teacher development, both professionally and personally (Ateşkan, 2015; Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006). The cultural competence conceptual framework aids in guiding this study (Seeleman, Suurmond, & Stronks, 2009). The paradigm for this study was constructivism by exploring cultural factors from American and Turkish students' experiences in study abroad programs (Cooper, 1993). This study used a qualitative methodology through the use of a survey method. Examples of student feedback include pre and post assessments, collaborative presentations, and post trip interviews. All student attendees were invited to participate in the study; only those that opted-in and clicked the informed consent partook in the study. Ethical considerations for the students time was taken into account, therefore the survey was online so that those who participated were able to take the survey at their convenience. The Turkish and American students' responses revealed an expanded worldview and broadened perspectives on education as a result of exposure to early childhood settings abroad. Although the American and Turkish students come from very different cultures, both found their international experiences valuable.

*global perspectives, undergraduate students, abroad programs, Turkey, United States*

**Integrating newcomers educators to the profession - Mentoring and learning communities**

Eleni Mousena (1), Mareta Sidiropoulou (2), Melpomeni Sxiza (3), (1) University of West Attica, Greece; (2) Democritus University of Thrace, Greece; (3) Hellenic Open University, Greece

The purpose of this research was to find out how newcomers educators in ECEC are supported in Greece. Specifically, how are they integrated into the profession? Reflective practice and pedagogical mediation are the central concepts in this research. Routman argues that conversation is at the heart of professional development (2002). Educators who were part of a network benefited from collaboration and sharing of ideas (Serrano, Alfaya, and Garcia, 2017). The research draws upon the studies on the conceptualization of the role of preschool professionals (Oberhuemer, 1999) and of the current theories of professionalism and continuous professional development of preschool educators (Urban, M. and Peeters J., 2016). It is sited in an interpretative example, using a qualitative data collection. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three years experienced educator focus group. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research and were assured of confidentiality. They took part voluntarily and had the opportunity to withdraw at any time, without consequence. The results show that educators are guided and supported in formal and informal ways. They argue that developing networks and learning communities is an excellent practice for professional development and a way to reduce professional stress during the starting period. New educators want a better formal supporting framework that will allow them to have much more time for meetings and to build a strong professional identity.

*preschool educators, integration, mentoring, networking, learning communities*

**Effects of discussion methods applied to kindergarten internship course: Students' perspective**

Lee-Feng Huang, National Pingtung University, Taiwan

Programs for teacher training in Taiwan include instructional internship. The internship courses aim to establish pre-service teachers' teaching abilities. Discussion methods often stimulate students to learn actively, to scaffold each other, and to explore potential problems. The purpose of this study is to elucidate how discussion methods in preschool internship courses impact on pre-service teacher's professional development. Hemmerich, Hoepner & Samelson (2015) indicated that internship can develop a closer connection between classroom pedagogy and teaching practice. Gall (1980, 2010) suggested that discussion methods are effectively applicable to learners at different stages. Based on the Vygotsky's social-cultural theory, peer's scaffolding can enhance

students' learning outcomes. Discussion methods provide students to exchange experiences in the internship. This study offered opportunities to 20 pre-service teachers to discuss problems during the instructional internship, they exchanged their internship experience in different kindergarten classrooms. This study collected their self-assessments and self-reflections in a qualitative survey. The collected data were classified, coded, compared and thematically analysed, to evaluate their professional growth and shortcomings by discussion methods. The collected research materials were anonymous and not counted into the semester score. Discussion methods helped pre-service teachers to adjust their teaching beliefs, to develop their teaching strategies for mixed-age classrooms, and improve their reflection skills. However, the methods were less helpful for classroom management and for leading group discussion. Pre-service teachers should intensively observe kindergarten tutors' teaching process to enhance their abilities to manage classrooms and to lead preschoolers' discussion.

*preschool internship course, instructional internship, discussion methods, pre-service teachers, student's perspective*

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## **E 14**

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION DURING THE PRIMARY SCHOOL YEARS**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium seeks to highlight some of the key findings arising from the eponymous research study. The study was co-funded by the National Parents Council and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment in Ireland. The study was carried out over an 18 month period and engaged pupils, parents, teachers and principals in representative sample of schools. The symposium will explore the what is meant by working in partnership with parents, the voices of children and adults around the role of homework in these partnerships and the design and development of workshops to support parental involvement in the area of literacy development.

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**Chair: Cliona O'Keeffe, St Nicholas Montessori College, Ireland**

#### **Supporting children's home learning environment through partnerships with parents**

Cliona O'Keeffe (1), Joan Kiely (2), Leah O'Toole (3), Maja Haals Brosnan (2), Emma Zara O'Brien (2), (1) St Nicholas Montessori College, Ireland; (2) Marino Institute of Education, Ireland; (3) Maynooth University, Ireland

This paper outlines the results of the second phase of a larger research project on parental involvement and engagement in their children's learning during the primary school years. This phase sought the views of stakeholders involved in 'innovative' practice in this area. Research has highlighted the importance of understanding children's learning as embedded in the social, cultural and family contexts in which it occurs and the role of parents and the 'home learning environment', (Alanen, Brooker and Mayell, 2015 ;Hayes, O'Toole and Halpenny, 2017). International research shows that children do better when their parents are actively involved with their education (Borgonovi and Montt, 2012; Desforges and Aboucaar, 2003; Emerson, Fear, Fox and Sanders, 2012; Goodall and Vorhaus, 2008). Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) can provide an appropriate conceptual framework through which to interpret processes of parental involvement, engagement and partnership (O'Toole, 2017). The research followed a constructivist paradigm and consisted of three phases: Literature Review, Case Studies, and Workshops. The case studies involved interviews and focus groups with stakeholders and analysis of children's drawings. Informed consent was sought from adults involved in the research and from the guardians of all children involved alongside ongoing assent from children themselves. There was a disparity of opinion between stakeholders as to what constitutes 'effective' parent partnership. The findings suggest that more support is required for schools, parents and children around effective partnerships to support children's home learning.

*home learning environment, parents, partnership, story reading, oral language*

#### **Making homework more family-friendly**

Joan Kiely (1), Maja Haals Brosnan (1), Emma O'Brien, Cliona O' Keeffe (2), (1) Marino institute of education, Ireland; (2) St Nicholas Montessori Dublin, Ireland

This paper is part of a larger research project conducted for the Irish National Parents Council on parental engagement in their young children's education (age 4-8). This presentation will report on the final phase, which focuses on the development of innovative ways to involve parents with Ireland's new language curriculum (2015). The research will replicate the successful methodology of the Storytime Project (Kiely, 2017), which aims to empower parents to support children's oral language development. The current research embeds the understanding of parental involvement, engagement and partnership within

Bronfenbrenner's 'bioecological' model, incorporating biological components and temporal concerns (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 2006). New approaches to homework will be provided using workshops with particular attention to children's oral language. At the end of the qualitative research period, focus groups will be conducted with parents, children and teachers, investigating their experiences of the approaches employed. Parental and child consent has been obtained. Researchers sought ongoing assent, as guided by Skanfors' (2009) concept of an 'ethical radar' whereby children's agency and assent is negotiated in the moment and on an ongoing basis. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly adhered to. The research is ongoing and the final focus groups still to be conducted. Findings will include children's, parents', and teachers' experiences of the new homework methods and whether these will contribute to increased parental engagement in children's education. The trialling of new ways of doing homework will inform practice in schools and the development of resources developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

*homework, parental involvement, children, oral language, choice*

### **What is this thing called 'working with parents'; involved, engaged or contested? Insights from research**

Emma Zara O'Brien, Marino Institute of Education, Ireland

The role of parents in children's learning and development has drawn focus and attention with greater emphasis placed on understanding the many strands encapsulated and how best to support parents in their child's learning and development. Working in partnership with parents is recognised as central and crucial within ECE and as beneficial to child outcomes (Sjolta, 2006; NCCA, 2009; Desforjes & Abouchaar 2003). Examples include, Aistear's Guidelines on Building Partnerships with parents (NCCA, 2009) in Ireland which draws on the work of Epstein (2009; 2011). Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) can provide an appropriate conceptual framework through which to interpret processes of parental involvement, engagement and partnership (O'Toole, 2017). Non-systematic literature review. This paper draws on the initial findings of a study of parental involvement, engagement and partnership in their children's education during the primary school years, which is funded by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the National Parents Council (NPC), and is being conducted by researchers from MIE. Included drawing from a wide range of sources to ensure representative views and the identification of funding sources, cognisant of bias. What is less clear is how 'partnership', and parental involvement, is conceptualised and understood. Discussion within existing literature highlights the contested landscape such concepts inhabit. It is argued in developing policies and practices to support parents' involvement in, and partnership with, ECE practitioners and settings, an overview of extant literature offers a possible roadmap on how this is best achieved.

*parents, partnership, parental involvement, ECE, implications for practice*

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## **E 15**

### **VALUE DIVERSITY IN CARE AND EDUCATION. DEVELOPING A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH BETWEEN TEACHERS AND ASSISTANTS**

Self-organised symposium

Inclusive ECEC-services ask for a collaborative approach in which different practitioners, involved in the care and learning process of children, work and learn together. In most European countries not only preschool teachers (i.e. 'core' practitioners) work with children and families. Many other, mostly lower qualified, practitioners are involved in the care and learning process (e.g. teacher-assistants, childcare workers, Roma assistants, special needs assistants, ...). A NESET II study (European Commission, 2016) shows that these 'assisting' practitioners are often not involved in planning and CPD, and are 'invisible workers'. Underwood et al. (2016) stated that they mostly work in a 'one teach/one assist' approach, whilst other team teaching strategies are preferred to cope with the diverse needs of children and families. In this symposium we focus on strengthening the collaboration between all ECEC-practitioners involved in the care and learning process of young children in Belgium, Denmark, Portugal and Slovenia.

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**Chair: Jan Peeters, Ghent University, Belgium**

### **VALUE diversity in care and education: Unravelling the collaboration between teachers and teacher assistants**

Hester Hulpia, Sandra Van der Mespel, VBJK, Belgium

VALUE - a 3 year Erasmus+ project, in Belgium, Denmark, Portugal, and Slovenia – aims to value the diverse background of all ECEC practitioners (i.e. core practitioners and ECEC-assistants). By strengthening the collaboration between all ECEC-practitioners the learning and care needs of diverse children, families and communities are better addressed. The CoRe Study (Urban et al., 2011) and the NESET II study (Peeters et al., 2016), revealed that in many European countries part of the workforce is represented by (often low qualified) ECEC-assistants. They are defined as 'invisible workers', not represented in policy documents, without official competence profiles, and fewer possibilities for professional development. Often core ECEC-teachers are involved in 'teaching',

whereas ECEC-assistants take a 'caring role', implying a hierarchy between 'education' and 'care', hindering a holistic conceptualization of education (Van Laere et al., 2012). Starting from the educare paradigm and the added value of ECEC-assistants for diversifying the ECEC-team, a desk research and a baseline study are performed in the involved countries. Information on the role of ECEC-assistants is gathered, as well as the collaborative approaches that reflect on the professional identities of both core practitioners and ECEC-assistants. In the baseline study an informed consent was signed. The findings revealed that engagement, strong leadership, ownership, competent facilitator, safe context, time for planning and reflection and tailor-made are crucial to set up a collaborative approach between core practitioners and ECEC-assistants. Recommendations are made on how to support a collaborative approach between all ECEC-staff and strengthening the role of ECEC-assistants.

*inclusive ECEC, collaboration, continuous professional development, teacher assistants, diversity*

#### **VALUE changing practices in ECEC aimed at Inclusive education through learning laboratories – A Danish case**

Bente Jensen, Aarhus University, Denmark

In what way are VALUE Learning Laboratories improving collaboration between professionals groups (teachers and assistants), and the opportunities and barriers that exist. Past research highlights an important argument for considering innovative CPD to strengthen collaboration between teachers and assistants; that addressing issues regarding inclusive education must be a part of this type of collaborative CPD. Whilst there is no consensus on the best kind of collaborative CPD, evidence suggests that a broad range of CPD, involving various levels of ECEC, in a developmentally-supportive environment is effective. Learning laboratories/co-creation (Engeström, 1998) used within and across ECEC systems, through professionals, educators and assistants. Communities of practice (COP) (Wenger, 1998) and Communities of Innovation (COI) (Jensen & Iannone, 2018) underpin the conceptual framework. The study builds on a social constructivist paradigm. Data were gathered through a survey, questionnaires, desk research and case studies including observations within three pilot schools. The anonymity of informants was respected where required, as researchers followed a strict ethical protocol. Analyses and findings were validated by various researchers independently, triangulated and also framed with contextual data (baseline data). By questioning existing practices teachers and assistants collaborated on renewed inclusive education. We found that crucial aspects include: critical reflection, communities of practices and a growing awareness of the meaning of addressing social inequality in ECEC within collaborative practice. The new approaches to learning labs/co-creation are incorporated to expand the CPD to include all employees in a form of employee-driven innovation. More specific elements of impact require further research

*collaborative practice, inclusive ECEC learning laboratories, innovative CPD, teachers and assistants*

#### **An example of a VALUE learning path: The Flemish case**

Kaat Verhaeghe, Leen Rosiers, Erasmus University College Brussels, Belgium

The aim of this pilot-research is to build a CPD-path in Flemish preschool. It accompanies core-practitioners and ECEC-assistants in valuing each other roles and perspective and involve the whole staff to an 'educare' approach. The development of a narrative coaching method (Verhaeghe et al., 2017) showed the potential of using narratives in the professionalisation of ECEC-professionals. Perspectives of staff members themselves are, however, often absent in these 'educare' debates (Van Laere & Vandenbroeck, 2016). An internal model consisting of ideals about education, an image of the child and professional role, influence professionals in their intentions and actions (Golombek, 2015). While professional growth often focusses on behavioural change, changes in beliefs and attitudes are more likely when narratives are addressed (Stelter & Law, 2010). Inspired by narrative coaching (Verhaeghe et al., 2017) the diverse team can conduct interprofessional practice, enabling an educare approach (Van Laere & Vandenbroeck, 2016). A narrative approach was conducted to value the perspectives of all ECEC-practitioners involved in the pilot school. The narrative approach induced the creation of narrative space to give equal opportunities to all participants, and it encouraged the coach to reflect on the own biases. The presence of assistants in the team, when valued, can represent an opportunity to diversify the ECEC-workforce, which addresses the needs of diverse families. The validation of care and education as complementary concepts has the potential to enhance pedagogical practice. ECEC-policies should focus on the cooperation of 'all' professionals working in ECEC contexts to establish the educare approach.

*educare, diverse teams, narrative coaching, holistic approach, professionalization*

## **SUPPORTING BELONGING FOR REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT FAMILIES THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: RESEARCH FROM AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND**

Self-organised symposium

Refugee and immigrant children and families are transitioning to a new country and culture, where a primary task is to develop a sense of belonging. Belonging is a basic human need that develops in the context of relationships with people, places and things. Yet, despite its prominence as an early childhood education (ECE) curriculum strand in Aotearoa New Zealand and several other countries, the processes of coming to belong and supporting belonging through early childhood education, especially where different cultural beliefs require negotiation, are not well understood. The three presentations in this symposium will discuss findings from two research projects focused on refugee and immigrant families in early childhood education. The research aims to develop an evidence-based theoretical model, and associated strategies, that will contribute to transforming policy and practice in ECE in ways that enable refugee and immigrant families and children to construct positive outcomes for belonging and participating.

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**Chair: Linda Mitchell, The University of Waikato, New Zealand**

### **Bicultural belonging development for refugee families**

Lesley Rameka, University of Waikato, New Zealand

The research will develop theoretical framings that build on Māori concepts to strengthen a sense of bicultural belonging and identity for refugee families, and also help families sustain a sense of belonging and identity in their home countries. Whilst the experiences of refugees differ from Māori, experiences of colonisation, the need to construct positive identities of self and sense of belonging in unfamiliar, contemporary contexts is not dissimilar. This Kaupapa Maori (Berryman, 2008) research project utilises a design-based implementation research process involving cycles of data gathering, theory building, critical analysis and evaluation, and adaptation of design, carried out in participation with children, teachers and families in five early childhood settings. The research is positioned within a Māori worldview. The methodology is guided by Māori philosophical frames and the methods utilized involve culturally appropriate processes and procedures, including collaborative analysis of bicultural practices and documentation. In relation to biculturalism, both Māori researchers are committed to supporting bicultural development and have extensive networks and ongoing relationships within Māori communities that were drawn upon to support the work Powhiri (Māori ritual ceremony), where the hosts welcome visitors to their territory, provides the metaphor for understanding the development of bicultural belonging and identity for refugee families in New Zealand. Articulation of what is involved in each step of the Powhiri process is key to developing theoretical understandings of the ways in which all refugees to NZ can develop a sense of bicultural belonging

*refugees, Māori, belonging, biculturalism, Powhiri (Maori welcome ceremony)*

### **Drawing as an interactional resource for supporting stories about belonging**

Amanda Bateman, Swansea University, United Kingdom

This paper addresses one of the research aims to find out how drawing, story-telling and play provide opportunities for children to i) sustain connections with people and experiences from their home country and ii) develop new connections in and sense of belonging with Aotearoa New Zealand. Our findings build on prior work regarding the co-construction of knowledge between teacher and child (Bateman, 2016) through culturally nuanced and multimodal ways (Mitchell & Bateman, 2016). An Ethnomethodological framework (Garfinkel, 1969) is used with language socialisation theory, conversation analysis, and video recordings. Ethical approval was gained through the Waikato University Ethics Committee, and addressed key ethical concerns of assent processes for children, and processes for withdrawing assent. A shared understanding between the participants is gained as the child draws and tells about the figures in her picture (people), the park itself (places) and the activities and equipment used at the park (things). The drawing activity acts as a tangible support for co-operative action and storytelling about belonging (Goodwin, 2017). Early childhood settings have the ability to support children's sense of belonging in a new country through multimodal engagement where the affordances of drawing and telling ensure enhanced awareness and consciousness of children's connection with the family and wider world.

*language socialisation theory, conversation analysis, immigrant and refugee children, drawing, storytelling*



## **Negotiating community funds of knowledge of refugee and immigrant children and families within curriculum**

Linda Mitchell, The University of Waikato, New Zealand

This paper addresses the aim to analyse the engagement and negotiation at community and family levels with cultural values and understandings of belonging, and their enactment through ECE. The research builds on our prior research in ECE (Mitchell & Bateman, 2016) which suggested that belonging was enhanced when connections were made with cultural values, home languages, and interests from home. Democracy as a fundamental value for education provides a conceptual framework. Dewey (1916) argued that for a society to develop as a democratic society, education must also operate as a democratic community that creates dispositions and interest in formulating and addressing shared concerns. A "funds of knowledge" paradigm contributed to development of the research question, to data gathering methods, and to how the project was set up as a partnership with teachers as collaborators. A qualitative methodology included case studies of children and families in a refugee ECE centre. Video-recording, story-telling, documented learning stories, drawing and interviewing were specific methods. Social and cultural considerations were overcome through the researchers collaborating with language support staff, who translated material and undertook some interviews in participant home languages. The ECE centre generated a sense of ethno-belonging through two-way processes of learning and coming to belong, with refugee families adding to the ECE programme in significant ways. Ways are exemplified by which ECE teachers can encourage families to contribute to curriculum and in so doing reinforce genuine connections with home country that lead to deeper intercultural understanding.

*refugee, interculturalism, funds of knowledge, belonging, democracy*

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### **E 17**

#### **HOW IS QUALITY DESIGNED AND ENHANCED IN ECEC?**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Rita Melia, Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Ireland**

#### **Quality indicators framing the evaluation of the Finnish ECEC services**

Janniina Vlasov, Laura Repo, Finnish Education Evaluation Centre, Finland

This presentation introduces results of national evaluation carried out by the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre. The aim of the evaluation was to examine the realization of the ECEC core curriculum in Finland and to identify the key elements of successful processes. The project relates to previous quality evaluation studies. The project tested the suitability of the national quality indicators drawn up for Finnish ECEC (Vlasov et al. 2018). Theoretical foundations of Finnish ECEC evaluations are based on the principle of enhancement-led evaluation (Patton 1997; Atjonen 2015), which stresses the principles of participation and impact. It emphasises trust between the evaluator and those participating in the evaluation study. Data for the evaluation project was acquired by self-evaluation questionnaires from teachers and leaders of ECEC centres. The data consisted of both quantitative and qualitative elements and represented a randomly collected sample of Finnish ECEC services. Ethical requirements were carefully considered during the study, and the anonymity of the informants were assured. The main findings of the evaluation suggested that the teachers were highly-motivated, yet the quality of the ECEC processes varied. Additionally, the structural factors of the services were found to be insufficient, and the lack of resources directed to ECEC contradicted with the pedagogical aspirations of the teachers. The evaluation project had many practical and political implications. Such as producing information and tools for evaluating ECEC on national and local level, promoting the quality and thus the equal provision of the services, and supporting ECEC providers in their quality management task.

*ECEC quality evaluation, quality indicators, self-evaluation, enhancement-led evaluation, professional development*

#### **Relations between the quality of the structure and the quality of the process in Russian kindergartens**

Tatiana Le-van, Olga Shyian, Igor Shiyan, Moscow City University, Russia

The aim is to investigate the factors that influence the quality of ECEC in Russia. Relations between different aspects of ECE quality and the structure parameters are in studies: Pianta R. et al., 2005; Bigras N. et al., 2010; Hartman S.C., 2016; Slot P.L., 2018. The study is based on Vygotsky's approach: the social situation of development in preschool education quality. In the course of the national monitoring, the quality of the structure (education and experience of teachers, the number of children in groups and the ratio of children to adults) and the quality of the process (subscales of ECERS) were investigated. The study involved 1301 kindergarten. Regression analysis was used to study the relations of parameters. Respondents participated voluntarily. The participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The study did not reveal significant relations between the quality of the process and the vocational training system of teachers, their professional experience and involvement

into the system of in-service trainings. The items' scores on the subscale "Language-Reasoning" are decreasing while the number of children per adult grows. The scores of "Toileting / diapering" are also significantly different when there are 2–9 children and 19–34 children per adult ( $P$ value = 0.016). The groups with 2 or more teachers and the groups with 1 adult are significantly different in the cluster "Best" and "Random" cluster. The results of the research are important for educational policy, as well as to enhance the quality of teacher training.

*ECE, ECERS, structure quality, process quality, quality assessment*

#### **Enhancing quality provision; Supporting regulatory compliance**

Helen Rouine (1), Rita Melia (2), (1) Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child & Family Agency, Ireland; (2) Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Ireland

The aim of this research was to identify areas of noncompliance with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. To elicit from the Early Childhood Education Care sector required resources and training supports and to develop a suite of training supports to assist registered providers to promote and achieve regulatory compliance. Access to on-going professional development and innovative practices is essential to support quality ECEC provision, European Commission, (2014), Melhuish, (2015), OECD, (2005) Theories on quality in ECEC as outlined in the findings of the CoRE report (2011), the European Commission (2014) and Eurofound (2015) study underpin this research. These studies reference the importance of continuing training to enable practitioners to fulfil their professional role with subsequent impact on the quality of staff pedagogy and children's subsequent outcomes. Data for this mixed methods study was collated using an online survey, focus groups and consultation to explore the changing paradigm of quality ECEC provision. Ethical considerations of informed consent, freedom to withdraw from the study, anonymity, participant safety and wellbeing were adhered to. Findings identified the need for; an evidence- informed resource where all relevant regulatory material were collated in a single document. A resource to support compliance with regulations. A resource to support standardization and consistency of the inspection process. The development of the Quality Regulatory Framework (2018) and a resource guide to developing policies and procedures together with the upcoming development of an e learning resource are expected to support compliance and quality ECEC provision.

*quality, compliance, practice, regulation, professional development*

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## **E 18**

### **PROFESSIONALISATION OF THE EARLY YEARS' WORKFORCE: THE IRISH POLICY APPROACH TO INITIAL PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION, CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND INSPECTION FOR IMPROVEMENT**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium aims to highlight the Irish policy approach to professionalisation of the early years' workforce, focusing on three papers around Initial Professional Education (IPE) criteria and guidelines, continuing professional learning (CPL) for inclusion of all children, and inspection for improvement.

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**Chair: Fintan Breen, Mary Immaculate College, Ireland**

#### **Leading inclusion: Participants' views of the effectiveness of the Leadership for Inclusion (LINC) Continuing Professional Learning Programme in Ireland**

Fintan Breen (1), Teresa Heeney (2), Emer Ring (1), (1) Mary Immaculate College, Ireland; (2) Early Childhood Ireland, Ireland

LINC is a continuing professional learning (CPL) programme, aiming to reach 80% of Irish early years' services by 2020. Graduates are appointed as INclusion Co-ordinators and are responsible for the inclusion of children with additional needs. This research explores the graduates' evaluation across 2016/17 and 2017/18. There are clear benefits of high quality early intervention in inclusive pre-school services for children with additional needs (Ring et al. 2016; Ring & O'Sullivan 2018), however, in Ireland early years' education has not been invested in until more recently (Ring, 2016), which has had negative consequences for children and families (Ring, Daly & Wall 2018). Utilising good practice across a range of adult education methodologies, LINC was designed to meet the needs of graduates to support children and families (Breen et al 2018). This blended learning (83% online) programme comprises of 6 modules and caters for ~1000 educators annually. Research has been conducted to investigate graduates' evaluation and impact of the programme. Ethical considerations of informed consent, freedom to participate or to withdraw, anonymity, as well as participant wellbeing were adhered to at all time. Results from the evaluation from participants of the first two years of the programme ( $n=639$  / 38%) indicate a significantly positive experience, particularly in how well graduates feel

prepared to lead inclusion (~97% prepared well). The large cohort sizes (~1000 pa) and the significant reach (80% of services by 2020) is impacting positively on inclusion, and results will influence policy and practice both in Ireland and internationally.

*Inclusion, additional needs, continuing professional learning, leadership, CPD*

#### **Initial professional education - Professional qualifications for the modern ECEC sector**

Aoife Conduit, Ministry of Education and Skills, Ireland

The ECEC sector in Ireland has experienced dynamic development leading to a more complex policy and practice environment for practitioners. This paper identifies the objectives and processes in the Irish policy context foundational to the development of new ECEC professional awards. New policy builds upon the Model Framework for Education, Training and Professional Development in the ECEC sector (2002), the Workforce Development Plan for the ECCE sector in Ireland (2010), CoRE Report (Urban, Vandenbroeck, et al, 2011), Review of occupational role profiles (Urban, Robson, Scacchi, 2017), Survey of Early Years Practitioners (DES 2016), evaluation of the consultation findings (Fillis 2018) with context from First 5 strategy (Ireland, 2018). Conceptual frameworks that address the professionalisation of the early years workforce as it is connected to the quality of practice have informed this paper e.g. Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (1999) Research pillars include comprehensive literature review and extensive consultation with the sector. Grounded theory and iterative processes of valorising theory into practice are central. All data gathered has been anonymised and a wide range of literature has been considered impartially. All future qualifications will prepare graduates for more complex and challenging roles with an increased focus on core knowledge, practices and values and on professional formation. The new qualifications will support a pathway for practitioners and have been developed using research into the policy and practice environment for ECEC professionals and consultation with stakeholders. This work is guiding policy for professionalisation of the ECEC workforce.

*professionalisation, quality of qualifications, professional formation, occupational roles, career pathways*

#### **Education inspection for improvement in the early years sector in Ireland**

Maresa Duignan, Department of Education and Skills, Ireland

This paper provides an overview of the development and implementation of early years education inspection (EYEI) in Ireland. It details the quality framework informing these inspections and the 'inspection for improvement' approach. It provides composite findings from analysis of published inspection reports and discusses their impact on early years provision, practice and policy. This paper cites literature on inspection practices in education e.g. OECD Synergies for Better Learning (2013). It considers the role of inspection for improvement in realising a 'competent system' as the infrastructural support for quality ECEC. (CoRE Report, 2011) Theories of change that identify the centrality of evaluation, both internal and external, to the evolution of both self and group professional identity have informed this paper, e.g. Mezirow, (1997), Friedson (2001) Since 2016, EYEI have been completed in over 50% of eligible Early Years settings. The paper presents analysis of published reports. Data in this report has been anonymised. EYEI 'make visible' practices in early years settings that impact on the early learning experiences of children. In doing so they raise the profile and status of this undervalued sector, promote coherence and continuity across diverse education contexts for children, including early years settings and primary school and promote further investment by the Government in the provision of high quality ECEC. The paper concludes by sharing the future direction of Irish Early Years policy and next steps in the development of Early Years Education Inspection

*Quality, early years education, Inspection, development, policy*

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## **E 19**

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE AND VALUES IN YOUNG CHILDREN'S MATHEMATICS LEARNING**

Self-organised symposium

Mathematics is considered a universal language that was developed to describe patterns in the world around us. Already young children explore and discover those patterns. Early childhood education and care (ECEC) institutions, as well as families, shall support the children in this endeavour. In the first talk, Kelly Johnston focuses on toddlers. She has analysed the mathematical language used by ECEC professionals during mealtimes. 'Talk moves' are language patterns that were developed to support teachers in talking with students about mathematics. Camilla Justnes and Anne Nakken explore in the second talk how this tool can be used in ECEC settings. In the third talk, Dorota Lembrér shifts the focus from ECEC institutions to the children's homes and how parents describe their children's engagement in mathematics in everyday situations. Parent's views and how they value the children's mathematical activities help us to better understand the mathematics in young children's lives.

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**Chair: Kelly Johnston, Macquarie University, Australia**

**More than 'more': Mathematical language in snack-time conversations with toddlers**

Kelly Johnston, Sheila Degotardi, Macquarie University, Australia

This research aimed to investigate educator use of mathematical language with toddlers during snack-times. The research of the Erikson Institute Early Math Collaborative for infants and toddlers underpins this study. They reinforce that infants have innate mathematical knowledge which develops rapidly in the first three years (Chen et al., 2017) and that early abilities are predictive of later achievement in mathematics and literacy. The study employed social-interactive theory (Vygotsky, 1974), acknowledging that language is embedded in social and cultural contexts. A sociocultural framework (Rogoff, 1990) enabled understandings of individual and contextual factors relating to educator use of mathematical language. A social constructivist paradigm enabled exploration of interactions. Snack-time conversations were video-recorded and transcribed for analysis. A coding system of mathematical concepts was developed based on research. Analysis determined the extent of educators' mathematical talk and whether this related to measures of talk quantity and quality. Ethical approval was obtained via the Macquarie University Ethics Committee. Researchers sensitively monitored infants for any signs of dissent, and ceased filming when this occurred. Findings demonstrated that mathematical language was evident to varying degrees during snack-times but was largely incidental rather than intentional. Educator use of number and talk related to repetitious and directional-style language. Measurement talk was embedded in more complex ways and related to educators' use of extended utterances. When educators see mathematical thinking and learning opportunities embedded in everyday routines they can become more intentional. This fosters children's early mathematical abilities and interest and supports later achievements.

*mathematical thinking and learning, birth to three years, language, early childhood educators, early mathematics*

**How Norwegian preschool teachers make sense of talk moves: A case study**

Camilla Normann Justnes, Norwegian Centre for Mathematics Education, Norway

This study explores how Norwegian preschool teachers might make sense of talk moves - i.e. revoicing, repeating, reasoning, adding on, waiting, turn and talk, revising - and how presentation of talk moves can be meaningfully adapted to the Norwegian preschool context. Chapin et al. (2009) have identified talk moves that are effective for supporting, structuring and leading mathematical discussions in the classroom (c.f. Kazemi & Hintz, 2014). We use the Math Talk Learning Community framework developed by Hufferd-Ackles et al. (2004, 2016) and qualitative classroom-based research by O'Connor & Michaels (1996). The study is a case study that relies predominantly on qualitative data. Based on a convenience sample, we study preschool teachers' meaning making from analysis of questionnaire data and group discussions about talk moves as described by the Norwegian Centre for Mathematics Education (Wæge, 2015). Participation was voluntary, and all participants could withdraw from the study at any time. We replaced participants' names with pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality. Our analysis showed that preschool teachers found some of the settings described as unfamiliar, and they considered some of the examples to be school-like. Based on the participants' suggestions, we developed new descriptions of talk moves and discussed these with a new group of preschool teachers, as a cycle of refinement. We argue that talk moves need descriptions and examples that are familiar and meaningful and this appears crucial for possible implementation. We discuss how we intend to implement the adjusted talk moves in a PD for Norwegian preschool teachers.

*mathematics, kindergarten teachers, talk moves, mathematical discussions, professional development*

**Mathematics at home: Parents' views on children's mathematics learning and development**

Dorota Lembrér, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

The focus of this study is on how parents describe their children's engagement with mathematics at home, in order to investigate the values they hold about mathematics. Whereas some research has focused on why home environments are important for children's mathematics development and learning (Brenner, 1998), other studies have sought to understand how home environments can be a part of children's mathematics learning (Civil et al., 2002). A narrative approach to research is a way of understanding how meaning is imposed on experiences (Burton, 1999). In this study, I consider parents' narratives to be socially constructed (Burton, 1996) in that they are formed out of wider societal understandings of these specific situations. I used photo elicitation interviews and parents were asked to take photos of mathematics at home. This methodology facilitates dialogues between parents and opportunity to express their views, experiences. Participants received guidelines-letter about photographing their children engaging in mathematics at home. They were made aware that they could withdraw at any time and that data would be anonymised. Results show evidence of what constitutes mathematical content and how parents are providing stimuli for the development of mathematics knowledge in their children. They raised concerns about mathematics at home and what

they valued. Importance to assess values that parents have and issues concerning relationships between the world of preschool and parents. Study contributes to an emerging need to uncover home-related mathematics that is an important source of children's mathematics experiences.

*parents, mathematics activities, home, narratives, first educators*

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## E 20

### **TOWARD AN INTEGRATED MODEL FOR QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD INCLUSION: LINKING ASSESSMENT, PRACTICES, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium will synthesize what we have learned from research, along with innovations from everyday experiences, about the practices that support quality inclusive practice in early childhood education; how quality can be measured; and what professional development supports are essential for promoting continuous quality improvement. The first segment of the symposium will present a synthesis of research-based practices that support access to, and full participation in, quality inclusive programs. The second segment will provide information about the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP<sup>®</sup>), a new classroom observation measure designed to assess the quality of inclusive classroom practices in early childhood settings. The third segment will share a professional development framework for supporting quality inclusion and will present a pilot study of the framework that integrated evidence-based inclusive practices and effective professional development.

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**Chair: Elena Soukakou, Roehampton University, United Kingdom**

#### **Quality inclusion in early childhood: How do we measure it?**

Elena Soukakou (1), Camille Catlett (2), Maria Evangelou (3), (1) Roehampton University, United Kingdom; (2) Frank Porter Graham University of North Carolina, United States; (3) Oxford University, United Kingdom

The Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP) is a measure designed to assess the quality of inclusive classroom practices in early childhood settings. The ICP includes 12 practices with the strongest research support for meeting the individualized needs of children with disabilities included in early childhood programs. While improving the quality of early childhood programs is at the centre of current policy developments, in contrast with the literature on early child care, only a limited amount of research has studied aspects of quality in preschool inclusive classrooms (Odom, Buysse & Soukakou, 2011; Spiker et.al, 2011). The ICP was developed in response to a lack of reliable and valid measures for assessing classroom quality in inclusive programs (Soukakou, 2012). Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (1979) provided a framework for considering the various systems that shape inclusion. The ICP practices are aligned with practices that support inclusion, such as the Recommended Practices of the Division of Early Childhood (DEC, 2014) and international research on preschool inclusion. The ICP was developed using an iterative, multistep measurement paradigm. Piloting involved expert review, assessment of inter-rater reliability, construct validity, acceptability and usability of the measure. The research followed the BERA ethical guidelines. Administration of the ICP involved informing program staff that no child personally identifiable information would be collected or used. Results show good reliability, validity and acceptability of the ICP. Assessment information gathered by the ICP might be used by program leaders, professional development providers, and early childhood educators to inform quality improvement efforts.

*early childhood, inclusion, quality, practices, assessment*

#### **What do we know about inclusive practices?**

Camille Catlett (1), Elena Soukakou (2), (1) University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, United States; (2) Roehampton University, United Kingdom

This presentation synthesizes research on practices that support quality inclusion in early childhood (EC), including the DEC Recommended Practices. It will focus on practices at program and classroom levels that best support children with special education needs in inclusive EC settings. The presentation builds on the work of the Early Childhood Research Institute on Inclusion and National Professional Development Centre on Inclusion (Odom, Buysse, & Soukakou, 2011; NPDCI, 2011). One framework is the position statement of the National Association of Young Children (NAEYC) and DEC in the US which provides a definition of inclusion and delineates the responsibility EC and early childhood special education professionals share for providing evidence-based, quality services and supports for young children with and without disabilities. DEC Recommended Practices were developed based on systematic reviews of international research on preschool inclusion and are organized around domains including assessment, environment, instruction, interaction, teaming, and transition. The DEC Code of Ethics requires that professionals

"acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to work with a variety of young children with disabilities and their families within natural and inclusive environments". The information shared will support expertise needed to support this mandate. Selecting and using inclusive practices with research support in EC programs is a key aspect of quality inclusion. Discussion will centre on how an understanding of these practices may be used to provide high quality services for children who have or are at-risk for developmental disabilities and their peers.

*inclusion, practices, participation, access, support*

#### **Using quality assessment to support quality inclusion**

Maria Evangelou (1), Elena Soukakou (2), (1) Oxford University, United Kingdom; (2) Roehampton University, United Kingdom

This presentation provides results from a study that assessed the feasibility, acceptability, and usefulness of a new classroom quality measure, the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP; Soukakou 2016) to guide quality improvement in inclusive early childhood programs. Research highlighted that children with Special Educational Needs might be at risk of receiving less-than-outstanding experiences in settings typically rated as outstanding (Wolery et.al, 2000; Soukakou, 2012). A definition of inclusion using access, participation, and supports (DEC/ NAEYC, 2009) was used. It provided a framework for understanding, measuring and supporting quality improvement. The use of a classroom quality assessment tool, was guided by a professional development framework on: (1) the characteristics of the learners and the PD providers (2) the content of the professional development and (3) the methods used to implement professional development (NPDCI 2008; Winton, Snyder & Goffin, 2016). BERA guidelines were followed. Program staff were informed that no child personally identifiable information would be collected or used. The ICP was applied in 21 inclusive early years settings in the UK. All assessors received training and performed follow-up feedback visits to settings. Results showed that assessors achieved reliability proficiency, rated the ICP training program positively, and found the ICP a useful tool for guiding quality improvement efforts (Soukakou, Evangelou, & Holbrooke, 2018). The ICP can be used by program leaders, professional development providers, and early childhood educators to assess the quality of classroom practices with an aim to guide continuous quality improvement.

*early childhood, inclusion, quality, professional development, assessment*

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## **E 21**

### **CHILDREN AS ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Mia Heikkilä, Åbo Akademi University, Finland**

#### **"Child's right to participation in a multicultural Norwegian kindergarten"**

Ramona Bernard, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

How can we understand child participation in early childhood education in a cultural minority-majority perspective? This paper analyses and discusses recommendations made by UN's Children Committees (UNCR) and the Norwegian educational department. UNCR addresses children's participation with regard to culture and play (2013), children's right to be heard (2009) and indigenous people (2009). Based on the Kindergarten Law (Å§1,2,3,8), the Norwegian framework plan for early child education (2017) outlines child participation in relation to diversity, inclusion and indigenous people. Previous work on child participation in early childhood education is often related to a democratic frame of reference (Bae 2012, 2018, Kj rholt 2008, L vlie 2013). I will approach the subject in a cultural minority-majority perspective. A majority-minority cultural perspective emphasizes including and excluding mechanisms in child participation (Salole 2013, Gjervan 2006, Eidheim 1987, Biesta 2007). In a qualitative/interpretive paradigm and hermeneutic methodology, this study aims at understanding human action (Gadamer 1989, Thomassen 2006). The employed method is analysis of utterances in policy documents and systematizing the subject matter in question. Investigating historical texts, the researcher is aware of how own interests and knowledge in advance can influence the investigation. To make documents justice central utterances are cited. This enables examination of the interpretation and the discussion. Child participation is related to kindergarten everyday life; the children's own cultural activities and what they are to be taught. Child participation in a multicultural kindergarten is ambiguous. Understanding child participation in a minority-majority perspective can nuance the understanding and expectations in early childhood education.

*child participation, early child education, minority - majority, culture, Norway*

## **Differentiated instruction and achievement in kindergarten: How can quantitative measures be child-friendly?**

Anastasia Mavidou, Domna Kakana, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

The present study discusses how quantitative methods of data collection and data analysis were adjusted in order to become developmentally appropriate for kindergarten children. These quantitative methods were used to examine the impact of Differentiated Instruction (DI) on children's achievement. Previous research regarding the impact of DI revealed contradicted results. Although, the qualitative studies highlighted the effectiveness of DI on achievement and motivation (e.g. Danzi, Reul & Smith, 2008), the quantitative studies did not always confirm the same results (e.g. Koeze, 2007; Scott, 2012). Therefore, questions emerge about the reliability and credibility of the selected methods, regarding their compatibility to children's age. The literature proposes the adjustment of data collection methods that are applied to adults in order to address the specific characteristics of children (Mauthner, 1997). However, research with kindergartens might be challenging, as they have a limited concentration span and literacy development (Punch, 2002). The present study followed a quasi-experimental design. Pre- and post-tests were applied in two pre-determined groups of kindergarten children (Nexp = 80 and Nctrl = 74). Signed consent from parents and verbal consent from the participant children was acquired. All of the kindergartners engaged actively through the interviews. The statistical analysis revealed the effectiveness of DI for all the children. The applied methods and the specific techniques of data collection and analysis that are presented could be considered as good practices for future research involving young children and also contribute to the literature of DI's effectiveness.

*differentiated instruction, kindergarten, data collection, child-friendly, methodological issues*

## **Norm-creative play and learning in educational environments – The rebuilding of two early childhood educational settings and scrutinising educational materials**

Mia Heikkilä (1), Anne Lillvist (2), Malin Lindberg (3), Jennie Andersson Schaeffer (4), Karin Saler (5), Jens Engman (5), (1) Åbo Akademi University, Finland; (2) Örebro University, Sweden; (3) Luleå Technical University, Sweden; (4) Mälardalen University, Sweden; (5) Lycklig Arkitektur AB, Sweden

The aim of this reported research has been to develop innovative ways to promote inclusive, norm-creative play, by rebuilding educational environments in two preschools together with preschool staff and children in a learning process that examines, understands, and alter the norms at the preschool. Research shows that preschool play does not always include all children equally (Dolk 2013, Fast 2007, Hellman 2010), and there is a risk that power structures within the play, concerning age and gender, leads to uneven access to the environment. This can jeopardize children's equal and free play and instead encourage privileged positions within the play (Paechter & Clark 2007, Krogstad et al.) The theoretical perspectives used are multimodal understanding of children's meaning making (Kress, 2003, 2010), combined with Doreen Massey's perspectives on space and gender. Photo-elicited interviews (Clark, 2017) with children have been conducted, as well as focus group interviews with teachers. This has been done parallel with two different periods of video observations of play before and after the rebuilding. Ethical aspects have in line with national research policy been taken into account throughout the project, especially concerning children's participation. The analysis show results on several different dimensions. The results shows that rebuilding of educational environments need to be done parallel with development work with teachers. The results show that rebuilding units affects children's play and give children higher level of insights and views of their own and other play going on. It also makes play more sustainable concerning time, relations and gender.

*rebuilding, educational environment, gender, age, mixed methods*

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## **E 22**

### **DEFINING AND CRITIQUING 'KNOWLEDGE' IN ECEC**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Nancy Barbour, Kent State University, United States**

### **Examining the developmentally appropriate practices (dap) position statement: Context, critiques, and changes**

Nancy Barbour (1), Nancy File (2), (1) Kent State University, United States; (2) University of Wisconsin, United States

Within the US, concepts of Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP), as promulgated by NAEYC, are ubiquitous in the early childhood landscape. We focus on how DAP has been perceived both in the US and abroad. We explore the impact of historical context, the many critiques of the position statement, and the unwavering commitment to particular perspectives. The initial publication of DAP provoked fierce conversations within the field. Revisions to DAP in 1997, 2009, incorporated responses to critiques. Another revision to DAP is currently in progress. Our paper is based upon systematic literature review of critiques of

DAP and historical analysis of context and trends in the field, situating these in context. Research involved qualitative document analysis of scholarly writing responding to interpretations/applications of DAP in the US and abroad. Coding of content for political, sociological, economic, and educational trends provided historical context for understanding critiques of DAP. Review of documents did not include research with participants and was not subject to institutional review. Findings note that contextual conditions influencing DAP have elements of change and continuity. The foundations of these documents haven't fully included perspectives outside of an empirically-driven viewpoint and how a wide range of practices can lay claim to being aligned with DAP. Critiques of DAP date back largely to the first edition. This qualitative study over time includes both the more recent critiques from the US and those from abroad. Ongoing critical review is necessary for this influential document to be responsive and relevant to ECE audiences.

*ECE quality standards, professionalism in ECE, historical context, professional standards, ECE pedagogy*

### **What counts as valid knowledge in the English Early Years Foundation Stage?**

Liz Chesworth, Aderonke Folorunsho, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

This study, funded by the Froebel Trust, aimed to identify the cultural practices that children brought to their play in a superdiverse early years setting. Drawing upon research by Chesworth (2016) and Hedges and Cooper (2014) we argue that children's interests and knowledge are mediated by their participation in home and community practices. These ideas and interests can inform curriculum-making decisions in early years settings (Wood and Hedges, 2016). Informed by sociocultural theories, we used the concept of funds of knowledge (Moll et al, 1992) to acknowledge that households are rich sources of knowledge for young children. The interpretive study was informed by an ethnographic methodology and generated data of ten children's play over a four-month period. Paired observations, professional dialogues with practitioners and research conversations with parents were used to gain insights into children's funds of knowledge. Ethical concerns were addressed through ongoing reflection and negotiation. Respectful relationships with the participants were key to ensuring informed consent and to adopting a sensitive approach to data collection. The research findings indicate that children's home cultures are rich sources of knowledge. However, the requirements of the English curriculum meant that funds of knowledge were sometimes not recognised within the nursery. Ongoing reciprocal dialogue with parents, and alertness to the multi-modality of children's meaning-making, are key to recognising and responding to the knowledge that children gain from participating in everyday home activities. From a policy perspective, discourses of accountability need to shift in order to embrace complexity and diversity in local communities.

*funds of knowledge, sociocultural theory, curriculum, home practices, diversity*

### **Partner kindergartens as learning arenas - Different forms of knowledge as basis for students' professional development in ECEC teacher education in Norway**

Heidi Østland Vala, Ingunn Sælid Sell, University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

The main goal of this study is to develop the partnership between the partner kindergartens and the ECEC teacher education institution. This research is inspired by studies focusing on the equality ideology existing in Norwegian kindergartens (Eik, 2014), and also relates to what sort of knowledge and competence that is valued in kindergarten (Steinnes, 2014). Different understandings and concepts of knowledge (Gustavsson, 2000) is the fundament of the theoretical framework. Professionalism is also a central concept (Biesta, 2014; Eik, Steinnes & Ødegård, 2016). The study draws on six semi-structured focus groups with 45 pedagogical leaders and directors in kindergartens and has a phenomenological and hermeneutical approach. To reflect the participants' explorations of their own experiences, preserve empirical closeness and prevent premature conclusions, data were inductively analysed and categorized through coding and condensing (Creswell, 2013). This study approaches different forms of knowledge as equal contributions in the kindergarten's community of practice, thus consciousness and reflections upon use of concepts and formulations in the interviews, analysis and discussion has been central. The relationship between researchers and participants is asymmetrical (Tjora, 2017). Being two researchers has brought wider perspectives into the ethical reflections. The pressure that the ECEC profession is exposed to can be related to different sorts of knowledge, staff composition and ways of organizing the pedagogical work in kindergarten. Focus on different sorts of knowledge is significant in the ECEC profession, education and practice arena as part of facilitating students' professional development.

*Knowledge, Partner kindergartens, Equality ideology, Professional development, ECEC teacher education*



## EMPIRICAL AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS IN QUALITATIVE CHILDHOOD RESEARCH

Self-organised symposium

Despite the recognition of the potential of visual arts-based methodologies, many questions regarding the analysis of children's drawings within early childhood research remain so far unanswered. The presenters of the symposium would like to discuss the potentials and limitations of children's drawings within empirical and theoretical perspectives. Therefore, three perspectives on children's drawings will be presented to determine which theoretical and methodological frameworks are required for the use of children's drawings as a empirically substantial and feasible research method. Initially, Kathrin Borg-Tiburcy focuses on the relationship between theoretical conception and methodological framing with regard to children's pictorial creation. In relation to this, Mirja Kekeritz presents her study about preschoolers' perceptions towards primary school, in which children's drawings are main method of data collection. Finally, Jaqueline Veenker and Melanie Kubandt critically review the potentials and limitations of interpreting children's drawings as an access to foreign (children's) worlds within the researcher's subjectivity.

**Chair: Mirja Kekeritz, DAAD, German Academic Exchange Service, Germany**

### **Children's voices in transition - Preschooler's perception about starting grade 1 in Sri Lanka**

Mirja Kekeritz, DAAD, German Academic Exchange Service, Germany

The Study "Children's Voices in Transition – Transition from Preschool to Grade 1 in Sri Lanka and Germany" is a research project by Mirja Kekeritz supported through DAAD, Germany and University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka and investigates through children's drawings how children experience the transition from preschool to grade 1. The study's methodological focus on children's drawings refers to the lack of critical-reflective approaches on children's drawings within childhood studies apart from psychological or developmental interpretations. Children's drawings are conceptualized as a visual form of expression in the process of world and self-appropriation (cf. Nießeler, 2003). Thus, children's drawings enable insights into children's life (cf. Heinzel 2010). The method of children's drawings (cf. Mitchell et al., 2011; Burke&Prosser2008) as the central method of the study was furtherly combined with interviews, observations and questionnaires. The research projects aims to discuss the limits and capacities of children's drawings for accessing children's perspectives within preschoolers' age. Special attention had been paid to the ethical handling of children's drawings: a non-judgemental, dialogical approach of the researchers, especially in the stage of drawing, ensuring anonymity and voluntariness of each child. Key question revolve around the importance of the process dimension of drawings and the relevancy of the viewers reception of the drawing and in this regard children's drawings potentials to gain insight into children's perspectives. Exemplary results alongside methodological implications will give further guidance for research including children's drawings and point out the boundaries of research about children's perspectives.

*children's drawings, visual data, transition, child-centred research, childhood studies*

### **The value of non-verbal research approaches to children's perspectives - Limits and potentials of the interpretation of children's drawings**

Melanie Kubandt, Jaqueline Veenker, University of Vechta, Germany

The presentation explores the possibilities and limits of interpreting children's drawings as access to foreign worlds. As third presentation it refers to material from Kekeritz' study "Children's Voices in Transition – Transition from Preschool to Grade 1 in Sri Lanka and Germany". Research on children's drawings has a long tradition in art education and developmental psychology (cf. Richter 1987, Schuster 2010), while in educational science there is a tendency towards empirical neglect of non-verbal approaches. Arguments are the risk of reification and the difficulty of capturing the perspective of children (cf. Heinzel 2012). The perspective on Children's drawings as an aesthetic process is combined with questions dealing with children's views in early childhood studies. Referring to ethnomethodology (Garfinkel 1967) and social constructivism (Knorr-Cetina 2001) research about children's perspectives require suitable methods that offer children the opportunity to provide information about their own views. From a methodological perspective, this includes not only a sensitive design of the data collection situation (cf. Hülst 2012), but also dissolving the predominance of language in data collection (cf. Heinzel 2012). Ignoring cultural peculiarities can lead to misinterpretations, but also offers potential for understanding children and the cultural affiliations of the researchers themselves. It will be discussed, how children's drawings can give empirical access to the perspectives of children on the background of the method's potentials and limitations. Identifying the blind spots of research "out of children's perspective" gives further guidance on reflecting about reification and how to adequately deal with subjectivity within qualitative research.

*children's perspective, drawing in early childhood education, qualitative research, social constructivism, reification*

## PARENTAL PERSPECTIVES

Self-organised symposium

This symposium focuses on parental perspectives in three differing arenas. The first explores the views of Muslim home educators and how they conceptualise their social experiences to manage these. The second analyses an intervention programme to support young children's physical activity and nutrition. Gathering parental perspectives gave a critical view of how this intervention impacted on the home setting, enhancing sustainability. The third presentation examines parental views on their child's transition from a play-based education and care environment to statutory schooling at the age of five years in the UK.=

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**Chair: Babs Anderson, Liverpool Hope University, United Kingdom**

### Muslim home educators in the time of Prevent

Harriet Pattison, Liverpool Hope University, United Kingdom

Following the implementation of the Prevent strategy in the UK and the public linking of Muslim home education with radicalisation, this research explores the situation of Muslim home educators. It draws on the work of Cohen (2002) on moral panics and folk devils and synthesises work on Muslim identity (Awan, 2012) with that of reactions to stigmatisation (Breakwell, 2010; Bueker, 2017; Griffiths 2010). A phenomenological stance is taken through an interpretivist analysis. An adaptation of Griffiths (2010) 'folk devil reaction model' is used as an interpretative guide. Data was drawn from three case study families via questionnaires and interviews and analysed thematically within a symbolic interactionist framework. This is a sensitive area of study with particular need for anonymity. Further, interviews transcripts and paper drafts were returned to participants for member checks. Following reflective appraisal of the Muslim home educators' position, two categories of response are identified: retreat and resistance. Both of these are further subdivided, respectively into reactions of blending in and withdrawing and drawing on resources and contestation. The paper argues that a legal and increasingly popular educational choice has been co-opted from being an individual family decision into a political narrative of danger, radicalisation and security implications (Hoskins and O'Loughlin, 2009). In a situation where prejudice about home education and Islam already abundantly exist, such divisions may lead to an increasingly intolerant society. Recognition of the situation of Muslim home educators may go some way towards tempering this.

*home education, radicalisation, moral panic, Muslim identity, folk devils*

### Physical activity and nutrition: What do parents want from ECEC settings?

Babs Anderson, Liverpool Hope University, United Kingdom

The Special Needs Coordinator has proved a successful means of securing effective practice for children with Special educational needs in the UK. One Local Authority, aware of the high levels of young children deemed overweight or obese (Selbie, 2018), explored the notion of whether a similar role leading on physical activity (PA) and nutrition could have a similar impact on children's physical health and well-being. Part of a larger project, this aspect focuses on parental perspectives on this role. This employs the findings of Walsh et al (2017) and Hart et al (2015), which highlight the importance of ascertaining parental views when designing early childhood health promotion interventions. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) bio-ecological systems theory is used to explore the two interacting micro-systems of home and ECEC setting, including the reciprocal nature of communication between them. Using an interpretivist stance, parents' views were invited on their child's experiences of physical activity and nutrition using phenomenology. Online surveys included options for in-depth responses. Research participants gave informed consent in responding to carefully phrased non-discriminatory questions regarding their lifestyle choices (EECERA 2015). Parents were concerned about their child's physical activity levels, indicating a number of barriers to this. Their main source of information regarding PA and nutrition remained the health visitor rather than the early childhood practitioner or key person in the early childhood setting. Parents' views indicate that early childhood settings need to be more proactive in promoting children's health and wellbeing for families in addition to healthy provision within the setting.

*phenomenology, health promotion, physical activity, nutrition, parental perspectives*

### Parent's thoughts on their child's transition to Key Stage One

Jane Brie, Liverpool Hope University, United Kingdom

The aim of this pilot study was to gain insight into parent's experiences and thoughts during their child's transition from Foundation Stage to Key Stage One. As Bakker and Denessen (2007) state, much of the literature involving parents focuses on how to improve

parental engagement as opposed to researching their views and perspectives on their child's educational experiences. The publication of the Bold Beginnings document (Ofsted, 2017) reignited the debate surrounding this transition phase. During transitions in early childhood, children go through dramatic changes in the way they view the world and locate themselves in it (Packer, 2017). Transitions in education are considered to have long-term impact and be the most challenging in a child's life (Fabian and Dunlop, 2006). A small scale, phenomenological pilot study was undertaken. Parents were recruited through Facebook and online diaries were the method used to collect data. Full ethical clearance was obtained for the pilot study ensuring that participants were fully aware of the parameters of the study. BERA (2011) professional guidelines were followed. Participant consent was achieved in advance and the opportunity to withdraw at any time was provided. The data was analysed using a thematic approach. Early findings appear to show that parents were focused on their child's happiness and wellbeing during the transition phase. Findings have implications for settings seeking to support the engagement of parents with children in their early years and to inform their own practice during this transition.

*transition, parents, Key Stage One, diaries, phenomenology*

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# Symposium Set F

15:40 – 17:00, Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2019

## F 1

### ENGAGING WITH EDUCATIONAL CHANGE: MAXINARRATIVES

Self-organised symposium

Building on earlier EECERA presentations (eg. Fleet, DeGioia, Madden, Semann, 2015) and publications (eg. Fleet, DeGioia & Patterson, 2015), this symposium offers three perspectives on the conference theme. Challenges of educational change in accountability-driven contexts offer opportunities for reconceptualising approaches to professional learning. Framed by 'socially-constructed knowledges', these papers are situated in participatory pedagogies (Pascal & Bertram, 2012). Our first presentation reports on research around the leadership development essential for pedagogical change. The second reports on a system-wide initiative supporting preschool teachers in the formative assessment of literacy and numeracy. The third presentation shares the lived experience of educators within that change process. While the Australian Early Years Learning Framework (2009) presents agentic children and positions teachers and children thinking together to create curriculum, pressures of assessment can create ruptures in educators' thinking. This symposium offers three papers to invite discussion of participants' experiences in this terrain.

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**Chair: Alma Fleet, Macquarie University, Australia**

### Shifting practices: State wide initiatives that have an impact

Anthony Semann, Semann & Slattey, Australia

This paper showcases a whole of State intervention aimed at improving two critical components of quality. Firstly, the leadership experienced and enacted across early childhood sites, and secondly the pedagogical aspects of teaching and learning. This research investigated a project aimed at improving leadership and pedagogy across 220 Australian prior-to-school sites through a range of evidence-based interventions. The research builds on Fleet, Soper, Semann & Madden's (2015) investigation of shifts in pedagogical practices amongst educational leaders and Semann's (2019) work on the organisational culture of leadership. The project is informed by adult learning principles but more specifically by self-determination and motivation theories. Furthermore, foregrounded by theories aligned to reconceptualist ideas, that quality is a contested space, participants were engaging in a range of theories to assist in locating and placing quality practices over a period of time. A Plan-Do-Act-Study approach was used to investigate ongoing/ continuous improvement, and support an increase in the quality of leadership and educational programs. Data was collected via staff perceptions, mentor observations and action planning. Participants were involved through consent form, full disclosure of the research aims and the ability to withdraw if desired. A multi model approach to intervention had an impact with significant changes identified through qualitative and quantitative research data, as reported in the presentation. For example, the study found that leaders involved in this intervention reported higher levels of leadership capability and confidence. The findings indicate improvements across areas of leadership and pedagogy via data collected and independent evaluation.

*educational change, interventions, quality, leadership, accountability*

### Re-conceptualising our approach to assessment: Children leading the learning

Alma Fleet (1), Emily McNair (2), Tahlia Grandison (2), Lawrina Osbourne (2), Sally Coleman (2), Adam Christie, (1) Macquarie University, Australia; (2) Department for Education South Australian Government, Australia

This research aimed to investigate our developing skills and capacity to formatively assess and enhance children's literacy and numeracy learning through quality pedagogical documentation Fleet, DeGioia & Patterson (2016) investigated practitioner inquiry as a key vehicle in educational change. This research deepens the focus to lived experience within an Australian state-wide initiative. Assessment practices investigated through practitioner research were underpinned by the Australian Early Years Learning Framework (DEEWR, 2009). Our research prompted us to think more critically about how our formative assessment practices were authentically contextualised within our site/s to inform pedagogical practices. Research method: Externally-facilitated Practitioner Inquiry. Qualitative data was collected as on-line written narrative responses to 6 sets of consistent questions/prompts. Data analysis occurred through collaborative critical reflection alongside the Early Years Learning Framework, and State Implementation Guidelines for Indicators of Preschool Numeracy and Literacy Following larger study ethical protocols, data was collected anonymously. Informed consent gained participants were free to withdraw Through critical reflective practice and engagement in Practitioner Inquiry (baseline-data from seeing children differently), teachers became curious researchers, reimagining approaches, rethinking data-collection and analysis processes Formative Assessment strategies were revisited/improved and Learning Design became more proximal to individual children. The research project has supported us to develop a deeper understanding of how to use practitioner inquiry to drive local educational change. A focus on formative

assessment has supported us to re-think how we assess and plan for young children's knowledge, skills, and dispositions literacy and numeracy learning alongside Pedagogical documentation.

*educational change, inquiry formative assessment, numeracy, literacy*

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## **F 2**

### **EXPLORING SOCIAL ORDER AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES THROUGH CHILDREN'S VIEWS**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Rosanne Pugh, KU Children's Services, Australia**

#### **The world in young children's eyes: Story from one remote preschool in Taiwan**

Yvonne Yu-Feng Liu (1), Jiun-Ling Luo (2), (3), Shih-Wen Chen (3), Jia-Min Lin (4), (1) National Pingtung University, Taiwan; (2) National Tsing Hua University; (3) Xinfeng Elementary School, Taiwan; (4) Zhong Xin Elementary School, Taiwan

This research is aiming at revealing what children's interpretations of the world are in this globalized era. Research focus on what the interpretations are in terms of the world in young children's minds and how children link the outer world to their lives. Global competence is important for future global citizens and was stressed in curriculum guidelines (DfES, 2004, MCEETYA, 2008, Mansilla & Jackson, 2011). Most of the researches presented pupils' learning of international education from school (iEARN, 2017) but neglected learning and interpretation from young children. OECD (2018) revealed four dimensions of global competence framework which were supported by knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. The researcher took knowledge of the world as the first step to explore children's understanding. Constructivist and qualitative approach were adopted in this research. Data was collected from one remote preschool in Taiwan by multi-methods. Teaching observations, discussions with teachers and learning sheets from children were gathered. The researcher had a cooperative history with participants and formed the foundation of trust and agreement in this research. Meetings with teachers and researcher's reflections are ways to examine the ethical appropriateness of data collection. Findings are firstly, for young children, the world is filled with diversity that amazed them in different ways and secondly, the whole world is a vague concept and loosely links to their daily lives. In order to open a bigger window for children to see the world, global information could be elaborated more in curriculum guideline by governments and in learning activities by teachers.

*international education, Taiwan, global vision, children's perspectives, social context*

#### **Children's voices in the rainforest: Investigating children's co-construction of conceptual learning**

Rosanne Pugh, KU Children's Services, Australia

This research focused on valuing children's voices in their local environs, within and beyond the centre for broader environmental advocacy, communication and partnership building. Inspired by Ji and Stuhmcke (2014) reported in Davis, J. & Elliott, S. (Eds.) (2014). Ji's description of a children's biotopic map and project approach (Helm & Katz, 2011) was of interest to our context and philosophical approach. The study was informed by social constructionism and an interpretive research paradigm. Crotty (1998) describes social constructionism as a collective construction of meanings in the light of social contexts and values. The intent was to capture this co-constructed social learning process during campus field trips. Further, interpretivism (Mukherji & Albon, 2015), invites us to interpret and understand the essence of co-constructed learning. As a narrative inquiry (O'Toole & Beckett, 2013), the Centre Director undertook a researcher/practitioner role. Specific data creation methods included; video recordings of field trip interactions, children's focus groups and reflective diary informed by critical friend meetings. Consent for research depended on parental permissions offered in "plain English" and children's assent obtained verbally on the day. The children explored a multiplicity of interrelationships, expressing of key conceptual understandings about ecological balance and belonging which resonated at local and global levels as fundamental to systems thinking and sustainability. The potential for replication in other settings may offer a provocation for co-constructed and transformative learning, community advocacy, local government policy making and action both by and with children for their sustainable futures.

*co-construction, sustainability, advocacy, voice, transformation*

#### **Can children change the kindergarten: Children's view on the social order in everyday practice?**

Olga Savinskaya, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russia

A kindergarten is a place where children spend up to 10 hours daily and learn friendship, communication, independence, cooperation. The research explores how children construct the world of a kindergarten: explicit/implicit norms, and social order

existing in everyday practice. The research based on the new sociology of childhood stated that children are not just the passive subjects of social structures and processes (James and Prout, 1997: 8) and 'children's competence as social actors is a key theme in the new social studies of childhood' (Holloway and Valentine, 2004: 5). According to Vygotsky, child development occurs in social situations where not only a teacher but peers have got an active role in constructing new social meanings and symbols. Developing the method I base on Vygotsky's (1928, 1966) theory of the game. I use the constructivist paradigm and qualitative methodology. 15 interviews and 5 focus groups with children aged 6-8 years were conducted. The interview-game and gamified focus-groups are two gamified versions of the interview, involving the use of psycho-dramatic projective techniques for the sequential examination of activities in the kindergarten. All informants' mothers signed a consent form to conduct interviews with their children. The research pointed out that children are very creative "innovators" of practices to reconstruct the space and activities of a kindergarten, to change the teacher's role and rules of communication making them more equal. To ensure the democratic participation of children in the improvement of preschool education the children's voices and ideas should be taken into account.

*child voice, child participation, interview with children, child centred kindergarten, child narrative*

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### F 3

#### **TEACHER PERSPECTIVES ON CHANGE INITIATIVES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Margaret O Donoghue, Technological University of Dublin, Ireland**

#### **Rethinking early years education quality in the era of accountability: Early years practitioners' and parents' experiences and perspectives the u-turn of baseline assessment in reception classes: Three case studies from London, England**

Ran Harper, UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom

The research discusses how practitioners and parents perceive the U-turn of Baseline Assessment (BA) in England and if data-based accountability promotes early years education (EYE) quality. Within global neoliberal education reforms highlighting data-based accountability in governing education, schools and practitioners are made visible through data to government and parents. Governing through data has been applied to EYE in England. BAs were applied to 4yrs as a measurable starting dataset for education accountability. Researchers like Peter Moss argues for diverse contextual factors in governing educational practice and fears surveillance through data promotes 'one-ruler-measuring-all' in discussing EYE quality. The Foucauldian critique of education is deployed to discuss how the knowledge and practice of governing through data become the 'regime'. This qualitative research adopts a case study approach, deploying in-class observations and semi-structured interviews. Volunteer work prior to research, confidentiality and anonymity guarantee that ethical concerns like getting consent, building rapport and privacy protection are overcome. The research finds that practitioners were negative about BAs, accusing them of compromising education quality, seeing children as data unit and undermining professional autonomy. It also argues that practitioners unconsciously became self-governing and voluntarily complied with performativity culture. Despite little knowledge of accountability measures, all parents admitted data play important role in school choices and were anxious about school choices through data. EYE is firmly tied in the educational accountability system, and the discourse of governing through data constrains practitioners' professionalism and parents' school choices, which calls for reform in accountability policies in England.

*accountability measures, governing through data, early years education quality, Foucauldian educational critique, educational governance*

#### **Shifting paradigms: American teachers' perspectives on the implementation of innovative classroom management strategies**

Sara Tours (1), Ahmet Simsar (2), Michelle Amodei (1), (1) Slippery Rock University, United States; (2) Kilis 7 Aralık University, Turkey

The overall goal was to document the implementation of a behaviour management program titled "Conscious Discipline" through inquiry involving interviews, focus groups, and observations. The second goal of the project was to assess elements of implementation to measure outcomes. Teachers report 30-80 percent of instructional time is interrupted due to behaviour issues (Levin & Nolan, 2007). Systems like "Conscious Discipline" aim to change classroom cultures by changing teachers' paradigms through setting goals, reaching milestones, and focusing on meeting social/emotional needs proactively (Finn, 2015). Choice theory by William Glasser (1998) framed the study, which asserts people choose behaviour, but those choices are guided by relationships. Our study aimed to evaluate choices made by teachers within the scope of Conscious Discipline. Teacher involvement in implementation yields greater success. Investigators attended a meeting to describe the study, and distribute

consent forms. The first focus group meeting was to discuss Conscious Discipline, and to gauge teachers' perceptions of the implementation process. Observations were conducted in classrooms by investigators to chronicle implementation and to prepare for focus group sessions. All data collected was coded so that identifiable information was not available to avoid any potential risk of fear of repercussions should negative commentary be shared. Teachers who felt personally invested in implementation experienced classroom success and personal satisfaction. This research served to add to the body of literature which highlights the importance of relationship building, and the use of positive, proactive management strategies to create stronger classroom climates, and higher teacher morale.

*classroom management, social/emotional learning, conscious discipline, teacher perspectives, school culture*

#### **Enacting a new primary curriculum: The need to consider the contextual realities that teachers experience in their schools.**

Margaret O Donoghue, Technological University of Dublin, Ireland

The aim of this study was to understand how curriculum changes are enacted in relation to other contextual dimensions and to develop a framework that supports teachers to implement Aistear (NCCA, 2009) within a new Primary curriculum (DES, 2016). School policies can be understood as attempts to solve a problem (Maguire et al., 2015). Such a narrow understanding of policy ignores "the other moments in the processes of policy enactments" (Maguire et al., 2015, p.485). Braun et al., (2011, p. 603), argue that "policies are enacted in material conditions, with varying resources, in relation to particular problems and are set against, existing commitments, values and forms of experience". Drawing on Blatchford et al's (2002) models of pedagogical framing and interactions and Braun et al's (2011) conceptual model of context, a new model was developed to elucidate the complexities of curriculum enactment which facilitated an understanding of the interconnected and inter-relatedness of contexts. The research sits within a social constructivist paradigm. A qualitative two case study approach was adopted which included observations. Ethical principles and procedures were followed including the participants being adequately informed about the purposes of the research, its outcomes and dissemination and confidentiality. The findings provide evidence that the teachers implemented Aistear based on their individual understandings of the framework and its fit within their contextual realities. The study contributes new knowledge to the literature on policy enactment and understanding of how curriculum changes are enacted and managed on the ground in relation to other contextual dimensions.

*curriculum, policy, enactment, context, pedagogy*

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## **F 4**

### **INSIGHTS INTO WELLBEING, IDENTITY AND BELONGING IN MULTICULTURAL ECEC SETTINGS**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Carmen Dalli, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand**

#### **Children's and educator's reflections on belonging in a multicultural preschool community**

Jóhanna Einarsdóttir, University of Iceland, Iceland

The aim of the study was to examine educator's and children's experiences of belonging in a multicultural preschool community. Yuval-Davis's (2006) work on Politics of Belonging and Sumsion & Wong's (2011) 'Cartography of Belonging' are connected to the study. The study is informed by Childhood Studies (Mouritsen & Qvortrup, 2003) which view childhood as a social construction, contingent upon culture, time, and context and focuses on children's competencies and participation. The study also draws on the politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis's, 2006). Data construction was two folded. First, nine children in a multicultural preschool in Iceland shared their views of belonging by taking photos on computer tablets and discussed them with the researcher. These discussions were then followed up by group interviews with the children while they drew pictures related to the study. Secondly, a focus group interview was conducted with four educators working with the children. After gaining consent from gatekeepers, the children gave consent after being informed about what it might involve to participate in the study, and their right to opt out of the research. Anonymity is protected by pseudonyms. The data with the children was reduced into four main themes: friendship; participation; solidarity; and identity. Those were discussed by the educators who focused on children's friendship in preschool, exclusion and inclusion in the peer group, and the tendency to categorize children. The study can encourage educators to listen to children with diverse background on their wellbeing in preschool.

*diversity, multicultural, children, Nordic, belonging*

## **An action research study investigating shared multi-modal family narratives in multicultural early years classrooms**

Fatma Poyraz Ciddi, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

The aim of this study is to investigate the sharing of multimodal family narratives in multilingual early years classrooms. Children's experiences, culture, and interests are still underrepresented in early childhood education (ECE). By taming and controlling the learning process with predetermined curriculum goals and standardized assessments (Roberts-Holmes, 2015), ECE ignores the culturally rich potential of the child who has more than 'one hundred languages' (Rinaldi, 2006) to make meaning, learn and discover (Moss & Balduzzi, 2013). When schools do not include the experiences, cultures, and perceptions of families and children in schools, families, and children can often feel silenced, marginalized and alienated (Dyson & Genishi, 1994; Janks, 2000). This study draws from the socio-cultural theories by using Moll's 'funds of knowledge' (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992), and critical pedagogies (Janks, 1997) as an alternative path to develop a more democratic, diverse and inclusive discourse and practice for early childhood education. This research will be conducted by using an action research methodology following the assumptions of the interpretive paradigm. Multimodal narratives will be produced and shared in the classroom by using Ipads. Observations and interviews with teachers, parents, and children will be used in order to examine the changes in the classroom environment. Initial and ongoing consents will be gained from participants and pseudonyms will be used to protect their confidentiality. Preliminary results will be presented by August 2019. This study will have implications on practical and policy level to open up spaces for inclusive, diverse and empathetic classroom environments.

*multi-modal family narratives, action research, multiculturalism, early childhood education, family involvement*

## **Conflict as a window on children's wellbeing: Insights from a study in a multi-ethnic early childhood centre**

Carmen Dalli, Anna Strycharz-Banas, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Wellbeing is a slippery notion. Often equated with physical wellness, its meaning is frequently unspecified in policy and scholarly documents (Manning-Morton, 2014). The New Zealand early childhood curriculum, Te Whāriki, positions wellbeing as one of its five strands urging early childhood teachers to consider wellbeing as comprising emotional as well as physical health. Recent global measures of wellbeing used by the OECD illustrate the multivalent nature of the concept and the multiple methodological approaches through which it can be investigated, yet, research on wellbeing in EC settings typically focuses on the physical dimensions of health. How children acquire a sense of emotional and social wellbeing is only now beginning to gain attention (e.g., Corrie L. & Leitaio N. 1999; Gibbons, Stratford and White, 2017; Manning-Morton 2014). This paper reports findings from a project on naturally-arising conflict among children aged 2-5 years in a multi-ethnic early childhood setting. Using a grounded sociolinguistic interactional approach, episodes of conflict were analysed as a window on how children acquire and negotiate a sense of wellbeing that stretches beyond physical health. Data for the study were gathered using video recordings of naturally-occurring interactions, anecdotal observations, teacher journaling, and focus group discussions. All data are anonymised and images are used with permission. We found that, post conflict, children are highly focused on restoring relationships and use multiple strategies to reconnect with peers. From a child's perspective wellbeing and connectedness are interrelated. This has implications for how early childhood teachers might intervene in conflict.

*peer conflict, wellbeing, sociolinguistic interactional analysis, child agency, connectedness*

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## **F 5**

### **PERCEPTIONS OF QUALITY: THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Zoyah Kinkead-Clark, The University of the West Indies, Jamaica**

#### **Teacher assessment practices as quality indicators: What can we learn from the Greek context?**

Maria Birbili (1), Irini Roufidou (2), (1) Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece (2) University of West Attica, Greece

The study presented here aimed to explore Greek early childhood teachers' views and practices regarding young children's assessment. According to McLachlan, Fler & Edwards (2013) the practice of assessing and documenting children's progress is critical for effective instruction and learning. Xu, Stronge and Grant (2015) argue that effective teachers understand the concept of alignment between curriculum, teaching strategies and assessment, use the results of assessment systematically and intelligently and are adept at choosing appropriate tools. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 65 educators working in public kindergartens. Teachers gave their consent to take part in the research and for data to be reported if anonymity was preserved. The results suggest that teachers do not conceptualize assessment practices as essential to



instructional planning. Traditional, mostly closed-ended worksheets are used to 'check' children's 'knowledge and skills' right after teacher-structured activities and 'prepare' young children for primary school. Worksheets are also used to convince parents of the 'important work done in kindergarten'. In the presentation we will discuss teachers' decision to use worksheets - a practice that goes against the national curriculum guidelines - taking into consideration the contexts within which Greek kindergarten teachers operate. Teachers' perceived need to 'prove' their effectiveness to parents through tools like traditional worksheets raises questions about early childhood teacher status and professional learning. At the same time, teachers' practice raises questions about the quality of early childhood programs in Greece and who controls it. Implications for policy making are discussed.

*assessment, worksheets, Greece, quality, teacher effectiveness*

**Challenging the rhetoric of two dimensional interpretations of quality early childhood education; A focus on the Caribbean**  
Zoyah Kinkead-Clark, The University of the West Indies, Jamaica

Narrow interpretations of quality have been to the detriment of developing countries because the current agenda to metricise and scale up ECEC has often been done with little consideration of the importance of culture. This presentation will share the findings of a study which examined the perspectives of local stakeholders on the ways in which global influences have impacted ECEC. The research questions are; 1) What are stakeholders' perceptions about external factors'/entities' influences on the ECE sectors? (2) How have stakeholders' been influenced by external entities? This research supports Woodhead (1998) and Moss, Dahlberg & Pence, (2013) who address the importance of cultural considerations when addressing how quality early childhood education and care ought to look and be interpreted. The Developmental Niche Model (Super & Harkness, 1986) provides the framework. It addresses the importance of culture and environment in shaping children's developmental outcomes. Paradigm: Epistemology. Method: Qualitative research, 26 participants, semi-structured interviews. Methodology: Thematic analysis to extricate dominant themes. This also allowed for the acquisition of rich details from the participants. Guidelines stipulated by The UWI, Mona were followed. This included; ensuring informed consent, maintaining anonymity, confidentiality and minimal risk for the participants. Culture and socio-economic strength need to be considered in the discourse surrounding external influences on the region. Likewise, teachers believe that Caribbean countries need to dispel the north to south transmission of knowledge. Local knowledge must be promoted as a means to solve local challenges. Listen to the voices of teachers, challenge loan conditions

*Caribbean development, reconceptualising quality, challenging rhetoric, knowledge democracy, early years in the Caribbean*

**Framing, saming and shaming: Unpacking the mechanisms shaping perceptions of quality in early childhood education research and practice**

Zoyah Kinkead-Clark (1), Charlotte Hardacre (2), (1) University of the West Indies, Jamaica; (2) University of Cumbria, United Kingdom

This presentation presents the findings of a cross-cultural study (Kinkead-Clark and Hardacre, 2019). We will examine how research contexts guide researchers' assumptions about quality and present a practical tool that stakeholders can use to apply the principles of knowledge democracy to research in order to identify high quality early childhood education (Hall and Tandon, 2014). Our work is underpinned by scholars such as Beiser (2003), Widenfelt et al. (2005), and Sullivan and Cottone (2010) who seek to reveal and navigate normative or deficit framings of quality. Using knowledge democracy as a conceptual framework allowed us to challenge narrow definitions of quality and the narrow spaces in which legitimate knowledge production can take place (Mullett et al., 2015; Gaventa and Cornwall, 2008; Tremblay and Oliveira, 2015). Sitting within an interpretivist paradigm, the study utilises Cross-cultural Conversation as a methodology because of its potential to situate knowledge within local communities. We collected and analysed eleven hours of conversation between two Jamaican and British early childhood educators and researchers. We employed Zizzo et al's (2016) model of everyday ethics which diminished bias by encouraging us to acknowledge our role as insider researchers who could not take neutral stance; allowing for scrutiny by the reader. Following the analysis of our conversations, we developed a tool to help other researchers engage in transformative dialogue that may help reveal the forces shaping perceptions of quality in their contexts. This study contributes to the movement seeking to dismantle homogenising perceptions of quality in ECE.

*knowledge democracy, quality in early childhood education, decolonising research, cross-cultural conversation, practitioner research*

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**Chair: Mirjam Kalland, University of Helsinki, Finland**

**Children's use of fundamental motor skills in preschool**

Mikaela Svanbäck-Laaksonen, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

The purpose of the study is to highlight children's use of fundamental motor skills in everyday life in early childhood education. The theoretical perspectives used in this study concerning motor skills are Rintala, Sääkslahti and Iivonen (2016) and Capelle (2017). The fundamental motor skills are not something we can expect children to mature into but it requires practice and a lot of training for children to master these skills. The assignments of preschools are also to develop children's fundamental motor skills (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2016). The theoretical perspective of the study is based on the socio-cultural perspective (Vygotskij). The theoretical understanding of the fundamental motor skills are according to Gallahue, Ozmun and Goodway (2012) classified into three different categories: stability skills, locomotor skills and object control skills. Video observations have been used in order to analyse children's use of the fundamental motor skills. The empirical data material consists of video observations of five children aged 1;7–2;2 at the beginning of the data collection. The data material consists of video observations of a total of 20 days. All guardians of the children have given written consent to allow their children to participate. I have, when filming been sensitive to children's signals of accepting the filming or not. The results show that children mainly use locomotor skills and much lesser object control skills. The environment for free play time offer more possibilities for practising locomotor skills rather than object control skills. Impact: researches, teacher in preschools and elementary schools.

*fundamental motor skill, physical activity, video observation, toddlers, environment*

**Teaching physical education in early years: Focusing on teachers' practices**

Niki Tsangaridou, Mikaela Pieroua, Ermis Kyriakides, Charalambos Charalambous, University of Cyprus, Cyprus

The purpose of this study was to describe early childhood teachers' practices of teaching Physical Education (PE). PE in early childhood has been reinforced by an emphasis on play. Evidence suggested that well-resourced free play is not sufficient to develop children's motor skills (Petrie & Phillips, 2018). PE in early years can contribute to the learning experience of children and may support physical, cognitive, and social development (Kirk, 2005). The quality of these experiences, however, depends on the teaching practices of the teachers (Ross, 2013). Eleven early childhood educators participated in the study. Data were collected using systematic observations. Both low- and a high-inference forms of a modified version of the Task Structure System (mTSS), and the Dynamic Model of Educational Effectiveness (DMEE) were used. Three 40-minute observations were conducted for each teacher, by two coders: one using the mTSS and the other using the DMEE forms. Participants were handed informed-written-consent forms and appropriate human subject procedures were followed. Preliminary results showed that the majority of teachers more frequently employed in their PE teaching certain generic than content-specific practices. Structuring and questioning were observed in most of the lessons, whereas skill demonstration, emphasis on the skill's critical elements, and congruent and specific feedback were not observed in more than half of the lessons. Additionally, refining tasks were the most neglected type of tasks. The congruency and quality of student practice trials, however, was satisfactory. Implications of findings are discussed in light of teacher education programs.

*early childhood education, physical education, teachers' practices, teaching quality, early years*

**Engaging preschool children in physical activity**

Jaime Barratt, Brock University, Canada

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect the educator resource, SEESAW, has on preschool children's engagement in physical activity (PA). Moreover, it investigates preschool educators' beliefs and practices in relation to their own PA, and how these beliefs/practices impact children's PA. This paper will specifically discuss educators' perspectives of their role in engaging young children in physical activity. Previous research has found children's engagement in PA is dependent on factors including educator training, guided activities, and the availability of resources (Gubbels et al., 2011; Tsangaridou, 2017; Tucker et al., 2011; Vanderloo et al., 2014). The study is underpinned by Stokol's (1996) social ecological model, emphasizing that children's engagement in physical activity is influenced by factors at the individual, institutional, social environment, and physical environment levels (as cited in Pate et al., 2016). Within the pragmatic paradigm, this study employed a convergent mixed methods approach (Leavy, 2011), and collected data once prior to implementation of SEESAW, and three months after. Interviews

were conducted with preschool educators, who also completed a questionnaire of their physical activity. Preschool children's physical activity engagement was investigated using direct observation. Educators were at risk of feeling judged by their PA practices and thus were reaffirmed lack of engagement in PA does not mean they are unhealthy. Preliminary findings indicated educators believe children's physical activity engagement is dependent on three key elements: educator training, role-modelling PA behaviours, and support from colleagues. Implications include recognizing and reframing educators' facilitative role in children's physical activity engagement.

*educator's role, childcare contexts, physical activity, preschool children, health promotion resource*

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## F 7

### ACTIVITIES AND APPROACHES IN STEM

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Judy Van Heerden, University of Pretoria, South Africa**

#### **Preschoolers experiencing "beautiful stuff": Fusing the Reggio Emilia approach and STEAM**

Judy Van Heerden, University of Pretoria, South Africa

This paper reports on a study done with three South African student-teachers who incorporated principles of the Reggio inspired beautiful stuff project and fusing them with STEAM. Children don't learn best through direct instruction, but with active participation, using senses and exploring real objects (Essa, 2011; Redleaf, 2009, Stach, 2017). The STEAM initiative introduces art to STEM (science, engineering, technology and mathematics) (Kawaski & Toyofuku, 2013). A gap exists in current research on integrating the Reggio approach and STEAM in ECD. The Reggio approach founded by Loris Malaguzzi, inspired by Montessori, Piaget and Vygotsky theories, promotes cooperative learning environments whereby experience and self-expression like music, art, mathematics and technology are of central importance (Cox Suárez 2014). In this explanatory instrumental case study framed within social constructivism, data were gathered through open-ended questionnaires, photographs, interviews, and reflections. Student-teachers presented innovative learning activities by introducing the beautiful stuff project to preschoolers. Student-teachers documented how children engaged with objects and asked questions that are at the core of STEAM. Consent forms were provided to all participants. Informed consent was negotiated with children's parents. Pseudonyms were used and participants could withdraw from the study at any time. Student-teachers understood that learning does not happen in silos, but needs integration of children's interests, open-ended materials and active involvement. STEAM fused with Reggio, provided preschoolers with significant learning opportunities. Awareness of ways to fuse STEAM with Reggio, could guide educators to inspire preschoolers to develop long-term learning habits like problem-solving and creativity development.

*beautiful stuff project, Reggio Emilia approach, STEAM, Active participation, open-ended materials*

#### **Teaching chemistry and physics in preschool: A matter of establishing intersubjectivity in communication**

Susanne Thulin, Agneta Jonsson, Andreas Redfors, Marie Fridberg, Kristianstad University, Sweden

Research aim is to develop knowledge about teaching chemistry and physics in preschool. Research question: How can intersubjective communication between teacher and children be described in relation to a science object of learning? Research points out the quality of the communication established between children and teacher as a key factor for children's learning about a science content (Fleer & Pramling, 2015; Thulin & Jonsson, 2014; Thulin, 2011). A core concept is intersubjectivity in sense of establishing an agreement in the communication between teacher and child; to share perspectives – not only attention – when addressing aspects of actual object of learning (Rommetveit, 1974; Ivarsson, 2003). A qualitative analysis (Bryman, 2016) of video recorded science activities have been used focusing excerpts representing qualitative differences in intersubjectivity related to verbal communication and the object of learning. The research adheres to ethical guidelines (Research Council, 2011) and required informed consent from guardians combined with a sensitivity to participating children's volition. Results: Intersubjectivity occur in different ways with diverse consequences for children's opportunities to view current learning object. The teachers have to create links between the child's perspective and the object of learning. An intermediary object of learning can constitute a supporting element in children's conquest of new science knowledge. A suggestion is that teachers have to: 1) verbalise and activate an intermediary object of learning as a critical aspect in the teaching situation; 2) find ways to support mutual simultaneity in creating links between children's local language and an expansive scientific language.

*science, learning, intersubjectivity, teaching, preschool*

## **How to adapt STEM activities to multilingual preschoolers with a low SES?**

Thijs Eeckhout, Helena Taelman, Marlies Algoet, Odisee, Belgium

In this project we designed a combined approach to STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and language stimulation, with the aim to identify design criteria needed to serve 4-year-old multi-language-learners with a low socio-economic background (SES). There are good arguments to stimulate STEM and language together. Generally, conversations during scientific activities are language stimulating and feature an academic language register (Cabell et al., 2013; Henrichs & Leseman, 2014). Furthermore, language strengthens STEM, since the teacher's language-stimulating conversation style improves the understanding of STEM concepts (Hong & Diamond, 2012). This project fits within the research tradition to design and evaluate responsive language and thinking stimulating approaches (Wright & Gotwals, 2017). During the reported cycles of this education design research, two themes were designed, and tested by four experienced teachers in two rounds. Daily feedback forms, field notes, observations, and interviews with the teachers were analysed qualitatively to identify and evaluate design criteria. Parents were informed about the project, and gave consent to participation. Teachers were asked to stop activities if not sufficiently engaging. New design criteria for the STEM-component included the guidance by a STEM-coach; the significance of material knowledge, motor skills and attention span; the need to phase up the learning process and use concrete materials. New design criteria for the language component included the selection of STEM and content target vocabulary; the experienced significance of pre-teaching moments; the value of an observation tool focusing on conversational capacities. Design criteria inform practitioners, developers and coaches to deal with this population.

*early childhood education, STEM education, language of schooling stimulation, professionalisation, Low SES dual language learners*

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## **F 8**

### **WHAT MAKES AN EARLY CHILDHOOD ENVIRONMENT POWERFUL FOR YOUNG CHILDREN'S INQUIRY? DYNAMICS OF TEACHING-LEARNING PERSPECTIVES IN USING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES**

Self-organised symposium

Research in early childhood contexts is beginning to show that by incorporating technology-based pedagogical practices, there is a good chance to stimulate children's cognitive and affective learning processes. What is still lacking to be able to holistically cater for 21st century learners, is the understanding of factors that can impact teaching-learning processes during the integration of digital resources in preschools. This symposium begins by providing a systematic review of the research carried out in other contexts over the past 30 years on digital preschools and to identify the dominant paradigms. Next, the interplay of teachers' technological knowledge and pedagogical knowledge and related practices poses the advantages as well as voices the challenges in the integration of technology. Finally, the factors which impact on touchscreen play with preschool children gives insights into the dynamics of pedagogy and practice in a digital learning environment.

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**Chair: Sarika Kewalramani, Monash University, Australia**

### **What are the main paradigms of research being conducted on the use of digital technology in preschool over the past 30 years?**

Gabriel Kappeler, University of Teacher Education, Switzerland

This communication is part of a systematic literature review on the use of new technologies in preschool. The aim is to identify the main paradigms studied over the past 30. This systematic literature review is based on findings in the digital field of early childhood education. The contributions of Palaiologou provide information on the type of technologies being used by children under 5 years. The importance of free play is an essential part of early childhood education. Our systematic review is also based on the contributions of Howard and those of Edwards. The historical-cultural approach, technical scaffolding and the role of the teacher are questioned (Lim; Manches & Plowman). Other research focuses on the link between disciplinary knowledge and digital skills (Neumann, Finger and Neumann). The use of new technologies is becoming an essential paradigm in preschool education. The challenge for teachers is to teach their pupils to use these new technologies appropriately and in accordance with the socio-cultural context. Understanding the factors influencing their use in order to empower children to develop cognitively, emotionally and socially is a major importance for future research. In an inductive approach, a systematic review of the last 30 years on "ERIC" has been done. The articles selected for this literature review are based on research supported by government and by associations that respect ethical criteria. The articles are currently being analysed. The results of this literature review will help to develop new avenues for research on digital in preschool.

*systematic review, digital resources, educational technology, technology Integration, preschool*

## **Tech-savvy learning in preschools? Understanding teacher pedagogical practices for developing children's STEM and inquiry learning**

Jyoti Senthil (1), Sarika Kewalramani (2), (1) SRS Global Educates Pvt Ltd, United States; (2) Monash University, Australia

This study (Phase 2 of an international project) investigated teachers' perceptions in using technology within pedagogical practices to facilitate children's STEM and inquiry learning in Indian preschools. Early childhood pedagogic culture relies on the integration of content areas, wherein STEM and use of technology constructed pedagogical practices are only developing as a prominent feature in preschools. (Yelland & Gibert, 2017) Scarcely used in early childhood education research, this study is framed underpinning Mishra and Koehler's (2006) Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK) theory, and considers teachers' technology constructed pedagogical practices can aid as a means for children's engagement in STEM and inquiry learning. Using Indian preschools as a case, this mixed-methods study administered educator surveys (N=100), interviews with educators and administrators (N=7), and classroom observations (two preschools) An informed consent including approvals for data collection, animosity, and any cultural sensitivity of the participants was assured as per the ethics guidelines. Data analysis highlighted teachers' Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) as being apt for planning problem-solving and inquiry-based tasks for children whereas their perceptions about Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) was more teacher-centric and not prone towards facilitating children's collaborative inquiry while using technology during STEM experiences. Teachers' pedagogical practices aligned more with their curriculum frameworks while planning for STEM activities. Implications lie in further understanding of the diversity (more prone to less prone) in educators' TPK, their mixed feelings in facilitating STEM and children's collaborative inquiry learning, which poses the advantages as well as voices the challenges in the integration of technology.

*STEM, inquiry pedagogical practices, teacher's integration of technology, early years*

## **Pedagogy and Practice: Exploring the factors which impact on touchscreen play with preschool children**

Shannon Ludgate, Birmingham City University, United Kingdom

The study explored the affordances of touchscreen technologies when used by pre-school aged children (3-4 year olds) in four early years settings in England. The study builds upon recommendations from Yelland and Gilbert (2012) and Katz and Levine (2015) that further research is required to identify the affordances of touchscreen technologies so that practice can be further developed. Activity theory (Engestrom, 1999) and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1993) guided the analysis of the data through a social constructionist lens, recognising the social environment as integral to children's learning experiences. A multi-site case study approach was implemented gathering mixed-methods data. Interviews with practitioners, observations of practice, focus-group interviews with children and an online survey were conducted to gather a broad range of data. Consent lanyards were designed to give children a voice through the stages of gaining consent and ongoing assent throughout the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were adhered to in the non-disclosure of data, and through pseudonyms and codes for the settings. Analysis of the data revealed there were implicit and explicit factors which contributed to touchscreen play. These factors arose from pedagogical beliefs and personal attitudes towards the touchscreen, alongside wider factors such as training sessions, newspaper reports and the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2017). Practitioners did not always make these connections explicitly, but these were reflected in conversations or through observations of practice. It is now important to allow practitioners time to reflect on their positionality and consider how their own beliefs may affect children's touchscreen play.

*pedagogy, early years, touchscreen technology, play, Bronfenbrenner*

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## **F 9**

### **ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGIES EXPLORING CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Helen Perkins, University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom**

## **Understanding young newcomer children's perspectives through arts-informed approaches**

Nicole Jamison, University of Alberta, Canada

This paper explores how young newcomer children's personal art-making can be used in data collection to better understand their perspectives and what is personally significant about their everyday lives. This builds on existing work that recognizes young children's art-making as an important source of knowledge (Knowles & Cole, 2012) which can offer a window into how they understand and communicate about their world (Anning & Ring, 2004), echo or reproduce situations from their lives (Vygotsky, 2004) and express their emotions (Matthews, 2003). Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), the RAISED Between Cultures ecological model (Georgis et al., 2017) and a conceptual framework of art as a form of communication (Anning & Ring, 2004; Kress,

1997) are used in this doctoral study to inform and contextualize the everyday experiences of young newcomer children. Working within a qualitative constructivist paradigm, an arts-informed case study was used. Data included observations, photographs, video- and audio-recordings of children's art-making, and conversations with the children, caregivers and educators. Ethics approval was obtained through the institution. Children's verbal assent along with written informed consent were given. Data was anonymized and participants could withdraw at any time. Personal art-making supported young newcomer children in sharing their voice and perspectives about their experiences and lives, and positioned them as creative and knowledgeable storytellers and experts. Implications for practice includes a discussion about what materials and prompts were engaging, successes and challenges with this approach, and strategies and suggestions for those that want to use arts-informed methods with young children.

*arts-informed methods, research with children, newcomer children, children's voices, children's art-making*

### **Children as researchers as a pathway to participation: A didactic approach and its relevance in the perspective of children**

Birgit Huepping, Petra Bueker, University of Paderborn, Germany

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states in article 12 the right to participation which includes the right to learn how to act and to be democratic. The research aim is to proof a didactical approach empowering children as researchers, to understand their learning pathways and to explore how children reflect on the relevance of being researchers. The research is part of a participatory primary school development in the Peter-Gläsel Primary School of the Peter-Gläsel-Foundation, and is based on the children-as-(co) researcher approaches (Lundy 2007, Kellett 2011; Mayne/Howitt/Rennie 2018; Murray 2018; Bükér 2019). The Actor Network Theory (Eßer 2013), complemented by the understanding of competence (Deci/Ryan 2000), forms the framework. In the conceptional phase, children's agency is analysed by using the hierarchical model of children's research participation (Mayne/Howitt/Rennie 2018). Within a qualitative action research approach, the right-based didactical concept was developed with n=20 children (age 6-9), accompanied by ethnographic observations and interviews with children (n=8). The research adheres to the principles and practice of the EECERA Ethical Code (2014). Imbalance of power was overcome by communicative validation with the children. Results show that children use the didactic approach successfully as a kind of scaffolding. Children report that they like their role as researchers. They formulate many ideas for issues and methodology and show a sophisticated understanding of the relevance of research for actively shaping their environment. What counts, is to strengthen children to participate in a systematic way by supporting them to develop research competencies.

*children's rights, participation, democracy, children as researcher, didactic approach*

### **Listening to children's voices in an international study on high-quality early childhood teaching**

Julia Rodríguez-Carrillo, María Elena González Alfaya, Rosario Mérida Serrano, María Ángeles Olivares García, Miguel Muñoz, University of Córdoba, Spain

Children are seen as competent participants by including their perspectives regarding high-quality ECE teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes. Pálmadóttir and Einarsdóttir (2015) research work raised that few studies have incorporated children's perspectives on their teachers' role in play. In our case, almost none studies have incorporated young children's voices on high-quality ECE teaching. Quality in ECE teaching has been shown to be tightly linked to children's learning and wellbeing. Although educational research with children rather than on children is increasingly common (Olivares-García, González-Alfaya, Mérida-Serrano & Muñoz-Moya, 2019), there is a need for more research on high-quality ECE teaching from children's views (Rekalidou & Panitsides, 2015). It is a multi-case study with Spain and the U.S. as participating countries. Results reported here have been obtained after conducting the U.S. case studies with 41 children between four and six years-old. Creative methods -a 'multiple choice game' and a 'talk-and-draw session'- have been implemented because of their participatory nature. Ethical issues have to do mainly with ensuring children's true willing to participate. The informed consent was seek in a meaningful and child-friendly manner (Bertram, Formosinho, Gray, Pascal & Whalley). Children value ECE teachers who help them to overcome disagreements with friends, establish care-based relationships with them, acknowledge their right to be listened, and actively involve their families in the school's activities. Valuable information is offered regarding what young children think is essential for ensuring their overall wellbeing and, above all, how ECE teachers may contribute to this transcendent outcome.

*high-quality teaching, excellent teaching, children's voice, research with children, creative methods*

## ISSUES IN SUSTAINABILITY

Individual Paper Symposium

Chair: Ann-Christin Furu, University of Helsinki, Finland

**Exploring the kindergarten teacher's role in garden activities for sustainability – A case study from an Arctic kindergarten**

Veronica Bergan, Pernille Bartnæs, UiT, The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

The research aim was to explore the role of the kindergarten teacher in the process of growing organic food from seed to meal. Garden activities aim to educate children about the origin of food, nature and sustainability (Bergan, 2018; 2019). This is a process-oriented case study with an exploratory design. The analysis is conducted from the perspective of Tim Ingold's theory of dwelling (Ingold, 2000). This case study belongs to the interpretive paradigm using mixed methodology of participant observation, interviews and video documentation. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Informed consent was negotiated with the children involved and re-negotiated during the time the research was carried out. Participants (including child participants) were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The kindergarten teachers' role was to walk beside the child to interact with the garden beds, tools and plants pointing out clues of information along the way. This wayfaring of hands-on experience requires direct transferring of plant knowledge through education of attention, fine tuning of perception skills and attunement to the child's level of understanding. The teacher's knowledge, attentiveness and ability to for open-ended questions about nature and food production seemed to elicit the children's interest to learn and explore more, especially regarding sustainability issues. Gardening activities facilitated by the kindergarten teacher may add on to children's agency for sustainability issues and care for the local harvest and living things.

*sustainability, gardening, teacher role, EfS, children's agency*

**Developing sustainability education in Finnish ECEC – Merging bits and pieces?**

Ann-Christin Furu, Hannah Kaihoviirta, University of Helsinki, Finland

This paper reports on research that explores how sustainability education is currently addressed in the Finnish ECEC context. It presents findings from a trial using the OMEP ESD Rating Scale (OMEP, 2013) in ECEC settings. According to Finnish policy and curricula for ECEC, every child has the right to develop the skills needed for taking ethical responsibility and developing a sustainable lifestyle. Thus, ECEC has an ethical obligation to respond effectively and innovatively to current sustainability challenges (cf. Årlemalm-Hagsér & Elliott, 2017; Taylor, 2017; Wals, 2017). The study expands international research using the OMEP ESD Rating Scale as a tool for developing ECEC quality with special focus on sustainability issues (Siraj-Blatchford, Mogharreban & Park, 2016). The study was conducted within a qualitative interpretive research paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Questionnaires were filled out by 38 teams in municipal ECEC settings in the Helsinki area. The analysis was conducted through a content analysis within a phenomenological hermeneutical approach. The study follows the guidelines of the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity. Research permission was obtained by each municipality. The results show that there is a substantial variability in the extent to which sustainability is addressed in ECEC settings. The ecological dimension is at the foreground, while the social/cultural, and the economical dimensions are less frequently addressed. Based upon the findings of this research, the issue of sustainability education in Finnish ECEC needs to be urgently addressed in terms of imaginative and intensive in-service and pre-service professional development.

*sustainability education, early childhood education and care, OMEP ESD Rating Scale, quality, professional development*

**A critical examination of experiential learning within the context of a Hong Kong preschool gardening programme**

Lai Ping Chung, The Education University of Hong Kong, China

To study what ways a gardening programme being implemented within the context of a Hong Kong pre-school support experiential learning. Dewey is one of the most significant figures in experiential learning. Kolb extended and modified some aspects of Dewey's work, with influence by Piaget and Lewin. Fenwick pinpointed some strengths and limitations of experiential learning. Experiential learning is the conceptual framework of this study (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984; Fenwick, 2001). I was obliged to reconsider my own ideology both in relation to gardening and experiential learning and to recognise how ideology predisposed me to 'see' in some ways and not others. This study is a qualitative single case study using interpretivist paradigm. Multiple data collection methods were used, including unstructured, participant and non-participant observations, semi-structured individual

and group interviews, research journal and documentation. The participants were duly informed of the purpose, procedures, and instruments that would be used, including any potential risks. Signed consent was secured. The findings indicated that the children learned through experiential learning. The teachers lacked the necessary subject knowledge - particularly science - for supporting children's learning. The study also highlighted how Chinese cultural beliefs and practices create significant tensions when implementing experiential learning, especially in terms of adult-child relationship. The implications to my teaching included (1) an integral component of my teaching; (2) students can try theories in order to develop practices; (3) enabling students to connect theories to practice; and (4) offering opportunities that students can reflect on their own learning, with engagement.

*Hong Kong early years education, Chinese culture, experiential learning, gardening, teacher's role*

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## **F 11**

### **OUTDOOR PLAY AND LEARNING SIG: CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION, MOTIVE-ORIENTATION AND EMPOWERMENT**

Self-organised symposium

This outdoor play and learning SIG symposium considers children's participation in three different contexts.

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**Chair: Natalie Canning, The Open University, United Kingdom**

#### **Viewing the child's participation at forest school through the lens of motive-orientation in cultural-historical activity theory**

Angela Rekers, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, United Kingdom

The PhD study explores the participative experiences and the developing motive-orientation of a diverse group of young children in school and Forest School, in relation to the expectations of institutional practice. Informed by research on the child's social situation of development (Vygotsky, 1998; Fleer & Hedegaard, 2010), inclusive and multimodal participation (Nind, Flewitt & Payler, 2011), and affordances of outdoor activity (Waters, 2017), the study considers the nature of children's participation in institutions from the child's perspective. Hedegaard's (2008, 2009) cultural-historical wholeness theory of development and Bang's (2009) environmental affordance perspective underpin the study of children's inter/intra-active experiences. Hedegaard and Fleer's (2008) dialectical-interactive approach to interpretative ethnography for studying children was used. Participants included children, parents, teaching and forest school staff. Data collection methods utilised observation, audio-visual recording, interviews and video-stimulated conversations during 8 months' fieldwork. To ensure informed consent from parents from a disadvantaged community, written information was supplemented by audio-visual presentations demonstrating data collection methods and use of data. Also, parents were invited with their children to view audio-visual data collected for their child to ensure ongoing consent. The values and objectives underpinning institutional practice are considered in relation to the demands and expectations placed upon children's participation and socio-material activity. Case studies of children's motive-oriented activity settings discuss affordances for the child's self-experience as a participant actively engaging across and within institutions. Findings suggest that the tensions between policy and practice in Welsh Government strategies for play-based early childhood education impact upon the child's participatory experience.

*cultural-historical activity theory as sociomaterial framework, participation and inclusion, video/photograph - stimulated interviews, affordances, conflict and behaviour*

#### **Observing children's empowerment in play**

Natalie Canning, The Open University, United Kingdom

The research examines how educators identify children's empowering experiences in outdoor play. It is a continuation of a larger study on children's empowerment in play (Canning, 2016). Empowerment as a holistic concept, encompassing experiences draws on work by Zimmerman (1984); Gomm, (1993); Rivera and Tharp (2006). The research is underpinned by sociocultural theory founded on the works of Vygotsky, arguing that society is socially constructed by the ideas which are generated through cultural trends. It is based on an interpretive, ethnographic study of two early childhood settings (children aged 3-4 years) with educators using a conceptual framework of empowerment (Canning, 2016) to observe children's play. Educators were interviewed before using the framework and afterwards on the accessibility, cross reference to the curriculum and significance of empowerment. The interviews supported a developing understanding of the relationship between play and empowerment. The British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines (2018) were adhered to. Areas of ethical consideration in the design included consent for participation in interviews and access to educators' written observations of children which were anonymized. Children experience moments of empowerment in play situations as a result of their social interactions and experiences. They demonstrate empowerment through negotiating play relationships with peers. The conceptual framework enabled observations to focus on empowerment and for educators to recognize the importance of this in children's development. The research asks Early Childhood



educators to examine their practice, specifically the way they observe and record learning through play to acknowledge the significance of children's empowerment.

*play, empowerment, sociocultural, observation, curriculum*

### **The significance of participatory processes in transforming the outdoor school spaces into learning and play places**

Georgia Gessiou, University of Ioannina, Greece

The survey aims to support children's outdoor learning and play through engaging all the school community members in the processes of decision making, designing and transforming the outdoor school environment. Internationally, there is a growing body of research regarding children's need to play outdoors (Waller et al, 2017) however previous findings (Gessiou & Sakellariou, 2017) suggest that children spend 89,3% of their school day indoors. Children's involvement in the design of the school settings was described as a "symbolic" and "complementary" process and outdoor settings seemed detached from children's needs and preferences. Space-learning relationship shouldn't be considered as a quantitative relationship (Woolner et al., 2012), but as an organic microsystem consisting of dynamic, participative and active relationships between cultural, social, spatial and psychological factors (Schluz, 2009). The research adopts the transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2009), while conducting a Participatory Action Research. Using different participatory techniques, based on Mosaic approach (Clark & Moss, 2011), both with adults (educators, parents) and children, we embraced values of empowerment, collaboration and collectively meaning-making. All participants were informed of confidentiality and their consents were obtained. Results of the thematic analysis of the transcripts (interviews and focus groups) and observations unveil challenges and changes both on the outdoor settings and on the educational culture. We will discuss the findings through the participation and the perspectives of children, educators and parents. Our findings are shedding light on the meaning of participatory process as a political activity that assists the educational community on entering the new era of outdoor learning and play.

*participatory action research, transformative paradigm, outdoor learning and play, empowerment, decision- making*

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## **F 12**

### **NOTICING WHAT GOES ON: AN INSIGHT INTO CHILDREN'S INTERNAL WORLDS AND ATTUNED PEDAGOGY**

Self-organised symposium

These presentations consider how the Tavistock Method of Observation has been embedded in practice in an integrated centre for children and families in the UK. Consideration is given to the impact these have had on practitioners and children, in terms of developing an attuned pedagogy. Practitioners will present a case study demonstrating how their role has developed to include the Tavistock observation technique to work with children and their families in a Nurture provision. The final presentation is an evaluation study based on a course 'Advanced Emotional Roots of Learning' that ran for a year at Pen Green Centre for Children and their Families in the UK. It aims to evaluate how psychoanalytic concepts, in particular Bion's 'Theory of Thinking' can be used to interpret Tavistock Method Observations.

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**Chair: Felicity Dewsbery, Pen Green, United Kingdom**

### **How developing practices to encompass the Tavistock Method of observation within a nurture service impacts children and families**

Kat Clark, Laura Kiff, Pen Green, United Kingdom

A case study demonstrating how practitioners in an ECEC setting in the UK have developed the Tavistock observation technique to work with the most vulnerable children and their families in a Nurture provision. The objectives were; to consider the impact of the Tavistock observation techniques within an intensive early intervention service; to understand family perspectives and impact of Tavistock observation techniques. This research follows the 'Emotional Roots' and 'consultancy observation' work at Pen Green presented at EECERA (2014-2018). Elfer (2017) evaluated the contribution of the Tavistock Observation Method in daily pedagogic interactions which links directly with our research. The main difference being that as practitioner researchers the impact on the children and families is evaluated. Psychoanalytic theory drawn on this research project includes Bick's Tavistock Observation Method (1962), Winnicott's 'holding' (1965) Bion's 'containment' and (1962), Stern's (2005) 'attunement', Lawrence & Gallagher (2015), 'pedagogy'. The research has been conducted within an interpretive approach using qualitative methods including observation, case study and semi-structured interviews. Informed consent was gained with all participants' whose views were sought, material was anonymised. Participants were offered the right to withdraw up until submission of this proposal (Flewitt, 2005). To communicate the effectiveness of bringing together the emotional roots theory in practice, and demonstrate

this through case studies. The usefulness of peer support to explore projections and identify experiences. The importance of considering the emotional worlds of children are recognised through respectful relationships, patience and partnership working.

*children's experiences, observation, pedagogy, quality practice, methodology*

#### **A psychoanalytic framework for interpreting Tavistock Method observations in a centre for children and their families**

Janet Shaw (1), (1) Northern School of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy, United Kingdom

Felicity Dewsbery (2), (2) Pen Green, United Kingdom

This is an evaluation study based on a course 'Advanced Emotional Roots of Learning' that ran for a year at Pen Green Children's Centre, UK. It aimed to evaluate how psychoanalytic concepts, in particular Bion's 'Theory of Thinking' can be used to interpret Tavistock Method Observations. Many child psychotherapists have applied Bion's theory of thinking in clinical settings. Bion's concept of container/contained has been used as explanatory theory for Tavistock observations in children's centre research. There is research highlighting the importance of symbolism in the early years. Bion's 'theory of thinking' describes the process through which learning from emotional experience takes place; projective identification, the container/contained relationship, reverie, transformation of affect enabling symbol formation. Emotional defences; denial, adhesive identification and omnipotence interfere with the process. Course participants undertook observations of children using the Tavistock method. 8 observations were analysed using template analysis to produce an interpretative framework. All course participants were given an information sheet and completed a consent form. Informed consent was given by parents prior to undertaking observations and renegotiated at the time of the evaluation. Confidentiality was ensured. Analysis of the observations found that Bion's 'theory of thinking', along with additional psychoanalytic concepts, is a useful framework for interpreting Tavistock Method observations. Bion's concept of 'container/contained' has become familiar in early years education. Symbolism is at the core of conceptual learning. This study extends the paradigm by placing the containment of emotional experience leading to symbol formation at the centre of the early years curriculum.

*psychoanalysis, Bion's Theory of Thinking, Tavistock observations, symbol formation, pedagogy*

#### **How the Tavistock Observation Method supports practitioners in developing an attuned pedagogy**

Felicity Dewsbery, Colette Tait, Pen Green, United Kingdom

This is a case study to identify the impact of the Tavistock Method of observation on practitioners' pedagogy and on children observed in practice. This research follows on from the 'Emotional Roots' and 'consultancy observation' work at Pen Green (2018) in conjunction with the Northern School of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy previously presented at EECERA (2014-2018). Elfer (2017) evaluated the contribution of the Tavistock Observation Method in daily pedagogic interactions which links directly. The main difference being the practitioner researchers are evaluating the impact it makes on the children and families they are engaged with. Psychoanalytic theory drawn on for the Emotional Roots course and this research project includes Bick's Tavistock Observation Method (1962), Winnicott's 'holding' (1965) Bion's 'containment' and (1962), Stern's (2005) 'attunement', Lawrence & Gallagher (2015), 'pedagogy'. The research has been conducted within an interpretive approach using qualitative methods including observation, case study and semi-structured interviews. Informed consent was gained with all participants' whose views were sought. Material was anonymised and participants were offered the right to withdraw up until submission of this proposal (Flewitt, 2005). The method allowed observers to see what had previously not been seen, and share this with practitioners' in a safe and containing space, allowing for shared reflection. The impact of this, was a change in the way they thought about the observed child, and the development of a more finely attuned pedagogy. Children and families are thought about by practitioners differently when considering the projections and identifications made with children.

*children's experiences, observation, pedagogy, quality practice, psychoanalysis*

### **F 13**

#### **PROFESSIONALISM, COMPETENCIES AND IDENTITIES IN ECEC**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Olivera Kamenarac, University of Waikato, New Zealand**

#### **The Abecedarian Approach within an innovative professional learning model - a Danish pilot study**

Kimberly Meunier (1), Bente Jensen (2), (1) Abecedarian Education Foundation, United States (2) Aarhus University, Denmark

This study examined a Danish version of the Abecedarian Approach to early childhood education applied within a practice-based organisational learning model. We explored whether this approach and model made sense within the Danish universal daycare

context and if it could improve professional learning and ECEC quality. The Abecedarian Approach has a long history of research (Ramey, 2018) with new research and applications taking place in multiple countries. The study in Denmark draws on the professional development project VIDA (Jensen, 2014). This professional learning program is inspired by theories of knowledge-sharing (Krogh, 2011), communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), and innovative learning (Engeström, 1998). Quality is improved through collaborative learning and practice among ECEC professionals. The study builds on a social constructivist paradigm and took a participatory approach. Data were gathered through questionnaires and anthropological case studies. Participants were 10 nursery professionals and 10 family daycarers. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Participants' anonymity and confidentiality of information was maintained. Multiple researchers independently validated analyses and findings. This model of professional learning (coupled with the Abecedarian Approach) improved educator knowledge, skills, engagement, motivation, and teamwork. It made sense to these professionals and increased their critical reflection and self-awareness. There were some differences between nursery and family daycare staff that will need to be explored further. Due to these initial positive findings, it makes sense to now implement on a larger scale and study child outcomes. This professional development model may be promising in other universal daycare contexts.

*communities of practice, professional development, innovative learning, abecedarian approach, high-quality ECEC*

### **What is left unproblematic in constructions of teachers' professional identities in New Zealand early childhood policies and practice and why?**

Olivera Kamenarac, University of Waikato, New Zealand

This study investigates how teachers' professional identities have been (re)constructed in response to the shifting discourses in New Zealand ECE policies and practice over the last three decades. The impacts of policy reforms on the early childhood education (ECE) sector have been a focal point of many scholarly discussions in New Zealand (May, 2009; Mitchell, 2017). Interestingly, only a few studies touched on how teachers' identities have been shaped by the policy changes (Farquhar, 2010; Warren, 2013). On the global scale, however, authors (Skattebol, Adamson, & Woodrow, 2016) have determined a need for more research on teachers' identities within transforming contexts of ECE. To conceptualise teachers' professional identities, I draw on a framework of post structural discursive studies and theoretical ideas of feminist poststructuralists (Baxter, 2016; Weedon, 1997). I employ a discourse-analysis approach (Bacchi, 2000; Gee, 2014) to examine identity constructions in three different data sets - key New Zealand ECE policies, focus group and individual interview transcripts with teachers and managers from both the community-owned and for-profit ECE services. The study is undertaken with the university's ethics approval, followed by the participants' informed consent forms, respecting their rights and privacy. The study reveals how opposing political agendas forced teachers to simultaneously negotiate multiple and yet confronting identities, and favour enterprise interests over wellbeing of children and families. This study implicates that some identity constructions have allowed more than others teachers to advocate for ECE as a democratic, socially just and equitable place for all children.

*early childhood policies, teachers' professional identities, professionalism, teachers' advocacy, activism*

### **Core practices and competencies in the preparation of ECE teachers**

Clodie Tal, Levinsky College of Education, Israel

The goal is to show how students develop core professional competencies at the ECE department at Levinsky College of Education. Competencies such as relationships with children and adults, mediated interactions, and classroom management. These competencies are embedded in a number of core practices: small work (SGW), repeated picture book reading (RPBR), emergent curriculum and work with parents. The work is based on Ball & Forzani (2009) and Grossman et al. (2018) on the one hand and The Hundred Languages of Children (2013). The approach is based on the argument advanced that "making practice" is the core of professional preparation and that we need to define and enact essential practices novice teachers must develop in the process of becoming professional teachers. The study is a qualitative action research and it involved analysis of syllabi and students' submitted assignments from 2010 to 2019. Student teachers and staff whose work will be presented gave their consent to using the data. SGW, RPBR, and communication with parents are perceived by the students as core practices. Emergent curriculum is only implemented during preparation. Staff work is lacking from our preparation. Sustainability, and the workload have been identified as challenges. There is a need to reach wide acceptance of the core practices and competencies involved and to build mechanisms of sustainability. I will present a proposed portfolio to be used in teacher preparation to document the students' professional development.

*core competencies, core practices, preparation in ECE, sustainability, portfolio*

**Chair: Maria Dardanou, UiT, The Arctic university of Norway, Norway**

**The contribution of family-kindergarten collaboration to the development of children's creativity. Implementation in a program with games**

Eleni Zisopoulou, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

The aim of this present study is to show the contribution of family-school collaboration to the development of children's creativity through a game-making program (games with objects, words, concepts, waste materials, etc.). According to Cropley's review, *Creativity: A social approach* (2014), various ages students' creativity was cultivated and promoted in a social and supportive environment. Thus, these results hint that family's and school's cooperation may enhance students' creativity. Creativity is a combination of three factors: individuality, domain of work and social environment (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Since family and school are included in social environment, they could also enhance creativity. Research took place in a kindergarten school in Thessaloniki. Its duration was five months and the sample was composed of 25 children and their parents. Data collection tools were the observation guide, photography and questionnaires. Data quality analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was the analysis method used. The study's participants, which were children and their parents, were asked to fill a consent form for their participation. They were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any stage of it. The involvement of parents and other people from the family environment as well as the supportive environment in school helped to enhance children's creativity. In particular, children produced new and original ideas, used materials in other ways, solved problems and communicated their ideas to others. The current research findings would probably show enhanced students' creativity if they could be applied in a vast number of kindergarten and elementary students.

*creativity, play, school-family collaboration, fantasy, co-operation*

**Children's local places and environmental art**

Maria Dardanou, Bente Karlsen, UiT, The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

The aim of the study is to investigate how children explore and perform Environmental Art in their local places and how places can offer an opportunity for children's experience of past, present and future. This study builds on previous studies based on exploring nature through art and art through nature (Sørenstuen, 2009). Drawing on Ingold (2007), place is constituted by movement, by the lines of movement, by walking, sensing, exploring a place. Place is central to the understanding of how children's practices are situated within more-than-social contexts (Hackett, Procter, & Seymour, 2015). Method contains participatory observation. A group of twelve children, four to five years old, visit the same local place several times during a period of few months. Data consists of pictures, voice recordings, video, children's drawings and narratives in order to approach ways children interact and make meaning of place by performing Environmental Art. The project and all data are guided of strict confidence and anonymity. Participation is volunteer for the children, and the parents were given the opportunity to withdraw their children from the study at any point. The research is still ongoing at the time of this presentation, however, the preliminary findings suggest that Environmental Art may be a way for children to connect with local places and local history. The findings might have implications for new ways of approaching how places affect and shape children's experiences.

*local place, local history, environmental art, participatory observation, research with children*

**Art and cultural education in the Spanish early childhood curriculum**

Maria del Mar Oliver Barcelo, Aina Estrades Bauzá, Antoni Cerdà i Navarro, Carme Rosselló Rosselló, Universitat de les Illes Balears, Spain

In this research we analyse the approach given to Artistic/Cultural Education in the Early Childhood Curriculum of Spain. There have been multiple curricular analyses of Artistic/Cultural Education in other stages, such as Primary or Secondary Education, that include continents (Bamford, 2009; Giráldez & Palacios, 2014; UNESCO, 2006) or specific regions (Haslip & Gullo, 2008; Kim & Kim, 2017). But Early Childhood Education curriculums are rarely included in this type of studies. We propose that from the arts we can question the status quo, connect education, art, society and our general context (Acaso and Megias, 2017; Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 2003). We have conducted the study through a systematic and qualitative methodology, based on the documentary analysis, using the Nvivo software. We observed the structure, the curricular model, the approach and the meaning of the

Artistic/Cultural Education. The results have been contrasted with experts. The three experts contacted, to contrast the data, previously allowed recording conversations and their use for research purposes. As general results we can point out the preponderance of a communicative approach in the Artistic Education of the Spanish ECE Curriculum, and the maintenance of the traditional hierarchy of visual arts and music over other artistic disciplines. In light of the results, we conclude with the importance of increasing the presence and transversality of the Artistic and Cultural Education, and incorporating social, multicultural and critical approaches. We intend to encourage reflection on artistic education approaches in public policies, and generate new lines of debate on curricular models.

*curriculum, art education, national policies, critical education, value education*

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## **F 15**

### **PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH APPROACHES TO SOCIAL INCLUSION IN ECEC PRACTICES**

Self-organised symposium

In Denmark early child education and care (ECEC) settings are expected to cater diversity and enable all children to succeed and develop, irrespective of their background. Despite ample analysis and yearlong political attention, social inequality and marginalization is nevertheless challenging equality in ECECs in Denmark. In two innovative participatory research projects, researchers and ECEC practitioners from 7 Danish municipalities, explore and develop the relational conditions and learning environments for children in challenged positions. The projects are based on sociocultural understandings where children's emotional well-being and learning is developed as an integral part of everyday life in the ECEC settings. In both projects, researchers and practitioners joined daylong thematic workshops where playful learning, relational conditions and social inclusion were explored and discussed. In both projects professional learning and development is based on a collective, problem- and practice-oriented approach where narratives, video observations and interviews play a central role.

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**Chair: Lone Svinth, Aarhus University, Denmark**

#### **Playful Learning - A participatory approach to children's wellbeing and participation in Danish ECEC settings with relatively many children in vulnerable positions**

Lone Svinth, Aarhus University, Denmark

The study investigates how 25 practitioners, through a playful learning intervention, develop their relational approach and children's participation and wellbeing. Social inequality and marginalization challenge children's everyday participation in Danish ECEC (Svinth, 2019). Children with disadvantaged backgrounds experience more conflicts and less dialogues and interactions. The study is framed within a relational ontology and sociocultural theory. The child's wellbeing and learning is perceived to be entangled with its opportunities to participate in the everyday life of the ECEC. Buber's (1937) notion of I-THU and I-It is applied. A qualitative and participatory research methodology is applied in order to study and develop the relational conditions for social inclusion. Written narratives (Hansen, 2009) from 25 ECEC practitioners are analysed (Braun & Clark, 2006). A participatory research approach was selected to give voice to the practitioners' experiences with children in vulnerable positions. Written informed consents were obtained from practitioners and pseudonyms applied (Zeni, 1998). Through a playful learning approach, practitioners opened themselves for the vulnerable child's situation, suffering and engagements. This openness expanded the relational conditions and developed children's participation and wellbeing in a more inclusive direction. Openness toward the vulnerable child's perspective and situation have positive implications for an ethical and inclusive pedagogical practice. Since a vulnerable child's participation cannot be understood in separated from its relational origin, advanced qualitative approaches that encompasses pedagogical processes and their influence on children's participation are needed.

*social inclusion, playful learning, narratives, sociocultural theory, participatory research*

#### **Collaborative research and practice development exploring inclusive practices for children in vulnerable positions**

Charlotte Ringsmose, Aalborg Universitet, Denmark

The aim of this research is to explore how collaborative research and practice development can support inclusive practices in ECEC for children in vulnerable positions. This study investigates how researcher practitioner collaboration has affected practices from the practitioners' point of view. Despite a long history of universal childcare in Denmark inequality and marginalization is nevertheless challenging equality in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) (Ministry of Education, 2016; Landersø & Skaksen, 2017). The project is based on a sociocultural understanding (Vygotsky, 2004, Ringsmose, Kragh-Müller, 2014) where children's emotional wellbeing and learning is developed as an integral part of everyday life in the ECEC settings. The study is action based research. In a two year research project pedagogues from one of the most challenged Danish municipality together with

researchers have explored and developed the conditions for children in challenged positions. Researchers and practitioners met on workshops where development of inclusive practices were explored. The professionals volunteered to join the partnership. The professionals were encouraged to influence. The parents of the children in the groups were informed, and gave written consent. The results show that there are strengths and weakness regarding this collaborative approach. Some of the practices have changed dramatically, others find it difficult to involve colleagues. The pedagogues points to closer and more specific encounters. The results show us that the success is connected to the organisational conditions the practitioners come from, and the ability of organisational learning. Some centres integrate new knowledge, others continue practices as usual.

*children in vulnerable positions, inclusive ECEC practice, quality development, collaborative researcher practitioner research, practice development*

### **Evidence use for equity and inclusion in Danish ECEC services: Potentials and challenges**

Line Skov Hansen, Aalborg University, Denmark

The study describes how data- and research based knowledge is used to improve the learning environment in ECEC, as well as which possibilities and challenges the teaching staff experiences when evidence is to be part of an ongoing cycle of inquiry for improvement. The use of evidence can be an essential trigger to improve the learning environment (Aincow, 2005). However, practitioners need to develop the knowledge and skills to collect, analyse and use evidence for improvement (Earl & Timperley, 2008). Leadership support for evidence-informed improvement work play an important role (Datnow & Park, 2009). The study is framed within the theory of professional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012), improvement science (Bryk, 2015) and organisational learning (Argyris & Schön, 1978). A case-study is conducted to understand the selected phenomenon in its real-world context (Yin, 2018). Written reflections (n=40) from leaders & key-teachers, interviews with leaders (n=12) and teaching staff (n=21) in 6 ECEC-services are analysed. Interviews and written reflections give voice to teacher-experiences. Written informed consents were obtained from the participants and pseudonyms applied. Teaching staff experience lack of access, knowledge and skills, to analyse and use evidence for improvement, Leaders preparing for group structures, understanding and allowing the establishment of an ongoing cycle of inquiry for improvement, aligning goals for the learning and wellbeing of all children with available data and research play are strongly needed Use of evidence for equity and inclusive learning environments is complex and need attention and support if to succeed.

*improvement work, evidence-informed, use of data and research, equity and inclusive learning environments, quality*

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## **F 16**

### **UNEXPECTED ISSUE OF WELLBEING FOR EDUCATORS IN ECEC**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Janet Arndt, Gordon College, United States**

#### **Violent forms of behaviour towards teachers**

Nikolaos Chaniotakis (1), Ioannis Thordis (2), (1) University of Thessaly, Greece; (2) University of Western Macedonia, Greece

The aim of the presentation is to present the results of the study regarding the experiences and perceptions of Kindergarten, primary and secondary Greek school teachers about phenomena of violence towards them. Recent studies with European and American teachers in all levels of education described high rates of psychological and physical violence towards the teachers produced by the students and their parents (Forsa, 2016 & 2018; McMahon et al., 2014. Gerberichet al., 2011). Especially in Kindergarten there is mainly psychological violence against teachers from parents (Hedlin, 2017. Itzkovich & Dolev, 2019). The present study is based on the Violence Triangle (Direct Violence, Structural Violence and Cultural Violence) as proposed by Galtung (1990) as well as on the ecological systems theory of U. Bronfenbrenner (1979). Regarding the Violence Triangle, we mainly focus on the Direct Violence and especially the psychological dimension and less the physical one. The research was conducted as a quantitative study using a structured questionnaire based on two German surveys (Forsa, 2016 & 2018) on teachers' views on violence in order to generate frequencies of response amenable to statistical treatment and analysis. Teachers were informed about the purpose of the study, and they participated voluntarily, according to the rule of scientific ethics. The findings indicated that violence is becoming an important concern for Greek teachers, although still at a lower level in comparison to the findings of studies conducted abroad. The results of the questionnaire provided valuable information about the violent forms of behaviour towards teachers.

*teacher, parents, students, relationships, violence*

## **The relationships of mental health and institutional climate among early childhood educators**

Judit Fináncz, Melinda Csimá, István József, Kaposvár University, Hungary

The aim of the study is to examine the mental health of early childhood educators related to institutional climate dimensions. Early childhood education has been appearing more and more emphatically in professional discourse, however, the aspects of professionals working in this field have been explored only sporadically (Hall-Kenyon et al. 2014, Royer and Moreau 2015, Cumming 2017). At the same time, they can determine the standards of care and education affecting rising generations' quality of life. 1,010 professionals working in Hungarian nurseries and kindergartens were involved in our quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive research carried out by survey. Data collection was conducted anonymously, in accordance with EECERA Ethical Code principles. In terms of mental health, it can be stated that although mild depression affects a considerable proportion of respondents, burnout is not typical among them. The low level of burnout may be due to the career characteristics: dealing with young children proves to be a protective factor. Moreover, emotional exhaustion shows an increasing trend in relation with the length of time spent in the career ( $p < 0,05$ ). As for institutional climate dimensions, it can be said that efficiency, coherent educational principles and professional cooperation can be regarded as strengths, but respondents feel that their social appreciation is low. It has also been found that early childhood educators working in nurseries assess the climate characteristics of their workplace as the most unfavourable ( $p < 0,05$ ), which may be due to their heterogeneous composition and the professionalisation of education, which is still in progress.

*mental health, institutional climate, kindergarten teachers, early childhood educators, Hungary*

## **The need of substitute teachers in preschool in Sweden**

Rauni Karlsson, Airi Bigsten, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

The overall aim is to explore the preschool teachers' experiences about the relationship between their profession and the temporary substitute teachers' competence in the everyday activities when replacing an absent teacher. In Sweden preschools are facing major challenges primarily concerning personnel with applicable skills. The preschool teaching profession is developing with the support of the curriculum implementation (Vallberg Roth, 2010). An important part of the profession is developing knowledge within one's own practice (Carlgren, 2009). Taguma, Litjens and Makowiecki (OECD iLibrary, 2012/2013) show that quality of preschool is dependent on staff training. Preschool teacher vocation has not always been considered as a profession (Englund, 1995), and questioned if regarded as a profession or not. Systematic theory, authorization, professional autonomy and self-controlled professional ethics forms the basis for a profession (Colnerud & Granström, 2018). The study is placed within a qualitative paradigm (Bryman, 2004) and the methodology is hermeneutics. Data was collected by conducting web-interviews with preschool teachers. By e-mail preschool teachers received information about ethical principles such as, the opportunity to withdraw at any time and that they would be anonymized. The study shows a paradox regarding the expectations of the substitutes. They are expected to possess a basic practical preschool pedagogical professional knowledge and a basic level of preschool education knowledge. Depending on whether the regular staff find substitutes having above mentioned knowledges or not, the substitutes will be perceived as either an asset or a burden. These results can contribute to continued research within the field of teachers' professionalisation.

*Preschool teacher professionalisation, Temporary substitute teachers, Web-interviews, Professional knowledge, Practical knowledge*

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## **F 17**

### **PEDAGOGICALLY APPROPRIATE METHODS FOR RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN UNDER SIX: APPLYING PLAY-BASED PRINCIPLES TO DATA COLLECTION.**

Self-organised symposium

The symposium discusses how the founding principles of playful pedagogies can inform our research approaches with children from birth to six years old. The authors present innovative approaches for consulting with young children that align more closely with early childhood pedagogy than traditional research practices. We draw on the focus of our forthcoming SAGE book *Research through Play: Participatory Methods with Young Children*, to present data which aims to: 1. Position early childhood research as a reflexive approach focusing on the strengths of play-based pedagogies as a route to children's natural expression. 2. Detail the methods which are appropriate to record and document interpretations and meaning from children's play. The work stems from four different research projects which focus on Voice, Internet Connected Toys, Critical Thinking and Metacognition. These projects, although different in focus are unified by the methods to work with children in pedagogically-appropriate ways to collect research data.

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**Chair: Lorna Arnott, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom**

**Creative approaches to informed consent with children under six: A critical dialogue**

Lorna Arnott (1), Kate Wall (1), Loreain Martinez Lejarreta (1), Cara Blaisdell (1), Ioanna Palaiologou (2), (1) University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom; (2) UCL, United Kingdom

This paper aims to present child-led, child-friendly, creative, playful, and pedagogically-appropriate informed-consent processes, devised to negotiated consent/assent directly with children. It demonstrates our belief in young children as 'reliable, voluntary' participants" (Farrell, 2016: 226), moving the field beyond the current research which is still somewhat restricted to discussions of ethics codes (Parsons, et al. 2015). It stems from a Children's Rights Conceptual Framework (United Nations, 1989), offering a much-needed discussion on what ethics look like in practice. The interpretivist and reflexive projects which inform this paper, employ qualitative methodologies. Methods all stem from play-based pedagogy and are derived from knowledge of practice. These include narrative picture books, animated videos and participatory play experiences. We obtained consent/assent directly from children and were responsive to children's embodied cues. Parental proxy consent was still obtained. We drew on guidance from the EECERA ethical code. Findings from our critical dialogue demonstrate that like everything that is play-based and child-centred, informed consent processes were messy and fraught with challenge, while simultaneously offering a rewarding route for children's self-expression. E.g. the animated video created space for children's questioning of the ethical processes, but only when viewed on an interactive touch screen which could be paused to create an opportunity for dialogue between researcher and child. Findings necessitate that researchers relate to children in a responsive and reflexive manner. In seeking to marry research methods with pedagogically-appropriate practice, creative consent approaches need to evolve as projects progress. One-time consent is not appropriate.

*voice, methodology, pedagogically appropriate methods, ethics, informed consent*

**Exploring play-based research methods for stimulating critical thinking in the context of young children and adult interactions**

Loreain Martinez Lejarreta, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

The aim of this presentation is to explore the usefulness and constrains of multiple thematic play-based methods for stimulating and capturing 4-6-year-old children's Critical Thinking. The study focused on techniques that were pedagogically appropriate and served as catalytic tools. I draw on and extend established approaches for listening and eliciting young children's voices in research (Clark, 2001, Blaisdell et al., 2018) to tune in with children's thinking in this study. This methodological study draws on play pedagogy and learning within the theory of social constructivism and is grounded upon Dewey's theory of experiential education (1938). In this multiple case study, semi-structured detective play-based experiences were created for and with children to investigate observable behaviours of individual and collaborative thinking within the designed context. The study took place across two schools with 4-6-year-old children. A sample of 24 children participated in groups of 2-4. I assumed the role of pedagogue-researcher. Play experiences were video-taped to capture multiple modes of communication. Local authorities', departmental ethics committees', gatekeepers', legal guardians' approval/consent and children's ongoing informed assent/dissent was sought. EECERA ethical code and conduct (2015) was followed. Obtained data illustrates children's engagement in diverse thinking processes during four imaginary-play scenarios. Strengths and challenges of four different play-based research methods will be discussed. Findings demonstrate, human thinking is an internal process which can be challenging to research. Therefore, this paper shows that tailoring research methods and identifying tools and practices that stimulate or inhibit young children's thinking, its manifestation and capture is of great importance.

*participatory research methods, playful pedagogy and tools, teacher-researcher, critical thinking, eliciting thinking*

**Methodological benefits and challenges to using pedagogically-appropriate tools to conduct research in Primary 1**

Jennifer Zike, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

This paper explores methodological benefits and challenges when using research tools derived from classroom practices. Based on an existing tool for exploring children's metacognition, the study adapted this approach for use with Scottish children (age 4-5). It draws on Wall and Higgins' (2006) work with pupil views templates. These are practice-based tools that facilitate young children's verbal reflection on learning and thinking. Employing a child rights perspective, the use of pedagogically appropriate tools is based on Lee's (1998) work which frames agency and proficiency as dependent on familiarity with the situation. Grounded in critical realism and pragmatism, this mixed methods study employed visually-mediated interviews with 55 children and teacher/parent questionnaires. Children's verbal assent/dissent was actively sought and continuously re-evaluated throughout the research process. Additionally, written consent from schools/ parents was obtained. EECERA ethical guidelines (2015) were followed. The discussion is based on my reflexive decision-making process throughout the study. The visual templates and



supportive interviewing approach were vital to co-creating a familiar context where children were able to express their perceptions of learning and thinking in various situations. Key conclusions are that young children can and will demonstrate intricate understandings of complex mental processes if supported to do so. Practice-based research tools create contexts that promote children's understanding and build on their strengths. Employing a familiar and supportive approach is particularly important when asking young children to verbally reflect on complex mental processes. However, researchers should be cautious when navigating their supporting role to ensure space for children's authentic voices.

*research methods, researcher role, pedagogically-appropriate tools, primary school, children's participation*

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## **F 18**

### **DEMOCRACY AND CHILDREN'S VIEWS**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium is composed by three presentations on children's wellbeing and democratic principles. The first presentation unpicks aspects of young children's participation in decision making and raises the debate as to whether this is realistic, rhetorical or problematic? The second presentation draws on a study that explores children's personal views on their subjective wellbeing with a specific emphasis on issues of safety and safeguarding. The third presentation explores wellbeing and democratic living in early childhood curriculum policy, through a comparative study including China, Colombia, Denmark, England and Portugal in the context of the International Early Learning and Child Well-being study. The symposium will draw attention to explicit and implicit expressions of wellbeing and democratic living, children's participation and views and early childhood curricula.

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**Chair: Zoi Nikiforidou, Liverpool Hope University, United Kingdom**

#### **Young children's participation in decision making: Realistic, rhetorical, or problematic?**

Fengling Tang (1), Angela Scollan (2), Federico Farini (3), (1) University of Roehampton, United Kingdom; (2) Middlesex University, United Kingdom; (3) University of Northampton, United Kingdom

This documentary research based paper interrogates issues around young children's participation in decision making in families and early years settings. Children's participation has been one of the most debated aspects of UNCRC. Existing research explore initiatives and practices of children's participation in societies (Hart 1992; Wyse 2001; Lansdown 2010) and address challenges in promoting children's authentic participation (Fitzgerald, Graham, Smith and Taylor 2010; Raby 2014). Inspired by Hart's (2011) highlight of power relations and children's struggle for equality toward the realization of their participation rights, this paper adopts children's rights perspective and a socio-cultural lens to interrogate complexity involved in young children's participation in decision making. This paper employs a critical approach to documentary research rooted in interpretivism to examine the historical, social, cultural, economic, political contexts of existing research of children's participation and address purposes, authenticity and credibility of relevant documents (Hammersley and Arkinson, 1995). Ethics applies to a careful interpretation and evaluation of existing research to prevent producing stereotypes and biases to the minimum (O'Leary, 2014). Preliminary findings portray a complex picture of young children's participation in decision making. Children's rights perspective reinforces adults' understanding of the importance of children's participation in society, however, it does not ease the tensions among adults regarding perceptions of children's competencies. Socio-cultural aspects are interwoven into the process of young children's participation in decision making with adults and children wrestling with power relationships. This paper highlights the intersection between children's rights perspective and socio-cultural aspects to facilitate and widen young children's participation.

*children's participation, children's rights perspective, a socio-cultural lens, decision making, documentary analysis*

#### **Children's personal views on their wellbeing: Issues of safety**

Zoi Nikiforidou (1), Antoanneta Potsi (2), Lydia Ntokou (3), (1) Liverpool Hope University, United Kingdom; (2) Bielefeld University, Germany; (3) University of Ioannina, Greece

The aim of this study is to explore children's personal views on aspects of safety and 'good quality' in their life. The study relates to previous research on children's subjective wellbeing (e.g. Bradshaw, 2011; Bradshaw et al, 2013; Strózik et al, 2016), where children are encouraged to evaluate their overall life satisfaction. This study draws on the notion of the vulnerable and agentic children (Munro 2011) who from a rights-based approach are encouraged to have a voice in relation to their lives (Garlen 2019). In addition, it raises issues concerning how the 'risk society' (Beck 2006) provokes a cotton-wool, overprotective culture where the balance between adults' responsibility and children's opinions is sometimes unsettled. The study is part of the International Survey of Children's wellbeing (ISCWeB) and was conducted during 2018 in Greece. A representative sample of pupils (n= 402) aged 10, from 80 schools, participated through quantitative self-report questionnaires that comprise eight life domains and

aspects of life. The EECERA ethical code (2014) has been taken into account and the research was submitted for approval at the Greek Ministry of Education. Once approval was granted headteachers, teachers, parents and children were contacted regarding consent to participation. The findings unpick children's views on how safety and risk shape the quality of their lives in relation to the people, spaces, resources, free time and activities they engage in. This study contributes to the field of young children's subjective wellbeing in providing opportunities for their voices to be heard and be accounted for.

*subjective wellbeing, young children, safety, risk, agency*

#### **Wellbeing and democratic living in early childhood curriculum policy: perspectives from China, Colombia, Denmark, England and Portugal in the context of the International early learning and child wellbeing study developments**

Sigrid Brogaard Clausen, Sofia Guimaraes, Fengling Tang, Clara Rubiano, University of Roehampton, United Kingdom

This presentation considers the position of wellbeing and democratic living in early childhood curriculum policies in China, Colombia, Denmark, England and Portugal. One of the conditions for democracy and democratic living is that it is rooted in the educational system (Dewey 1916) and education as a political act (Freire 1996). Democratic living is dialogical and contains emotional and social encounters and therefore intertwines with dimensions of subjective wellbeing (Ahrenkiel and Warring, 2016; Guo, 2015), including personal freedom, and experiencing control over one's own life and choices (Ben-Arieh et al. 2014). Documentary analysis and a comparative and critical policy lens is applied (Bowen 2009; Radin and Weimer 2018) in identifying 'contrasts-conceptions', commonalities and significance of 'a particular absence', while acknowledging the challenges in not applying dominant ideas and direct comparison (Burke 2006). Ethical concerns specifically attend to critical policy analysis as a way of addressing inequality of opportunities (Diem et al 2014). The findings evidence strong attention to, though diverse positions of young children's democratic living and wellbeing in the curricula. This is especially important in light of the increased pressure from neoliberalism reflected in standardised curricula with increased focus on assessments and tests in early years (Volk 2017). These findings urges all stakeholders in early childhood to recognise and link the moral, ethical and political dimensions of working with young children. To empower early childhood as a space for democratic living and wellbeing, democratic dialogues about alternatives to neoliberal discourses of competition, investment and return.

*democratic living, wellbeing, international early childhood curriculum policies, neoliberalism, critical and comparative policy analysis*

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## **F 19**

### **ADDRESSING COMPLEX ETHICAL ISSUES IN RESEARCH**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Torill Moe, North University, Norway**

#### **Exploring unethical behaviours in the Albanian preschool education**

Gerda Sula, Blerta Bodinaku, Skerdi Zahaj, University of Tirana, Albania

The aim of this research is to explore unethical behaviours from teachers and parents and to provide recommendations for the development of national programs and policies in the Albanian Education System, with specific focus on preschool level. Ethics in the Albanian education has not been explored previously. Hallak, J. & Poisson, M. (2005) on ethics and corruption in education shows that the situation in Albania is not unique. Two models are considered: structural and content-based, providing conceptual frameworks of educational ethics. Creswell, et al, 2003 served as basis for research modalities. A mixed-methods sequential explanatory design (quantitative-qualitative) was employed. The quantitative part with a sampling of 95% and confidence interval of 5% provided general understanding of ethics and unethical behaviours. The qualitative data collected through a face-to-face interview of the outliers explored participants' views about ethics in the Albanian preschools. All actors were informed in writing on the aims of the research, and that at all times had the right to withdraw from the research. Anonymity was assured. Research results were shared with all participants. Parents and teachers consider all unethical behaviours as serious, but infrequent. Violence against children in physical, psychological and verbal forms, is exerted by parents and teachers alike. There is prejudice by teachers and parents. These issues in combination hinder progress in establishing cooperation for an ethical early childhood experience. Improvement of legal framework and mechanisms for prevention and treatment of ethics' violation cases, in particular cases of prejudice in Preschool Education in Albania.

*unethical behaviour, mixed-method research, Albania, values education, policy implication*

## **Managing complex relationships in the field whilst attempting to develop sensitive ethical research practices. A practitioner researcher's experience with refugee children, their parents and early years educators**

Donna Gaywood, Birmingham City University and Centre for Research in Early Childhood, United Kingdom

This research considers how four very young refugee children experience Early Education settings, in terms of their sense of being and belonging. It is inspired by Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Freire: 1970), Natural Inclusion Theory (Rayner: 2017) and Tobin et al (2016). The study builds on the findings of Kalkman and Clark (2017) and Prior and Niesz (2013). A complex theoretical framework has been developed to account for the children's relationships within a social context, which consists of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel: 1979); Orientalism (Said: 1978); Social and Cultural Capital (Bourdieu: 1979). The research is located within a qualitative, real world research paradigm. An emergent hybrid methodology, which is praxeological (Formosinho and Formosinho: 2012); (Pascal and Bertram: 2012) and polyvocal (Tobin et al: 2016), was employed. Multimodal methods (Theron et al: 2011); (Clark and Moss: 2011) were used to elicit the children's voices. Individual visual vignettes were created and presented to participants. For ethical robustness, a familiar interpreter was employed, and letters were translated into Arabic. Home visits were conducted to ensure parental understanding. The ongoing assent of the children determined their involvement and member checking (Lincoln and Guba: 1985) is a strong feature. All participants are anonymised. Early findings suggest that amid vulnerability the children demonstrated great strength; the ability to make a friend was vital and communication between practitioners and parents was complex. The research aims to inform everyday Early Years practice within local authorities in England and attempts to promote a "pedagogy of welcome."

*refugee children, post migration experiences, complex methods and methodology, ethically sensitive, child's voice*

## **Ethical considerations in action research in ECECs**

Torill Moe, Kjell Aage Gotvassli, Nord University, Norway

How to secure ethical principles doing action research (AR) in ECECs? Ethical perspectives in AR in ECECs is sparingly represented in the literature. With background in AR in 4 ECECs we analyse the ethical challenges (Williamson & Prosser, 2002; Coghland & Brannick, 2014). How can confidentiality and anonymity be preserved? How can informed consent be meaningful and how can AR avoid doing harm to participants? Practice-related research is compared with AR as a methodology. Ethical challenges in that those who participate from the field is discussed (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). A typical feature of AR in the ECECs is the strong proximity to the field and the collaboration between external researchers and practitioners. This requires that several ethical issues be raised and thoroughly considered in both the planning and implementation of action research (Brydon-Miller & Greenwood, 2006). The research is based on field reports and both anonymity and informed consent is secured. The participants have read the field reports and their comments is embedded in the reports. The project have been approved by the Norwegian Research Council. Key points is: informed consent, the right to privacy, respect for personal integrity, not do harm in relation to the practice field, clarification of the use of the data and results. The presentation is built around literature in the field of ethics and AR, and put into a context related to AR process in ECECs, The results will have importance for those who wish to work with AR in the ECECs.

*ethics, leadership in ECECs, action research, reflection in action, learning organisations*

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## **F 20**

### **CONCEPTIONS OF THE CHILD**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Yordanka Valkanova, Canterbury Christ Church University, United Kingdom**

## **Understanding children's sexuality in ECEC**

Øystein Skundberg, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

The paper suggests how to understand and interpret children's sexuality (CS), sexual play and behaviour. ECEC students and practitioners express (Øverlien & Sogn, 2007) that their lack of knowledge about normal vs. abnormal CS poses problems - both with identifying harmful behaviour or signs of abuse, and with reconciling it with personal or cultural norms about sexuality. CS has long been theorized within a constructivist framework partly based on Foucauldian concepts of sexuality as a social construct (Moore & Reynolds, 2017). Nevertheless, there is a tension between bio-medical and constructivist conceptualizations (Ryan, 2000), thus creating uncertainty about what is "normal" and "natural". Although early Freudian thinking acknowledged CS as part of natural human development, it was mostly perceived homologically (an immature form of adult sexuality) except for writers within child psychology developing a heterological understanding (CS as separate and singular) (Sauerteig, 2012). Paradigm:

Constructivist epistemology. Methodology: Literature study. Analysis of empirical studies of adult concerns and attitudes about CS. Method: Theoretical discussion. Though parents' and educators' personal beliefs about sexuality should be respected, concern for children's development necessitates challenging these beliefs with objective knowledge about CS. ECEC practitioners' interpretations of CS are often obscured by both lack of theoretical knowledge and concerns about abuse or of non-age-appropriate influences. Viewing CS heterologically can reduce this uncertainty, thus minimizing the risk of under- or overreactions. In ECEC, a heterological understanding could prevent CS being analysed as inherently unnatural or abnormal while still delineating it from signs of abuse or harmful behaviour.

*children's sexuality, epistemology, practice, constructivism, normality*

### **Scientism and wilderness in the laboratory preschools in Soviet Russia (1917 - 1928)**

Yordanka Valkanova, Canterbury Christ Church University, United Kingdom

The aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between wilderness and scientisation in questioning the possibilities and boundaries of a model of 'the developing child' in the Bolshevik laboratory preschools. In particular, it concentrates on the case of the psychoanalytic Children's home in Moscow. Much previous research has centred primarily on explorations of how psychoanalysis is understood in an educational project (Miller, 1998; Gianotti and Schiavulli, 2014; Angelini, 2008). Applying a documentary method, this enquiry proposes a new theoretical framework derived from Dalibor Vesely's (2004) concept of the divided nature of representation, and views the relationship between wilderness and scientisation from a dialectical perspective. The method of inquiry is to engage critically with existing theoretical analyses of 'scientisation' of education, drawing on a range of material including teacher's reflective diaries as well as children's drawings and recorded learning logs. Since the project involves potentially offensive materials such as participant's sexual behaviour, no historical facts that could harm the privacy of the families of the children who attended the psychoanalytic laboratory are disclosed. This paper suggests that the entire enterprise appeared to the outside academic and practice community as a quest of the secrets of unconsciousness. The association of freely experienced sexual practices evoked the idea of appraising secrets of wilderness. The case, compared to similar early childhood contemporaries, which have been documented in early childhood historiography would help us to generate models of how theoretical knowledge has married practice.

*scientisation, progressive kindergarten pedagogy, Eugenics, Soviet Russia, child psychoanalysis*

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## **F 21**

### **MOTIVATIONS OF MEN ENTERING INTO AND DROPPING OUT OF ECE WORK AND TRAINING**

Self-organised symposium

These papers cohere around the motivations of male ECE workers. They commence with a concern about the lack of ECE men as a basis for developing a greater understanding about what encourages them and what puts them off, a common concern within each of the countries represented here: Norway; Iceland; Germany. The papers represent a range of methodological approaches: face to face interviews, accompanied by the drawing of a career storyline; an ethnography conducted over 14 months; a mixed methods approach using a survey, interviews and focus groups. Kubandt's paper which emphasises the public discourse of "general suspicion" around male ECE practitioners, finds that men are restricted to act particularly cautiously in their physical work with children. Thordardottir reveals the 'accidental' entry of men into ECE and the influence of their social background. Together, the papers present the presence of a diversity of masculinities.

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**Chair: Jo Warin, Lancaster University, United Kingdom**

### **The role of the gender of pedagogical professionals in dealing with children close to the body**

Melanie Kubandt, University of Vechta, Germany

The ethnographic study "Doing gender in the day-care centre" focused on doing gender in everyday life in a German day-care centre. The connection between female gender affiliation and a general presumption of innocence is contrasted with the general suspicion in the context of more men in day-care centres. Aigner and Rohrmann (2012) conclude that the suspicion of paedophilia, which is also discussed under the buzzword general suspicion, leads to a restriction of male educators and forces them to act particularly cautiously. According to a socio-constructivist-ethnomethodological research perspective (Garfinkel 1967, Reckwitz 2003) the educators own gender perspectives come into sight. The data are based on a weekly observation over 14 months and was coded with the aim of categorization based on the Grounded Theory (Strauss/Corbin 1996). Sensitive to reification, the study avoided reconstructing gender patterns on the basis of observations in which the actors in the field did not make gender a theme themselves. Ethical principles were used with regard to consent, data storage and confidentiality of personal data of children,

parents and professionals. The gender affiliation of pedagogical specialists functions as a determinant in child day-care when it comes to dealing with children close to the body and how such logics have an effect on everyday pedagogical life. Blind spots on the part of early childhood educators for their own (stereotypical) assumptions in dealing with educators are reconstructed. The results make it possible to point out pitfalls in everyday pedagogical life and to take up perspectives on gender that go beyond stereotypes.

*doing gender, male educators, ethnographic study, gender stereotypes, early childhood institutions*

#### **Snapshot of three Icelandic male – preschool-teachers: The gender paradox in practice**

Thordis Thordardottir, University of Iceland, Iceland

In this paper the focus is on essential gendered role models linked to the OECD (2018) avocation for more tolerance for diversity and inclusion in ECEC. The focus is on the stories of three Icelandic participants of a current comparative study in 13 countries, aiming at understand factors that either keep men inside or outside ECEC. The research question is: What patterns appear in the participants' description of staying or leaving ECEC? Men's experience of staying or leaving preschools is explored in relation to Warin's (2018) findings of men challenging gender stereotypes in ECEC; Rohrmann's (2016) concerns with males' self-perceptions in "female world of ECEC;" and Brody's, (2015) argument for a holistic understanding of males' conditions in preschools. The framework is established in theories of multiple masculinities which must be embedded in gender research (Messerschmidt, 2018). In person' interviews, with career story-line, highlighting critical moments in participants' career path where made. Interviews were recorded, translated into English and transcribed. All participants signed an informed consent form, and participated voluntarily. They have pseudonym names and surroundings are carefully changed. Participants started ECEC career by coincidence. Sickness and shortage of opportunities were the main reasons for leaving ECEC, but flexibility and opportunities to increase salary for staying were primary reasons for remaining in the profession. The findings indicate the importance of increased attention to status of men in ECEC and their effects on diversity and increasing tolerance, which could retain and attract more men to ECEC.

*gender, masculinity, ECEC, trajectories, diversity*

#### **To drop out, or not to drop out? How do male students in ECEC teacher training answer this question?**

Arnt Nordli, Olav B. Lysklett, Kari Emilsen, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education (QMUC), Norway

Investigate male dropout among first-year students at QMUCs ECEC teachers training in Norway. Few men work in ECECs (Peeters, Rohrmann, & Emilsen, 2015). The percentage of men in Norwegian ECECs is 8.6 %, (SSB 2018). Norwegian authorities aim to increase the share of men in ECECs (Emilsen 2015). Sargent (2004) holds that the role of the early childhood educator is perceived as a female occupation, making men's choice to enter the profession difficult. Nedregård & Abrahamsen (2018) show that one-third of the students, in a programme of professional study, drop out or postpone their study. This corresponds with our findings. Nationally more male students drop out from ECEC studies. Results will be analysed through the lens of Connell (2005), and Messerschmidt and Messner's (2018), discourses of masculinities. We investigate how male student constructs their identities as male ECEC students as described by Warin (2018). To answer our question we: 1. analyse the SPSS results, from a questionnaire, among three cohorts of first-year students. 2. analyse interviews with selected students who drop out. 3. triangulate our datasets. Informants secured anonymity in interviews, survey data, and transcription, voluntary participation. Informants have a right to withdraw during, and after, data collection. We find a high dropout rate, but no gender difference among students at QMUC. Different measures to avoid dropout and how QMUC might facilitate for male students are discussed. The research is important to understand men's motivations for ECECs studies and to reduce student dropout.

*gender balance ECEC, reduce male dropout, students wellbeing, males in a feminine work place, how to facilitate for male students*

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## **F 22**

### **MULTILINGUAL TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Sally Brown, Georgia Southern University, United States**

#### **Early learning of English in schools of a new type of Russia (based on vocabulary related to games and toys)**

Nadezda Pospelova, Marina Achaeva, Kazan Federal University in Yelabuga, Russia

The purpose of the study is to develop effective methods for learning English at an early stage of study on the basis of vocabulary related to games and toys of the linguistic culture of the countries of the target language. It underpins our study by examining the

specifics of the work of schools of a new type, the British and American peculiarities of this vocabulary, and new moves in TFL at school. Linguacultural interpretation of the lexical units referring to the toys and games in Great Britain and the USA (2017); Language education: new moves (2017). The study is based on studying problems of early learning languages (Biboletova, 2000); psychology of child development (Vygotsky, 2014); problems of interaction in early childhood education (Gunn, 2017). The paradigm of our investigation lies in the personal focused didactics, the principle of synthesis of intelligence, emotions and actions. Methodology includes direct, communicative, interactive methods. The methods of the research are semantisation, "word interview". For ethical considerations parents should fill out consent forms, if they do not agree with the ideological principles of the games they can refuse. The use of the following children's games in the educational process is proposed: Ludo, I-spy, musical chairs, Snakes and ladders, Jack-in-the-box, Ducks and drakes, Dumb crambo, Fairies and witches. Psychological and pedagogical studies have shown that the environment, heredity, upbringing are the factors of personal development. The linguistic environment and the developing environment contain tremendous potential for personal development.

*early education toys and games, culture of English speaking countries, preschooler, early learning, nursery school, special teaching methods*

### **Video assessment as a method for Swedish preschool teachers to analyse their teaching strategies**

Martina Norling, Mälardalen University, Sweden

The overall aim in this project is to develop strategies and knowledge about multilingual children's opportunities to learn and develop literacy skills in Swedish preschools. This project demonstrates that the concept of "power and knowledge" is applicable (Gavanta & Cornwall, 2006, p. 71) to support preschool teachers learning as well as develop "knowledge production" (s.74) about multilingual children's opportunities for literacy development in preschool. Starting from a social constructivist perspective with focus on the strategies employed by preschool teachers to support multilingual children's literacy learning, the data analyses are based on the theoretical foundations of bioecological and sociocultural theory (Barton, 2007; Bronfenbrenner, 1999; Vygotsky, 1962). The starting point for a participatory research project, is action learning and a pragmatic orientation (Johansson & Lindhult, 2008). This study employs a mixed-methods design. Qualitative data were derived from the preschool teachers' descriptions of their teaching strategies and quantitative data on eighteen dimensions of strategies in various activities were analysed with the scoring and analysis tool, Social Language Environment- Domain (Norling, 2015). The study was carried out in accordance with the ethical principles of social sciences research (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). This presentation highlights the preschool teachers' use of video recording as a tool to make critical analyses, in order to develop teaching strategies to support multilingual children's literacy learning. The knowledge production has contributed to a change of attitudes from measuring children's literacy outcome, to pay attention to preschool teachers' strategies to support multilingual children's literacy learning in preschool.

*social language environment, emergent literacy, multilingual, preschool, participatory action research*

### **Assessing the multimodal texts of young multilingual students**

Sally Brown, Georgia Southern University, United States

The research aims are how can we assess the growth of young, multilingual writers using a holistic, strengths-based approach, and how can multimodal and multilingual elements be valued in a writing assessment? Assessment of multilinguals should acknowledge the multimodal literacies of the child. For example, the child's first language may be used as a resource (Bauer, Presiado & Colomer, 2016). Many schools tend to ignore these abilities (Ntelioglou et al., 2014). Instead, applying a translingual orientation helps teachers value all forms of communication (Zapata & Laman, 2016). Multiliteracies emphasize the cultural and linguistic variations in the global world. This view validates the existence of many forms of literacy and showcases the ways literacies are influenced by contexts, texts, and participants which include moving beyond monolingualism, monoculturalism, and standard forms of language (New London Group, 1996). This project involved the collection and analysis of 20 student work samples, transcripts, field notes, and interviews to determine patterns of growth using an ethnographic perspective (Green & Bloome, 1997). Multimodal writing samples and dialogue were analysed using grounded theory and multimodal analysis (Saldana, 2015). Ethical considerations focused on democratic values with the focus on respecting young learners and bringing the utmost sensitivity to cultural and linguistic assets. A draft of the assessment tool will be shared for critique. This project has the potential to not only offer a new way of assessing young multilingual students, but also of providing a more appropriate pedagogy for working with early childhood multilingual students (Ascenzi-Moreno, 2018).

*literacy, multimodal, composing, assessment, technology*

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**Chair: Sharon Colilles, Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom**

**Exploring how play based pedagogies support mixed ethnicity identity formation**

Sharon Colilles, Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom

This study explores how play and teaching within the EYFS shapes learners mixed ethnicity identity. Barron (2014) used sociocultural and funds of knowledge theory to explore how children respond to their cultural and educational worlds. However, the complexities of how mixed-ethnic children participate in these experiences and the role practitioners' play in shaping identity have been overlooked. Bodies of knowledge from Vygotsky, 1978, Lave and Wenger, 1991, Rogoff, 2003, and Corsaro, 2014 provide the theoretical lens of sociocultural theorising to problematise how ethnic identity is experienced and constructed in learner-practitioner interactions. Qualitative collection processes, use Bertram and Pascal's Praxeological approach in an EYFS setting for generating data. Phase one uses semi-structured interviews with practitioners. Phase two accesses children's perspectives using participatory activities with skin coloured paints and story-telling. Ethical Considerations emerge in raising issues regarding ethnic grouping, identity and pedagogical practice. For informed consent, information sheets and conversations established the study aims, confidentiality and withdrawal arrangements. Engagement with participants followed institutional ethical frameworks. Literature suggests the EYFS curriculum is premised on suppositions of valuing inclusivity, however it falls short of making explicit a pedagogical approach that support practitioners in negotiating the complexity of social experiences and identity. Studies contend the curriculum needs to move towards engaging with the perspectives of children and families with multiple identities and belongings, rather than inclusive practices that relate to normalised groupings. Children's conceptualisation of identity provides new insights into the way they make sense of ethnic difference.

*mixed, ethnicity, identity, play, pedagogy*

**A democratic approach on inclusive learning environment in Swedish preschools – What counts, and who counts?**

Susanne Klaar, Högskolan i Borås, Sweden

The aim is to understand more about inclusive learning environments in preschool. This is done by investigating how different aspects of democracy become visible in teacher's talk about inclusive learning environments, and by discussing possible consequences for children's meaning making. UNESCO (2009:10) states that inclusive "education for all" has to be linked to learners' needs and be relevant for their diverse lives. In similar ways there is a large emphasis on democracy and equality in the curriculum for Swedish preschools (Pramling Samuelsson, Sheridan and Williams 2006:26). However, this inclusive approach on education highlights a complex dilemma between education as compensatory and education as participatory (Nilholm 2006:30). The use of democracy is based on three characteristic aspects of democracy in Swedish preschool education; i) support autonomy, ii) develop solidarity, iii) socialise to institutional norms (Klaar and Öhman 2014). The methodology is based on pragmatic curriculum theory and selective traditions (Öhman 2006, Sennébeck 2004). Walk-and-talk interviews (Klerfelt 2016) have been conducted with four different preschool teachers in four different preschools, and their utterances have been qualitatively analysed. Ethical approval was sought from the preschool teachers and the interviews were conducted when no children were present. The analysing process is still in progress but one preliminary result shows a tension between supporting autonomy and developing solidarity that differ depending on preschool location and current group of children. With a large focus on the autonomy aspect of democracy there is a possibility that the solidary aspect of democracy is left in the background.

*inclusive education, democracy, selective traditions, walk-and-talk interview, Swedish preschool*

**Belonging and participation at stake. Polish migrant children about (mis)recognition of their needs in Norwegian ECECs**

Alicja Sadownik, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

The study aims to make the migrant children's voices heard. The study builds on European policy documents pointing at Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) as the foundation for later success in life in terms of educational performance, well-being, and social integration, as well as research on cultural diversity and social coherence in the context of ECE. The theoretical frameworks being used are Marianne Hedegaard's model for societal conditions for institutional practices as well as Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical toolkit of: misrecognition, doxa as well as cultural and social capital. In the research process the "giving voice" methodology was followed. 10 interviews with Polish migrant children in Norway, aged 3-9 were conducted in December

2014-March 2015. The general ethical guidelines for research were followed. The consents were signed by the children's parents, however it were the children themselves who finally decided if to participate in the interviews. All the children have been given possibility of withdrawal at any stage of the research process. Both parents and children were informed about the aim of the study, the data anonymisation, data storage and ways of it being disseminated. The results underscore belonging and participation in the main ECEC activities as aspects of great importance for the children. Participation in a play-based ECEC, however, depends on children's capital, which is devalued during migration. The findings presented in this paper invite to discussions on various pedagogical approaches for including newcomer children in ECECs, as well as policies that can support it.

*children and migration, transition to Norwegian ECE, ECE as arena for social coherence, migrant children's belonging, migrant children's participation*

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## **F 24**

### **STORIES FROM FAMILIES ABOUT ENGAGING WITH EARLY YEARS SETTINGS**

Self-organised symposium

This panel explores family engagement with early years settings in Greater Manchester. The three studies all share the concept of listening that borrows from Bronwyn Davies's (2014) notion of a listening practice that has the potential to open up new ways of knowing. Listening to the stories of mothers, grandparents and parents from diverse communities opens spaces for deeper reflection on the meaning and discourses around parental 'engagement' with early years settings. One study focuses on the stories of mothers from a predominantly South Asian community and their encounters with neoliberal ideas of equality shaping early years policies. Another study shares findings emerging from an experimental collaboration between a dance company and an early years setting where parents are co-researchers alongside practitioners. The third study expands parental engagement beyond the dyadic relationship of parent and child to explore inter-generational learning thorough talk and images.

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**Chair: Monica Edwards, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom**

#### **Stories of (non)engagement: BAME mothers' narratives of the two-year-old offer**

Monica Edwards, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

The research considers what it means to 'engage' by exploring BAME mothers' narratives of their engagement with the UK government's offer of free child care for two-year-old children. Research into non-engagement with families from minority ethnic communities frequently frame 'culture' as problematic (Royston and Rodrigues, 2013). These reflect cultural and political tensions emanating from a 'one size fits all' approach to parental engagement (Crozier, 2001). Postcolonial feminism (Ahmed, 2000) is used to analyse narratives of mothers from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities to challenge the ways policies and professionals silence how women represent themselves as 'engaged' parents. This study takes an interpretive paradigm to focus on participants' individual and shared narratives of their experiences. Postcolonial feminism offers a methodology to explore how these narratives unsettle power differentials (Ahmed, 1998) embedded in ideas of (non)engagement. Conversations in focus groups were used to collect these narratives. Ethical concerns included obtaining informed consent from participants and confidentiality assurance through pseudonyms that replaced the names of participants, following university code of ethics. Narratives offer disruptions that do not seek to present some subaltern 'wisdom' derived from experiences. Rather the narratives speak of relationships with equality on multiple levels, merging the private sphere of family with the public sphere of education and health. Mothers deconstruct boundaries of (non)engagement to help question policy and its enactment in practice. Narratives offer spaces where uncertainty might unsettle understandings of equality reliant on reducible, observable and measurable principles to assess and judge.

*engagement, narratives, equality, mothers, postcolonial feminist research*

#### **An exploration of intergenerational learning thorough talk and images**

Patricia Giardiello, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

To investigate ways in which learning and development takes place between children and grandparents and how it can be supported in early years settings. Objectives are to capture what the children do with their grandparents through talk and images. Previous research found that when grandparent and grandchild learn together, the relationship offers scope for 'transformation' of ideas; interactions had a different quality from the parent-child relationship (Kenner et al, 2007). Bronwyn Davies's (2014) notion of a listening practice and Bourdieu's (1986) concepts of capital, habitus and field are applied. The study is qualitative and adopts a participatory research approach. Children's drawings, scrapbooks or photographs to capture time spent with their grandparent(s) are used. Conversations in a focus group is the method used to collect stories from the grandparents. Ethical



consideration included obtaining children's, parents,' grandparents' and professionals' informed consent and confidentiality assurance following BERA guidelines 2018 and EECERA code of ethics. Evidence from the findings reveal the importance of nurturing the grandparent - grandchild relationship to promote early childhood development. Stemming from activities that illuminate the children's family life an increased understanding of the dynamics of grandparent-grandchild relationships has benefited early years professionals in developing effective provision. Through the production of a 'partnership with grandparents policy', resources, activities and events to acquaint grandparents with early years provision are provided so that they can support their grandchildren more effectively.

*grandparent-grandchild relationship, intergenerational learning, cultural knowledge, shared meanings, stories*

#### **Moving together: A dance collabratory in the Nursery**

Lisa Taylor (1), Christina MacRae (2), (1) Martenscroft Nursery School and Children's Centre, United Kingdom; (2) Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

This paper reflects on a collaboration between Company Chameleon (a dance group) and Martenscroft Nursery School and Children's Centre. It explores ways of working with practitioners and parents through movement. The context is the increasing anxiety related to language acquisition (Save the Children, 2016, Berrow, 2008), where increasingly it is words that 'count' in the early years. This project asks whether story-telling practices can be expanded as something that also occurs through movement. A growing body of scholarship emphasises young children's literacy practices as entangled meaning-making with and through place, bodies, and the objects they encounter (Wolhwend, 2009, Hackett, 2014). This emphasis on moving bodies, gesture and materiality contrasts with word-deficit approaches. Our analysis is informed by multi-modal approaches to communication that decentre academic and linguistic ways of knowing in favour community knowledge (Campbell and Lassiter, 2015) and practice-based knowledge (Nelson, 2013). Adopting a visual methodology, based on photographs and field-notes made by parents and practitioners, the data will be collectively analysed in a paradigm of co-production. Alongside informed parental written consent, the concept of assent (Flewit 2005) underpins this research. This ongoing ethical renegotiation in-the-moment with children recognises non-verbal communication and their right to withdraw assent. The findings demonstrate that attunement to movement and gesture is a way that adults can create improvisatory and responsive story-telling practices that deepen children's involvement. A case is made for arts-led participatory events where parents, practitioners and children are co-involved in non-verbal but communicative practices where movement rather than words count.

*participation, dance, movement, improvisation, performance arts*

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## **F 25**

### **PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Barbara Maria Sageidet, University of Stavanger, Norway**

#### **A competence development and research project - With focusing on a content**

Ingela Friberg, Laila Gustavsson, Högskolan Kristiansstad, Sweden

The study aims to describe ECE teachers' try to develop theoretical knowledge about teaching a certain object of learning during an action research project. The research was based on pre-school teacher issues that became the starting point for reflections together with a researcher (Rönnerman 2004). For the teachers in this project, it did not mean a learning in general but a targeted learning (Marton and Booth 2000). Variation theory is here used as a framework for analysis as well as for the preschool teachers planning. The theory is developed from a phenomenographic approach and the outcome space of categories can be described as qualitatively different ways of discerning what a learning object in preschool class can be and then plan based on how to handle the learning object. Achieving a change involves being able to distinguish the different aspects of a phenomenon that was not previously possible (Marton, 2014). Preschool teachers in preschool classes participated in the project. It is a creative process with a focus on the present situation where you do not strive for an end. Preschool teachers were interviewed before and after the project. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The project has considered the prevailing ethical principles, Swedish research council guidelines (Gustavsson, Hermerén & Pettersson 2011). The preschool teachers were informed that they can stop participating in the project at any time. All participants are guaranteed anonymity. The first findings will be discussed. Implication for practice concerning preschool teachers' teaching is discussed.

*content area, preschool class, preschool teacher, learning objects, Variation theory*

### **Professional identities in Portuguese baby rooms**

Bárbara Tadeu, Amelia Lopes, University of Oporto, Portugal

Our research was focused on the construction of the professional identities in baby rooms in daycare centres. In Portugal the number of babies with both parents working full time is very high (60%). About 76% of Portuguese women with children under three years old are integrated into the job market (OECD, 2011). The number of Portuguese families that use daycare services has increased in recent years (UNICEF, 2013). To know who are the professionals to whom families trust "the most precious thing in the world" (Goouch & Powell, 2017; Lightfoot & Frost, 2015), was the initial question that guided our research project. Our investigation had as theoretical framework studies on professional identities (Dubar, 1997, Lopes, 2008, 2009) and early childhood professional identities (Elfer, 2012, Goouch & Powell, 2017). The study is inspired by the complexity paradigm and used a mixed methodological approach. We held focal groups with educators, educational assistants and parents. They also replied to a questionnaire survey. All participants were clearly informed about the study objectives and rules of participation. The participation was governed by the principles of free consent, anonymity and confidentiality. We found that the majority early years educators practice their baby room practice through supervision and follow-up of the work carried out by the educational assistants who work in these rooms and we will discuss this finding. Our study may reinforce the need to change educational policies for early childhood education and care, and the necessity of investment in curricular and in-service training of professionals.

*early years educators, educational assistants, parents, social perceptions, professional identities in baby rooms*

### **Student teachers' biographies in teacher education: Narrating and analysing their educational lives from Kindergarten to University**

Vassilis Tsafos, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

Examine the extent to which the combination of biographies' narrative analysis and action research allows student-teachers to: a) examine their preconceptions about learning, b) make explicit their tacit knowledge from their own school experience, and c) become more reflective. Action research and narrative analysis in teacher education in Australia and Greece (Chan 2012, Tsafos 2014). The method of action research in combination with the literature for Biographies and Teacher Narratives. Analysis of student teachers' narratives and action research reports on the course "Student-teachers' narrative". The main aim of this approach is to help students-teachers to reflect not only on their practice during the implementation of their planning but also on their choices and the theories underpinned. The project was approved by the Ethics committee of National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Principals and student teachers were informed about the study's purposes. By narrating and analysing their narratives, by observing, criticising, and evaluating, the student-teachers build up a new practical theory for the purposes of their everyday classroom situations. The study contributes to the field of teacher education on how to help student teachers use rational analysis of their choices, in order to become aware of their 'tacit' knowledge and intuitive behaviour.

*student teachers, narratives, action research, reflection, teacher education*

# Symposium Set G

10:30 – 11:50, Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2019

## G 1

### **ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS, TEACHER JOB TRAINING, AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES: THROUGH A VIEWPOINT OF A SMOOTH TRANSITION FROM ECE TO COMPULSORY SCHOOL EDUCATION (CSE)**

Self-organised symposium

These three papers discuss research conducted into the following three aspects: assessment systems, teacher job training, and the development of children's activities, through a viewpoint of a smooth transition from ECE to CSE. The first paper aims to illustrate how, through language education, various national education systems struggle for a smooth transition. Similarities and differences were found in pedagogy, assessment systems, etc. between ECE and CSE through a comparison of several countries. The second paper focuses on the development and improvement of teachers' communication skills during interactions with children, as a result of teacher job training. The paper discusses what type of training program content achieves the most desirable results. The third paper explores the beneficial effects of circle activities (e.g.: Circle-time, Circle dancing and Circle games), which are regular features of both ECE and CSE, through the theory of comparative culture. The paper describes particular powers these activities have.

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**Chair: Yuji Fujimori, Shinshu University, Japan**

#### **How can we achieve smooth transition from ECE to CSE? An international comparative study of language education and the assessment**

Asato Yoshinaga, Kokugakuin University, Japan

The aim of this research is to illustrate how Japan and the UK have struggled to transition from ECE to CSE in language education and its assessment. There were differences and similarities between Belgium, the USA and Japan in terms of teaching methods in ECE and CSE. The theories of Vygotsky (1978), Daniels (2001) and Moss (2013), and the concepts of 'Play-based Learning' and 'Experience Curriculum' inspired this research. The paradigm utilized a qualitative and social constructive approach. This research was designed on the case study and descriptive methods. Multiple school visits, observational surveys, semi-structural interviews and document analysis were conducted. This research was approved by each school director via e-mail. Directors obtained informed consent from all participants. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time and their names remained anonymous. In the UK, there are similarities between ECE and CSE. It suggested that there is a sequencing of learning styles from ECE to CSE. CSE teachers help children achieve higher levels using ECE's 'reading-aloud' and 'play-based learning' styles. Meanwhile, ECE teachers demand academic reading skills like CSE. In Japan, CSE's learning styles are becoming closer to ECE's under the new national curriculum. The vision of assessment standards is shared by both. However, there are difficulties in articulating ECE's with CSE's. Our findings suggested that there are pros and cons in the school transition of each country. Incorporating other countries' 'good' practices will be the key to achieving a smoother transition.

*transition, language education, assessment, learning style, comparative study*

#### **Developmental research of ECEC teacher's job training to improve their communication skills: Through analysing the content of teacher's job training**

Yoshiko Shirakawa (1), Takaaki Hara (2), Takashi Muto (3), (1) Kyoritsu Women's University, Japan; (2) Mejiro University, Japan; (3) Shiraume Gakuen University, Japan

ECEC teachers are expected to provide children the opportunity of "agentic and dialogical deep learning", so they should improve their communication skills. The purpose is to examine which content of the teacher's training effects on their communication skills. Shirakawa et al. (2018) found that the teachers who took part in the training improved their communication skills compared with the teachers who didn't take part in the training. However, we didn't suggest which content of the teacher's training effects on their communication skills. Our project draws on the theories of L. S. Vygotsky who described a process where a teacher supports children's learning within their 'zone of proximal development', as well as Wood's theory dealing with 'scaffolding'. The contents of group discussion in the teacher's job training program were categorized. The variation and the number of the categories were quantitatively compared with those of pre-test and post-test. A consent form was provided to all participants. They were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The participants could understand and be satisfied with the content of teacher's training. Especially, they increased the number of their communication skill categories though sharing their own knowledge with their colleagues in group discussion. The discussion will relate to fundamental and concrete viewpoints

of the smooth transition through our research results. We'd like to survey the effect of ECEC teacher's communication skills on the 1st grade students' literacy competence through the viewpoint of the smooth transition.

*communication skills, teacher job training, smooth transition, SSTEW scale, scaffolding*

### **Why use circle activities in ECE and CSE?: Through the theory of cultural study**

Yuji Fujimori, Shinshu University, Japan

Activities involving Making a Circle (AMC) such as 'Circle-Time' are performed in many countries. It has been pointed out that such activities promote the development of children's social independence, self-expression, and listening attitude etc. However, research has yet to be conducted as to why a 'Circle' structure induces such educational effects, in particular, through an investigation of relevancy to various cultural phenomena (e.g. traditional annual events, games and ceremonies). This study aims to clarify essential values, functions and systems which are embedded in AMC, from the viewpoint of Cultural Study. Fujimori and Yoshinaga (2018), in EECERA 2018, found that a 'Circle Meeting' is a typical activity for ECE and CSE. This study deepens understanding of the fundamental effects of this. This study draws on the theories of Cultural Study, 'Mindset' (Dweck, 2017), and 'Play-Based Learning'. The study is based on a case study method, by analysing practices through kindergarten/school visits including interviews and on-site observations. Participants were provided with a consent form before research commenced, as well as the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. Pseudonyms were used in all presentations. This study discusses the essential meaning of AMC, and will explore; 1) The underlying meanings of traditional AMC throughout various cultures. 2) The various styles of AMC in ECE and CSE, and the inherent purposes and effects. 3) The unique characteristics and functions found in AMC. This study will contribute to establishing a positive Kindergarten/School Culture, and will offer new methodology towards creating a smooth transition between ECE and CSE.

*Making a Circle, smooth transition, cultural study, Mindset, play-based learning*

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## **G 2**

### **A NEW TYPE OF ECEC PROFESSIONALISM?**

Self-organised symposium

The ECEC area – traditionally located in the "outskirts" of societal interest – has gradually moved towards a more central position, as an politicized area of social intervention and learning. New demands for evidence, new relations of economic interests, new research focusing on "what works" and new monitorial demands are evolving. At the same time, both transnational and national learning agendas is being implemented at a very large scale, carrying commercial systems, strong didactical implications and intensified requirements regarding control and documentation. This development has transformed the role of the ECEC institutions. But what about the professional? The question is whether we are looking at a completely new type of professionalism of the ECEC pedagogue. The aim of this symposium is to discuss the change in professionalism of pedagogues, in the light of this drastic development, based on three different perspectives on this question, drawing on three different empirical studies.

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**Chair: Christian Aabro, University College Copenhagen, Denmark**

### **Pedagogical professionalism in the era of accountability**

Christian Aabro, University College Copenhagen, Denmark

What is the professionalism of ECEC pedagogues, in this new era of accountability? Does the drastic increase in the use of standardized commercial programs in the Danish ECEC area, represent a competing demand for professionalisation that threatens to curtail the educators' room for manoeuvring? This research relates to my earlier empirical work (Aabro 2016, Aabro et. al. 2017), looking at the developments of the ECEC profession, and the relationship between policy and practice. Inspired by the theoretical framework of Julia Evetts (2006, 2011, 2014), viewing professionalism as both a normative value and a discourse, the new role of the pedagogue is understood as a clash between a historically derived occupational professionalism and a new, externally imposed organisational professionalism. As the overall approach is interactionist, the methodology is phenomenological, seeking patterns of 'accounts' (Scott & Lyman 1968). The empirical design is a series of qualitative interviews with 40 pedagogues. All interviewees' names and workplaces have been changed and concealed. Consent to usage was given by interviewees and informants. With Evetts (2011), a preliminary analysis of interviews with pedagogues suggests that this image of organisational professionalism displacing the original occupational professionalism is not supported. Rather, it is suggested that professionalism consists of series of pragmatic merging strategies, actively carried out by the pedagogues, between occupational values and organisational demands. The project points out the challenges and dilemmas, neoliberal practices impose on ECEC

professionals. Findings underpins the importance of policymakers recognizing the professionalism of pedagogues being valuable in itself, as both contextual and pragmatic.

*professionalism, accountability, pedagogues, ECEC, accounts*

### **Pedagogical professionalism as originality, personality and ethical judgment**

Christina Haandbæk Schmidt, UCL, University College, Denmark

The research draws on a study exploring different transnational and national frameworks and their influences on learning in the ECEC area. It aims to analyse pedagogical professionalism in light of these potential conflicting frameworks and is based on policy studies and interviews with ECEC professionals. The project is inspired by various methodical disciplines; policy anthropology (Wright et. al., 2013) diagnostic mapping (Kristensen & Hansen, 2014) and empirical studies (Schmidt 2017, 2018). The study is based on a meta-theoretical position 'Beyond both Taylor and Foucault' (Weir, 2009), in which pedagogical professionalism may be seen as both self-interpretation and subjectification. The paradigm is policy anthropology (Wright et. al 2013) and the study consist of both transnational and national policy documents and of interviews with ECEC professionals. The institutional requirements for ethics clearance, informed consent and participation, were followed. The participating pedagogues as well as the institution are anonymized. Due to transnational processes; Bologna, EU and OECD, the pedagogue's personal development disappears from the educational curriculum and is replaced by standardised competence, knowledge and skills goals, but the empirical study shows how personality still is an important component in ECEC professionalism. In line with the study the pedagogue's personal development should be (re)introduced as a purpose in the pedagogical education in order to help the student anchor professional ethics, knowledge and experiences in her/his own personality in order to "be able to act with ever greater autonomy, judgment and personal responsibility." (UNESCO 1996).

*ECEC professionalism, transnational ECEC politics policy anthropology, ethical judgment, personality*

### **Demands for new qualifications among young and newly educated social pedagogues**

Steen Baagøe Nielsen, Roskilde Universitet, Denmark

Despite a relatively high level of education (Bachelor degree) and continuous training in placements throughout education, newly graduated social pedagogues in Denmark apparently find themselves under growing pressures when they arrive at their first workplaces. The paper discusses the experiences of newly graduated pedagogues and their apparent need for new types of competencies in the light of (historically) growing pressures on the practice of social pedagogues in the Nordic Countries. Transition shock, 'role ambiguity', and frustrations have previously been well recorded within other welfare professions, such as nurses and primary school teachers (e.g. Duchscher 2009). But hardly ever within pre-school-teaching and the work of social pedagogues. The studies explore changes and appeal in professionalism and qualifications mainly based on the understandings from Evetts - broader understanding of reflexive modernity from Beck Based mainly on action research and critical theory, methodological approaches partly through ethnography and thematic qualitative interviews with newly graduated pedagogues All interviewees names and workplaces have been changed and concealed. Consent to usage was given by interviewees and informants. Focus is partly on pressures related to changing working conditions in ECECs and terms of employment of the pedagogues, but I discuss also the broader need for change in competencies related to the 'knowledge society' and 'reflexive modernity'. Questions are raised to the education - and the focus on academic competencies in particular: How can future education and workplaces meet the needs for qualifications of newly educated pedagogues.

*professionalism, training and education, qualifications, pressures of academisation, transition shock*

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## **G 3**

### **HOME MATTERS IN PREPRIMARY EDUCATION: SHARING EXPERIENCES FROM SOUTHERN CHINA**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium aims to share and discuss enlightening experiences about how to improve ECE quality by partnerships with parents through home learning environments (HLE), which would support young children's development, learning and well-being. For example, Initial teacher training and other early education courses should include modules on the home learning environment and working with parents. It's acknowledged that a child's early home environment has a profound effect on the well-being. Home learning environments (HLE) refers to the learning environment children experience at home in the context of their family and community. It could contribute to addressing the emergent and shared challenges to provide high-quality HLE with enabled parents. The Effective Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education (EPPSE) study (Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford, and Taggart, 2014) and related researches (Melhuish, 2010) have suggested the quality of the early HLE is more important for intellectual and social development than parental occupation, education or income.

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**Chair: Xiaoqi Chen, Beijing Normal University, China**

**Exposure and Use of Mobile Media Devices by Young Children from Southern China**

Jiamin Li (1), Minyi Li (1), Jianwei Fang (2), Yongqiang Zeng (2), (1) Beijing Normal University, China; (2) Guangdong Teachers College of Foreign Language and Arts, China

This study aimed to examine young children's exposure to and use of mobile media devices in the most developed province from Southern China. Studies revealed children's media lives as digital citizens (Rideout, 2017; Rideout 2013). Meantime, parents need further help in navigating the flood of new technologies in homes. Media have become such a central part of children's lives that further understanding is essential for those working to support child development. Furthermore, multimedia has become an important part of home learning environment. Cross-sectional study of 24768 parents with children aged 3 to 5 years seen June 2018 at kindergartens in Guangdong province from Southern China. The survey was adapted from Common Sense Media's nationwide survey in 2013 and 2017. Informed consent was gathered from parents for their own and children's participation in the study. In a typical day, on the average, children spent about 152 minutes on mobile devices, whereas 54 minutes in outdoors and 49 minutes to play toys. For highly frequent activities, children mainly used the mobile devices to listen stories and songs (90%) and watch educational videos (70%). However, less than 42% parents set up rules and 54% took it as placebo. The ownership of device, age at first use, and daily use were not associated with ethnicity or parent education. The patterns of use suggest early adoption, frequent and independent use, and media multitasking. Studies are urgently needed to update recommendations for families and providers on the use of mobile media by young children.

*multimedia, child development, home learning environment, China, media devices*

**What do the home learning environments look like for kindergarteners in Southern China?**

Xiaoqi Chen (1), Fengxiang Liu (2), (1) Beijing Normal University, China; (2) Guangdong Teacher College of Foreign Language and Arts, China

This study aims to explore: (1) What do the home learning environments (HLE) look like in terms of HOME Inventory? (2) How the HLE vary by age, gender, socio- economic status, and ethnicity? As the lifelong, critical and foundational factor of child development, the HLE has been highlighted internationally and domestically. The HOME profile approaches child development through the ecological systems theory developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979), which places the developing individual in a context of interdependent environmental systems of differential impact. Combined stratified and convenient sampling, 24768 families with children aged 3-5 in kindergartens were recruited by on-line survey in Guangdong, China. The Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (HOME) (Caldwell & Bradley, 2001), the research tool which designed to measure the quality and quantity of stimulation and support, focused on the 3 to 6-year-old child in the environment and the child as a recipient of inputs from objects, events, and transactions in the home environment, were used to investigate the HLE. Informed consent was gathered from parents for their own participation in the study. The study results indicate that: (1) in general, families provided better environments in Academic stimulation ( $M=0.946$ ), Physical environment ( $M=0.927$ ), but had low performance in Learning materials ( $M=0.782$ ). (2) Family socioeconomic status (SES) have significant positive relationships with the HOME scores. (3) The ages of the children have positive relationship with the quality of the family learning environment. Accordingly, this study suggested that optimizing the HLE in both practical and political aspects.

*home learning environment, child development, socioeconomic status, kindergarten, parenting skills*

**The impact of home multimedia environment on the development results of language capability of children aged 3-6: A survey in S city**

Shunlam Chan (1), Shiqi Wang (1), Cuiyun Zhang (2), Tian Liu (2), (1) Beijing Normal University, China; (2) Guangdong Teacher College of Foreign Language and Arts, China

This study aims to explore the situation of children's home multimedia environment, the development results of children's language capability, and the influence of the former on the latter. Multimedia has become a central part of children's lives, which impacts children's learning and development (Common Sense, 2017). To understand the relationship between multimedia and children's development, this study focused on three questions: (1) What is the situation of children's home multimedia environment; (2) What are the development results of children's language capability; (3) How does the home multimedia environment influence the development of children's language capability. Cross-sectional study of 5040 parents with children aged 3-6 years seen June 2018 in S city from Southern China. The survey was adapted from Common Sense Media's nationwide survey in 2013 and 2017. Informed consent was gathered from parents for their own and children's participation in the study. Our results showed that: (1) It's common that children use multimedia for a long time. Many parents restrict the content of multimedia

and the usage time by children, while the proportion of parents accompanying the children to use multimedia is low.(2) Compared with other capabilities, the development level of children's language capability gets the lowest score, where the one of language communication and reading capability are higher than that of writing capability.(3) The children's language capability is significantly influenced by their situation using multimedia and parents' attitudes. Based on the above results, we provide practical suggestions to optimize the family multimedia environment and promote the development of children's language capability.

*multimedia usage, multimedia usage, language capability, children aged 3-6, child development*

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#### **G 4**

##### **WORKING WITH PARENTS AND FAMILIES: THE PROFESSIONALISM FROM THE PRACTITIONERS AND PARENTS POINT OF VIEW**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium will show the results from three different research regarding the professionalism point of view from the practitioner's in Spain, from the parent's in England and how do early childhood professionals position parents and families in rural and remote in Australia. The results will help improving the professional role and interactions with families, and implications for development and implementation of universal policies.

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**Chair: Silvia Blanch, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain**

##### **Professionals working at educational playgroups to improve responsive parenting**

Silvia Blanch, Victoria Herrera, Marta Cortés, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

The aim of the study is to analyse the professional profile in an educational playgroup with parents and their children under three to promote responsive parenting. Previous research has been published focusing on the importance of the professional role working with families in ECE settings (Bladen, Hansen & McNally, 2017; Blanch, 2010; Blanch, Gimeno, Careta, 2016). Working with families can be challenging. Research shows that there are three reasons that can influence family engagement: developing a sense of belonging; reinforcement; previous positive or negative experiences. In this respect, a professional leading these educational playgroups needs to develop certain competencies to motivate families to engage. A qualitative approach is being implemented. This research is a multiple case study, consisting of an inductive and descriptive analysis to learn the characteristic features of the 16 professionals and thus obtain deeper understanding of their role. An in-depth interview has been carried out. Written and informed consent for participation and the use of images has been obtained from the professionals working in the family 'settings'. The results showed a system of categories related to the professional diverse profile and the competencies highlighted regarding: their intervention, the rooms, infrastructure and materials used, their attitudes, the finances, the teamwork, their training and supervision. The results show the complexity of the professional working with parents. Implications for policy and practice are explored to improve the training of the professionals working with families and to promote Service Learning Projects between the university and the professionals.

*educational playgroup, families, professional profile, competencies, service learning project*

##### **The caring partnership: How English parents want to interact with early childhood practitioners**

Ute Ward, University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom

This research project aimed to explore parents' understanding of their partnership relationship with early childhood practitioners and the ensuing expectations for early childhood professionalism in relation to the work with parents. It builds on Finnish and English research into practitioners' understanding of their roles and positions in their interactions with parents (Venninen & Puroila, 2013; Ward, 2018) and extends models of professionalism to include the specific context of parent-practitioner relationships (Osgood, 2010; Brock, 2012). Positioning theory (Langenhove, & Harré, 1999) provided the theoretical framework to capture parents' narratives of their varied lived experiences of interactions with practitioners. Through accountive and third order positioning parents described professional attributes of early childhood practitioners, and a set of dimensions emerged that further our understanding of professionalism in the work with parents. As part of the second stage of an explanatory sequential mixed methods research project eleven parents were interviewed. The resulting qualitative data was analysed employing grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006). The research was carried out in accordance with BERA guidelines and received ethics approval from King's College, London. The findings supported the development of four dimensions which underpin early childhood professionalism in the work with parents. Furthermore, parents indicated that they wished to engage in a 'caring partnership' with practitioners. Both the set of dimensions and the concept of the 'caring partnership' present tools that can be used to extend

practitioners' understanding of their interactions with parents and to prepare students and trainees for their future work with parents.

*caring partnership, positioning theory, mixed methods research, dimensions of professionalism, parents' perspectives*

### **How do early childhood professionals position parents and families in rural and remote Queensland, Australia?**

Sue Dockett, Bob Perry, Charles Sturt University and Peridot Education, Australia

The research addressed the provision of preschool in remote communities and the impact for children, families and educators. This presentation explores how families positioned themselves and were positioned by educators as they engaged with preschool education. Existing research emphasises the importance of access to quality preschool education, as well as many challenges faced by families in remote communities, often linking these to educational disadvantage (Capeness, 2015) and stereotypes of rural life (Roberts & Green, 2013). Massey's (2005) notions of place and space are used to analyse the ways in which parents and educators both adhere to, and challenge, the stereotypes associated with families and education in remote communities. Qualitative data were generated through telephone and email conversations, online surveys, and field visits to each of 30 remote locations. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with children, parents, educators and community members. Thematic coding provided the basis for analysis and reporting. Participants were approached through the school/preschool. Specific information and consent forms for children and adults outlined the ethical conduct of the research and provided ongoing opportunities for consent to be renegotiated. Experiences of place were complex and different for those living in remote communities. Some educators positioned families in terms of class and mobility, highlighting stereotypes of remoteness, agriculture and working communities. People's experiences of place were framed by their relationships. This study highlights the diversity of remote communities and some of the challenges of universal or metro-centric education policy.

*preschool, remote, positioning, place, communities*

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## **G 5**

### **CHILDREN AS ACTIVE AND AGENTIC PARTICIPANTS IN THEIR TRANSITION TO SCHOOL**

Self-organised symposium

This presentation brings together researchers from Chile, Italy and Canada to share research and compare perspectives related to children's active participation and agency during their transitions from childcare to primary school. First, Joanne Lehrer will present an analysis of what Kindergarten children choose as relevant to share with their friends in childcare about what to expect when starting school. Then, Arianna Lazzari will present the findings of a recently concluded EU-funded study 'START' by focusing specifically on pre- and primary school children's voices and on how these were taken into account for rethinking transition practices through participatory action-research. Finally, Daniela Jadue Roa will present a visual participatory project exploring children's developing sense of agency during the challenging first grade transition experience.

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**Chair: Joanne Lehrer, Université du Québec en Outaouais, Canada**

### **Children showing children: An innovative transition to school practice**

Joanne Lehrer (1), Stéphanie Duval (2), Véronique Menand (1), (1) Québec University, Canada, Canada; (2) Laval University, Canada

This project documented children's perspectives on the transition to school through an innovative transition practice. Children attending kindergarten shared photographs of their school at the childcare centre they had attended. Research on children's perspectives has focused on children as they start school (e.g. Dockett & Perry, 2003; Einarsdottir et al., 2009). This project follows up on Ackesjö's (2013) concept of border crossings regarding children returning to childcare. The co-construction framework focuses on relationships and the expertise of all participants (Niesel & Griebel, 2007). Theoretical constructions of children's agency position children as social actors and active agents (Corsaro, 2005; Vandenbroeck & Bouverne-De Bie, 2006). This critical and interpretative project sought to understand children's perspectives while questioning the role of the researcher and research context in shaping the data. This intrinsic case study employed content analysis to analyse children's photographs, video documentation, and interviews with children. After obtaining ethics approval from the University, and consent from educators and parents, children were invited to participate in the study, paying special attention to their nonverbal communication in order to respect their rights. Children used different strategies to present their school to their peers, such as photographing physical locations, activities and routines in the classroom, and trustworthy children and adults. The children in childcare were pleased



that there were familiar toys at school and were impressed by school rules. Implications include the importance of children having the opportunity to return to their childcare centre and supporting their peers during the transition.

*children's perspectives, transition practices, transition to school, early childhood education, kindergarten*

### **Children's agency in transition experiences: Understanding possibilities and challenges**

Daniela Sofia Jadue Roa, Universidad de O'Higgins, Chile

The aim of the study was to identify children as agents in relation to educator pedagogical practice during their transition from kindergarten and first grade. The field of International research on early childhood transition to school suggests further integration of children's perspectives into policy and practice discussion (e.g. the Starting School Research Project (Dockett & Perry, 2005); and research carried out by Dunlop in Scotland (2003)). A multidisciplinary research framework was adopted inclusive of cultural-historical (Hedegaard, 2012) and self-regulation (Efklides, 2008; Whitebread, 2012) and social learning theories (Bruner, 1996). Research design employed visual participatory methodologies with emphasis on the listening and rights' methodological approach. Photobook and Posters in kindergarten and first grade respectively, guided the semi-structured interviews with young children. The study sought informed consent with all participating actors, assuring their right to privacy, anonymity and withdrawal. These consent processes adopted different expressive forms - oral language, written and drawing formats – considering various ways in which children could choose to express themselves (Harcourt, Perry, & Waller, 2011). Findings suggest self, social and shared regulation, as well as self-awareness, are indicative of children's developing sense of agency during the challenging first grade transition experience. Conclusions suggest the inclusion of child perspectives to policy and pedagogy for early childhood education and primary schools in order to promote better transition experiences. Conclusions suggest the inclusion of child perspectives to policy discussion and pedagogy for early childhood education and primary schools is key to promote better transition experiences.

*children's agency, transition visual participatory research, children's rights, pedagogical practice*

### **Listening to children's voices in transitions: Insights from the START project**

Arianna Lazzari, Bologna University, Italy

The START project involved research, training and educational institutions (ECEC/CSE) across 4 countries (IT, BL,SL,UK) with the aim of experimenting innovative practices for sustaining smooth and inclusive transitions centred on the voices and perspectives of children and families. Previous research (Dumčius et al., 2014) suggests that children's experiences of transition between educational levels can play a critical role in sustaining – or rather hindering – their future achievements. Institutional practices characterised by marked changes in routines and expectations turn out to be detrimental for children's wellbeing. Instead, promoting professional exchanges among ECEC practitioners and CSE teachers, as well as engaging with children and parents as active protagonists of transition processes, are considered key success factors (Dunlop & Fabian, 2007; Margetts & Kiening, 2013). The research was conducted within an interpretive approach using ethnographic observations, visual and narrative methods to gather rich and nuanced data from which insights were sought. Informed consent was constantly negotiated with participants by adopting a reflective stance allowing the researchers not only to learn about children's perspectives but also about how to include them in research (Flewitt, 2005). By putting at the core of participatory action-research the voices of children as experts of their own lives, ECEC/CSE professionals started to critically rethink transition practices, creating room for sustaining children's agency and nurturing their sense of belonging in the new setting. These findings have implications for jointly re-shaping educational practices across ECEC and CSE settings, as only by supporting professionals in creating a common understanding of children's needs and potentialities their learning experiences can be meaningfully sustained along a developmental continuum.

*Children's perspectives, transitions, relationships, professional collaboration, practice innovation*

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## **G 6**

### **DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE EARLY YEARS MATHS PRACTICE**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Ran Harper, UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom**

### **Mathematical quality of instruction and teacher-child interactions in Greek kindergarten classrooms**

Zoi Kolipetri, 2nd Regional Educational Design Centre of Western Thessaloniki, Greece

The study aims, to improve through an educational intervention the mathematical quality of instruction in area measurement, after assessing teaching practices quality that enhance teacher - child interactions. Effective interventions have succeeded in

improving the mathematical quality, through changes in teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (Hill & Ball, 2004), which includes the knowledge about content, children possibilities and teaching practices (Zhang, 2015). The practice-based theory of Mathematical Knowledge for Teaching (Ball, Thames & Phelps, 2007) for the assessment of the mathematical quality and the interactive context of learning communities (Krainer, 2003) for the improvement, were considered as frameworks. The QMI (Learning Mathematics for Teaching, 2006) coding rubric for measuring the mathematical quality of 33 instructions and a content analysis to categorize teaching practices observed as appropriate or not before and after the intervention, were implemented. Data have been recorded without any manipulation according to the ethical guidelines of research. This study is a part of a doctoral dissertation, which is approved according to the ethical guidelines of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. It was confirmed after the interactive and empirically framed intervention the change of the mathematical quality from low to high and the high percentage of inappropriate teaching practices to appropriate, that favoured the teacher-children interactions. The study aspires to support the significance of the continuing professional development in learning communities, which strengthens the teacher's pedagogical content knowledge and the mathematical quality of teaching in early childhood education.

*Mathematical quality, mathematical pedagogical knowledge, teaching practices, learning community, interactive environment*

#### **Early childhood mathematics and differentiation**

Karin Franzén, Mälardalen University, Sweden

This study is about early childhood mathematics with attention to differentiation strategies. The children in a preschool unit have not the same abilities and needs. Preschool teachers have to deal with this diversity in a way that promotes each individual child's need in the learning situation. The research questions are: What differentiation strategies (if any) related to early childhood mathematics are implemented in the preschools, and what do these are in practice? What challenges are highlighted in teachers work with differentiation in terms of early childhood mathematics? Sarama and Clements (2011) asserted that preschool teachers should take into account that children have diverse mathematics experiences; this promote quality in early childhood's mathematics. Children also need competent teachers who are capable to meet individual needs of children (Björklund, 2014). The study refers to the PPCT-model of Bronfenbrenner & Morris (1998) and the theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotskij 1978). The study has a qualitative approach. In this case study teachers and children in two Swedish preschool units were enrolled and the data was collected: via semi-structured observations of teachers work in ongoing daily preschool activities, from documents as well as via focus-group interviews with teachers. The research followed guidelines from the Swedish Research Council. The result provides knowledge about which type of differentiation strategies preschool teachers use in order to meet children's individual needs and how they can differentiate the teaching based on the group's needs. The research can support preschool teachers work with differentiation in early mathematics

*early childhood, preschool mathematics, teachers, differentiation*

#### **The assistants of measurement skills: Metacognition and self-regulation**

Ebru Ayvaz (1), Çağlayan Dinçer (2), (1) Marmara University, Turkey; (2) Ankara University, Turkey

In this study, it is aimed to investigate the metacognitive and self-regulatory skills that preschool children exhibit in mathematical measurement activities. Although there are many studies revealing the relationships between metacognition, self-regulation and mathematical achievement, there are very few that explore how these skills appear in mathematical activities (Kontos & Nicholas, 1986; Teong, 2003; Whitebread & Coltman, 2010). To explore metacognitive and self-regulatory skills, measurement activities were preferred because measurement can serve as a way to integrate the different strands of mathematics as it offers opportunities to learn about and apply other areas of mathematics (NCTM, 2000). The research was conducted on the basis of deductive case study design. The participants of the study were 18 children take part in 60-68 month group. Based on length, area, weight and volume dimensions of the measurement skills, 16 activities were conducted and all event process was video-recorded. Because of the ethical concerns, a signed permission document was obtained from the parents of all participants for video recordings. The data were analysed through the framework of C.Ind. Le Coding Scheme: Verbal and Nonverbal Indicators of Metacognition and Self-Regulation in 3-to 5-Year-Olds (Whitebread et al. 2009). According to the results, it was found that children have individual differences in verbal and nonverbal indicators of metacognition and self-regulation. It was also appeared that children's metacognitive and self-regulatory expressions according to measurement dimensions differentiate in Task Information, Strategy Information, Monitoring and Evaluation. These results provide a way for further efforts to understand and support children's metacognition and self-regulation.

*metacognition, self-regulation, preschool mathematics, early mathematics, measurement skills*

## DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN ECEC

Individual Paper Symposium

**Chair: Sue Walker, Queensland University of Technology, Australia**

### Diversity in Finnish national ECEC curricula

Heini Paavola, Jaana Pesonen, University of Helsinki, Finland

The goal is to find out how diversity is presented in Finnish national core curricula in Early Childhood Education (2016) and Pre-Primary Education (2014): what kind of concepts are used, how they are used and what is the context in which the concepts are used. The concept of culture is strongly linked to diversity discourses in all Finnish core curricula. According to Paulsrud, Zilliacus and Holm (2017) in Finnish Core Curriculum for Basic Education (2014) the concept of culture is dynamic and including all students, not only immigrants. Culture is thus seen liquid, not solid (Bauman 2004). The conceptual and theoretical framework is based on the critical multicultural/intercultural theory (Dervin 2015). The paradigm is constructivism. This is a qualitative study where two above mentioned core curricula have been analysed through discourse analysis. The analysed documents are official and available to general public. No humans have been involved in the study. One of the most remarkable difference compared to former curricula is that instead of multiculturalism the term diversity is used and taken into account in multiple ways. There are a lot of improvements in regards to how diversity is considered, but the new challenge in curricula texts is the way concepts have been chosen and are used. There are several concepts meaning almost the same but they are seldom explained, which may confuse the early childhood educators who are consumers of these documents. This study may enable broader view to discuss for example about equality and equity.

*curriculum, diversity, culture, identity, equality*

### Kindergartens' good practices in the context of an intercultural educational program - An action research project

Kafenia Botsoglou, Eleftheria Beazidou, University of Thessaly, Greece

The aim of this case study was to propose practical ways that teachers can apply in order to that facilitate learning across cultures. There is a need for more research regarding successful educational methods and practices for this disenfranchised population, because the existing research does not adequately provide to educational planners with the resources or information to develop effective programs (Williams, 2001). Teachers of young children are urged to include activities for sensitivity, inclusiveness, and respect, in daily program. (Banks & Banks, 2004) Paradigm appears to be constructivist, as an action research approach was implemented. Observations and anecdotal records were important components in data collection and useful tools to help teachers develop critical thinking about their work. Additionally, researcher collected initially data (September) and subsequent data (last measure January) using the tool "Social Play Record" to determine how refugee- student became actively involved in classroom community. Protection of anonymity and confidentiality of research participants was a crucial component of our research ethic. The project showed the necessity of giving the children furthermore intercultural classroom activities from two specific teaching and learning issues: a) building relationships (such as cooperative activities, social peer play etc.) and b) learning from one another (new concepts and words and children's culture by role-play, act project, natural play situation etc.). Our results are useful for the educators whose task is to implement and integrate intercultural education into the daily classroom activities

*early childhood education, multicultural education, action research, Social Play Record, refugee*

### Reasoning about social inclusion over the early years of elementary school: A focus on epistemic cognition

Sue Walker (1), Jo Lunn (1), Laura Scholes (1), Eva Johansson (2), (1) Queensland University of Technology, Australia; (2) University of Stavanger, Norway

This longitudinal research explored: 1. The relationship between epistemic cognition and children's reasoning about inclusion of an aggressive peer in their play over Years 1 to 3 of school; and 2.Changes in children's justifications about the inclusion of aggressive children over time. We know little about how children's thinking regarding the inclusion of others emerges over the early years of school. We draw on research which shows that epistemic cognition may influence reasoning (e.g., Greene, Cartiff & Duke, 2018). Epistemic cognition refers to children's thinking about the nature of knowing and knowledge (Hofer & Pintrich, 2012). However, no research has explored young children's epistemic cognition about social inclusion. We used a mixed method design. The data collection involved 30-minute interviews in which children engaged in two tasks related to epistemic cognition and including an aggressive child in their play respectively. Children and their families provided their consent however, children's

assent was again requested before each interview. Children were interviewed close to their classroom to ensure they felt comfortable. Findings showed that children were more likely to choose to include an aggressive child in Year 3 if they also expressed subjectivist epistemic beliefs. These children also justified their decision to include an aggressive child in more nuanced and complex manner. Our findings suggest that, as children become able to consider multiple perspectives, they become more likely to behave inclusively. We suggest that teaching practices that help children to consider multiple perspectives may help children engage in critical thinking about inclusion.

*epistemic cognition, early childhood, elementary school, social inclusion, moral reasoning*

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## **G 8**

### **PEDAGOGICAL DOCUMENTATION**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Jan-Erik Mansikka, University of Helsinki, Finland**

#### **Documenting the impact of praxeological transformation over time**

Cristina Mesquita, Instituto Politécnico de Bragança, Portugal

This study documents the impact of praxeological transformation five years after the pedagogical reconstruction process. We intend to know if the learning process still encourages the professional development of educators over time. Staff learning and development is conceptualized from an ecological socio-constructivist perspective that departs from the daily pedagogical situations, and is aware of the ecological connections between micro and macro contexts. Indeed, the study uses the socio-constructivist context-based staff development approach of Childhood Association (Formosinho & Oliveira-Formosinho, 2008). This study assumes a concept of pedagogy that integrates the holistic nature of professional practices. This approach defines praxis as practical intentionality for change in an ethical commitment with action. It emphasizes the unavoidable link between the professional development and the early childhood pedagogical perspective. This study is located in the qualitative paradigm and is being conducted through a single case study. Interviews to kindergarten teachers, the Children Involvement Scale and the Adult Engagement Scale were used to collect data. An interpretive approach was used for data analysis. All ethical procedures regarding informed consent and collaboration were considered. The study reveals that praxeology reconstruction processes, when supported by pedagogical and methodological references, endure over time and have an impact not only on the professionals who have developed them, but also on the new professionals who integrate the institutions. The study reveals the potential of praxeological transformation, the value of the professional development and the context-based staff educational practices for the development of communities of practice.

*praxeological research, professional development, childhood pedagogy, praxeology reconstruction, a participative praxis*

#### **Preschool teacher as a documentarist in the wake of the educational transition in the Finnish ECEC**

Jan-Erik Mansikka, University of Helsinki, Finland

The research focuses on the concept of pedagogical documentation, which has gained an important role in the new National Core Curriculum (2016) guiding ECEC in Finland. It's however not unequivocal what the concept entails and how it should be implemented in practice. The aim is to investigate what kind of expectations there are concerning pedagogical documentation in the Finnish context. The study is closely related both to Nordic research on documentation (e.g. Alasuutari et al. 2014) as well as, more particularly, pedagogical documentation (Elfström 2013; Rintakorpi 2018). In this paper the theoretical discussion of pedagogical documentation will be traced, on one hand, to the movement of Reggio Emilia (Moss, 2016), but on the other hand, developed in relation to post-structuralist thinking (Olsson, 2009; Lenz Taguchi 2012). The paradigm and methodology is based on a qualitative thematic and conceptual analysis of literature and curriculum. This will be compared to results from empirical studies, both qualitative (action research) and quantitative (survey), that illuminate how pedagogical documentation is received in Finland. The research data from the empirical studies involved in the project are treated with caution and confidentiality, following the guidelines from Finnish National Board of Research Integrity. It can be concluded that pedagogical documentation as a working method fits well into the overall values of the new National Core Curriculum, but as a new concept it is clearly under-theorized in Finland. This is why both theoretical grounding and empirical studies are needed in relation to the Finnish ECEC.

*pedagogical documentation, ECEC curriculum, Nordic context, Quality, In-service training*

Aims of the research were to find out how documentation of children's learning may differ in parent-led early childhood services from teacher-led services and how this documentation may support children's learning. By making the connection between sociocultural approaches to pedagogy and assessment and narrative inquiry, Carr and Lee (2012) illustrate how learning stories can help build children's agency and build understandings of complexity of learning. Gee (2008) argues that a sociocultural approach looks at knowledge and learning primarily in relationships, between an individual's mind and body and the environment. It is based on the child actively constructing knowledge through activity and play and through interaction with sensitive adults and other children. (Carr & Lee, 2012). Assessments therefore have to take into account the contexts in which they take place and involve parents and children (Smith, 2013). This small qualitative project took place in Play centres. Parents and coordinators from a range of Play centres attended two group interviews and they shared children's portfolios and examples of learning stories. Consent was obtained from parents and the Play centre organisation. Parents could withdraw at any time and anonymity was assured, using pseudonyms. Main findings are that narrative assessments are less about accountability and more about adults seeing documentation as enriching relationships and increasing their understanding about children's diversity and authenticity of learning. Findings in this study may inform mainstream early childhood services in assessment practices and building partnerships with parents.

*learning stories, assessment for learning, parent participation, sociocultural, documentation*

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## **G 9**

### **METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE SECRET LIFE OF CHILDREN'S PLAY**

Self-organised symposium

This symposium will address conference strand number ten by examining different methodological approaches to observing and interviewing to investigate the secret life of children's play. We discuss the underpinning epistemologies and highlight the strengths and limitations of each approach. The first presentation will discuss how a conversation analysis approach using video-recorded observations can show in fine detail how children build and maintain their secret peer social orders in an Australian classroom. The second presentation illustrates the benefits of participant observation and rapport building so that children felt comfortable to self-disclose their secret play spaces in an urban community in Brazil. The final presentation draws upon data collected in Australian long day care settings to compare and contrast observation and interview methods and their respective positivist and interpretivist paradigms. Together, the three presentations shine light on the different epistemological insights such methods afford.

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**Chair: Ann Farrell, Queensland University of Technology, Australia**

#### **Methodological observations on the secret life of children's play: The push-and-pull of peer membership**

Susan Danby, Pernilla Miller, Sandy Houen, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

This research aims to show through video recordings and conversation analysis how children use language and multimodal interactions to accomplish peer social orders. Young children often find physical and interactional spaces to undertake their peer activities without the presence of adults. At times, children's social interactions may be hidden from adults, and may include excluding others from their peer group play (Corsaro, 1985; Paley, 1992; Sheldon, 1996). Underpinned by the sociologies of childhood, children were viewed as competent to manage their social interactions in situ (Corsaro, 2005; Cromdal, 2006; Danby & Baker, 1998). The methodological approaches of ethnomethodology and conversational analysis were employed to investigate children's social worlds. Ethnomethodological studies concentrate on locating the interactional methods interactants use to create shared meaning and conversational analysis focuses on the sequential features of talk-in-interaction to describe how talk is organised and produced as the interaction unfolds. The ethical considerations were addressed through child centric approaches relating to child assent. Conversation analysis afforded understandings of how two girls in preschool produced rules and conditions that restricted a third girl's access to the play resources and to the peer group, so that her membership always was uncertain. This sequence of push-and-pull activity outside the teacher's gaze, shows how children's secret everyday life is produced within the boundaries of the classroom, even within the presence of a nearby adult. Findings provide an opportunity for researchers and educators to understand and recognise the secret lives of children's social order in classroom contexts.

*conversation analysis, children's social worlds, social order, preschool classroom interactions, methodology*

### **Methodological observations on the secret life of children's play: Urban childhoods in Brazil**

Rhaisa Naiade Pael Farias (1), Susan Danby (2), Sandy Houen (3), (1) Universidade de Brasilia, Brazil; (2) Queensland University of Technology, Australia; (3) The University of Queensland, Australia

This research aims to highlight how participant observations and researcher rapport building with children can reveal children's competence in creating meaningful spaces to play and interact with each other. Children create their own peer cultures as part of their everyday life. (Corsaro, 2005). They utilise communal spaces to create meaningful places, which are sometimes secrets that are not shared with adults (Moore, 2015). The study is grounded on sociological studies of children and childhood (Holloway & Valentine, 2000; James & Prout, 1997). This study recognises children as active agents with rights to be heard (Mayall, 2000) and draws upon participant observations, field notes, photos and interviews collected in an urban context in Brazil. The ethical issues relating to research with children were addressed by seeking child assent and protecting their anonymity. Permission was sought to write about these children's secret play spaces. Findings demonstrate how participant observations and rapport building provided opportunities for children to self-disclose the places and spaces that are important to them in their community. This methodological approach afforded the opportunity for children to be heard and to have decided what they shared about their secret play spaces. Findings have implications regarding the methodological approaches policy makers and community planners employ to gain children's perspectives about the places and spaces that are provided for children.

*children, participant observations, spontaneous play, agency, friendly communities*

### **Methodological observations on the secret life of children's play: Children's subversive behaviour during mandated sleep times in prior to school classrooms**

Emma Cooke, Sandy Houen, Karen Thorpe, Candice Oakes, Sally Staton, The University of Queensland, Australia

This research aimed to investigate the epistemological strengths and limitations of observation and interview methods for understanding children's subversive behaviour during mandated sleep-times in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). Previous research found more than half of children aged 3-6 years in ECEC have ceased napping (Thorpe et al., 2018), yet there is no research on such children's behaviour and experiences during sleep-times. Our research is underpinned by a constructionist epistemology, which posits that individuals construct meaning in social contexts (Fattore and others, 2017) and we conceptualise children as social actors (Mashford-Scott and others, 2012). We thematically analyse empirical data to highlight the strengths and limitations of observation and interviewing, and situate these methods into their respective positivist and interpretivist paradigms. Key ethical issues pertained to children's informed assent and rapport-building which we aimed to address through a child-centric methodology. A key strength of the observational data was that it revealed some instances of subversive behaviour that were not raised by children during interviews. However, the interview data provided insight into children's perspectives on deviant behaviour at sleep-times, specifically: their motivations and the motivations of other children for deviant behaviour, how such behaviour is shaped by teachers' supervision, and how deviant behaviour affects the sleep-time experiences of other children. We argue that researchers of children should recognise the epistemological limitations of observation methods. We highlight the benefits of methods situated within the interpretivist tradition, such as interviewing.

*interviews, observations, interpretivism, positivism, epistemology*

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## **G 10**

### **WHAT COUNTS IN ECEC: PUBLIC OPINION, VALUES AND LONG TERM RESEARCH?**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Aline-Wendy Dunlop, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom**

### **Making public opinion about early years count**

Liz Kerrins, Noreen Moloney, Frances Byrne, Early Childhood Ireland, Ireland

The aim of the multi-annual research is to explore how we can influence policy debate in Ireland to focus on the crucial role of early education and development settings in the lives of children, families and communities. Moss (2007) explores the possibility that ECCE institutions can be first and foremost, places of political practice and specifically of democratic politics practice, made urgent by two developments in many countries today: the growth of policy interest in early childhood education and the need to revive democratic politics. He makes a strong case for refocusing the political attention on childcare away from largely technical questions. Changing Child Care, Prentice (2001); Making the case for investment, New Economics Foundation (2009); Social movements and policy change, Ball and Charles (2006). A secondary analysis of research in countries where public investment and high quality are central, was completed. A series of nationwide opinion polls were also commissioned to measure support for early

years care and education. An economics advisory group is in train which will assist the research to identify quantitative measures. Ethical considerations of informed consent and wellbeing were adhered to in this research. For two consecutive years, findings reveal high levels of support for early years education and care among the Irish public as well as recognition of the value of educators. These findings will help us to identify levers for building political support for high quality programmes and services, which are accountable and demonstrate significant positive impacts and outcomes for babies and children.

*policy, rights, community, accountability, measuring*

#### **Values in recent ECEC core curriculum in Finland in relation to the debate on early standardized testing and neoliberalism**

Mirjam Kalland, Jan-Erik Mansikka, Ann-Christin Furu, Marina Lundkvist, University of Helsinki, Finland

A New National Core Curriculum (NCC) (2016/2018) is guiding the Finnish ECEC. We analysed the values in the new curriculum in relation to neoliberalism entering ECEC. Our research was guided by the questions: (1) What kind of educational values are guiding the NCC? (2) Can the Finnish case enlighten the debate on neoliberalism entering ECEC and OECD's International Early Learning and Child Wellbeing Study (IELS)? Previous research has identified common democratic values for ECEC in the Nordic countries emphasising educare with little learning goals for individual children to reach (Einarsdottir et al 2015). However, it has been claimed that also in the Nordic countries a new push-down curriculum is placing more emphasis on school academics than on egalitarianism (Sims 2017). The study relates to the concern of the expansion of a neoliberal focus that places children's learning as an investment in the labour market of the future. Also the IELS has been interpreted as a sign of a neoliberalist focus on ECEC (Deaune 2019). We performed a critical theory content analysis of the Finnish NCC. Ethical concerns on the values of ECEC was in focus. The values of the NCC are substantially rooted in social justice and not mirroring neoliberal views of education or learning goals. There are very little arguments speaking for standardized testing in ECEC settings, and the criticism against IELS seems in line with the discussion around PISA (Simola, 2015). A core curriculum based on democratic values can protect from neoliberalism entering ECEC.

*ECEC, curriculum values, neoliberalism, IELS*

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#### **G 11**

#### **TACKLING LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL BARRIERS IN SUPERDIVERSE ENVIRONMENTS. THE ISOTIS MULTILINGUAL VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR PARENTAL SUPPORT, CURRICULUM INNOVATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.**

Self-organised symposium

The ISOTIS ([www.isotis.org](http://www.isotis.org)) project addresses challenges raised by the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity of European society. Following several steps (literature reviews, large-scale surveys, expert consultations, inventories of good practices) , a transferable prototype of a multilingual digital platform was developed, piloted and evaluated. Design-based research interventions were carried out in 8 countries (Italy, The Netherlands, England, Greece, Czech Republic, Portugal, France, Germany), focusing on the relationships among the actors at the intervention sites (practitioners, children, parents, ...). The Virtual Learning and Communication platform provided teachers and classrooms with curricular activities to support multilingual development in early childhood and primary education (first presentation). The platform also supported parents to implement home activities focusing on first language support (second presentation). In addition, (para)professionals in family support, in early childhood and primary education, participated in professional development activities provided at the platform (third presentation).

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**Chair: Paul Leseman, Utrecht University, Netherlands**

#### **Multilingualism and global competence in pre- and primary schools. The ISOTIS digital platform prototype**

Giulia Pastori (1), Andrea Mangiatordi (1), Valentina Pagani (1), Alice Sophie Sarcinelli (1), Jana Obrovská (2), Lenka Kísovà (2), Zuzana Lenhartová (2), Joana Cadima (3), Gil Nata (3), Kostantinos Tsioumis (4), Kostantinos Vasiliadis (4), (1) University Of Milan-Bicocca, Italy; (2) Masaryk University, Czech Republic; (3) University of Porto, Portugal; (4) Hellenic Open University, Greece

Interventions was conducted in four countries (Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Portugal), in pre-primary and primary schools(3-12ys), developing and implementing the use of a multilingual cooperative virtual learning and communicating environment (VLE) aimed to support teachers in innovating the curriculum and the teaching approach to global competence and multilingualism; and to promote awareness, agency, communication-collaboration among teachers, children and parents. Guiding principles to designing the platform and curriculum activities were built upon previous international work (Aguiar et al, 2017, 2018, available on [www.isotis.org](http://www.isotis.org)) on curriculum approaches, educational practices and social climate interventions tackling social inequalities. Key frameworks are the Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), focusing the interventions on the system of relationships among the social actors; and the global-intercultural competence

framework (UNESCO, 2013, 2015; OECD, 2018; European Council, 2014), guiding the platform functions and contents, and the participatory process of collaboration among researchers and research-participants. Set within a qualitative paradigm, the study adopted a design-based research methodology (Reeves 2012), several instruments were implemented to monitor and evaluate (formative evaluations, interviews, observations) and document (notes, audio & videotape). The platform user-data storage and protection required to apply safe security measures GDPR compliant; platform accessibility & usability required to make reference to a Universal design for learning approach and training of participants. Main findings regards the use of digital tools in fostering global competence and in building up collaboration and communication in super-diverse school-communities. Interventions had an impact on teachers' practice and curriculum; the analysis of the interventions provides important information on using digital platform in doing so.

*global and multilingual competence, curriculum innovation, participatory process, virtual learning environment, eco-systemic approach*

**Design and implementation of ICT-based parent interventions to support parents with young children in linguistically diverse contexts. The ISOTIS virtual learning environment for families.**

Katharina Ereky-Stevens (1), Kateřina Sidiropulu Janků (2), Mareike Trauernicht (3), Juliane Schünke (3), Mirjam Pardijs (4), Giulia Pastori (5), Alice Sophie Sarcinelli (5), (1) University of Oxford, United Kingdom; (2) Marsaryk University, Czech Republic; (3) Freie University Germany, Germany; (4) Wise & Munro, Netherlands; (5) University of Milan Bicocca, Italy

We aim to present design processes and implementation of parent support interventions which make use of the ISOTIS VLE, and support parents with young children who have language backgrounds different to the language spoken in school. Design and implementation was carried out in England, Czechia, Germany and Italy, and built on previous ISOTIS work, in particular an inventory and case studies of promising and evidence-based parent- and family-focused support programmes (Cadima et al., 2017; Cohen et al., 2018). Guided by family and systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1974) and family-systems intervention models that embrace a resource-based approach to interventions (e.g. Dunst & Trivette, 2009), content created through the help of the VLE stimulates cooperation in the cultural and school community. The aim is to support beliefs into the value of heritage language and multi-lingual competencies, and family language practices that make good use of language resources at home. We followed a design-based research methodology. Several methods were combined in order to evaluate the process of implementation, including observations, interviews, focus groups, and self-reports. Taking part in the VLE-based interventions required participants to create content and materials for the digital platform. Care was taken to ensure informed consent by participants as well as full compliance with the GDPR. Results demonstrate how the use of VLE can be challenging, but also beneficial to facilitate participants' active participation and collaboration, and processes of reflection. The use of ICT to support interventions with parents is innovative; research into its potential can enhance family learning practices.

*promoting multi-lingualism, family language practices and beliefs, home literacy, parent involvement in learning in school, technology as a resource*

**Professional development aimed at enhancing professionals' intercultural competences using a virtual learning environment.**

Pauline Slot (1), Jerome Mbiatong (2), Gil Nata (3), Joana Cadima (3), Sofia Guichard (3), Rianne Francot (1), Bodine Romijn (1), Mirjam Pardijs (4), Valentina Pagani (5), Giulia Pastori (5), (1) Utrecht University, Netherlands; (2) Université Paris-Est Créteil, France; (3) University of Porto, Portugal; (4) Wise & Munro, Netherlands; (5) University Milano-Bicocca, Italy

A professional development (PD) intervention was implemented in France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Portugal using a virtual learning environment (VLE) to increase professionals' intercultural competences. Building on previous European work on PD (Slot et al., 2017) several key ingredients were identified, including a focus on knowledge, skills, beliefs, and attitudes in view of changing practices, and the importance of the organisational context for professional growth. Global-intercultural competences are increasingly important given the growing cultural and linguistic diversity (European Council, 2014). However, teachers and other professionals need to show awareness and develop their own intercultural competences in interacting with children/families, before they can foster the development of these competences in children. Our contextual PD model views 'reflection' and 'enactment' as key facilitators of change in professionals' practices (Slot et al., 2017). The current study adopted a design-based approach rooted in a qualitative paradigm. Researchers and professionals collaborated in the design and implementation of the PD intervention and VLE platform. Different instruments were used to monitor and evaluate this process at different stages (e.g. interviews, observations, self-reports). The VLE relies on real-life examples, thus different measures were taken to ensure compliance with the GDPR. Foremost, the VLE is a secure and password-protected platform accessible for users only. Moreover, all participants were actively involved to ensure proper use of the VLE. The VLE promoted professionals'



intercultural competences and collegial exchange within and across countries. This study provides important information on the process of code signing PD and using a digital platform in doing so.

*professionals' intercultural knowledge, multicultural and multilingual beliefs, culturally sensitive practices, professional-parent partnerships, virtual learning environment*

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## G 12

### PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS EXPERIENCE OF PRACTICE

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Sule Alici, Kırşehir Ahi Evran University, Turkey**

#### **Is there a tendency towards education for sustainable development in Turkish pre-service teachers' school experience practices?**

Sule Alici (1), Havva Ayça Alan (2), (1) Kırşehir Ahi Evran University, Turkey (2) Middle East Technical University, Turkey

This study aims to explore the quality and quantity of early childhood education pre-service teacher (ECEPT)'s practicum implementations targeting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Although ESD is not a new issue in higher education (Wals and Blewitt, 2010), the studies targeting ECEPT are not at the desired level (Ärlemalm-Hagsér, 2017). There are some research (e.g. Lasen et al. 2017) on ECEPTs' experiences and reflections about EC learning settings' ESD practices while there are almost no studies about the analysis of ECEPTs' ESD implementations. This study's theoretical background comes from critical theory since ESD covers more than nature and ecology-oriented education with the environment, economic, social and political dimensions which are aligned with critical perspective (Davis, 2015). A qualitative research design is used. Initially, 14 ECEPTs' 12 daily plans are collected and examined via content analysis. Then, based on the analysis, students' most and least satisfactory plans are determined in addressing ESD dimensions and interview students to get depth information about their ESD understanding and pedagogy. Required permissions from the ethical board and participants' informed consent are obtained. Preliminary analysis indicates that the quality and quantity of ECEPTs ESD implementations differ based on their universities. ECEPTs from an environmental friendly university approach and campus are more prone to include ESD in their practice. To enhance quality and quantity of ECEPTs' implementations about ESD, opening new courses addressing ESD, encouraging them to use the whole approach for ESD, creating a green campus action plan and supporting university clubs targeting sustainability could be fulfilled.

*education for sustainable development, early childhood education, pre-service teachers, higher education, teaching practice*

#### **Mentoring and assessment of students in teams during practicum periods in ECEC education**

Anders Råde, Umeå University, Sweden

The aim is to explore mentoring and assessment of students in teams during practicum periods in ECEC education, Sweden. Several researchers have studied mentoring in practicum periods in teacher education (Gray et al., 2018; Hodge & Smith, 2018; Lawson et al., 2015). Some studies have also scrutinized the assessment in connection with practicum periods in teacher education (Goodwin & Oyler, 2008; Hegender, 2007, 2010; Holland, 2005). However, few studies have investigated mentoring in ECEC education (Juul Jensen, 2015; Soni, 2019) and even fewer have studied mentoring in teams (John, 2012). Studies indicates that mentoring is both important and complex (Izadinia, 2017; Mena et al., 2017). It is proposed that traditional mentoring ought to be challenged by alternative and more collaborative ways (Sorensen, 2014). It is also vital that the assessment develops when the mentoring changes (Hegender, 2010). Practicum periods in the ECEC education are important parts as they connects theoretical and practical parts of the education. This project will use Bernstein's (1999) concepts of vertical and horizontal discourses to understand the theory-practice relationship. The project will have a sociological perspective on education. With an action-research methodology alternative models to mentor/assess students will be tested. Students and mentors will be interviewed at the end of the project. The EECERA ethical code will be followed concerning informed consent, confidentiality, non-discriminatory, feedback and respecting the wellbeing of the participants as subjects with human rights. No findings yet. Possible implication is to develop new models to mentor/assess students during practicum periods.

*action research, assessment, mentoring in teams, practicum periods, theory and practice*

## **Stuck between a rock and a hard place: Early childhood education students' experiences of field practice: The importance of mentoring and professional development**

Svava Mork, University of Iceland, Iceland

The aim was to gather initial stakeholders' perspectives on university and preschool collaboration in early childhood teacher education in Iceland, focusing on students' experiences. Rozelle and Wilson (2012) documented student teachers' learning through field experiences. They found that mentors strongly influenced teaching practices, whether or not they had made a positive impact on students. There, professional discourse within the preschool is relevant (Hennum & Østrem, 2016; Jónsdóttir, 2012). In this presentation, we use Smith's (2015) definition of mentoring as a profession within a profession. We also use Smith's and Ulvik's (2015) findings regarding mentors' knowledge bases and how they support mentees' professional development. Furthermore, Hennum and Østrem's (2016) findings regarding how the reinforcement of professional discourse can be an efficient way to highlight preschool teachers' expertise are used. We conducted focus-group interviews with semi-structured questions to gather data (Bender, 2013). Participants representing preschool teacher-education programs in Iceland were selected using mixed snowball and purposeful sampling (Bender, 2013; Krueger & Casey, 2015). Research permits were collected from Iceland's Office of Data Protection and the municipalities where the participants work and study. All participants gave their informed consent and were promised confidentiality. Students agreed that mentors with little or no interest in their role affected their learning as much as capable mentors who had a great impact on their competence. Findings further indicate that mentoring can influence teaching-students' professional discourse. Iceland has few educated early-childhood teachers, and thus, few educated as mentors. This need to be addressed by stakeholders in this field.

*mentoring, professional discourse, field practice, professionalism, ECE students*

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### **G 13**

## **WHO CONTRIBUTES TO ACCOUNTABILITY? THE VOICES OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Valerie Sollars, The University of Malta, Malta**

### **Opening Pandora's box? Troubling the concept of accountability and contribution in research with young children**

Iris Duhn, Louise Hennessy, Monash University, Australia

We introduce the notion of dispersed accountability as an alternative to technologies of control with the objective to propose a broadened perspective of accountability processes. Urban (2016), Moss (2016), Grieshaber (2018) and others who critically engage with notions of quality, evaluation and technologies of measurement are relevant to our contribution to post-qualitative methodologies. Drawing on post-human theoretical concepts we acknowledge the contributions of all kinds of others, both human and more-than-human to learning encounters (Barad, 2007; Haraway, 2016). This framework questions what knowledge-production is, who or what contributes and how learning can be accounted for otherwise in early years. A post-qualitative paradigm informed the research. Video data, field notes and drawings were co-created by children, researchers and 'the environment' in the process of the study which took place during outdoor learning events, such as bush walks and city walks. Consent forms and information sheets were provided to participants. Informed consent was negotiated with children and re-negotiated during the time of the research. Pseudonyms have replaced the names of participants. Participants had the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. Findings challenge 'what counts' as accountable and measurable children's learning. Unexpected video contents of fieldwork turned the familiar into the unfamiliar – upside down, blurred and close up images shifted what counted as 'quality' research material and enabled a focus on how non-human entities co-constitute the realities of early learning in a relational ontological capacity. Dispersed accountability offers alternatives to current foci on accountability from a technicist paradigm.

*postqualitative, place, outdoor learning, post-human, dispersed accountability*

### **Parents defining quality in early years provision**

Valerie Sollars, The University of Malta, Malta

Parents of under-fives were invited to define quality in early years, share their expectations about children's achievements arising from their experiences of using childcare or kindergarten, suggest improvements and provide their views about ideal settings. Understanding parents' perspectives about quality is necessary for meaningful and responsive partnerships. In previous research, parents' definitions emphasised 'care' or 'education' (Rentzou, 2013; Sollars, 2016) but over-estimated the 'quality' of settings (Grammatikopoulos et. al., 2014; Hu et al, 2017). Set within a social constructionist perspective, this study sought to capture

complexities associated with defining quality. Quality is a multifaceted concept, constructed and negotiated at various levels and contexts. A questionnaire consisting of closed and open-ended questions was sent to parents whose children were attending one of 49 early years settings. Responses to open-ended questions were analysed with NVivo, with a view to eliciting parents' perspectives and interpretations. Participation was anonymous and voluntary. The researcher had no access to parents. Distribution and collection of questionnaires was handled by practitioners. Parents were instructed to avoid disclosing identities. Approval was obtained from the University Research Ethics Committee. 'Characteristics of carers', 'relationships' established with children and families and 'children's happiness and enthusiasm' toward their early years setting emerged as key factors indicating quality. With regard to their expectations, parents gave importance either to children's personal and social development or preparation for school and academic achievement. These results have implications for both practice and policy suggesting the need for renewed efforts to inform and engage major stakeholders.

*Quality in ECE, parents' definitions, parents' expectations, quality services, stakeholders' involvement in ECE*

#### **Do our accountability systems allow for children's views to be heard in decisions that affect them?**

Michael Gaffney, University of Otago College of Education, New Zealand

The aim of this research is to review how the current provision of ECEC in Aotearoa-New Zealand limits or supports children's participation in accountability systems. We can understand ECEC as a purchase of services in the current market approach to privatised education (Mitchell, 2012). Or we can put this aside in favour of ECE settings being democratic spaces where the primary concern is not the exchange of fee for service but the creation of community in which children are recognised as citizens (Moss, 2011). By using a children's rights focus (Smith, 2015) we can evaluate the accountability relationships within the two approaches, especially with respect to the right of children to be heard in relation to decisions that affect them. This study will critically analyse recent ECEC policy documents and developments in Aotearoa-New Zealand with a view to ascertaining whether they will support children's participation rights. There are no human ethical considerations within this paper based policy study. In Aotearoa-New Zealand the ECEC curriculum presents a democratic community approach to relationships, yet the overall system is underpinned by a market approach that reinforces choices based on information, availability and cost. This limits including children's views within accountability systems. In viewing children as citizens within ECEC settings there is a greater likelihood that their participation rights will be upheld and that accountability systems can be inclusive of their views. This is much more difficult to do when parents are framed as decision-making consumers.

*children's rights, Aotearoa-New Zealand, policy analysis, national accountability systems, UNCRC article 12*

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#### **G 14**

#### **EARLY CHILDHOOD MUSIC EDUCATION**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Konstantina Dogani, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece**

#### **Generalisation in early childhood music education**

Konstantina Dogani, Evangelia Papadopoulou, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

The aim of the current research was to investigate preschool children's understanding of musical concepts through generalisation and their application in composing songs. Teaching music usually focuses on developing musical concepts, through comparisons and discriminations. However, the notion of generalisation as a way of understanding concepts to ultimately organize and use sounds in new musical situations is not apparent. The study was based on theoretical approaches of mathematical generalisation, focusing on the recognition of common elements in a situation (Kaput, 1996) and a shift from local to a general level (Radford, 2006). Through a phenomenological lens, the research focused on children's understanding of musical concepts from their own perspective. The analysis was based on observational data that included critical incidences from children's responses to teacher questions and their musical actions as well as drawings that recorded their understanding of the musical concepts. The data derived from a 4-week musical intervention of six student teachers involved in their teaching practice in different preschool classes. The student teachers were accepted in their classes after receiving permission from local education authorities, while special care was given in order to respect children's anonymity in their reports. The main finding is that children were able to generalize and to further demonstrate their understanding of musical concepts by creating their own song for their classmates, in which they integrated these concepts creatively. A teaching approach oriented to generalisation can assist teachers to elaborate musical content and realise students' level of understanding.

*musical concepts, generalisation, early childhood, music education, composing*

## **Using singing in early childhood classrooms: Teachers' attitudes, skills and practices in Ireland**

Edel McDonnell, University College Cork, Ireland

The purpose of this study is to provide a broader perspective and a deeper understanding of how early childhood teachers' (ECTs) use singing in classrooms with children age 3 to 5 years in Ireland. A case study in an Australian Early Childhood Education Centre conducted by Barrett et al. (2018) suggested that 'music provision is best supported when there is a high value for music amongst staff'. This study revealed that both the director of the centre and the early childhood teachers' (ECTs) valued music in children's learning and development and therefore music opportunities are more likely to be implemented. Barrett, M.S., Flynn, L.M., & Welch, G.F., (2018). Music value and participation: An Australian case study of music provision and support in Early Childhood Education. *Research in Music Education*, 40(2), 226-243. An intervention framework will be used which refers to an adapted model of research over three phases (Fraser, Galinsky 2010). Fraser, M. W., and Galinsky, M. J., (2010). Steps in Intervention Research: Designing and Developing Social Programs, *Research on Social Work Practice*, 20(5), 459-466. Paradigm: Interpretivist. Methodology: Qualitative. Methods: In-depth, semi-structured interviews with a representative sample of Irish ECTs. I needed to obtain the permission of all participants to undertake the research in the first instance and they were provided with written information about what was proposed. ECTs have concerns around confidence in their own singing abilities and knowledge about teaching singing in early childhood. The research findings also raise awareness around the complexities and contributions of singing amongst ECTs.

*early childhood teachers, singing in early childhood, Irish curriculum, early childhood music, music*

### **Early childhood musical collaborations**

Karen Wickett, University of Plymouth, United Kingdom

This paper presents an exploration of the relationships between those involved in arts, Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and BA Early Childhood Studies (ECS) collaboration in England. There is acknowledgement that there are benefits for children and practitioners learning, when artists are involved in ECEC settings (Young, 2012). However, there can be uncertainty of each other's role and the relationships between collaborators (Petrie & Chambers: 2010). Remer (1996) identified two partnerships in an arts and ECEC collaboration; the instructional partnership between ECEC practitioner and artist and the administrative partnership between ECEC leaders and arts organisation leaders. Interpretative study will generate qualitative data through semi-structured interviews. Participants will be asked to reflect on their relationships during the arts, ECEC and HE collaboration. There will be an iterative process of moving back and forth between the data and academic literature to explore the ecology of relationships. It will be made explicit that participants choosing not to participate, or withdrawing from the project, will in no way affect the relationship between themselves and the researcher, and will not have a detrimental influence on the students' studies. Remer's arts and education partnerships have been extended to include the Higher Education (HE) sector. The extended conceptual framework was useful when exploring the layers of relationships in arts, ECEC and HE collaboration. Explicit recognition that the relationships in ECEC, arts and HE collaboration are multi-layered and complex and that time is required to consider this complexity.

*ECEC, the arts, higher education, collaboration, relationships*

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## **G 15**

### **DEVELOPING A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN AUSTRIA, SOUTH AFRICA AND THE USA**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Olga Savinskaya, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russia**

### **A pathway to professionalism – Vocational training at university colleges for skilled preschool teacher**

Bernhard Koch, University College of Teacher Education Styria, Austria

In Austria, the level of education of skilled workers in kindergartens is on secondary level. In 2018, at 10 university colleges the first skilled workers started an additional vocational training course in ECEC (bachelor degree). Aims: Research on the profile and experience of these students. While many researchers have found the staff's qualification level being the best criterion for high quality ECEC services (e.g., Blossfeld & Rossbach, 2012), other research suggests that the relationship between teacher education level and child outcomes has been overestimated (e.g., Early et al., 2007; Oberhuemer & Schreyer, 2018). Some international studies (e.g., Nasiopoulou et al., 2017) investigated professional profiles. This study is grounded in Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model. Both qualitative and quantitative research instruments were used: An online questionnaire to all students in Austria (n=340; response rate 80%) and semi structured interviews (n=9). The anonymity of participants is guaranteed both in the online

survey and in the interviews (which were conducted from "non-teachers" in order to counter any perceptions that research participation may affect grades). The results show, that the students were quite satisfied with their initial training, their position at work, and their facility's quality. Areas for which respondents identified the greatest need for learning are "team leadership" and "development assessment". Findings were discussed under the aspect of preschool quality and of discretionary decision-making. The study's findings are an important contribution to international research because of the specific form of the training course (students with more than 10 years of experience in preschools, in-service-training).

*professionalisation, tertiary education, profile of preschool teacher, Austria, vocational training*

### **Transforming early childhood teacher education: Polyphony of voices**

Donna Hannaway, Hasina Banu Ebrahim, Mary Clasquin-Johnson, University of South Africa, South Africa

The paper aims to make sense of the learnings for transformation in teacher education in the early years, which emanated from the Project in Inclusive Early Childhood Care and Education (PIECCE). Tchombe's (2014) work underpins this research since it examines facets of teacher education such as research, policy and training, and endorses a progressive transformative teacher education in an African country. The paper was grounded in the conceptual framing of Mezirow's (1978; 2009) phases of meaning for transformative learning with emphasis on habits of mind and Ellerman's (2001) theory of autonomy-compatible help. This qualitative case study was located in the critical paradigm and informed by site visits, observations and reflections. A strict and stringent process of ethical clearance, within the institution, was obtained prior to the study commenced. The research context was "medium" in terms of "level of sensitivity" since participation required divulging of personal information but was not regarded as sensitive/intimate. Three key learnings, namely: diverse frames of reference; learning through dialogue; and nurturing autonomous thinking were derived. The implications that arose from this study highlight four key areas: At a systemic level, there is a dire need for support to teachers at all levels to ensure access for professional growth and development; Individual and institutional capacity building in and of early childhood teacher education is required; Material development that is contextually responsive to meet the demands of the field requires careful thought; stakeholder engagement is central in attaining early childhood teacher education intact.

*early childhood teacher education, transformative, habits of mind, learning through dialogue, autonomous thinking*

### **Building a system: Launching comprehensive ECE training with coaching support for new staff**

Sarah Lang (1), Cynthia Buettner (1), Marsha Basloe (2), Lieny Jeon (3), (1) Ohio State University, United States; (2) Child Care Services Association, United States; (3) Johns Hopkins University, United States

To examine the feasibility of implementing a comprehensive professional development (PD) system that incorporates practice-based coaching to support new staff training. Within the U.S., most States only require childcare teachers to have a high school diploma. However, teachers need sufficient child development training to provide quality ECE, (National Academies of Science, 2015). In addition, all state quality rating and improvement systems (QRISs) use staff credentials as a component in assessing quality (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, ACF, 2013). Staff training is critical to provide greater access to quality ECE programs. Teacher training that is paired with coaching support is the most effective form of PD (Joyce & Showers, 2002; Kraft, 2018); our model for addressing the need for more well-trained staff aims to replicate the system used in U.S. military childcare programs, pairing research-based, publicly available content with on-site or off-site coaching support. We examined licensing and QRIS standards for staff credentials and conducted interviews with city, state and national ECE stakeholders. We built rapport and gathered consent from stakeholders, asked them to identify flaws in our model, and ensured transparency by sharing synopses of our conversations. Stakeholders appreciated the flexibility of online training, and felt coaching support was essential to help less educated staff continue in their training, however they expressed concern regarding the feasibility of securing quality onsite coaches and funding off-site coaching support. Ultimately, a mixed model that provides virtual coaching, innovative staffing plans, and public investment is needed to combat insufficient teacher training.

*professional development, coaching partnerships, ECE training, quality rating and improvement, ECE staff credentials*

## IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

Individual Paper Symposium

**Chair: Aoife Conduit, Ministry of Education and Skills, Ireland**

### **Successful inclusive early education of children with and without disabilities - State, conditions and needs**

Elena Sterdt, Sven Hohmann, Eric Simon, Anja Stolakis, Annette Schmitt, Jörn Borke, Matthias Morfeld, Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences, Germany

The research project aims at implementing the subject "inclusive education" in early childhood education studies as a cross-cutting issue. Therefore, empirically verified conditions for successful inclusion in preschools are identified and the needs for an inclusive professionalisation of educators will be determined. International studies show that children with and without disabilities perform significant development and learning processes in inclusive settings (Green et al., 2014). Essential condition is a high pedagogical quality that is closely linked to the qualification of the educators. To analyse the state of successfully implemented inclusion, the dimensions of the "Index for Inclusion" were considered (Booth & Ainscow, 2011). Using the concept of evidence-based practices in early childhood education a multi-level mixed-methods design was realised, that is embedded in the methodological framework of Campbell and colleagues (2000). A research step included a survey of all preschools in Saxony-Anhalt, Germany (n = 1.382) using a standardized questionnaire. There are no ethical concerns. Under consideration of data protection regulations, data were collected on institutional level. In total, 280 preschools participated (response rate: 20%). The majority (83%) supports the principles of inclusion. Sufficient number of staff, small group sizes as well as adequate facilities and equipment were stated as the most important conditions for inclusive education. Besides the structural conditions missing experience and knowledge of the educators were mentioned as central barriers. The results suggest a need for training that focuses on the practical skills of the educators. This will be addressed by developing evidence-based teaching materials for (academic) education.

*inclusive education, professionalisation, children with disabilities, mixed-methods design, evidence-based practices*

### **Analysing home environment of children with special needs**

Kerem Avci (1), Bülbin Sucuoğlu (1), Naciye Öztürk (1), Nursel Bektaş (2), (1) Hacettepe University, Turkey; (2) Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Turkey

The purpose of this study is to investigate home environment of young children with disabilities in three aspects; namely, the quality of the home environment, parental involvement with children's activities and toys which are available at home. In many studies, the relationship between home characteristics and child development has been investigated. These studies mainly focused on the home environment of typically developing children; however, the research examining the quality of the home environment of children with disabilities is scarce. Children experience many opportunities that support their development in the home, and the home environment influences their level of development. Positive home environment positively affects children's cognitive development (Andersson et al., 1998; Biedinger, 2011; Grieve & Richter, 1991), motor development (Ammar, Acevedo, & Cordova, 2013), literacy and mathematics skills (Letourneau, Duffett- Leger, Levac, Watson, & Young-Morris, 2011; Niklas, Chorsen, & Tyler, 2018), language development and child wellbeing (Sontag-Padilla, Burns, Shih, Griffin, Martin, Chandra, & Tylavsky, 2015). The data was gathered from 145 young children with disabilities through the Information Form including demographic characteristics of children and mothers, parent involvement with children activities and children toys available at home and Turkish Form of Home Screening Questionnaire. Data was collected based on voluntary participation of families. Analysis of data has not been completed yet. The research examining the quality of the home environment of children with disabilities is scarce. This research will allow us to understand the home environment of children with disabilities.

*home environment, children with disabilities, children's activities, children's toys, parental involvement*

### **ECE centre leaders' role in implementing inclusive early childhood education**

Riitta Viitala, Laura Lappi, Hanna Tuominen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

The aim of this investigation is to study how Finnish early childhood education centre leaders evaluate the fulfilment of inclusive early childhood education (IECE) in their centres and how they try to support educators in implementing IECE. Leaders have an essential role in implementing successful IECE (Ainscow & Sandhill 2010). The leader has to motivate staff and plan, organise and evaluate activities from IECE point of view (Dickins 2014). How the education of children with additional needs is organised, is an important component of the quality of ECE (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education 2017). For decades global

declarations have guided nations towards inclusive education (UNESCO 2003). Finland is committed to these declarations and National Core Curriculum for ECEC (2018) emphasizes IECE. The paradigm of the research is qualitative based on the data collected by interviewing 13 leaders. The data was analysed by using qualitative content analysis. All the needed permissions were asked. For the purpose of anonymity pseudonyms are used when presenting the results and details which could reveal cities, ECE centres or leaders have been removed. The leaders assessed that IECE was implemented relatively well. However, there were some problems such as a worry about the educators' negative attitudes towards IECE. Additionally, the leaders identified pedagogical practices which can't be recommended because they don't support IECE. The leaders thought their role was significant in guiding the educators. In pedagogy they wanted to highlight positivity, especially children's strengths. This study indicate that the ECE centre leaders recognize the elements of high-quality IECE and they endeavour to increase it.

*inclusive early childhood education, children with additional needs, ECE centre leader, strength-based pedagogy, attitudes*

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## **G 17**

### **MAKING IT COUNT: PRACTITIONERS ACCOUNTING FOR THEIR PRACTICE - 10 YEARS AND BEYOND**

Self-organised symposium

For more than ten years, a network covering regions and countries has been developing methodologies and research that are sensitive to the human sciences and the human condition. Using practitioner research, a diverse range of educators, supported by academics, have researched, implemented and developed accounts that illuminate achievements, shifts in practitioner identities and quality, and asked how their work could be improved. As early years researchers they have raised the profile and visibility of early childhood studies to make it count in the corridors of power. One team in this network won the 2017 EECERA practitioner research award. These practitioners have become articulate, knowledgeable and assertive and four members come together in this symposium to share their respective journeys, highlights and challenges.

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**Chair: Linda Newman, The University of Newcastle, Australia**

#### **"I grew brain cells": Practitioners accounting for themselves through collaborative enquiry**

Linda Newman (1), Christine Woodrow (2), (1) The University of Newcastle, Australia (2) Western Sydney University, Australia

This collaborative enquiry research investigated effectiveness and empowerment; accountability strengthening; activist professional identities; and pedagogical leadership for educators working in an economically and socially stigmatised community. Well established literature supports collaborative enquiry as effective for professional learning and sustainable pedagogical change (Black, 2018; Newman & Woodrow, 2015; Newman & Leggett, 2018). Emerging critical literature indicates its contribution to robust professionalism (Darder, 2011). The fragility of professional identities in high poverty contexts is noted (Skattebol et al, 2016). Project design included engaging, scaffolding and mentoring eight centre-based-teams to theorise, design, and evaluate self-selected centre-based research. Sociocultural theory informed the use of Intentional Teaching; Sustained Shared Thinking; Funds of Knowledge; and The 5 Literacy Keys in each project. Data were collected through focus groups and questionnaires. A critical sociocultural paradigm informed this research. Eight centre-teams met monthly within mentored communities-of-practice to theorise, design and evaluate their own self-selected centre-based projects. Data collection included focus groups and questionnaires. The heightened need for confidentiality and trust-building among practitioner-researchers, previously strangers, within a competitive market, was foregrounded. Including centres from similar sociocultural contexts, overtly addressing confidentiality issues, advising of rights, and conscious trust-building were incorporated (University Ethics approval H12572). Working collaboratively with peers with similar challenges mobilised participants' courage to challenge (Galdames, 2017), exhibit agency, and account for themselves. Many new families enrolled in the centres. Participants showed enhanced capacity to account for their pedagogy, and present their learning to high-stakes policy-makers and managers supporting arguments for systemic practitioner-research funding.

*practitioner-research, teacher-agency, accountability, pedagogical leadership, high-poverty contexts*

#### **Organic quality assessment: Using practitioner research to drive quality outcomes in local early childhood centres**

Trish Heeley, Penrith City Council, Australia

Following research in a group project, local government early childhood centres in Australia have engaged for ten years in practitioner research around participatory curriculum review and creating systems to support quality pedagogy. We used practitioner research as it builds the professional and leadership skills of pedagogues which are responsive to the particular priorities of the local communities in which they work (Woodrow & Newman, 2015), and influences the way educators think and take action (Cochran, Smith & Lytle, 2009). We began with an understanding of the way practitioner research can change pedagogical thinking and practice (Newman, Keegan & Heeley, 2015) and framed our work using socio-cultural theory, recognising

the significance of practitioners working within their local communities (Newman, Woodrow, Rojo and Galvez, 2014). The project paradigm and methodology were grounded in sociocultural theory, recognising the significance of pedagogues being co-constructors in learning (Newman, Keegan & Heeley, 2015). We used action research cycles including surveys; critical reflection sessions; and direct observation of individuals and groups. Confidentiality and the option to participate at all stages of the research were ethical considerations and as the study occurred within workplaces we ensured the de-identification of all data. The embeddedness and length of this study has had a significant impact on the way quality is considered; the way pedagogues collaborate; and the professional identities of those involved. The success of the project has implications for other large early childhood organisations and may be a valuable model to consider when seeking changes to curriculum practices.

*practitioner research, action research, early childhood curriculum, pedagogical leadership, collaborative inquiry*

#### **Having Conversations that Matter': Critically reflective mentorship for leading with intent**

Melissa Duffy-Fagan (1), (2), Linda Newman (2), Nicole Leggett (2), (1) Elder Street Early Childhood Centre; (2) The University of Newcastle, Australia

This research explored educators' development of critical thinking and mentoring supported by University mentored practitioner-research. The research examined educators' understandings of how critically-informed mentorship promoted agency in leadership aimed at a reconceptualization in early childhood education and care (ECEC) settings. Sound literature supports leadership in ECEC being a relationship of influence with leadership from within teams to enhance quality practice (Campbell-Barr & Ho, 2012; McDowall Clarke, 2012). Critical thinking and mentorship support educators' contemporary leadership practice in ECEC settings (Denee & Thornton, 2017; Doan, 2013; Nimmo & Park, 2009). A sociocultural theoretical framework underpinned the design and methods employed in this collaborative educator driven research. A qualitative paradigm supported sociocultural methodology that informed selection of focus groups for collaborative data generation. Two online surveys were conducted followed by a 2 week change project recorded in reflective journals. Ethical consideration was given to confidentiality between centres involved in the practitioner research. Clear expectations of confidentiality were explained by University mentors. A need to address issues of coercion and power was mediated in the research team by excluding the Director/Licensee from focus group sessions and de-identifying participants' survey responses. Critically mentored relationships enhanced educator's leadership confidence and communication. Educators were able to recognise and encourage acts of leadership from within the team utilising the critical thinking roles designed in the research. Embedded critical mentorship by educators within centres enhances quality outcomes for children's care and education and new understandings of how critical mentoring creates opportunities for team leadership practice for the sector.

*practitioner research, critical thinking, mentoring, leadership, quality*

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## **G 18**

### **POLICY IDEAS AND POLICY CHANGE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ACROSS EUROPE**

Self-organised symposium

The focus of this symposium is on the policy developments and changes in early childhood education, in four European countries: Bulgaria, Finland, Italy and Sweden. We explore policy changes and ideas that are shaping the governance and provision of early childhood, with a particular focus on the role of the state, the relationship between the state and professionals, and consequences for issues of quality, inclusion and social justice for disadvantaged populations. Our three presentations are framed by a combination of institutional theories, sociological analyses on professionalism, and cultural analysis. We draw on research based on interview studies, observations of practice and policy analysis. The four countries of the symposium represent different welfare traditions and histories of practice in early childhood education. They also illustrate how policy ideas interact with institutions, cultures of practice, and sometimes contradictory policy demands for modernisation, inclusion, and quality.

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**Chair: Nafsika Alexiadou, Umeå University, Sweden**

#### **Policy change in ECE in Finland and Sweden**

Nafsika Alexiadou (1), Carina Hjelmér (1), Päivi Pihlaja (2), Anne Laiho (2), (1) Umeå University, Sweden; (2) Turku University, Finland

We analyse policy in Finland and Sweden in the post-1970s. Our research questions are: What are the key policies and goals for ECE, and the governance mechanisms in the sector? What are the policy and pedagogical ideas that define policy and change? Finland and Sweden invest substantially on ECE and developed delivery that is regulated by the state (Alila, 2013; Martin-Korpi, 2014). Expansion policies are underpinned by views on children's rights, equality and welfare (Vallberg-Roth, 2012). We examine



the changing policy ideas and institutional mechanisms for ECE provision and how these are affected by wider policy reforms. We combine two theoretical perspectives: A historical-policy approach on institutional formation (Mahoney & Thelen, 2010); and an examination of the role of ideas in the policy process (Schmidt, 2008). We view policy as dynamic, but also shaped by history, administrative traditions, and policy ideas that can instigate change of policy direction. We employ historical policy analysis. Our methods consist of documentary analysis and compilation of statistics (Alexander, 2000). Ethical consideration is given to a fair and balanced representation of policy documents and literature to avoid bias. Finland and Sweden have followed a similar trajectory of ECE policies, but with: a time-lag in implementation; a distinct approach to quasi-market provision; a different relation towards EU/OECD frameworks. We find that: surface similarities of policy discourses in different countries may hide differences in pedagogical assumptions about practice; and, an understanding of institutional contexts and values is necessary for the successful implementation of ECE reforms.

*policy change, policy analysis, Finland, Sweden, comparative*

### **Professionalism in early childhood education and care using the example of childcare services for zero to three-year-olds in South Tyrol**

Laura Trott, Ulrike Stadler-Altmann, Ulrike Loch, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy

The project NuTre aims to develop a framework for ECEC that will be applicable throughout South Tyrol. The research project will develop instruments for the internal and external evaluation of ECEC services. Debates on the quality of ECEC have been going on for 25 years (Tietze, 2004) and have produced results in South Tyrol, such as the framework for kindergartens, based on research by Fthenakis (2008). The interest in ECEC research stems from the importance of early childhood for the entire educational biography (Ingleby, 2013). Previous research has investigated the quality of ECEC from the child's perspective (Nentwig-Gesemann/Walther/Thedinga, 2017) and studied professional action in child care (DJI, 2018). The theoretical underpinning is informed by the works of Cloos and Nentwig-Gesemann on quality and professionalism in early childhood settings. Further concepts will emerge throughout the ethnographic process. Based on a constructivist paradigm, the research methodology is rooted in ethnography and grounded theory. Data collection methods include participant observation, qualitative interviews and focus groups. The researchers have received ethical approval from their university. Concerns involve the vulnerable age of children involved, which is overcome through the non-invasive nature of participant observation that is interested in professional action, rather than the children and their behaviour. The data gives us the opportunity to compare professional developments in ECEC with former developments in primary education in the field of professionalism and quality in South Tyrol, Italy and Europe. The findings will contribute to the further development of quality and professionalism in ECEC policy and practice.

*ethnography, professionalism, quality development, childcare services, ECEC institutions*

### **Transforming policy for inclusion? Interrogating policy-practice disjunctions in early childhood education in Bulgaria**

Anna Kirova (1), Veselina Lambrev (2), Larry Prochner (1), (1) University of Alberta, Canada; (2) University of Hawaii, United States

This study discusses tensions between policy and practice that have resulted from restructuring the education system in Bulgaria after the fall of communist regime. Using a conceptual framework that draws from Anti-Romaism/ Anti-ziganism (Selling et al., 2015), the study examines how these neoliberal education reforms, made to accommodate the educational needs of minority groups, has impacted Roma children's experiences of schooling. The presentation will explore the educators' perspectives on the impact of the recent education reforms implemented by the Bulgarian governments on their work with Roma students. The primary objective is to understand how EU policy and discourse on inclusion has reinforced the skewed image of Roma groups as culturally inadequate for schooling, negatively affecting their educational performance. The analysis draws on interview data with twenty-four educators in four Roma-only primary schools, two kindergartens, and one informal, grassroot preschool initiative. An important ethical consideration in the study has been to avoid the practice of misrepresentation and reinforcing bias in Roma-related academic discourses. Therefore, along with ethical approval, the researchers (non-Roma) used reflexivity that has been found to help construct ethical scientific knowledge (Hertz, 1997). The findings point to disjunctions between neoliberal education policy and practices of low preschool and elementary school participation of Roma children and lack of recognition of minority cultural knowledge. This study also provides examples of the role that ECE informal/grassroot programming could play in preparing Roma children for the realities of schooling and possibilities for overcoming the persistent practice of othering Roma children.

*education reform, neoliberal education policy, Roma students, equity, teachers*

**SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INCLUSIVE PRACTICE**

Individual Paper Symposium

**Chair: Andy Schieler, University of Applied Science, Germany****English special educational needs coordinators - Perceptions of practice and potential**

Hazel Richards, University of Worcester, United Kingdom

Detail from a PhD study investigating changes for SENCoS working in early-years arising from recent policy implementation is presented, including positive and negative influences and detail about their developing professional identity. SENCoS working in early years in England must be trained to Level-3 with subsequent training and support being difficult to access, optional and variable (Griggs and Bussard, 2017). EHCPs were investigated as a microcosm of the wider arena of policy and practice (Hellawell, 2017). These created considerable additional workload for SENCoS (DfE, 2017) and changed their roles and responsibilities (Ekins 2015; Hellawell 2016; Qureshi 2015). Additionally, the prioritised joint working, early identification and intervention have implications for SENCoS in working in early years, who may have neither the necessary status, power or tools to effectively realise this (Lamb and Blandford, 2017). Macro and micro level influences (Chreim et al, 2007) were investigated using identity theory and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979, 1982). A pragmatic constructivist approach was taken. Mixed methods were used, including descriptive methods (worklines, critical event narrative interviews and repertory grid interviews) and numerical methods (individual and group repertory grids). Ethical guidelines (BERA, 2018; ESRC, 2016; EECERA, 2014) were followed and risks and their minimisation were identified, for example, the impact of participation on workload - mitigated by arranging interviews at participant's convenience. Seven themes, at different system-levels emerged, including detail of SENCo identity and key relationships. Implications revealed by this close-to-practice related to purpose, support, learning communities and relationships will be presented.

*SENCo, ecological systems theory, identity, influences, close-to-practice***Doing inclusion with QiD – Quality development in discourse**

Andy Schieler, University of Applied Science, Germany

Based on the approach 'quality development in discourse (QiD)', we conduct a study investigating how pedagogical professionals can be supported in providing inclusive pedagogy in daycare institutions. We have developed 'quality development in discourse (QiD)' as an approach to improve the pedagogical quality in daycare institutions (Pohlmann et al., 2016, Schneider et al., 2015). This is done with respect to inclusion as a vision not only of the educational system but also of the worldwide society (e.g., declaration of human rights, 1948). We use a wide understanding of inclusion as the challenge to provide a social context that allows everybody to participate by respecting everyone's autonomy. Based on the qualitative empirical social research, we analysed documents of service providers and scientific interviews with experts in the field to investigate the understanding and implementation of inclusive pedagogy in daycare institutions. Following Mayring (2015), we used the qualitative content analysis for both the interview and document analysis. All participants signed a consent form concerning their voluntary participation and the use of data. Both methodological accounts provide evidence for different understandings of inclusion and a lack of information and tools about how to apply an inclusive pedagogy. This reflects the uncertainty of pedagogical professionals to deal with the expectations and challenges. These and further results lead to a variety of implications for the development of the QiD-approach. That is, for example, to support pedagogical professionals in developing a shared understanding of inclusion, an awareness of exclusive moments, and the necessity to cooperate.

*quality development, inclusion, daycare institutions, pedagogical professionals, ECEC practice***Challenges, limitations and possibilities for itinerant early childhood special education teachers**

Eva Staffans, Åbo Akademi, Finland

Aim of current study was to investigate pre-requisites for itinerant early childhood special education (ECSE) teachers working in the Swedish speaking parts of Finland. Research concerning Finnish ECSE is sparse. Pihlaja & Neitola (2017), Viljamaa & Takala (2017) and Viitala (2014) have studied changes within ECSE, and how changes affect the work for itinerant ECSE teachers. Dinnebeil, McInerney & Hale (2006), Dinnebeil, Pretti-Fontcsak & McInerney (2009) and McWilliam (2015) have studied different ways of working with, and supporting children with special education need (SEN). Children with SEN in early childhood education (ECE) participate in regular group settings according to inclusion theory (Finnish National Agency for Education 2014; 2016,

European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education System 2015, UNESCO 1994). The research is of a quantitative character. Based upon pre-understanding, the questionnaire was build up with questions on graded scales with opportunity for respondents to widen issues. Collected data has been analysed statistically with IBM SPSS 25. Ethical considerations have been done continuously during the process. The Swedish-speaking region is quite small and it is important to guarantee confidentiality; for example, has specific data (e.g. different diagnosis) been left out. In total 14% of children in ECE and pre-primary education, have SEN. The number of children ECSE teacher have responsibility for, job description and other outer factors affect ECSE teachers working possibilities. Results show that not all children with SEN receive support. Appropriate work pre-requisites are basis for a good result and here is still work to be done.

*early childhood education, special education, itinerant teacher, work pre-requisites, pre-primary education*

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## **G 20**

### **ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO DEVELOP CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE, RIGHTS AND VALUES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Sabina Schutter, University of Applied Sciences Rosenheim, Germany**

#### **Socio-dramatic play: An opportunity for developing language and literacy in the early years classroom**

Fiona Giblin, Dublin City University, Ireland

While early years teachers acknowledge the valuable context of play in the classroom, there is the contentious issue of providing evidence of learning from play experiences which is comparative to other classroom activities that are susceptible to educational outcomes (Anning, 2015). The aim of this research is to examine young children's language and early literacy development that is supported during socio-dramatic play. The research will investigate the literate behaviours young children demonstrate during socio-dramatic play to support narrative co-construction. Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1983) acknowledge that it is through socio-dramatic play that children master language acquisition. While Sawyer & DeZutter (2007) and Spodek & Saracho (1993) have indicated a strong relationship between children's socio-dramatic play and emergent literacy. A qualitative study was conducted, involving a class of 4-5 years girls in their first year of primary school in Ireland. Data consisted of naturalistic observations in the classroom, supported by audio and visual recordings. Ethical considerations were addressed throughout the research and included parental consent, informed assent of the children and confidentiality assurance. During the socio-dramatic play episodes, the children worked collaboratively to improvise, negotiate and communicate so as to co-construct a narrative. They created scripts which often reflected a strong understanding of narrative elements. The data also highlighted the children's ability to develop representational functions by substituting objects, roles and events with symbols. Such outcomes explicate that socio-dramatic play should be integral to curriculum and policy as a means of practicing and refining young children's language and early literacy development.

*socio-dramatic play, play pedagogy, early years teacher, language and early literacy, curriculum*

#### **The right of the child of being heard – Looking at and promoting language from a children's rights perspective**

Andrea Tures, Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Germany

The paper addresses a children's rights perspective in infant-toddler education for the area of language education. The question how infant-toddler-language can be observed and analysed from a perspective which highlights the individual voices of young children, is answered. The research is based on findings and conceptual work on professional development at pre-service university training level. The article investigates an approach to language education for young children situated in a cultural-historical tradition and looks at the nexus of social, cognitive and linguistic development. The exploratory study used qualitative research strategies. Data was collected during an in-service training program in infant-toddler classrooms in 6 day care centres in 2 German states. Language documentation of ECEC teachers and video-data of language learning activities were collected and analysed through content analysis. The study was conducted as participatory action research and used indebted reciprocity through consent forms, confidentiality of participants and discussion of results with participants to avoid potential ethical dilemmas. The findings accentuate the key role of the care giver in taking a sensitive stand towards children's individual development. The findings furthermore demonstrate that a rights-based approach to language education for young children demands a high level of professionalism in early childhood settings that explicitly values the voice of the child and his agency in its educational process. It is argued for the need of a framework for language development which can be used in the infant-toddler class room to target and document the strategies of young children in a theory-driven and strength-based way.

*children's rights, language development, language education, professional development, cultural-historical approaches to learning*

## **How to use Picture Books to Communicate Values in ECECs**

Aasfrid Tysvær, Siri Hovda Ottesen, NLA Høgskolen, Norway

Literacy events, using picture books, are appropriate learning frames when focusing values and Value Education. The study thematise forgiveness, a value emphasised in the Norwegian Curriculum. The value forgiveness is not much dealt with in ECEC-literature. However, a Norwegian group has published several articles about values and value education. They find that values seldom are taught, even though the teachers are aware of the importance (Sagberg et. al., 2017; Glaser et. al., 2011; Gunnestad et. al. 2013). Our concern is to demonstrate picture books as remedies for important talks about values. There are several works on literacy events, but very few focusing on values (Solstad, 2015; Håland & Hoel, 2015). Our study will be seen in relation to theory about learnification (Biesta, 2012), democracy perspectives (Solstad, 2017) and to literacy events (Broström, 2013). Knowledge received from this study retrieves within the social constructivist paradigm; our methodology is hermeneutical. We collect data through document analysis and non-participating observation and discourse analysis of literacy events in ECEC and Primary School. The study is approved by the Norwegian Social Science Data Service. Participants' rights are respected. The study verifies full anonymity during data collection and publication. In literacy events children are given opportunities to talk about forgiveness, and listen and relate to others voices. Picture books about values give teachers opportunities and help in Value Education. The findings will give rise to implications for practice regarding use of children's literature as a catalyst for integrating values and for democratic experiences and skills.

*picture books, literacy events, value education, forgiveness, democracy*

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## **G 21**

### **SELF-EFFICACY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MASTERY MOTIVATION**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Krisztian Jozsa, University of Szeged, Hungary**

#### **HandlungsSpielRäume – Self-efficacy experiences of children in preschool and primary school**

Katrin Velten, Bielefeld University, Germany

The presentation focuses on the perspectives of children on their self-efficacy experiences and their perceived scopes of action during the transition into primary school. Self-efficacy is highlighted as a key factor in overcoming various challenges (e.g. Schunk & Swartz, 1993; Bandura et al., 1996; Schneeklott & Pupeter, 2010). Sources and influences of self-efficacy are mainly researched in adolescents and adults. Thus, the exploration of the perspectives of young children on their self-efficacy meets a research gap. To describe children's experiences of self-efficacy and to compare them with existing findings on self-efficacy, the self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1997) and the theory of cognitive development (Piaget & Inhelder, 1973) are used as theoretical frameworks. The underlying study is based on a qualitative longitudinal interview approach. 22 children aged five to seven years were interviewed before and after starting primary school. The mosaic approach (Clark & Moss, 2001), e.g. photos of the children, was used to enable children to communicate their perspectives in the interview situation. The data analysis is based on the concepts of competence and of generational order (Bühler-Niederberger, 2007). The EECERA ethical code (2014) is followed in the conduct of the study. A key finding of the study is that play situations without adult participation have a significant impact on the development of a child's self-efficacy. Conclusions highlight the importance of the pedagogical support of children's self-efficacy on the basis of the "mastery climate". The study also offers potential for reflection of research methods in childhood studies.

*self-efficacy, children's perspectives, fostering self-efficacy, mastery climate, childhood studies*

#### **Assessing mastery motivation by eye movement analysis among 5–6-year-old children**

Krisztian Jozsa (1), Agnes Nyitrai (2), Judit Podráczky (2), János Steklács (3), (1) University of Szeged, Hungary; (2) Kaposvár University, Hungary; (3) Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary

This study examines kindergarten children's mastery motivation (MM) by eye movement analysis. Data is presented about descriptive statistics, individualised persistence measure and about the validity of this new measure. Researchers use several methods for assessing MM, e.g., observation, questionnaire, computer-based assessment (Morgan, Józsa, & Liao, 2017). However, none of the previous studies have used the eye-tracking technique. MM stimulates a child to attempt to master a skill or solve a problem that is at least moderately challenging for him or her (Busch-Rossnagel & Morgan, 2013). Children's MM is an important predictor of school success. Object oriented persistence is a key measure of MM, which can be measured by eye tracker computers. The sample consisted of 210 children. We applied Tobii T120 eye tracker. Data were analysed by the Tobii Studio software, version 3.0.9. In addition to the computer produced data, children's persistence was rated by the examiner. Parents and

teachers rated children on the Dimensions of Mastery Questionnaire (DMQ18). Data collection was anonymous and voluntary. The research proposal was approved by a university IRB. Results show significant moderate correlations between the object-oriented persistence index measured by Tobii, the DMQ18 object-oriented scale, and the examiners' ratings. Based on the eye movement data, we can classify children's motivational behaviour. The eye tracking technology is an appropriate measure of MM at this age. Data supported the validity of this new measure. By the detailed eye tracking analyses, we can clarify some important questions about the development children's MM.

*mastery motivation, eye-tracking, computer-based assessment, kindergarten, dimensions of mastery questionnaire*

### **The role of nursery education in the development of mastery motivation**

Ágnes Nyitrai (1), Judit Podráczky (1), Krisztián Józsa (2), (1) Kaposvár University, Hungary; (2) University of Szeged, Hungary

This study examines the role of nursery education among preschool children in Hungary. The goal is to compare mastery motivation (MM) in two samples: (1) children who attended nursery before entering preschool at age 3; and (2) children who did not. Previous studies have pointed out the importance of MM in early childhood. The social environment may have an effect on the development of MM (Morgan, Józsa, & Liao, 2017). However, none of the studies have focused directly on the role of nursery education. Mastery motivation is defined as a multifaceted, psychological construct that stimulates the child's attempt to master tasks that are at least moderately challenging for him/her. There are three instrumental dimensions of mastery motivation (cognitive persistence, gross motor persistence, social persistence), and an expressive component (mastery pleasure) (Barrett & Morgan, 2018). The sample consisted of 3–4-year-old children (n=320). Half of the sample participated in a nursery school program before entering preschool, while the other half did not. Children were rated on the Dimensions of Mastery Questionnaire (Morgan et al., 2018) by parents and preschool teachers. No significant difference was found between the two samples in terms of SES. Data collection was anonymous and voluntary. The research proposal was approved by a university IRB. Significant differences were found between the samples in terms of MM dimensions. Children with nursery education background showed stronger social and gross motor persistence. Hungarian nursery education has a significant effect on children's motivation. It means that MM may be modified by education.

*mastery motivation, dimensions of mastery questionnaire, nursery, preschool, early childhood centre*

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## **G 22**

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Sharolyn Pollard-Durodola, University of Nevada Las Vegas, United States**

### **Exploring a cyclical model of professional development: Insights from childminders**

Kay Aaronricks, Anglia Ruskin University, United Kingdom

Childminders in England are accountable for their own professional development, but face barriers and challenges. I provide insights from a doctoral study exploring a cyclical model of professional development, with childminders through collaborative action research. Childminders are under researched and their voices rarely heard within literature. This research builds upon an initial study of training for childminders (Ferri, 1992), providing an alternative conceptualisation of professional development influenced by O'Connell (2011), which recognises the distinctive needs of these practitioners (Siraj, et al., 2017). Zuber-Skerritt and Fletcher (2007) identify action research as being undertaken in two parts for a doctoral study: thesis and core action research. I build on this conceptualisation presenting findings from three cycles of core action research, underpinned by social constructivist theories of learning. Qualitative accounts of childminder voice, from three cycles of collaborative action research are interpreted through a crystallized approach (Ellingson, 2009), presenting co-constructed understandings and representations of knowledge. The study was approved by the University Ethics panel. Childminders forming the participating group, collaboratively constructed ethical guidelines and were involved in the data analysis as part of the action research process. The findings illustrate childminders' reflections on a cyclical model of professional development comprising of: training; implementation; and reflection sessions, whilst providing additional insights into their own pedagogy of practice. There is scope for an alternative approach to professional development for childminders, which better reflects their distinct pedagogy (Ang et al., 2018), based on a cyclical model of professional development, and formed from within community-based childminding networks.

*childminding, family day care, professional development, action research, training*

### **Ensuring quality and equity in early education: Focusing on teaching practices**

Victoria Michaelidou, Nasia Charalambous, Andria Christodoulou, University of Cyprus Nursery and Kindergarden, Cyprus

This study aims to investigate how teaching practices as their presented on The Dynamic Model of Educational Effectiveness by Creemers & Kyriakides, (2008) can affect student outcomes. To achieve this aim it is necessary to answer the question "Which teaching practices are most used and most effective. In recent years, it has been increasingly argued that the dimension of differentiation can enhance effective teaching and learning for all students (Hattie, 2009) by aiming to overcome inequalities and promote social justice in mixed capacity classes (Koutselini 2009). The adaptation of the way the school operates to the particular needs of teachers and pupils, as well as the changes that can be made, ensures equal opportunities for all and the greatest possible chance of achieving better learning outcomes (Grift, & Creemers, 2004; Noble, 2004). The research follows a mixed methodological design. The sample of the survey includes three nursery classes. Tests that evaluated the knowledge and skills of children in Cognitive Development and Motor Skills were given in two phases during a common project for all. Data, (audio, optical records, lists, etc.). Data analyses using SPSS package. Ethical issues regarding access, informed consent, trust and power positions between the researcher and the teachers and children. The generic practices of the Dynamic Model of Educational Effectiveness are expected to be important in terms of the quality of teacher education. Those practices are supposed to have a positive impact on the children's development and achievement regarding the skills and knowledge examined.

*practices and teaching, improve learning outcomes, assessment, early childhood, equity*

### **Teacher empowerment: The role of reflectivity and video observations in constructing knowledge-building math talk**

Sharolyn Pollard-Durodola (1), Tracy Spies (1), Alain Bengochea (1), Nicole Joseph (2), Gloria Carcoba Falomir (1), Yunying Xu (1), (1)University of Nevada Las Vegas, United States; (2) Vanderbilt University, United States

The aim is to understand how to empower K-3 teachers of English Learners (EL) while bolstering their English language development practices during math instruction. How do EL teachers take action to construct "knowledge-building talk" (Author, 2015) while participating in self-reflections around videotaped observations with feedback? Research derives from a National Professional Development study-Project E3: Enhancing, Engaging, and Empowering Teachers for the Next Generation of ELs. E3 extends previous research that advocates for embedding second language development during content knowledge acceleration (Boals, Kenyon, Blair, Wilmes, & Wright, 2015; Carlo, et al., 2004; Gutierrez, Zepeda, & Castro, 2010; What Works Clearinghouse, 2015). Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological framework (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007) posits that a child's developmental outcomes are influenced by proximal processes (teacher-child interactions) in their environment. Reflectivity assists EL teachers to uncover what inhibits their typical math interactions and practices (Smyth, 1989; Zeichner & Lieu, 2010). 10 teachers participated in Math PD with 1) pre- and post-videotaped observations and 2) Smyth's (1989) self-reflective process: Pre-Reflection: Describing/What did I say and do (practices)? Informing: What principles guided my described practices? Post-Reflection: Confront: How did I come to be like this? Qualitative analyses yielded broad categories of commonality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) that explicate shifts in teachers' math talk. University Internal Review Board and School District approval obtained. Teachers consented and data confidentially stored via IRB criteria. Reflective action (Zeichner & Lieu, 2010) results in positive shifts in mathematical talk. Teacher empowerment unfolds by releasing "power" to students. Implications for enhancing math talk via reflective observations.

*English learners, reflective action, observations, professional development practices, teacher reflections*

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## **G 23**

### **SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING**

Individual Paper Symposium

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**Chair: Maresa Duignan, Department of Education and Skills, Ireland**

### **Receiving extra support in Norwegian centre-based childcare: The role of children's language and socioemotional development**

Ratib Lekhal, BI Norwegian Business School, Norway

This study examines how language problems, externalizing and internalizing behaviour problems affect the possibility of a child receiving extra support early in life. Efforts to promote development in children who struggle in the early years are more likely to lead to positive results, thereby improving children's long-term life opportunities (Knudsen, Heckman, Cameron, & Shonkoff, 2006). All children in Norway have the right to government regulated childcare from the age of one. Approximately 97% of all 5-year-olds attend childcare. An explicit purpose is to promote development among disadvantaged and vulnerable children (Ministry of Education, 2006-2007). Customizing teaching to a child's developmental level is authorized by law (Ministry of Education, 2010–

2011), and for some, this implies special education. The purpose of special education in childcare is to provide children with early support in the development and learning of, for example, language and social skills (Education Act, 1998). Despite our knowledge of the importance of early intervention, we still know little about which children in ECEC receive special education and why. Post-positivist, logistic-regression and fixed effect model was used. Traditional research ethical concerns (see Buchanan and Hvizdak, 2009 for discussion) also took place in this study. Ethical guidelines for research have been followed and the project are approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data. A connection between children's development and the possibility of receiving special education were found, but it was gender differences. The results may affect our view of systematic assessment of children's development in early education in Norway.

*special education, centre-based childcare, language problems, externalising behaviour problems, internalising behaviour problems*

#### **The contributions of preschool children's temperament and parent-teacher relationships to their teacher-child relationships.**

Mefharet Veziroglu Celik (1), Ibrahim H. Acar (2), (1) Istanbul Medipol University, Turkey; (2) Ozyegin University, Turkey

This study was aimed to examine associations between child temperament and teacher-child relationships, mainly focusing on moderating role of parent-teacher relationship in between temperament and teacher-child relationship. Although children benefit positive relationships with their environment, children with reactive temperament benefit more from positive relationship with their teacher and parents (Rudasill et al., 2013). Child temperament is related to relationships with parents and teachers (Acar et al., 2018). Therefore, it's important to understand the relationships between parent and teachers by considering temperament. Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) posits that children develop through interactions. Children who have higher positive interactions with their teachers and parents show higher levels of social behaviours (Acar, Evans, Rudasill, & Yıldız, 2018). Positive relationships between parents and teachers are associated with the positive outcomes of children (Sheridan et al., 2012). We recruited 140 children. Teacher reported on their relationships with parents via Parent-Teacher Relationship Scale (Vickers & Minke, 1995; Acar & Ucus Guldali, 2017) and relationships with children via Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (Pianta, 2001). Parents reported on child temperament via Short Child Temperament Questionnaire (Prior, Sanson, & Oberklaid, 1989; Yagmurlu & Sanson, 2009). All procedures were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Participants provided informed written consent. Hierarchical regression models showed that there was a moderating effect of parent-teacher relationship on the associations between reactive temperament and teacher-child closeness ( $\hat{f}^2=29$ ,  $t=2.22$ ,  $p=.02$ ) but not for teacher-child conflict ( $\hat{f}^2=.19$ ,  $t=-1.30$ ,  $p=.19$ ). Children with high reactivity showed less closeness with teacher in the context of low parent-teacher relationship. Reactivity was positively related to teacher-child conflict ( $\hat{f}^2=42$ ,  $t=6.13$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The results suggest that children with reactive temperament may benefit from higher levels of parent-teacher relationship to improve closeness with teachers.

*temperament, parent teacher relationship, teacher child relationship, early childhood, Turkish children*

#### **Measuring young children's wellbeing in multiple environments**

Karin van Trijp (1), Ratib Lekhal (1), Elisabet Solheim Buøen (2), May Britt Drugli (3), (1) BI Norwegian Business School, Norway; (2) R-BUP Oslo, Norway; (3) NTNU Trondheim, Norway

This study focuses on the validation and development of instruments to measure young children's wellbeing in multiple environments. There is a debate in defining wellbeing (Dodge, Daly, Huyton, & Sander, 2012) and children's wellbeing is underexposed (Røysamb, 2014). Moreover, young children participate at home and in ECEC (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), which might result in discrepancies regarding their Wellbeing through protective and/or risk factors in different environments (Aalbers-Van Leeuwen, Van Hees, & Hermanns, 2002). The influence of these factors depends on the interplay between children's genes and environments (Røysamb & Nes, 2018). These challenges support the lack of an instrument that measures children's wellbeing in multiple environments. Van Trijp and Lekhal (2018) presented a conceptual framework regarding young children's well-being. Children's basic needs, based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (1943), interact with protective and risk factors in multiple environments, which defines if children reach wellbeing in different environments. This forms the basis to evaluate the Leiden Inventory of the Child's wellbeing in Daycare (LICW-D) questionnaire (De Schipper, Tavecchio, Van Ijzendoorn, & Van Zeijl, 2004) and to develop an instrument that measures children's wellbeing in multiple environments. This quantitative study belongs to the postpositivism paradigm. The LICW-D is evaluated through factor analyses and compared with findings on the new instrument. The study is approved by the Regional Committee for Medical and Health Research Ethics. Preliminary results from the LICW-D and new instrument will be presented. This study provides tools to understand and measure the complexity of young children's wellbeing in multiple environments.

*wellbeing, young children, ECEC, framework, instruments*

## CHALLENGING GENDER STEREOTYPES IN ECEC

Self-organised symposium

Few men are working in ECEC (Oberhuemer, Schreyer, & Neuman, 2010, Peeters, Rohrmann, & Emilsen, 2015). The presentations in this symposium focus on how gender stereotypes can be challenged by men's participation in the Early Years workforce. A cross-country comparison from Ireland and Australia points out that in gender-mixed teams, gender stereotypes are simultaneously challenged and reinforced. Research on children's views and adult-child-interactions in the UK and in Germany shows the relevance of metaphoric discourses on gender in everyday interactions in ECEC. It is not practitioner's sex, but their willingness to reflect on the effects of gender stereotypes that can support children's self development beyond gendered patterns. However, children need to see their diverse society reflected in ECEC institutions, including men and women. Establishing a gender-balanced work force is crucial for children's development if it goes hand in hand with a gender conscious pedagogy.

**Chair: Kari Emilsen, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education (QMUC), Norway**

### Navigating gender roles: A comparison of the male early childhood workforce in Australia and Ireland

Joanne McHale (1), Victoria Sullivan (2), (1) Technological University of Dublin, Ireland; (2) University of Queensland, Australia

Reconciling the role of men in early childhood continues to be a minefield (Tennhoff et al, 2015). And yet, in a sector characterised by persistent staffing issues, the potential for men's contribution cannot be ignored. This research sets out to compare the experiences of male educators in Australia and Ireland as they navigate their roles. This study follows previous international research on gender equality and the role of men in ECEC challenging traditional gender roles (Brody 2014) and the issues of contradictory positions of reinforcing stereotypes (Nentwich et al, 2013) and their recruitment as offering a solution to both labour shortages (Peeters, 2007) and gendered practices (Cameron, 2001). The construction of gender as embedded in social structures (Cameron et al, 1999; Borge, 2017) and men's navigation of a female dominated workforce underpins this research. We follow an interpretative qualitative approach, undertaking a thematic analyses of our interview data. Ethical approval for this research was granted through each researcher's University Ethics Board. Pseudonyms were used and all identifying data was removed to ensure participant anonymity. Men that enter the ECEC workforce are challenging gender stereotypes simply because it is seen as "women's work" (Sargent, 2004). Findings observed in the data from both countries demonstrates that gender norms can be reinforced through the actions and thoughts of the ECEC staff. The implications for governmental and industry policy, ECEC practice and the recruitment and retention of male educators as an ameliorating factor to staffing and gender roles are discussed.

*gender, workforce, recruitment, gendered roles, men in ECEC*

### Men in childcare: What do the children think? - A joint project between the London Early Years Foundation (LEYF) and The University of Wolverhampton

Helen Perkins (1) Tracey Edwards (1), June O'Sullivan (2), (2) Nick Corlett (2), Lukas Parry-Norman (2), (1) University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom; (2) London early Years Foundation, United Kingdom

This paper draws on children's and teachers' experiences of men in childcare, reflecting on how gendered pedagogies in ECEC practice may limit children's perceptions of self. We set out to explore what the children think about their practitioners and how this may impact constructions of gender roles. Based on the previous research by June O'Sullivan (MBE) and Sue Chambers (2012) which found that children do not differentiate between staff members based on gender when selecting activities, with the exception of literacy, in which boys participated, but chose female practitioners for this activity. This research is mainly qualitative and based within a socio-cultural perspective. A praxeological approach is used, positioning teachers as researchers (Pascal and Bertram, 2012). Photographs of familiar staff (male and female) were used with children to provoke dialogue around gender stereotypical activities. Data were collected through interviews with children and a focus group with the teacher-researchers. Children's rights are attended to by teacher-researchers noticing and valuing children and their potential contribution to research, and ensuring that children have information and a choice about participation, including the right not to participate. Findings suggest that children need to see their diverse society reflected in their nurseries. Teachers who provide a rich, gender neutral learning environment, allows children to embrace positive, non-stereotypical gendered behaviours. Good practice is seen where teachers (male and female) act consciously to avoid perpetuating gender stereotypical behaviours. ECEC professionals should be aware of how their own values and beliefs may influence children's understanding of gender.

*men in childcare, gender, pedagogy, practice-based inquiry, praxeology*



## **Gender in early childhood education - A metaphorical discourse**

Markus Andrä (1), Marina Fuertes (2), (1) FH Dresden, Germany; (2) Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa, Portugal

This research analyses and compares the practice of gender socialisation in ECE institutions in Portugal and Germany as a metaphorical discourse in pedagogical interactions. It's an attempt to decode the construction of gender stereotypes in these encounters. Researches recently analysed the pedagogical behaviour of male and female professionals in ECE (Brandes et al. 2016, Fuertes et al. 2018), but have mostly neglected the verbal content of adult-child interactions. Boys and girls have astonishing metaphorical concepts regarding gender that can hardly be derived from direct experiences in their socialisation as ethnographic research shows (Maccoby 2000, Sheldon & Rohleder 1996). The theoretical framework is provided here by the conceptual metaphor theory, which allows to analyse metaphorical constructions of gender (Lakoff & Johnson 1999). The qualitative methodology of this research follows the idea of studying social action by interpretative methods (Weber 1984). Means of Systematic Analysis of Metaphors are used (Schmitt 2017). All professionals and parents of the participating children have granted permission via consent form. The transcriptions have been anonymised. All tasks were age appropriate. The socialisation of boys and girls can be described as an ongoing discourse of metaphorical meanings. The metaphorical concepts based on the gender scheme represent a stereotypical order of male and female positions in the social world but show ambivalence as well. ECE professionals should be aware of the metaphorical concepts of gender which are part of the daily discourse in any ECE-institution and be capable to see the ambivalence and flexibility in these constructions.

*gender, stereotype, metaphor, interaction, identity*

# Poster Symposium Set I

14:50 – 15:40, Wednesday 21st August 2019

I 1

## **What does it mean that children are doing music? - Grasping from a body and movement**

Shiho Yokoi, Nagoya Gakuin University, Japan

This research aims to clarify what children are doing music by understanding their movement, and from the appearance of children's play, what state the body is when doing music. Fujinami's "Motion analysis of samba performance" Acoustical Society of Japan 2011 is a study targeting the performer's movement. Fujinami states that music isn't only a state when there's a musical sound or sound is being produced. Music begins from preliminary actions that emit sounds until the end of the sound-producing actions, not a time sound stops. His statement supports this research's result. In this research, the interview data for musicians conducted are analysed by SCAT, and captures the children's appearance of doing music based on "teaching the concepts of music through movement" led by Dalcroze's theory. The research method is a qualitative study. Practical scenes of 5-years-old kindergarteners' plays are recorded with a video and analysed as auxiliary material. The images to be made public are processed so as to maintain the children's privacy and not identifying individuals. The followings were clarified as a result of the analysis: 1. Children's body doing music is not exactly the same timing as audible music, but there's a slight aggressive deviation in the movement and the body. 2. The body moving in the course of music is accompanied by a preliminary movement. From these points that became clear as a result of analysis, it can be said that it would be possible to objectively understand children's appearance of doing music.

*doing music body, rhythm play, 5 years old kindergarteners' body and movement, slight aggressive deviation*

I 2

## **Innovative therapeutic teaching aid for dyslexic children: PE with EDUballs integrated with language exercises**

Sara Wawrzyniak, Ireneusz, Cichy, Agnieszka, Krysmann, Andrzej Rokita, University School of Physical Education in Wrocław, Poland

This study aimed at investigating the effects of physical education (PE) with EDUballs on dyslexic children's language skills. Dyslexia is characterized by difficulties in areas such as reading, spelling, writing, and math. Developmental disorders may be also identified in motor skills, specifically bimanual coordination and fine motor skills (Capellini et al., 2010). According to the positive results of the implementation of intervention programmes during PE on children's academic and motor performances (Marttinen et al., 2017), the EDUball, an interdisciplinary approach to PE was used in the research. The EDUball contains 100 balls with letters, numbers and mathematical signs. The concept relies on the improvement of children's cognitive and motor performances through movement and playing. The research used a pedagogical experiment method and a parallel group's technique: experimental (N=9) and control groups (N=10). The study involved third-grade children from Therapeutic Elementary School for dyslexic children. In experimental group, the PE programme was integrated with literacy content using EDUballs. Language skills were tested by a standardized test for elementary schoolchildren. Test consisted of knowledge of letters, copying letters, reading, reading comprehension, listening, memory writing, and rewriting. Data were collected in pre-and post-tests. The research obtained the written consent from the school's headmaster and children's parents/guardians. After experimental programme children made fewer or none mistakes in writing, and read faster and comprehended better in reading. The EDUball approach may serve as an effective therapeutic teaching aid for dyslexic children. The integration or supplementation of EDUballs with traditional therapeutic methods may improve children achievements.

*special school, dyslexia, language skills interdisciplinary teaching, EDUballs*

I 3

## **What should daycare centres do in the event of a disaster?**

Miho Nishimura, Tokyo Future University, Japan

This is a case study of one centre affected by the Hokkaido earthquake of September 2018. The study aims to identify what daycare centres can do for children and their families when disaster strikes. The town of Abira was near the 6.0 earthquake's epicentre. Many houses were destroyed, and power outages occurred. Still, Abira's daycare cares were open every day after the earthquake. Many previous studies have focused on preparedness and evacuation drills (Abramson, Cox, Fothergill, & Tobin, 2018; Kondo,

2015), but few have considered the role of centres immediately after a disaster strikes. The conceptual framework is case study approach. This study includes interviews conducted in February 2019 with the principals of the two daycares in Abira. Both principals agreed to be interviewed and for the results to be published. Here, we identify four roles of daycare centres. First, they offer safe shelter to families with young children. In Japan, schools are used as shelters, but there is no place for play, and children must be quiet. Parents prefer staying at daycares over shelters. Second, they offer a safe place for school children, whose schools were closed for two weeks after the disaster. Third, they serve as a base for disaster assistance, such as the soup-run and emergency food and relief supplies for families. Fourth, they support victim families by providing bathing and laundry facilities. This study suggest daycare centres are safe and reliable place for children and parents in a time of disaster.

*disaster, daycare centre, Hokkaido earthquake reconstruction of life, shelter*

I 4

#### **What's the role of local government in the transition process? - An example from Linköping municipality in Sweden**

Keiichiro Yazaki, University of Tokyo, Japan

This study aims to explore how local government policy in Sweden contributes to child's transition from ECEC to primary education, focusing on Linköping municipality. Previously, many studies have shown how this transition has taken place from the perspectives of children, teachers, and parents (e.g., Ackesjö, 2013, 2017; Alatalo, Meier, & Frank, 2016). Although these studies may describe the "Swedish" case, it is also possible that there is diversity within Sweden. This study focuses on local government in line with the framework of "included middle" (Bobbio, 1996), which provides possibility to avoid dualistic thinking between national government and educational institution. Within a paradigm of international and comparative education, this study adopts a qualitative methodology to investigate local contexts in detail. The method is to analyse the guidelines and social backgrounds in Linköping municipality in order to get a sense of the effects of local diversity on transition. The data was anonymously provided by the staff at Linköping municipality and confidentially stored following EECERA Ethical Code. There is also documented permission to publish the outcomes of this study. Two findings became clear: i) Linköping municipality creates a foundation which enables information about children to be conveyed effectively; and ii) Linköping municipality ensures common contents in the transition process such as language, communication, and reasoning abilities, which are likely to be related to the socio-academic background in Linköping. These findings imply that it is important for local government to take local contexts into account when accepting transition policy issued by national government.

*transition from early childhood education and care to primary education, Sweden, local government Linköping, guideline*

I 5

#### **How does a young teacher in Japan build relationships with a young child through mutual understanding?**

Aki Uemura, Ohkagakuen University, Japan

This study aims to clarify the key factors in building relationships between young teachers and young children through mutual understanding. According to previous quantitative studies, young teachers can gradually predict the meaning of children's behaviour (Vander, 1988; Shiga, 2001). Therefore, it is necessary to qualitatively clarify the key factors in building the above-mentioned relationships. This study is based on the intersubjective relationship theory, which suggests that teachers and children are both creators of relationships (Trevarthen, 2010; Kujiraoka, 2011). The researcher interviewed a young teacher about her relationship with a two-year-old-girl student once a month from May 2017 to April 2018. The responses were qualitatively analysed using the Trajectory Equifinality Model (Sato et al., 2012). The interview purpose and considerations for personal information protection were explained to the participant and the child's parents, and consent was obtained. Moreover, permission was obtained from the university's research and ethical guidelines committee. The following factors were found to be obstacles to building the relationship: the feeling of being mentally busy, and conflict with various children's responses. Furthermore, the factors promoting relationship building were identified: changes in the perspective of the child owing to advice from other teachers, and consensus among teachers regarding teaching methodology. It was clear that it is difficult for young teachers to build relationships with individuals in a group, but with external support, building such relationships smoothly is possible. Therefore, it was suggested that providing external support for solving their various conflicts contributes to building relationships and professional childcare development.

*young teacher, understanding of young children, building relationships interview, the Trajectory Equifinality Model*

### **Children's interaction patterns in a daycare centre**

Rianne H. Slingerland, Aarhus University, Denmark

The Ph.D. project aims to examine children's ways of speaking based on a linguistic ethnographic approach and a children-oriented practice perspective and aims to create an empirical, analytical and theoretical insight into language as it is practiced by children in ECEC. The project relates to studies within the sociological/anthropological understandings of peer-talk and the relation to childhood socio-cultural structures and children's shared discursive worlds (Cekaite, et al., 2014). The theoretical framework draws on the understanding of language as social practice related to social groups and events (Tusting, 2015) and in combination with Hymes' language theory (1974) creates a broad understanding of children's language practices. The project anchors in the understanding of linguistic ethnography (Maybin & Tusting, 2011; Rampton et al., 2004). The methodology draws on the children's perspectives in a first persons view on children's peer-talk (Gulløv, 1999; James et al., 1998). The qualitative, exploratory and practice-oriented method design includes ethnographic participant observation, field notes, sound and video recordings and children interviews. Ethical considerations in research with children can be seen as an ongoing social practice. Among other things, children's reactions towards my participated observation is essential for the how I practice my researcher positions, produce empirical data, analyse and represent children's language practices. The presented discussion considers the methodical research design in doing research with children, focusing on entering the field, research positions and using video recording. The research provide ECEC-practice with a children-orientated and interactional language view, adding contextualized nuances to language pedagogy practices with and around children.

*children's peer-talk, children's language use, linguistic ethnography children-orientated practice perspective, children's peer discursive practices*

### **The meaning of toddlers' hiding places at a childcare centre**

Seo-Yeun Lee, Kwi Ok Nah, Soonchunhyang University, South Korea

The purpose of this study is to look at what toddlers' hiding places at a childcare centre mean to them. Young children set apart their own places to hide in order to separate themselves from the adults' world (Colwell et al, 2016). They create their own culture and perform creative and extended play in these hiding places (Skånfors et al, 2009). However, toddlers are not supposed to be out of an adult's sight. The theoretical framework of this study is based on the prospect-refuge theory which stems from Darwin's habitat theory. According to habitat theory, human beings prefer places where they can see others but cannot be seen by them, which accords well with the theory of evolution (Appleton, 1975). The researcher observed eight two-year-old toddlers for two months, and conducted interviews with them while discussing with pictures and photos of them hiding and playing in differing hiding places. The data were analysed using Colaizzi (1978)'s phenomenological method. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the director and parents of the childcare centre and received consent from parents. The results of this study showed that the meanings of the hiding places of toddlers were places to recover their body and mind independently, to realize their imagination, to be free from adults' gaze and regulations and to enhance intimacy with their peers and the teacher. This study suggests that practitioners should understand the benefits of hiding places for toddlers, and consider allowing them to play in covered areas.

*hiding place, secret, toddler childcare centre, South Korea*

### **Children's self-regulation and coping strategies in a frustrated context in early education**

Jouni Veijalainen, Jyrki Reunamo, Nina Sajaniemi, Eira Suhonen, University of Helsinki, Finland

The research tries to contribute the empirical understanding of how self-regulation (SR) supported children's coping strategies which they will possibly use in a hypothetical frustrated context. Previous research has assessed children's SR and frustration with observational or evaluation-based methods (Degnan et al. 2008; Graziano et al. 2007). SR is a child's ability to adjust his/her own emotions, behaviour, cognitive functions and a strength, whereby a child can regulate frustrated situations and his/her attention properly (Ayduk et al., 2000). The study's context were conducted by using mixed methods. Two independent instruments to measure SR and strategies for frustration were used. SR were assessed by teacher with an evaluation form. The coping strategies of frustration were studied via child interview. The children were not exposed to strong stimuli or their physical integrity was not violated. There was no register collection, and neither the personal information of parents nor that of the teachers. The interviews were conducted in a familiar day care environment, without any sensory distractions. The children were told that they could stop

the interview when they wanted. Children with good SR skills described persistent strategies and it was not so common for children with weak SR skills. They seemed to flexibly respond and did not give up. They had a tenacious and clear strategy. The children with weak SR skills had more withdrawal strategies than children with good SR skills. Teachers and children themselves can talk about their coping strategies and use them in activities they both understand.

*self-regulation, coping strategies, frustration interview, evaluation*

I 9

### **The role of materiality in the teaching-learning of mathematics between 4 and 6 years**

Claire Taisson-Perdicakis, Haute école pédagogique du canton de Vaud, Switzerland

The poster shows how students (4 to 6) build their mathematical skills through the materiality defined by the space, support (play or game), objects, body and gestures. Our research consists of a longitudinal study in which pupils have been followed during two years when learning mathematics. Pupils build their new reading skills by resorting to the materiality as well (Taisson-Perdicakis, 2013, 2014, 2018). When learning to read, pupils use semiotic abilities: material objects and their uses, basic gestures and their meaning (Moro & Rodríguez, 2005). We make the hypothesis that the children's basic abilities related to materiality constitute a resource in teaching-learning mathematics situations as well. This research fits into a double epistemological framework: the didactics of mathematics (Spelke, 2017), the Vygotskian socio-historical and semiotical perspective on development (Vygotsky, 1934/1997). The data collected consist of videos of class sequences. For each teaching sequence, on the level of macrogenetic analysis, we have made up the synopsis from which we have selected remarkable events in terms of materiality. Those remarkable events are composed of the microgenetic analysis using tools such as photograms. Parents and students were invited to an information meeting. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Pseudonyms have replaced the names of participants. Materiality appears as a resource for teaching-learning mathematics between 4 and 6 years. The research aims to provide information on efficient practices in preschool classes. The purpose is to make teachers aware of the importance of the use of materiality in their practices.

*teaching-learning, didactics of mathematics, materiality cultural-historical psychology, child's psychological development*

I 10

### **Participatory Action Research (PAR) with children**

Georgia Gessiou, Maria Sakellariou, University of Ioannina, Greece

The aim of the study is to support a critical conversation about Participatory Action Research with children focusing on the tension among participatory context, the equal rights of children to participate (UNCRC, 1989) and the participatory processes. Children's rights and their participation in research and decision-making has drawn much attention the recent years. However few researches have attempted to genuinely collaborate with them (Jacquez et al., 2012). As Shamrova & Cummings (2017:407) concluded, the oversimplification of children's involvement and misinterpretation of their voices has become a concern for many researchers. We build on a socio-cultural framework (Rogoff, 2003) with references to the new sociology of childhood (Corsaro, 1997, 2015), recognising children as active agents who engage in reciprocal interactions with the people and their environments. The study is situated within (a) an interpretative paradigm, using qualitative research methods (interviews with children-parents-educators and focus groups) and (b) a naturalistic paradigm exploring the lived experience of participants emerged from the PAR study. University ethics approval was obtained. All participants were informed of confidentiality and their consents were obtained. The ethical issues were based on the mutual respect and trusting relationships. The spiral stages of PAR and the process-oriented design enabled a dynamic interaction between all the participants allowing the distribution of power among all of them. We will also emphasise on researcher's role during the PAR. The research opens a critical dialogue around issues of methodological tools for children's participation as well as the cultural sensitivity of PAR as an approach of engaging children.

*participatory action research, children's participation, methodological features process-oriented design, focus groups interviews*

I 11

### **Language education at an early stage: new ways**

Marina Achaeva, Nadezda Pospelova, Kazan Federal University in Yelabuga, Russia

The purpose of the study is to develop effective methods for learning English at an early stage of study on the basis of childhood museum materials. Relationship of this investigation to previous research works: International schools in Russia, Tatarstan, 2017; Language education: new moves, 2017. It underpins our study by examining the specifics of the work of schools of a new type, new methods of learning English. The study is based on psychology of child development (Vygotsky, 2014); psychological

prerequisites for the early mastery of foreign languages (Leontiev, 1985); methods of studying foreign languages for the smallest (Negnyvitskya, 1987). The paradigm of our investigation lies in competence - based approach. FL methodology includes individual differences: age, intelligence, motivation, learning style. The methods are observations; conversations (by topic, informative, summarizing, fixing); questioning. For ethical considerations, parents fill out consent forms about museum collections, if they do not agree they can refuse. The tasks are aimed at understanding the culture of the English-speaking countries and at their own culture. Interesting brochures about museum collections and excursions are sent out. Children study such brochures in their native language, then the excursions are organized in English. Themes of excursions can be as follows: The development of children's toys. Toys for girls. Table games. Such an approach in the development of preschoolers corresponds to one of the principles of personality-oriented didactics - the principle of the synthesis of intelligence, emotions and actions, and contributes to the study of language.

*mini-museums; childhood museums; preschoolers; museum pedagogy; methods of learning English., early education, language learning teaching methods, new approaches*

I 12

### **Relationship-oriented organizational culture and relational satisfaction with the members of ECE institution perceived by teachers: The mediating role of awareness of ECE community**

Hee-kyung Park, Kai-sook Chung, Jiyeon Kim, Hyo-Jeong Kim, Pusan National University, South Korea

This study examined the early childhood teachers' awareness of educational community as mediators in links between relationship-oriented organizational culture and relational satisfaction with the members of early childhood education institution. In Korea, early childhood education institutions have relationship-oriented organizational culture and it's important to build an educational community to offer relational satisfaction for teachers. Variables measured in this survey were self-reported the awareness of early childhood educational community consisted of partnership and sharing core values (Chung, Kyun, Park, 2015), relationship-oriented organizational culture (Seo, 2006) and relational satisfaction with the members of early childhood education institution (Cho, 2004). The subjects were 638 teachers in South Korea. Using the collected data, descriptive analysis, correlations analysis, regression analysis and mediational analysis was conducted via SPSS 23 and SPSS macro. All teachers agreed to participate in this research. The results are that first, it showed the awareness of early childhood educational community and relationship-oriented organizational culture were positively correlated with relational satisfaction. Second, relationship-oriented organizational culture was significantly associated with partnership and sharing core values, and with relational satisfaction. And when partnership and sharing core values were added to the model, the direct effect between relationship-oriented organizational culture and relational satisfaction was reduced. Further only sharing core values emerged as a significant mediator of this relation. Findings suggested that building relationship-oriented organizational culture and creating opportunities for teacher to share core values could improve relational satisfaction. It is recommended that institutions conduct various rituals. Through ritual activities, teachers can express their opinions, share core values comfortably, and eventually improve their relationship satisfaction.

*perception of early childhood educational community, relationship-oriented organizational culture, relational satisfaction early childhood education institute, early childhood teacher*

I 13

### **Group composition indexes and the quality of teacher-child interactions in preschool: A systematic review**

Nadine Correia, Cecilia Aguiar, Ana Lúcia, ISCTE-IUL, Portugal

The present review systematizes information on group composition indexes focusing on preschool contexts and their associations with teachers' educational practices. This is the first review conducted with this purpose. High-quality classroom processes have been associated with positive child outcomes (Mashburn et al., 2008). Further, child characteristics and the classroom composition, an indicator of the structural features of the social context (Reid & Ready, 2013), can influence classroom quality (Kuger, Kluczniok, Kaplan & Rossbach, 2016). Together, these findings suggest the transactional nature of effects. A systematic search was conducted in Academic Search Complete, ERIC, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, Psychology and Behavioural Sciences Collection, Scopus and Web of Science. Based on the SPIDER framework, search terms were defined considering all possible combinations of the targeted population, the phenomenon of interest, and the method of evaluation (e.g., centre-based childcare OR preschool\* AND teacher\* OR educator\* AND group composition OR classroom characteristics AND class\* observation\* OR observed interaction\*). Thirty-one empirical studies, with samples of preschool-aged children, attending centre-based childcare, and providing quantitative data on the association between group characteristics and observed interactions and teachers' practices were selected for qualitative syntheses, based on interrater agreement. Findings suggest most classroom composition indexes focused on ability, age, ethnicity, family income, gender, home language, and immigrant background. Results concerning

the association patterns between classroom composition and teacher-child interactions will be presented. By systematically gathering and analysing data on how group composition and teacher-child interactions relate, decision-making processes concerning the organization of groups of preschoolers, may be optimized.

*systematic review, group composition, teacher-child interactions preschool, observation measures*

I 14

### **Monitoring ECE policies in Brazil**

Eliana M Bhering (1), Joice Pereira (2), Rosinete Schmitt (2), Tiago Bartholo (3), Mariane Koslinski (3),

(1) Fundação Carlos Chagas, Brazil; (2) Secretaria Municipal de Educação, Brazil; (3) Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The project aim was to develop/implement a monitoring system that considers aspects of quality ECE, related to staff education, children, their families' profiles; characteristics of building and equipment; existing materials and toys. In order to develop ECE policies and practices that are relevant to the targeted population, research on monitoring and assessment has been lately developed in Brazil (Bhering et al; 2018; Campos, 2017; Souza, et al 2015). The literature on ECE quality and assessment indicates that environment measures, taken from self-assessment (Campos, 2017), external assessment (Bhering, et al 2014), through tutorial process (Souza, et al, 2015) may enlighten and enrich teachers' practices and therefore children may benefit from the ECE opportunities. To develop the municipal monitoring system, groups of indicators were organised to capture crucial information which is extracted from existing municipal database and also fed by ECE municipal professionals, providing all involved reports yearly. The concern was towards using secondary data from different sources within the public sector where the project took place. Access to data is restricted to a group of professionals, therefore authorisation had to be given to participants to use it. A monitoring system may help to develop and revise/improve public policies so as to meet the educational goals set by Education Councils. Children and families' profile proved to be very important so as to review practices involving curriculum conceptions and implementation. The municipality where the system has been developed has increasingly acknowledged the benefits of having more detailed information on its resources and outcomes.

*early childhood education, monitoring system, policies and practices public system, monitoring outcomes*

I 15

### **Enhancing children's self-regulation: DAGIS-intervention study**

Taina Sainio, University of Helsinki, Finland

DAGIS-research is interested in healthy behaviours and stress regulation in Finnish preschool children (3-6-year olds). The aim of this sub-study was to investigate the effectiveness of a MindUP™-based intervention designed to enhance preschool children's self-regulation (SR) skills. The early childhood years have been identified as highly significant for the development of SR skills. Previous studies have shown that improving children's SR skills during early childhood can produce long-term health and educational outcomes (McClelland et al. 2013; Moffit et al. 2011). Social and emotional learning (SEL)-framework of this study draws from child development, health promotion, affective neuroscience and positive psychology (Zins, 2004; Durlak; 2011). The study used quasi-experimental controlled design. Participants were 801 children and 246 ECE- professionals in 29 public kindergartens in Finland. The kindergartens were randomised in intervention (n=13) and control (n=16) kindergartens. Control kindergartens implemented traditional early education curriculum. Methods included pre- and post-questionnaires for ECE-professionals assessing children's SR. The study was approved by the Ethics Committee (University of Helsinki). Informed consent has also been obtained from kindergarten principals, ECE-professionals and parents of the participating children. According to preliminary quantitative analyses, the children's SR skills did not differ (ATTEX-scale) in intervention and control groups after the intervention. However, ECE-professionals reported that the intervention program was useful (78%), supported their knowledge about the self-regulation skills of children (75%), children learned to calm their minds regularly (90%) and children's SR skills were strengthened (89%). Results suggest that the MindUP™-based program can be an effective way to promote children's SR in kindergartens.

*self-regulation, stress-regulation, intervention MindUP™-based program, early childhood education*

I 16

### **An updated concept of care in early childhood education?**

Mie Josefson, Bodil Halvars, Stockholm University, Sweden

The overall aim is to explore how care as a concept and practice is expressed in the encounter between children, parents and preschool teachers. The concept of care has been studied in Swedish preschool research, and summarized in four ways (Josefson

2018): as neglected (Halldén 2016), as elusive (Löfdahl & Folke-Fichtelius 2015), as expanded (Dahlgren 2017) and/or as delimited (Halldén 2016). Based on this, we will explore how the care is understood and implemented in preschool practice, in the Anthropocene epoch. Exploring care in preschool, the proximity ethical theory (Vetlesen 2001, 2015) is suitable for our field of interest. Proximity ethics especially emphasize ethical choices, human relations and encounters, which serve as the basis for the assessment and understanding of the other. The study is conducted in an interdisciplinary discipline of ECE, with an ethnographic approach including participant observations, focus group and stimulated recall. The ethical considerations will, besides following good research practice (Swedish Research Council 2017), also calibrate with the concept apparatus of proximity ethics. The participants will be informed about secrecy, de-identification and confidentiality. The (im)balance of power between adults and children is taken in concern during the research process. The discussion will revolve around what care implies in policy and practice in contemporary ECE. Preliminary findings indicate what an updated concept of care might challenge in the preschool context. Problematizing the immeasurable value of care in ECE will have consequences for the organization, the environment, daily activities and routines in preschool, as well as didactic implications.

*concept of care, preschool, proximity ethics ethical relations, Anthropocene*

I 17

### **Possibilities and challenges of early childhood music PCK**

So Yeun Park, Jin-Hee Lee, Keimyung University, South Korea

The purpose of this research is to explore the possibilities and challenges of early childhood music PCK (Pedagogical Content Knowledge), which combines content knowledge, instructional methods, and knowledge of children. As PCK, first introduced by Shulman in 1986, has been emphasized with the increased awareness of the importance of teacher professionalism in music education, the need for more studies about how PCK works in the real classrooms is raised (Millican, 2013). We hoped to understand how a childcare teacher interprets and applies her PCK on early childhood music education. Our theoretical framework draws upon current theories of pedagogical experimentation (Olsson, 2009), and action research in the field (Mac Naughton & Hughes, 2009). Within the qualitative research paradigm, we conducted action research with a childcare teacher from April 2017 to February 2018. Collected data consisted of interviews, journals, photos, video materials, activity products, telephone conversations, and e-mail correspondences. A consent form was signed by the teacher and parents. Anonymity and their right to discontinue the study at any time were explained. The participating teacher focused on one area of her PCK, 'enriched musical activities related to the meter and rhythm' and then extended it to other aspects of PCK. She recognized PCK as a 'compass' for navigating music activities with her students in her classroom and wanted to find ways to better utilize various elements of PCK for her music activities. PCK showed potentials to function as flexible and useful tools for accumulating teachers' practical knowledge in the field of ECE.

*PCK, early childhood education, early childhood music education childcare teacher, action research*

I 18

### **Story of early childhood teachers on developmentally appropriate practices (DAP)**

Jung Min Hue, Lee Jin-Hee, Keimyung University, South Korea

The purpose of this study was to investigate how DAP has been interpreted and practiced by early childhood teachers in South Korea, where strong measures for quality control by the government are distinguished. Despite increased concerns that ECE has been heavily influenced by dominant discourses (Moss, 2019) the reality of early childhood classrooms is resistant to changes. As developmental psychology has become 'striated spaces' for ECE teachers (Olsson, 2009; Sellers, 2013/2018), ways to draw 'lines of flight' are sought for. Within the qualitative research framework, we conducted 5 semi-structured individual interviews with 13 teachers, a total of 65 interviews, and two group interviews. Participants agreed to voluntarily participate in this study. Anonymity and their rights to withdraw from the study at any time were explained. South Korea's ECE curriculum is set up by 3 different age groups. Educational activities and materials are offered as supports but many teachers interpreted them as a time-table to comply with, resulting in rigidly structured thoughts and practices. For example, 4-year-old classroom teachers hesitated to read the "Rainbow Fish", which is now presented as developmentally appropriate for 5-year olds. South Korea is currently in the process of revising ECE curriculum. Our findings suggest that ECE curriculum should be reviewed from more diverse perspectives beyond developmental psychology so that ECE teachers can implement the curriculum with autonomy and expertise.

*national-level early childhood curriculum, developmentally appropriate practices (DAP), early childhood teachers educational activities, diverse perspectives*



### **Importance of "visualisation" in the process of understanding children**

Keiko Iwata, Hiroto Oomameuda, Tamagawa University, Japan

In this study, based on an analysis of attempts to visualize how children develop interests and what they are motivated to try in play activities in a nursery school, we analysed how teachers' understanding of children deepened. Educational documentation represents an important tool in understanding children's learning, as a pioneering practice in Reggio Emilia, Italy (Rinaldi, 2006). Creating documentation alone, however, does not deepen teachers' understanding of children. Such documentation should be prepared so that it gauges children's interests from a second-person approach, as indicated by Reddy (2008), which suggests reflection-in-action, as Schön (1983) demonstrated. This study focused on teachers' use of the mobile application, which is an application by which comments can be easily attached to the photographs taken in a private nursery school in Japan. We interviewed teachers to find out about their experience in using this application. For this research, prior consent of nursery school staff and children's parents was taken with the help of a consent form and information sheet. During the interviews, teachers were given the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time. Analysis of interviews clarified that teachers could deepen their understanding of children by using the application. It gave information on children's interest triggers. As more teachers became aware of such "interest triggers" and activities of children became more in-depth, this prompted revisiting past learning scenarios, thinking of future ones, and reworking them from various perspectives. These interest triggers can be shared with parents.

*documentation, visualisation, second person approach reflection-in-action, understanding of children*

### **The ecosystem of early childhood educator decision making with digital interactive technology**

Jubilee Smith, Southern Cross University, Australia

The aim is to understand the process of educator's decision-making ecosystem regarding use of digital interactive technology in early childhood education. Use of digital and interactive technology has been contentious for ECE (Danby, Fler, Davidson, & Hatzigianni, 2018) with no consensus about appropriate use in Australia (ECA, 2018). Limited information and literature guides ECE (Edwards, 2013; Fler, 2013; Marsh, Plowman, Yamada-Rice, Bishop & Scott, 2016; Plowman, 2016), ECE have not been inclined to include this in the EC setting (Palaiologou, 2016) with a lack of guidance for these decisions (Hatzigianni & Kalaitzidis, 2018). Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner & Ceci (1994) and Bronfenbrenner (1979) aligned with EC philosophy (Bowes, Grace, & Hayes, 2012) and research; Hatzigianni & Kalaitzidis (2018) and Highfield, De Gioia & Lane (2016). The study was underpinned by an interpretivist paradigm using qualitative methodology (Cresswell, 2009; Cohen and Manion, 1994). Methods; document analysis, survey and interviews. Analysis; thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Ethics sought from the researcher's university ethics committee - granted for surveys and interviews. ECE decision making with digital technology exists within a complex ecosystem of internal and external influences. The internal influences include; beliefs, personal philosophy and educational experience. The external influences include social context (cultural and policy context) and context of the early childhood centre. Implications for the wider EC research field by providing information regarding how ECE make decisions about digital and interactive technology and key influences on these decisions impacting upon practice with children.

*digital technology, educators, decision making ecosystem, barriers*

### **Rethinking early years education quality in the era of accountability: Early years practitioners' and parents' experiences and perspectives of the U-turn of baseline assessment in reception classes: three case studies from London, England.**

Ran Harper, UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom

The research discusses how practitioners and parents perceive the Baseline Assessment (BA) in England and if data-based accountability improves early years education (EYE) quality. Within global neoliberal education reforms highlighting data-based accountability in governing education, schools and practitioners are made visible through data to government and parents ((Lingard et al., 2013). Governing through data has been applied to EYE in England. BAs were applied to 4yrs as a measurable starting dataset for education accountability. Moss (2014) argue for diverse contextual factors in governing educational practice and fear surveillance through data promotes 'one-ruler-measuring-all' in discussing EYE quality. Foucauldian critique of education is deployed to discuss how the knowledge and practice of governing through data become the 'regime' (Foucault, 1991; Roberts-Holmes and Bradbury, 2017). This qualitative research adopts a case study approach, deploying in-class observations and semi-structured interviews. Volunteer work prior to research, confidentiality and anonymity guarantee that ethical concerns like getting

consent, building rapport and privacy protection are overcome. The research finds that practitioners were negative about BAs, accusing them of compromising education quality, seeing children as data unit and undermining professional autonomy. It also argues that practitioners unconsciously became self-governing and voluntarily complied with performativity culture. Despite little knowledge of accountability measures, all parents admitted data play important role in school choices and were anxious about school choices through data. EYE is firmly tied in the educational accountability system, and the discourse of governing through data constrains practitioners' professionalism and parents' school choices, which calls for reform in accountability policies in England.

*accountability measures, early years education quality, governing through data educational governance, Foucauldian educational critique*

I 22

### **The importance of co-operation between psychologists, parents and teachers in the regulation of material needs of children in times of economic crisis**

Cleopatra Pagiavli (1), Eleni Tympa (2), Sofia Stefanidou (1), (1) Mpillios Preschool Centre, Greece; (2) University of Ioannina, Greece

The aim of the study is to find out the impact of the economic crisis on children's demands, parents' mental health and how a psychologist can help to reduce family stress. The economic crisis has affected the social, emotional and mental health of the family (Boshara R. & Emmons R. 2015). Austerity has brought about a lot of changes in family life and has set different priorities. Children must face their parents' behavioural changes and simultaneously try to understand the reasons behind this difficult situation (Supon V. 2012, Friedline T. 2015). 95 mothers of a preschool centre in Thessaloniki participated, by answering an economic crisis related questionnaire. After the evaluation, all parents were invited to attend a workgroup held by the psychologist and the teachers. Various tips were suggested to reduce family stress. A month later, 20 parents were interviewed about the effectiveness of the psychologist's tips. All the participants had been informed of the aim of the study, anonymity was guaranteed and had the option to withdraw. Most of the parents believe that the crisis has made them emotionally vulnerable, aggressive and less functional. Parents believe that children grow up having learnt the hard way how to adjust to the new reality and they express anger. Parents were willing to express their concerns and found the workgroup helpful. The specialist's advice was that the children should be made aware of the problem and the cooperation of school and parents is the way to overcome potential difficulties.

*economic crisis, family stress, psychologist workgroup, vulnerable*

I 23

### **Facilitating teaching strategies and learning in Greek Early Years Department Students**

Eleni Tympa, Aggeliki Lapatoura, Ntaniela Baha, Vasiliki Karavid, Ioanna Sotiriadou, Antrianna Tzika, Vasiliki Saliai, Rania Theohari, George Vrionis, University of Ioannina, Greece

The aim of the study was to look at whether participation of ECEC students in experiential activities during their semester lessons could facilitate their learning and improve their performance on exams. Students experience teaching practices as somewhat limited to a one-sided passing on of knowledge to learners (Cross, 1981, Jogi, 2015). Studies have successfully proposed and implemented new educational approaches based on different techniques to ensure a different level of learning. Among these approaches, the element of experientiality, emotion and communication relationship are strongly dominate (Chrisafidis 2000, Bakirtzis, 2003, McPartland, 2018) The study involved 45 ECEC students (out of 110) of the first semester and 23 (out of 83) of the fifth, who volunteered to attend all the semester lessons, although they were not compulsory. All students participated actively during the lesson with presentations, musical games, role plays and group work. At the end of the semester the students underwent a semi-structured interview on the experiences and impressions of the teaching process, as well as the impact of the process on their written exams. Participants were informed in advance of the purposes of the study and their identities have been protected with the right to withdraw. All students stated that they enjoyed the process, preferred it from a typical lecture, gained more knowledge and were more prepared for the exams. 84% of them had a much better test score (grade 8 from 10). The teaching processes concern both teachers and students and require planning and further discussion.

*students, teaching strategies, active participation learning progress, group work*

### **The effects of financial crisis on the physical activity in young children**

Olga Kouli (1), Fotini Venetsanou (2) Antonis Kambas (1), Evangelos Bebetsos (1), Nikolaos Komoutos (3), (1) Democritus University of Thrace, Greece; (2) National and Kapodestrian University of Athens, Greece; (3) University of Thessaly, Greece

This study examines physical activity (PA) data of 4-6-year-old children in conjunction with socio-economic data of their families, from 2009 until today. Greek families have lost a significant part of their buying power (Foscolou et al. 2017), the investigation of the effects of the financial crisis on young children's PA would be important. Young children's participation in PA constitutes an important factor for obesity confrontation (Kambas et.al. 2014). Since health behaviours are formed at preschool age, PA significantly contributes to a healthy life long lifestyle. However, for the participation of preschoolers in organized PA fees is required; so, children's PA associates with family affluence (Michou et.al. 2019). Sample consisted of 373 preschool children, participating in public day-care centres in Greece. Children's ambulatory activity was recorded with pedometers, their parents' work status and educational level were assessed using the methodology of Doku et al. (2010), and their family affluence with the FAS II. The public authorities for day care centres provided official permission regarding ethical considerations, all participants provided written consent for their participation in the study. The results revealed that children's after school PA has been negatively affected by the financial crisis; PA, was significantly associated with family's affluence and not with parents' educational level. PA at preschool age should be placed in the front stage of policies that Greek State has to implement. Developmentally appropriate PA programs for young children, during school time and after school, must be integrated into this program for the benefit of public health.

*pedometry, preschool children, family affluence scale parents, economic crisis*

### **Practice and reflection on pre-service teachers' innovation science game course**

Lee-Feng Huang, Ya-Ling Chen, National Pingtung University, Taiwan

This study explored the performance of pre-service preschool teachers, who had no confidence in the sciences course since their childhood, in the course of "innovation design of science activities for preschoolers", which was designed according to the notion of "design thinking" and referred to the German learning workshops. Wedekind (2011) found that learning workshops can encourage pre-service teachers' motivation to explore science and inspire them to come up with innovative ideas. Ernst (1993) argued that adults are suggested to experience the pleasure of exploration which comes from experiences of active, inquiry, open and creative learning. The researchers adopted a qualitative research design in this study. The participants were 35 pre-service preschool teachers who enrolled in this course. The researchers conducted observation, interview and document collection methods to collect data. The collected data were sorted, coded and condensed to conclude the findings. These students were informed that they could decide not to participate in this study or withdraw at any time without any negative effect on their scores. The research results show that students enjoy the pleasures of free exploration, intensive interaction with peers, and self-initiative learning in the course. However, only a few students can explore science materials bravely and innovatively. The researchers suggest that instructors should provide pre-service teachers with more time and opportunities to raise open questions and encourage them to explore science materials more freely and creatively.

*design thinking, science activity, professional development pre-service teacher, learning workshops*

### **What do children feel attached to in outdoor walk environment?**

Mariko Miyata (1), Yumi Yodogawa (2), Sachiko Nozawa (2), (1) Shiraume Gakuen University, Japan; (2) University of Tokyo, Japan

In early childhood education and care, outdoor walk is one of the main activities often offered. However children's conception of outdoor walk experience is not studied enough. Thus, this study aims to investigate how and what children recognize about their outdoor walk. It was proposed in the previous research that children's recognition is connected to their previous experience in the town. Moreover, children had impression about their movement in which they efficiently used the feature of the place. This research applied Allison Clark's mosaic approach (2010) about a child's voice by the interview using a digital camera. In addition, we referred to Alexander's research (1978) which drew a common pattern in children's voice in city. In this research, I used photo projective method. From the photograph the child took and an interview, I analysed about the outdoor situation which the child is looking at. Prior to this survey, informed consent and voluntary participation was obtained. The study was conducted according

to University of Tokyo Ethical Guidelines. As a result of investigating over about one year to 14 persons (5 year-old), a common pattern was observed. Children liked the changing place. For example, they are the appearance of height, a colour, width, and an insect, the bloom of a plant, etc. The result of this research improved existence of the child in the city which tends to be made light of, and has proposed the state of a better city, and the state of childcare.

*outdoor environment, photo projective method, pattern mosaic approach, 5 year-old*

I 27

### **A Study on the characteristics of educational community capabilities of special education teachers and parents of a child with a disability**

Sin-Sil Gu, Jae-Kook Park, Soon-Young Hwang, Pusan National University, South Korea

The purpose of this study is to analyse the characteristics of educational community competence of special education teachers and parents of children with disabilities. For this research purpose, the tools of Soon-young Hwang, Jae-kook Park, and Hoo-hee Lee (2017) were modified to fit the purpose of this study. The theoretical review of previous studies (Lee, H. H. & Hwang, S. Y., 2016; Oh, E. K., 2008; Park, H. S., Song, Y. J., Lee, S. S., 2015) on the educational community capacity of special education teachers and parents of children with disabilities was also conducted. The collected data were analysed by one - way ANOVA, exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, potential profile analysis and independent sample T using SPSS23 and Mplus 7.1 program. This questionnaire will be anonymous and will not be used for any purpose other than research. The analysis results of collected data are as follows. First, community competency factors were derived from shared goals and emotional ties, mutual understanding through consideration and communication, voluntary responsibility and belonging sense. Second, the differences in community competence between special teachers and parents with disabilities showed significant differences ( $t=-3.15$ ,  $p<.01$ ) in factors related to mutual understanding through consideration and communication. We discussed the implications and limitations of the core competencies and practices that special education teachers and parents of children with disabilities should have in order to form desirable educational communities.

*educational community capabilities, special education teachers, parents of a child with a disability care and communication, mutual understanding*

I 28

### **Friendship skills – The associations between peer interaction skills and bullying among preschoolers**

Jennie Stolzmann-Frankenhaeuser, Maria Stoor-Grenner, Vilja Laaksonen, Laura Repo, Folkhälsans Förbund, Finland

This study examines the connection between bullying and peer interaction skills. Studies indicate that bullying does occur in ECE (Alsaker & Nägele 2008; Alsaker & Valkanover 2001; Crick, Casas & Ku, 1999; Kirves & Sajaniemi) and studies from Finland show that 12.6% of the children are involved in bullying (Repo 2015). Research shows that good peer interaction skills are related to acceptance by the peer group (e.g. Rose-Krasnor & Denham 2009) and that rejection by the peer group are related to poor peer interaction skills (Odom et al. 2006). Bullying is examined through the viewpoint of social constructivist learning, in which learning and internalizing specific behaviours happen through participating in social conventions of community. Within this model, a child is seen as an active learner within the community (Repo 2015). The paradigm is social constructivism and the methodology used are mixed methods. Data were collected from teacher rating scales, teacher reports, naturalistic observation, and interviews with children (Laaksonen, 2014, Repo 2015). It is important not to categorize children at an early age as "bully" and "victim" and carefully consider whether it is purposeful to use the terms (Repo 2015). The main finding suggests that there is a connection between peer interaction skills and bullying. The impact on practice shows that it is possible to prevent bullying and strengthen group cohesion by focusing on peer interaction skills training. Preschoolers' peer interaction skills have four dimensions and by training each of them you can prevent bullying (Laaksonen 2014).

*bullying, social skills, peer interaction skills peer relationship, preschool*

I 29

### **The role of documentation practices in ECEC: A case analysis from Denmark and Italy**

Fabio Dovigo (1), Karin Eskesen (2), (1) DPU Aarhus University, Denmark; (2) DDREN, Denmark

This study analyses and compares cases of documentation practices developed in Denmark and Italy. It aims to identify both the main factors that help ECEC services promote and sustain the documentation activity and the barriers and challenges they encounter in managing this process. Extensive research on the role of documentation in ECEC has been carried out over years building on the theoretical framework especially developed by the Reggio Children approach (Edwards et al., 2015; Gandini, 2005;

Rinaldi, 2006). Documentation practices are widely recognised as a pivotal activity to ensure the quality of ECEC services. Our theoretical framework emphasises the multiple goals of documentation: visualising children's learning processes, connecting theories to practices, fostering professional development of teachers, and promoting democratic engagement in schools. To identify the positive and negative factors that influence documentation in ECEC we adopted a case analysis research strategy. We compared the process of building pedagogical documentation through a mixed-methods examination of documents produced by two kindergartens in Denmark and Italy. Documentation analysis was integrated with in-depth interviews conducted with the kindergarten's practitioners. We committed to respect confidentiality and anonymity of participants by asking practitioners and caregivers for informed consent. Investigation shows that positive factors influencing the management of documentation practices are: leadership commitment, teachers' skills, mutual engagement and space organisation. Negative factors are: time constraints, resources availability, curriculum pressures. By identifying and analysing the mentioned positive and negative factors, our research will help strengthen the future design and sustainability of documentation practices in ECEC services.

*documentation, kindergarten, quality factors, mixed methods*

I 30

### **The difference of children's constructive play quality on teacher's play teaching efficacy**

Yungeui Yoo (1), Mi Jeong Song (2), Eun Jung Jang (1), (1) Soon ChunHyang University, South Korea; (2) Prime Kindergarten, South Korea

The objective of this study was to analyse the effect of teacher's self- efficacy on the quality of constructive play. The importance of teacher's role in improving the quality of play has been emphasized consistently. In particular, the teachers' self-efficacy along with the teacher's belief in play is an important variable related to children's play. Shin (2000) said that teachers with a high level of teachers' self-efficacy use various interventions to encourage children's play, it is an important factor in the development of play. Teachers' self-efficacy affects teachers' performance in play context, which has a positive effect on the quality of children's play (Rich, Lev, & Fischer, 1995). Subjects were two teachers each with higher or with lower play teaching efficacy, and the 111 children. Children's constructive play was videotaped for 60 minutes in each classroom. Play was analysed by level of constructive play, continuous length of play, variety of materials, enrichment of activities, and coherence of content. The teacher's self-efficacy measurement for play used questionnaires. All children's name used in this paper are pseudonyms. Both parents and children gave their informed consent for the video films to be used in this research. Constructive play of children whose teachers had higher efficacy in teaching play showed longer continuous play, used a higher variety of materials, and their play had more creative integrity. Various methods should be developed and applied to improve the teacher's self-efficacy on children's play.

*play continuation time, teacher efficacy, abundance of play activity variety of play materials, coherence of play content*

I 31

### **Influence of occurrence of childness associated with experiencing finger painting by caregiver on deepening of children's feeling**

Makiko Hayashi, Aichi University of Education, Japan

This study aimed to awaken caregivers' inner child and facilitate their intersubjective understanding of children's emotions, as well as to show that finger painting is especially effective in accomplishing these goals. Past research has shown that the tactile elements of finger painting activities create an emotional experience (L. Hintz, 2009) and a vicarious sensation of playfulness (Ichiki, 2009). This suggests that awakening caregivers' inner child and vicariously experiencing children's playfulness are distinctive features of finger painting activities. This study used the Three Layers Model of Genesis (TLMG) as its theoretical framework. TLMG is the theory that subjects visualize and transform objects in their minds according to their values and beliefs, which change over time. It is a theory that effectively captures the various perceptions and emotional transformations in caregivers' experiences. Participants were caregivers with over 10 years of experience. They conducted a finger painting activity, feedback descriptors were analysed after the activity using the Trajectory Equifinality Approach (TEA). Then, a figure was created to capture the various thoughts and emotions that caregivers experienced during the activity. The study's purpose, handling of data, privacy protection were explained to all subjects. All participants provided informed consent. The results show that finger painting activities promote caregivers' intersubjective understanding of children's feelings. This understanding is further supported by the linguistic and objective explanation of finger painting activities. It became clear that caregivers became aware of the specialties needed as a caregiver through a finger painting activity and aware of the need to provide to children.

*finger painting, intersubjective understanding, inner child caregiver's expertise, children's feelings*

### **The relationship between the teachers' values in Quebec attributed to play, and their preferences for developmental and academic practices concerning child's early writing in preschool education**

Krasimira Marinova, France Dubé, University of Quebec, Canada

Studying the relationship between the teachers' values attributed to play for early learning and their preferences for developmental practices (awakening of children) and academic practices (direct instruction). Research shows a tendency of direct teaching increasing in preschool education at the expense of teaching through play (Bassok, Latham and Rorem (2016) Ansari and Purtell (2017); Lynch, 2015; Marinova and Drainville, Soumis). Fowler (2018). For many teachers, it seems difficult to support their practices related to child's early writing by way of play (Thériault, 2010; Dumais and Plessis-Bélair, 2017). To understand how a child learns to write, we refer to Vygotsky's historic-cultural theory providing theoretical support for the social origin of the higher mental functions which include written language. A quantitative research has been done. A questionnaire including two scales measuring the preference for developmental and academic practices and one for measuring the value attributed to play has been administered to 161 teachers. Participation in research is voluntary and the anonymity is preserved. There is a positive relationship between the value attributed to play and the teachers' preference for developmental practices. No relationship could be found between the value attributed to play and their preference for academic practices. The value attributed to play for early writing doesn't lead to a decrease in the preference for academic practices among teachers. The findings will be applicable for the elaboration of public programs, in particular for the reinforcement of the place accorded to play and developmental practices in preschool education.

*preschool education, academic practices, developmental practices value attributed to play, teachers' preference*

### **Supporting primary school teachers implement Aistear: Ireland's early childhood curriculum framework**

Clare Roche, TU Dublin, Ireland

This research aims to support primary school teachers implement a play based curriculum. Aistear is a play based approach to learning. Play is a significant educational tool that helps educators enhance the academic ability of children (Bodrova, 2008). Aistear supports adults to engage with children in ways that afford children opportunities to participate in their own learning (NCCA, 2009). Often there is a difference between what teachers say and what occurs in practice (McInnes et al 2011). While teachers acknowledge there are advantages to play as a pedagogy, teachers express concerns moving to play-based approach to learning. This leads to a disparity of what takes place in the classroom. This research aims to provide supports to these concerns to encourage the use of a play based curriculum in the classroom. This research has employed a qualitative approach to gathering data. The research will involve carrying out one to one interviews with primary school teachers. Following that, there will be classroom observations in order to observe Aistear in action. Ethical approval was granted from TUDublin. Children were asked for consent to be observed in their classroom. Participants' identities were anonymised to protect from recourse and to enhance validity. Classroom observations and interviews found teachers are positive about Aistear and a play based approach however, lack of training and support in the classroom are hindering success. This paper will highlight the need for reform in how Aistear is delivered in universities supported by interviews and observations of its classroom implementation.

*Aistear, play, child-led learning, early childhood*

### **Research on the difference about father involvement in child-parenting between China and Japan**

Xiaojuan Liu, Hokkaido University, Japan

The aim was to tell the difference between father involvement in China and Japan. Huamin Zhao (2000) did a research about the difference on child education between China, Japan and American. By research, Lamb.M.E. (1986) concludes that paternal involvement, whether of a high or low level, can be beneficial or harmful to child development, depending on the attitudes and values of the parents concerned / stresses the importance of intercultural and intracultural diversity on child development. Using "questionnaire of father involvement in child rearing". The total number of the study samples was 175, including 134 valid paper questionnaires did by fathers selected from Changsha (China) and Tokyo (Japan). The questionnaire included 3 parts: basic information, the situation of fathers' participation in child-parenting, and the ideas / suggestions. Using the SPSS we explained about this research aims before doing the questionnaire, during the research, report to the fathers who have done the questionnaire, to make sure the result can be of benefit to them. In Japan, "children's need" and "fathers' responsibility" were the main reason for fathers to participate in child-parenting in the survey, but in China, fathers involved in nurture and education

activities because of having experienced the joy of participation. In China, it needs to strengthen and innovate the cooperation of kindergartens and higher education institutions. In Japan, to improve the communication mode between husband and wife, and to admire fathers' ability of parenting. Both of China and Japan need to establish a learning society, and promote fathers to master the knowledge of the development of children and family education.

*father involvement, parenting, investigation comparison, China-Japan*

I 35

### **Perspectives on indigenous curricula contents, what may be the further step to secure and develop Sami perspectives, indigenous knowledge?**

Kristin A. Ø. Fløtten, Nord University, Norway

Regarding indigenous curricula in ECEC teacher education, we asked newly graduated ECEC-teachers and university professors, to contribute with assessment in the ECEC-teacher education. What do they bring forward and "what may be the further steps to secure and develop Sami perspectives, indigenous knowledge in our ECEC teacher-education"? This study retrieves knowledge from 'The Northern Norway Diversity Project 2014', the 'Engaging the voices of Sámi children sustaining traditional knowledge through kindergarten, school and community transfer' project, as well as indigenous childhood- and kindergarten research (Balto, 2006, Jannok Nutti, 2016, Fløtten, 2016). The theoretical framework of this study lean on curriculum theory (Balto, 2005; Lundgren, 1983), Institutional ethnography (Smith, 2005), critical theory (Jannok Nutti, 2016) and sociocultural perspectives (Säljö 2005). Paradigm, methodology and methods are inspired by document analysis of the rather multi-faceted data available and semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1997). In this study we have invited a selected group of former ECEC-students and university staff for semi-structured interviews. The study follows ethical standards and privacy policies approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data and The Norwegian Data Protection Authority. Participants' confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed. The new ECEC-teachers and the university professors seem to share some critical views regarding fulfilling the curricula, their professional indigenous knowledge and practice. Further, they seem to share views, regarding the possibilities to bring forward and develop indigenous knowledge and questions connected to the university curricula. They will have to cooperate in the quality development, to secure Sami perspectives and indigenous knowledge in our ECEC-teacher education.

*Sámi perspectives, indigenous curricula, quality assessment ECEC-programme professors, newly graduated ECEC-teachers*

I 36

### **Rules and rituals: Tools for creating Ddadeutan multicultural community in the preschool**

Gab-Jung Yoon (1), Kai-Sook Chung (2), Hwan-Hee Son (2), (1) Daegu Haany University, South Korea;  
(2) Pusan National University, South Korea

This research examined roles of the rules and rituals in preschool classroom for creating a Ddadeutan (respect, wellness, Cheong (情)) multicultural community, South Korea. Ddadeutan (warm) educational community is a Korean educational community model (Chung et al, 2018) and members of the community experience intimate emotional bond with caring and love each other. Rules and rituals comprise symbolic actions that create social orders (Hallett, 2007) and ritual performances are expressed through everyday interactions (McLaren, 1986). The study was designed as a case study. The research classroom is a 5 years of age class has 8 boys and 12 girls, which has one Mongolian-Korean boy and the others are Korean children. The data were collected via classroom participant observations, interviews with a teacher, and documents analysis. The data were analysed by conducting content and meaning analysis. This study was conducted with IRB approval for participants. Also, photography was used with a permission and children's name was reported under assumed name. The results were as follows: rules and rituals for creating Ddadeutan multicultural community were included in 'classroom rules that children made', 'Monday morning prayer', 'everyday luxury greeting', 'listening attitude chant in the circle time', 'thankful chant before lunch', 'taking a group picture in the peer birthday party', and 'peer interaction rituals to gather peers and start off play.' This results provided implications that classroom rules and rituals enable children to have experiences such things togetherness, common memories, order in the classroom, and positive emotions for creating community.

*rituals, rules, multicultural classroom Ddadeutan educational community, preschool*

I 37

### **Using automata to promote STEM education in early childhood - first results**

Oliver Thiel, (1), Piedade Vaz Rebello (2), Corinna Bartoletti (3), Nelly Kostova (4) Joel Josephson (5) Jørgen Moe (1), Rolv Lundheim (1), (1) Queen Maud University College, Norway; (2) University of Coimbra, Portugal; (3) Eurek@, Italy; (4) 32nd School Sv.Kliment Ohridski, Bulgaria; Kindersite Ltd, United Kingdom

Automata are fascinating mechanical toys, Kinetic Art sculptures that can be defined as storytelling mechanical objects. The aim of the project AutoSTEM is to investigate how automata can enrich young children's play to promote a better understanding of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The research adapts finding from the previous project CLoHE (Bartoletti et al. 2013) to a younger age (4 to 7 years) and a pedagogy suitable for early childhood settings. AutoSTEM uses a relational play-based pedagogy (Hedges & Cooper 2018) and a dynamic learning concept (Broström 2017). The project focuses on the role of the teacher in play-based pedagogy (cf. Pyle & Danniels 2017). In teacher workshops, we present AutoSTEM's pedagogical materials and ideas and teachers develop their own automata. Later, they implement those ideas and use the automata together with children in their preschools. Finally, they will report their experiences. Participation in the project requires written consent. It is anonymous and voluntary and participants can withdraw at any time. The project is approved by the university's ethics committee and the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). Findings show that already four-year-olds are able to understand and build simple automata. Preschool teachers considered the project's pedagogical concepts as useful and implemented them in their preschools. Using the project's pedagogical materials helps teachers to build on creativity and play, stimulate the children's sense of wonder and ability to ask questions and master new skills. Automata give children varied experiences and opportunities to discover and understand STEM concepts.

*STEM, automata, play-based pedagogy dynamic learning, construction play*

I 38

### **The dog's importance for refugee children and their families during the asylum process in Sweden**

Agneta Simeonsdotter Svensson, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

The research aims were to highlight the importance of the dog to help refugee children and their families in asylum property and during the asylum process. International studies show that closeness to dogs has a positive impact on the quality of life. Children, who have a close relationship to animal, develop greater empathy for animals and humans. Traumatic experiences are processed (Beetz, 2007). Socio-cultural theories and developmental pedagogy are used to study refugee children and their families in asylum property in Sweden (Pramling Samuelsson, 2008). The study used an exploratory qualitative approach. The investigation team consists of four dogs, 16 children with their families. Children and families have been interviewed and photographed. Children and their families were informed that they could discontinue participation at any time and confidentiality was guaranteed. The Local Ethical Review Board has approved the project. The Council's research ethics regarding information requirements, consent requirements and confidentiality, underlie the ethical stance (Research Council, 2007). The results show that the dog gives children and families positive security experiences while waiting for a residence permit in Sweden. Child and family may talk to the dog about their experiences without the dog's condemnation. The dog is a listener regardless of language problems and is affectionate. Dogs may be used as security creators during the first time in the new country for refugee children and their families. The dog gives unconditional help to process the traumatic experiences. This is the best investment that any society can make.

*refugee children, dog's importance, good effects traumatic experiences, asylum process*

I 39

### **Dialogues and used vocabulary in the self-organised play in kindergartens**

Benedicte Bernstorff, Roskilde University, Denmark

The research focuses on spoken language's substance and positions in interactions and ask 'How does spoken language in child-child interactions contribute to participation in play communities in the self-organized play?' To underpin children's phantasy and cogitation it's important to offer them undisturbed time for play-activities (Weldemariam, 2014). When institutional framework and pedagogical approach support children to share and exchange points of views, it enables children to create transfer between their family life and kindergarten's code of practice and support learning and using vocabulary (Perregaard, 2004). Children's use of institutional frameworks to arrange and protect their play-activities (Rasmussen, 2015; Skovbjerg, 2016) influence how they verbal negotiate participation in self-organized play (Frønes, 1994; Corsaro, 2003). Therefore, I observed children's self-organized play as a field (Bourdieu, 2004; Øksnes og Sundsdal, 2018) through a phenomenological inspired non-participant observational study in two kindergartens with children aged 3-5 (Gallagher og Zahavi, 2010). To ethical respect, protect and represent children's perspectives I focused on children's act, positions and relations in play (Warming, 2011; Winther-Lindqvist, 2018). Preliminary analysis show uninterrupted and protected possibilities of play-activities seem to support the children's vocabulary and participation. The correlation between materiality and pedagogical approach become important for the children's use of vocabulary and affect how to be open-minded to each other. With the children's opportunity to create undisturbed places and



make transfer in their dialogues, participation and emotionally interactions seem easier. The research can have an impact on both policy and practice according to the correlation between language acquisition, materiality and play.

*vocabulary, materiality, pedagogical approach play communities, participation*

I 40

### **Images of the child in the educational landscape**

Helena Ackesjö (1), Sven Persson (2), Lina Lago (3), (1) Linnaeus University, Sweden; (2) Malmö University, Sweden; (3) Linköping University, Sweden

This study is a part of a research project, which aims to analyse consequences of educational policy change in Sweden. The overall policy change in Sweden is related to economy (Heckman 2000), to increase quality in education and to qualify children for further studies (Riddersporre & Persson, 2010). These changes are related to a global knowledge economy that enhances education for the youngest (Persson, 2010). Policies can be seen as narratives about progress and salvation, about 'finding the better life' and about 'making' the new citizen through schooling (Lindblad & Popkewitz, 2004). The descriptions of the child in the selected policy documents has therefore been analysed from the point of view of creating a new citizen as well as good education for children using Biesta's (2009) concepts of subjectification and qualification. In this study, focus is to examine descriptions of the child, the school start, school readiness and mandatory school attendance through analysing national policy documents from 1940-2017. Even if document analysis includes limited ethical issues, the results may implicate consequences in educational practice. The most prominent and recurring description of the child is school ready child vs the immature child. Descriptions of power and control over children and the obedient and silenced child appears in almost all policy texts. The process of learnification in an individual performative school culture is an overarching and still standing theme. Societal ideas of children and how these are expressed in policy can be assumed to influence educational practice.

*policy, Sweden, children subjectification, qualification*

I 41

### **American Pre-Service Teachers' Impressions of an American School in Spain**

Sara Tours (1), Laura Kelley (1), Ahmet Simsar (2), Michelle Amodèi (1), Linda Zane (1), (1) Slippery; (2) Kilis 7 Aralık University, Turkey

The aim of the research was to explore the impressions of undergraduate education majors on an American school in Spain. A number of studies explore the influence of international exposure upon education majors and its impact on their future teaching. Barkhuizen & Feryok (2006) found that education majors' expectations and experiences interrelate in complex, sometimes unexpected, ways. Ateşkan (2015) stated that cross-cultural experiences between education majors and international mentors, students, and communities serve to expand cultural knowledge and adaptability to new and future working environments. The cultural competence conceptual framework aids in guiding this study (Seeleman, Suurmond, & Stronks, 2009). The paradigm for this study was constructivism by exploring cultural factors from students' experiences in the American school in Spain (Cooper, 1993). This study used a qualitative methodology through the use of a survey method. Students had to consent to participate in the study. If they did not give their consent they were not included in the research. Each student had their own unique impression of the American school in Spain. They found similarities and differences from the United States schools they have attended and observed with the American school in Spain. They found this experience to be unique and valuable to them as future teachers. This research emphasizes the need for more universities to implement abroad programs for education students in order for classrooms of the future to have more global approaches to education.

*American school, global perspectives, abroad programs intercultural experiences, education majors*

I 42

### **Language Acquisition of non-native Japanese speaking children in their early ages and their development in Japan**

Hiroko Okamoto (1), Yumiko Sasaki (2), Yoshiko Matsuda (1), (1) Takasaki University of Health and Welfare, Japan; (2) Ashikaga Junior College, Japan

The purpose of this study is to show how language acquisition of non-native Japanese speaking children in their early ages effects on the development. Sasaki (2014) described that non-native Japanese speaking children who are forced to speak Japanese in their early ages would have fallen into "Double Limited" condition, where children can acquire neither their mother tongue nor

Japanese sufficiently. The theories of Cummins (1978) and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (1981), and the concepts of “multicultural education” and “Language Acquisition” inspired this research. This qualitative study adopted observations by action research and interviews with non-native Japanese speaking children in 13-15 ages. The data was analysed by using the method of description of episodes. The respondents granted permission for the publication of this study. It adheres to all ethical standards and privacy policies approved by the Japan Society of Research on Early Childhood Care and Education. Non-native Japanese speaking children in “Double Limited” condition will have more disadvantage in learning in the process of the development in Japanese schools. Although they are required more high level and complex thinking in learning as they grow, they don’t have any languages to deal with the situation. As a result, they would lose their motivation to learn and future goals in junior high school ages. We are deploying the following efforts. 1) Importance of language acquisition of non-native Japanese speaking children in their early ages; 2) Development of Japanese language education program for non-native Japanese speaking children in ECEC.

*multicultural education, non-native speaking children, language acquisition maintaining mother tongue, learning in school*

I 43

### **I want to know more! Teachers' attitudes to diversity in ECEC**

Zlatica Jursová Zacharová, Miroslava Lemešová, Katarína Cabanová, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia

The aim of the study is to investigate the attitudes of teachers and their need for further education and professional growth in the field of diversity and the work with minority populations. This study is part of projects KEGA 060UK – 4/2017 and VEGA 1/0620/16. Teachers are increasingly confronted with the diversity of pupils in their classes, whether they relate to special needs of children, their different cultural or linguistic backgrounds or to low socio-economic status. This may also influence teachers' needs for professional development (OECD, 2014: TALIS 2013). The research results show that teachers generally perceive inclusive education of ethnic minority children or children with a low socio-economic status negatively (Rose et al., 2019). Such perception can affect the motivation of children to learn. Our research combines qualitative and quantitative design. Teachers of pre-primary education (N = 90) and primary education (N = 161) indicated their further education needs (APA, 2006) for their professional development and their interest in training in narrative format approach for Roma children. They also answered the question about their opinion on inclusive education. Teachers participated voluntarily without any financial reward and answered questionnaires anonymously. Teachers who expressed interest in their further education in minority language children (27.5%) expressed significantly higher agreement ( $R = 0.138$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) with inclusion in education and generally have a higher interest in vocational development ( $R = .180$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Not only pre-service teachers, but also in-service teachers needed to be engaged in professional development in order to cope with diversities.

*teachers' interest for development, diversity, language minority children inclusive education, teachers' attitudes*

I 44

### **Measuring exploration security in early childhood education: Testing the exploration security questionnaire**

Michael Glüer, Fachhochschule Südwestfalen, Germany

This poster aims to discuss the measurement of children’s exploration security in early childhood education by introducing a newly developed questionnaire: The Exploration Security Questionnaire (ESQ). Exploration security explains children's experienced safeness in demanding learning and play situations (Glüer, 2017). The concept was introduced by Grossmann et al. (1999) as an extension of attachment theory. While Attachment security explains children’s need for protection under stress situations, exploration security, on the other hand, stands for children's confidence while the exploration system is activated (Glüer, 2017). In a cross-sectional survey 56 preschool teachers rated children’s (3 to 6 years) exploration security using the newly developed Exploration Security Questionnaire (ESQ). Instruments development was based on Grossmann’s definition of exploration security (e.g. Grossmann et al., 2008). Additional, children’s social and academic competencies were measured to test for criteria validity. The research study was proofed by the ethical board of the home university. Only preschool teachers were surveyed. The questionnaires contained no harmful questions. However, teachers had the opportunity to contact the research team at any time. Descriptive data, measurement statistics (e.g. item statistics) and criteria validity based on children's social and academic competencies will be reported. The first analysis showed a Cronbach's alpha of  $>.90$  for the whole questionnaire indicating high internal consistency. Data will be used to discuss how exploration security is best measured. The findings of the ESQ can extend our knowledge of exploration security and therefore our understanding of children's needs in situations where support is needed.

*exploration security, attachment, measurement questionnaire, academic and social competencies*

### **Using the theory of social pedagogy to frame a social justice pedagogy**

June O'Sullivan, Ben Clay, London Early Years Foundation, United Kingdom

The research describes the rationale and means by which a childcare social enterprise used the theory of social pedagogy to shape a specific social justice early childhood pedagogy. Social pedagogy was first described by its founding father Karl Mager quoted in Lorenzo (1999) as the practice of personal, social and moral education within the context of wider society. Bronfenbrenner (1979), Hamalainen (2003) and Hatton (2013) showed how it could be used by related disciplines to transform society and education with the aim to tackle or prevent social problems and inequality. This was relevant to our research as we sought to develop a pedagogy that strengthened our social justice purpose within a social enterprise approach. Social pedagogical methods were constructed in the context of the everyday organisation Cameron et al (2011). Therefore providing a framework within which we could examine and test the theories as part of everyday work. A participatory methodology with a focus on values and politics shaped the action research methods within a praxiological paradigm. Pascal and Bertram (2012). Although predominately a secondary literature review, consideration was given to ensure fair representation of sources. Our intention is better understanding of social enterprise childcare model and how and why the theories of social pedagogy shaped our approach to benefit the needs of disadvantaged children and families. This research provides the theory of why social enterprise combining business and social values is a credible model within ECEC.

*social pedagogy, social enterprise, social values social justice, poverty*

### **Prosocial behaviour of 4-6 year old children with peers: The effects of the scenes and periods**

Kiri Nishida, University of Tokyo, Japan

This study aims to reveal how scenes and seasons effect children's prosocial behaviour with peers in natural situation in Japanese nursery. In previous works, few kinds of prosocial behaviours have been studied with experimenting observation (e.g. helping, sharing; Williamson, Donohue, & Tully, 2013; Svetlova, Nichols, & Brownell, 2010). In this study, 32 kinds of prosocial behaviour are researched in natural situation to know what we should consider to foster children's pro-sociality in everyday life in nursery. This study bases on the N. Eisenberg and colleagues' theoretical model of prosocial behaviour (Eisenberg, Spinrad, & Knafo-Noam, 2015), focusing on the following factors; situation and children's development. This study use naturalistic observation in Japanese nursery for 1 year, sampling the event including prosocial behaviour, and use check-list method to code. Then the difference by the scenes and seasons are examined with ANOVA. Because this study use video camera to record children's behaviour in natural situation, I gave a nursery school and parents the explanation of the investigation and got consent form. As result of ANOVA, several significant difference were found. For example, in free play scene, children's prosocial behaviour are observed the most frequently and are executed the most successfully; in the season which the school year change, prosocial behaviour to younger classmates increase. The result of this study would implicate that; to plan everyday activity and environmental composition to foster children's pro-sociality, we need know more about the effect of scenes and seasons to children's prosocial behaviour.

*pro-social behaviour, 4-6 years old, naturalistic, observation, activity composition in nursery, Japanese nursery*

# Poster Symposium Set II

14:50 – 15:40, Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2019

II 1

## **SIA-ProD project\*: Development of the Teacher Self-Assessment Assistant (TSAA)**

Athanasios Gregoriadis (1), Olga Kouli (2), Michalis Linardakis (3), Evridiki Zachopoulou (4), Niki Tsangaridou (5), Elena Xeni (6), Michael Glüer (7), Nicola Catellani (8), Daniele Chitti (9), Ioannis Alexopoulos (10), Anastasia Vatou (1), Katerina Krousorati (1), Vasilis Grammatikopoulos (3), (1) Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece; (2) Democritus University of Thrace, Greece; (3) University of Crete, Greece; (4) Alexander Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki, Greece; (5) University of Cyprus, Cyprus; (6) CARDET Institute, Cyprus; (7) Fachhochschule Südwestfalen, Germany; (8) SERN - Sweden Emilia Romagna Network, Italy; (9) Imola Municipality, Italy; (10) Ellinogermaniki Agogi, Greece

This presentation presents results from the project SIA-ProD, an innovative self-improvement approach for the professional development of early educators. \*This project is funded by the European Commission [2016-1-EL01-KA201-023420]. The project implemented an innovative technique named Discrete Choice Modelling (DCM). DCM is widely used in marketing, biostatistics and other scientific areas, while its use in education is still very sparse. The project's framework is the DCM approach, which reveals the actual preferences of the respondents, by extracting their representations about a topic. The TSAA, a self-assessment instrument for the way early-educators promote physical activity, was developed based on mixed methods. The project has the ethical approval from the European Commission and Greek national agency-IKY. All participants have been informed about the study's purpose and agreed to participate. Findings from the content validity testing of the Teacher-Self-Assessment Assistant (TSAA) confirmed the eight attributes that cover the concept of physical activity in early childhood settings. The TSAA was tested in more than 200 educators from four countries (Greece, Cyprus, Italy, and Germany) and showed valid psychometric properties. Analysis based on Discrete Choice Modelling (DCM) confirmed the significance of the eight attributes and revealed various interesting findings regarding physical activity teaching in early childhood education. The SIA-ProD project has developed an easy, and low-cost method for self-assessment of early-educators. Results from the main study testing of TSAA have shown that the use of DCM can be expanded in the future in a wide range of ECEC domains and dimensions.

*discrete choice modelling, early childhood education, self-assessment professional development, SIA-ProD*

II 2

## **Linking research and practice in early childhood education through the blog PrimeirosAnos.pt**

Sílvia Barros (1), Nadine Correia (2), Cecília Aguiar (2), Tiago Almeida (2), Manuela Pessanha (2), Carla Peixoto (1), (3), Miguel Santos (1), Manuela Sanches-Ferreira (1), Marina Fuertes (2), Tânia Boavida (2), Margarida Fialho (2), (1) Instituto Politécnico do Porto, Escola Superior de Educação, Portugal; (2) ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, Portugal; (3) Instituto Universitário da Maia, Portugal

In this work, we aim to present the Portuguese blog PrimeirosAnos.pt that intends to: strengthen links between research and practice in Early Childhood Education (ECE), focusing on topics such as ECE quality, diversity, and inclusion; increase awareness about social inclusion; develop positive attitudes towards research/innovation; promote opportunities for discussion between ECE teachers, teacher educators, researchers, and policy makers. Despite the increase in research about ECE, which may support high-quality and inclusive practices, there is a need to increase the links between empirical evidence and everyday practices (e.g., Allen, Stanton, Di Pietro, & Moseley, 2013). This blog is based on theoretical and conceptual models that assume the importance of high-quality ECE settings for every child's development and well-being (e.g., Bryant, Zaslow, & Burchinal, 2010) and the importance of teacher professional development (e.g., Slot et al., 2017). PrimeirosAnos.pt is developed by researchers/teacher educators, from three Portuguese institutions, who publish research-based posts to disseminate research findings and support practical and reliable access to information. Four focus groups were conducted with ECE teachers to learn about practitioners' information seeking needs and strategies. The project complies with national data protection recommendations. The blog is reaching a substantial number of readers, directly or through social networks. We present and discuss data on post reach and ECE teachers' interactions with the blog. This work has the potential to promote the discussion about updated scientific results/innovative practices, contributing for teachers' reflections on their practices, and to inform the content of training programs and curricular plans that enable teaching.

*social inclusion, diversity, ECE quality professional development, blog*

### **How did principals think about “picture books reading” according to their ECEC experiences?**

Xiaoyun Lu, Jumonji University, Japan

The aim of this study is to analyse the opinions of principals on reading picture books to children and how did their opinions come from. The teachers' different reasons of selecting picture books were found according to their years of ECEC experience, especially for the teachers with 16~35 years of experience, they choose the books not only because they want to read to the children, but also to look for some connections between the books and the children's activities (Sato et al., 2007). This study was in referred to Cole's theories that literacy practices were tied up to the cultural practices of society (1996). As all of Japanese principals from public ECEC institutions have more than 20 years ECEC experience, four Japanese principals (including 1 vice principal) were interviewed from Dec 2018 to Feb 2019. Then the data was analysed by KJ method. The privacy of the principals was strictly protected and the data was allowed to be used in research only. The result showed that all of the principals have the same opinion, which is reading picture books is not only about telling the stories, but also about finding a way to communicate with the children, their parents and others. This opinion comes from their own private life experience (e.g. child's birth) and career experience (e.g. promotion). It is indicated that big life events occasioned the principals to practice different things and to reflect their previous picture books reading activities. And this experience promoted their professional development.

*picture books reading, teacher's professional development, semi-structured interview principals' narrative, principals' professionalism*

### **Attitudes of early childhood children towards the environment: Ecocentric and anthropocentric**

Ahmet Simsar (1), Sara B. Tours (2), Yakup Dogan (1), Fatih Bektas (1), (1) Kilis 7 Aralık University, Turkey; (2) Slippery Rock University, United States

Early childhood education aims to build a positive attitude towards environment. The aim of this study was to explore children's attitudes towards the environment within their Ecocentric and Anthropocentric behaviours. Overall, the research literature stated that the most reasons of the environmental issues is human beings. There are several factors that impact children's behaviours towards environmental issues. There are also some differences between children's behaviours regardless of where they live, family background and their genders (Erten, 2007, Uyar & Genç, 2016). The attitudes of preschool children towards the environment were impacted from different factors. The Bandura's social learning theory helped to build current study for how students improve their agocentric and anthropocentric attitudes. Phenomenology method was used as a qualitative research. The “Ecocentric, Anthropocentric and Antipathy Environmental Attitude Scale” (CATESPV) which was adapted to Turkish by Erten (2007) was used in the current study. All children who were invited to the study had permission given by their parents' in order to participate in the study. It has been found that most of the students have ecocentric attitudes towards using water, recycling papers, and electric usages. It has also been found that the children didn't know how they can recycle or use both sides of a piece of paper. Teachers could pay more attention to environmentally friendly behaviours and positive attitudes towards the environment. By the improving children ecocentric attitudes towards environment, it may be help to build more environmentally friendly person in future for cleaner world.

*early childhood, environmental attitude, ecocentric anthropocentric, phenomenology*

### **InQTheL - Inklusive Kindheitspädagogik als Querschnittsthema in der Lehre – A systematic review**

Anja Stolakis, Eric Simon, Elena Sterdt, Sven Hohmann, Matthias Morfeld, Annette Schmitt, Jörn Borke, Hochschule Magdeburg-Stendal, University of Applied Science, Germany

Promotion of professionalisation of early childhood educators for inclusive education is the goal of the research project InQTheL. The results of a systematic review giving an overview of the (international) state of research on conditions of success and needs for inclusion in preschools are presented. In inclusive settings, children with or without disabilities can achieve significant development and learning progress (Grisham-Brown et al. 2009) with pedagogical excellence being a precondition. However, early education degree programs hardly contain any inclusive education topics. There is a lack of scientifically based education material. To systematize the determined categories, i.e. the "Index of Inclusion" was consulted (Booth et al. 2017). Based on EPPE/EPEY studies (Siraj-Blatchford et al. 2002; Sylva 2010), the project is a mixed-methods study based on the methodological framework of the Campbell-Model (Campbell et al. 2000). It is evidence-based considering the systematic review at the highest level of evidence. There are no ethical aspects to be considered. Beside skill profiles of educators, structural framework and equipment,

the attitude of professionals towards inclusion, organization of pedagogical interventions, the integration of promotion and support actions as well as questions about cooperation/networking could be identified as substantial indicators of successful inclusive preschool practice. Despite the common agreement on inclusion, there are doubts about its implementation, primary based on uncertainty, lack of knowledge and appropriate strategies.

*inclusion, systematic review mixed-methods-design, early childhood education*

II 6

### **Partial presence of issues of child's holistic development and play in undergraduate preparation of ECEC teachers in Chile**

Marcela Pardo, University of Chile, Chile

To appraise whether issues of child's holistic development and play are present within undergraduate ECEC programs' plans of study, concerning the knowledge base of professionalism. International literature on professionalism (Freidson 2001), professionalism in ECEC (Dalli et al., 2012), and ECEC teacher preparation (Ryan & Gibson, 2016). Theoretical perspectives on professionalism, emphasizing the relevance of plans of study as an operationalization of the profession's knowledge base (Freidson 2001), and debates on ECEC's knowledge base (Finkelstein & Efthimiou 2000; Saracho 2013). Multiple case study focused on five ECEC undergraduate programs in Chile. Data was composed of these programs' plans of study (1981-2015), and interviews to faculty members. Cross-case analysis used apriori and emergent categories (Stake, 2006). Confidentiality, anonymity and voluntary participation were guaranteed to all participants. In all the five programs, issues of child's holistic development were partially addressed within plans of study. Only language and arts were present in every plan of study; other developmental areas (e.g. socioemotional) were irregularly addressed. Of more concern, play issues were totally absent from all mandatory courses within these programs' plans of study. The partial addressing of issues of child's holistic development questions the capability of programs to transmit the knowledge needed to comply with ECEC's purpose (i.e. fostering child's holistic development). Furthermore, the absence of play issues questions the programs' ability to transmit ECEC's distinctive procedure (i.e. play). These findings suggest that central elements of the knowledge base of professionalism are not systematically transmitted in undergraduate ECEC programs.

*undergraduate preparation, ECEC teachers, professionalism knowledge base, Chile*

II 7

### **Comparing the implicit and explicit approaches in acquisition of certain motor skills in young soccer players aged 5 to 6 years old**

Irina Polikanova, Sergey Leonov, Federal State Budget Educational Institution of Higher Education M.V. Lomonosov, Moscow State University, Russia

The aim of our study is to find out whether the application of implicit motor learning (using a metaphor) in soccer players aged 5 to 6 represents an efficient approach to the acquisition of certain skills compared to explicit approach (using a sign/scheme). A plethora of studies dedicated to the development of motor skills have demonstrated the effectiveness of using symbolic tools in different kinds of sports. However, literature dealing with implicit motor learning in the child population has been limited. The conceptual foundations of this work are based of the works by Vygotsky, Piaget, Zaporozhets. In terms of cultural-historical approach of Vygotsky the formation of physical activity of children was considered in the logic of acquisition cultural tools for mastering one's own body. 22 young soccer players ( $M/SD = 5.7/0.35$ ) from professional soccer schools were randomly assigned in metaphor and scheme learning groups. Participants were showed training mini-movies, which contained scheme- and metaphoric-orientated instructions: drawing animation of a human performing the skill or an animated cartoon representing a symbolic image of the movement. All study procedures were approved by the Ethics Committee of the Russian Psychological Society and the Scientific Council of the Soccer School. The implicit learning approach was shown to be more effective than an explicit approach. Results showed effectiveness of the metaphor implementation rather than the scheme when working with preschool-aged soccer players. It is necessary to point out the efficiency of the usage of metaphors as a means of learning physical skills.

*motor skills, implicit and explicit learning, soccer metaphor and scheme, preschool-age*

### **The learnings of make-believe play and math in the preschool context**

Linda Amrar, Anne Clerc-Georgy, Haute Ecole Pédagogique Vaud, Switzerland

The goal of this research in progress is to investigate teachers' practices and students' perspectives during a play-based lesson in mathematics problem solving. Since 2009, in Switzerland, school is mandatory as of 4 years. The first two grades (4 to 6 years old) have been integrated in the primary school (6 to 12 years old) which led to a displacement of preschool teacher practices to practices similar to those of primary grades teachers (Veuthey and Capitanescu Benetti, 2014). However, Van Oers and Duijkers (2013), showed that a play-based teaching is beneficial for student's learnings between 4 and 8 years old. Fundamentals learning include the construction of a mature make-believe play (Clerc-Georgy & Kappeler, 2017) which is involved in the development of high mental functions in the child (Vygotski, 1966/2016). The development of a symbolic thinking is predictive of maths abilities because it offers the possibility to develop a thought that is separated from objects (Hanline, Milton & Phelps, 2008). To examine the construction in situ of the construction of meaning during the play-based lesson in problem solving in mathematics, we will record videos of the Lesson Study process. Teachers and parents will sign a consent form. Video will be stored in an institutional PC protected with a password. We make the hypothesis that the alignment of specific preschool teachers' practices with pupils' interests ensure the construction of shared meanings. The implication for practice and policy is to highlight the importance of specific teacher practices based on child interest in preschool.

*make-believe play, fundamentals learning, math learning zone of proximal development, teacher practices*

### **Studies on quality in childhood education: A systematic review of the literature**

Cristina Mesquita, Catarina Vasques, Maria José Rodrigues, Rui Pedro Lopes, Instituto Politécnico de Bragança, Portugal

In this study a systematic review of the literature produced in Portugal during the last ten years (2008-2018) on quality in childhood education is carried out. The methodology follows the line of Kitchenham and Mendes (2007). For data collection, texts (doctoral theses, master dissertations and scientific articles) were analysed, available in the repositories and available online. For this purpose, the RCAAP (Open Access Scientific Repositories in Portugal) was used, since it indexes and contains the necessary metadata for the identification of the documents. We defined the search terms that should be included in the title, keywords or abstract. The documents were then retrieved and stored on the computer. In a brief analysis of the document, documents that were not written in Portuguese, were not complete or could not be opened, or were not included in the topic were excluded. With the remaining documents, a text-mining characterization analysis was performed, in order to identify the most significant and frequent terms. Based on these results, the documents were automatically grouped by affinity of text (clustering). Finally, the most relevant document groups were selected and a content analysis was done. In this study the ethical assumption was considered. The analysis allowed to group the studies by the following categories: criteria for thinking about quality, instruments for measuring quality and ways of evaluating and collaboratively developing quality. This is an important work that systematizes the work developed in the scope of the quality of the learning environments that can support future studies.

*quality of contexts, learning environments, childhood education quality assessment, instruments to measure quality*

### **Makerspaces in preschools - Preschool children learning about and with digital technology in creative and playful manner.**

Kristin Dýrfjörð, University of Akureyri, Iceland

The aim was to investigate how 4 to 5 years old preschool children approached digital technology to learn, create and play in a preschool setting. It will be looked at how children develop coding skills with smart technology in play by being creative. This research is part of European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant. There is evidence of a lack of continuum in many children's experiences of digital technologies across homes and educational settings, with uneven provision in many early years settings (Palaologou, 2014). There is lack of research undertaken on the potential of makerspaces as they are currently utilised in early childhood, small body of research is focusing on the way in which digital technologies can promote digital literacy, creativity and learning (Burnett and Daniels, 2016). Research method is participatory research (Grouncwater-Smith, Dockett and Bottrell, 2015) researcher participated, took field notes and interviewed children. Methods include documentation using video recorders and GoPro. Children are vulnerable, and have to be protected at the same time they are strong and have voice, informed consent was gathered from children, during discussions. Key findings are rich interaction between children, between children and devices. Girls and boys used devices creatively in play. Research

undertaken on young children's development of digital literacy skills and knowledge, in the light of societal grand challenges and shifting social, economic and cultural landscapes is important (Sefton Green et al., 2016). This research will be part of that.

*play, coding, creativity technology, gender*

II 11

### **"Daddies in action" a syneducation programme in Greek preschool centre**

Sofia Chatzigeorgiadou, University of Nicosia, Greece

To investigate the acquisition of common educational experiences of fathers and children in a preschool centre. The use of the syneducation model as a collaborative action research (Kekes, 2000). The model of syneducation (synergy + education) that aims at the acquisition of a common educational experience of persons differing in age and cognitive infrastructure and often in social and cultural level (Mylonakou & Kekes, 2005). A total of 10 sessions of fathers' visits in the preschool centre (4-5 years old children) during a four months period were implemented and evaluated. These syneducational actions were created, constructed and supported by new technology (email communication between the teacher and the parents, the use of Padlet as a diary and a communication platform during the visits, and google folder for sharing). Teachers informed the parents about the aim, rationale and content of the project and all relevant consent forms were completed. All the parents participated and contributed in the development of various syneducational actions that could range from the simple syneducation of parents and children to the systematic participation of children and adults in research and development projects. The creative exploitation of technology led to the development of new ideas in an interactive learning environment for children and parents. The study contributes to the field of school and family cooperation as interdependent systems. The necessity of shifting towards a more cooperative action between them is discussed.

*syneducation, family, preschool young children, school-family collaboration*

II 12

### **5 - 6 year old children's opinion about the preschool yard as a play and learning environment**

Lehte Tuuling, Aino Ugaste, Tiia Õun, Tallinn University, Estonia

The aim of the research was to find out children's opinion about the preschool yard as a play and learning environment and their outdoor learning experiences.

Diverse opportunities in the preschool courtyard will support the comprehensive development of children through both adult-designed and supervised activities and games initiated by the children themselves (Maynard, Waters & Clement 2013, Skar, M., Gundersen, V. & O'Brien, L. 2016, Olsen, H. & Smith, B. 2017). It's important to involve children in shaping the growth environment, starting with planning activities and completing the process evaluation. Involvement of children as respondents, who have become important in preschool education studies, to make the voice of children heard, on issues that concern them. Based on the results of studies, children are able to adequately talk to researchers about their experiences and relationships with people and the environment (Smith (2014). The research was conducted within the framework of an interpretative paradigm. A qualitative approach was used to conduct the research, using semi-structured interviews to collect data and a photographic and photo-based conversation as a supportive method (Einarsdottir, 2007). Consent for children's participation in interviews was agreed with parents and the anonymity of the respondents is guaranteed. Many of the children probably lacked the experience of studying in the yard because they were not able to associate the outdoors with the development of mathematical or reading and writing skills. Most of the children mentioned the possibilities of physical development outdoors. The results will help to better plan work with children.

*outdoor education, outdoor play, preschool children's opinion, environment*

II 13

### **Difference between fathers' and mothers' emotional conversations with their children**

Pei-Ling Wang, University of Taipei, Taiwan

Depending on the gender of a child, parents play different emotional roles and may use different emotional languages. This study investigated the differences in emotional language used by fathers and mothers. Studies have suggested that compared with fathers, mothers are more involved in emotional communications with their children. (e.g. Fivush, et al., 2009). Some studies have indicated that fathers have exclusive influence on children's emotional development (e.g. Manczak, et al., 2016). Vygotsky (1978) proposed that language is a thinking mechanism that serves as a pivotal bridge connecting an individual's internal life with external



society. The methodology of this study is a qualitative research. We recruited 30 pairs of parents and their 5 five-year-old children. We collect information on emotional interactions between the parents and children that involved happiness, sadness, anger, and fear. We will get the consent of parent before we enter the family to collect the data. We also gained ethics approval of the Human Subject Research Ethics Committee of University of Taipei (code IRB-2015-024). Our results suggested the mothers had a wider range of vocabulary than the fathers and were better at clarification and the fathers were better at elaboration. The mothers extended sons' sadness and anger and daughters' fear. The fathers generally extended sons' happiness, anger, and fear and daughters' sadness. We recommend that future studies focus on the unique role of fathers in the emotional development of boys and providing strategies to mitigate children's negative emotions.

*children, father, mother emotional experience, parent–child conversation*

II 14

### **Developing the practice of open kindergarten in Norway**

Kjersti Sandnes Haukedal, NLA University Collage, Norway

A distinctive feature of the open kindergarten is that the child does not have a permanent seat, but all children can use the offer. Parents or other caregivers who follow the child are considered part of the staffing (Haugset, Gotvassli, Ljunggren & Stene 2014, p. 2). In this study we want to shed light on the open kindergarten as a practice community (Lave and Wenger, 2003). Our research question is: How can open kindergartens develop their practice in a complex practice community? Research shows that there is great diversity among users in open kindergartens. However, open kindergartens seem particularly supportive for minority-language parents and parents who are unemployed and disabled (Haugset & Gotvassli 2014). Our study is built on a theoretical knowledge base related to development work (Mostad et al., 2013) and the theory of practice fellowship (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In our study we apply a narrative approach – exploring stories from the people involved in open kindergartens. The stories has been analysed and set in a larger context (Riessman, 2008). All kindergartens have agreed that we can use their stories from practice in the study. Open kindergartens have little experience with systematic developing work. The staff often find it challenging to get the different actors to interact, and to juggle the different roles in meeting with children and parents. The results show that having development work to gather around may support the interaction between the staff, parents and children.

*open kindergarten in Norway, quality, participation narrative approach, kindergarten policy*

II 15

### **Children general knowledge and thinking about their world from 5 to 7 years of age**

Tunde Anna Tasko, Eszterhazy Karoly University, Hungary

Our research goal is to study children's knowledge and thinking about their world generally from 4 to 7 years of age. There was an extensive research on children's general knowledge and thinking about their world in 1963 in Hungary conducted by Alice Hermann. Our research is based on this. General knowledge has two components: details about the world around us and the understanding of how things work (Hermann, 1963). The sample consisted of kindergarten children (n=60) from 5 to 7 years of age. The half of the sample (n=30) is from rural kindergarten and the other half of children (n=30) from urban kindergarten. We did interviews (26 questions) as research method. The interview questions based on Alice Hermann' research in 1963 changing some irrelevant questions in these days. We got permission from parents to study their children. Parents were informed the aims and terms of the research and sign an informed consent. We use data anonym. Taking care of the children during the interviews. We found differences between age groups (groups of 5, 6, 7 year-old children) compared to each other. We found differences between children from rural and urban area in the case of some questions. In comparison to Hermann's research we got some interesting results as well. It is important to know children general knowledge and thinking about their world in order to work out kindergarten educational programs. The results could be useful for primary school teachers as well to form realistic expectations.

*general knowledge about the world, interview, kindergarten children cognition, thinking skills*

II 16

### **Blog as a tool for professionalisation**

Kamila Wichrowska (1), Olga Wysłowska (1), Paulina Marchlik (1), Marta Kotarba (2), (1) University of Warsaw, Poland; (2) The Maria Grzegorzewska University, Poland

Inspired by a success of a Flemish blog for ECEC professionals (kleutergewijs.be) researchers and teacher educators from The Netherlands, Portugal and Poland launched national blogs. The goal of the following poster is to present main characteristics of

the Polish platform ([www.czymyskorupka.edu.pl](http://www.czymyskorupka.edu.pl)) which aims at supporting practitioners working with 0-4 year-olds by providing research-based contents on effective and culturally sensitive practices and innovation. Up-to-date research point to blogs as a valuable tools for online knowledge construction (Huei-Tse et. al., 2009). Moreover, blogs were found to have potential to successfully facilitate collaboration among its users (Flatney, 2005). The blog is built on the transactional professionalisation model (Slot et.al, 2017) by offering new knowledge, providing practice tips and enhancing reflection. Launching the blog was proceeded by conducting 3 focus groups with professionals, who formulated their knowledge needs and learning preferences. Based on the gained information layout and content of the blog were planned. In order to ensure high-quality blog messages internal evaluation procedure was elaborated. The privacy policy is clear and accessible on the blog website. All stakeholders who decide to comment blog messages need to provide active consent. Several characteristics of the blog, such as: layout (reference to daily activities provided in ECEC settings; spheres to child development, age range), language and provision of reference occurred particularly important for readers. Increasing popularity of the blog established in close collaboration with provides may be an inspiration for different communities of learners on how to use ICT to enhance exchange of knowledge and practices.

*educational blog, teachers and caregivers, ECEC settings professionalisation, lifelong learning*

II 17

### **The impact of games aimed at the development of the vestibular system on cognitive development of three-year-olds**

Elena Nikolaeva, Alexandra Gogoberidze, Victoria Pogolian, Ludmila Savinova, Herzen State Pedagogical University, Russia

The aim of the research was to investigate the impact of games aimed at the development of the vestibular system on cognitive development of three-year-olds. It was shown that all children with poor school results had some form of vestibular abnormality (Efimova et al., 2018). The problems arising in the process of vestibular system formation lead to a distortion of the picture of the world (Frith, 2010). In modern Russia, many young children move too little, and it could be the cause of problems in the vestibular system. 30 children of 2-3 years old in the kindergarten were participant of a program with exercise on the simulator, which was an unstable platform. The program was held during 2 years. When children were 5 years old, they were tested using the paradigm go/go and go/ no go evaluated the ability to navigate the flow of signals and the severity of their inhibitory processes. The results were compared with the data of children who did not participate in developmental activities. The permissions were received from parents of the children to participate in the program and testing Children engaged in the program, better cope with the task compared with the children of the control group: they better oriented in the flow of signals and have more developed inhibitory processes. The exercises on mobile platform are useful for the development of orientation in the flow of complex signals in children on the basis of vestibular system maturing

*vestibular system, development, go/go paradigm go/no go paradigm, children*

II 18

### **Inclusion and gender equity through the arts: Judith Scott's project**

Maria del Mar Oliver Barcelo, Maria Ferrer Ribot, Carme Rosselló Rosselló, Antoni Cerdà i Navarro Aina Estrades Bauzá, Universitat de les Illes Balears, Spain

In the present experience we have tried to generate a space of critical thinking about the traditional canons of Art History that we transmit in schools. We developed a project in Early Childhood Education, with four-year-old children, about Judith Scott, a well-known textile sculptress, deaf-mute and with Down syndrome. In the last decades several experiences have reflected a new approach of artistic education (Acer, 2012, Fernández & Feliu, 2017, Sánchez-Arenas & Soto-Solier, 2016), but they are still few compared to other educational stages. Many of the latest research in arts education point to the importance of the critical thinking, questioning our context and the discourses that perpetuate discrimination (Acaso & Megías, 2017; Freedman, 2006; Hernández, 2010). We apply the action research methodology (Latorre, 2005; Foreman-Peck & Heilbronn, 2018), with the purpose of integrating theory and practice. The data collection techniques were images, field notes and research journals. Participants allowed the use of images and personal data for educational research purposes before the data collection was completed. We conclude that the approaches included in the theoretical framework are pertinent and applicable to Early Childhood Education, and the need to incorporate experiences that address diversity. The limitations and difficulties are related to the generation of transformative practices, a subject on which we must continue reflecting. We consider it essential to develop critical thinking in ECE, and we are interested in sharing experiences with this purpose. We believe that Art Education is an ideal space for this.

*artistic education, critical thinking, inclusion gender perspectives, action research*

### **The development of a child's self-regulation skills in Kids' Skills Intervention**

Merja Hautakangas, University of Helsinki, Finland

This study investigated the development of a children's self-regulation skills in a Kids' Skills intervention program in Finnish early childhood education and care (ECEC) contexts. The study focused on how Kids' Skills program interacts with the development of a child's self-regulation skills, and to teacher's action and support. Studies have shown that learning to self-regulate is an essential skill for young children, as it has effects on several areas of children's lives (Eisenberg, Spinrad & Valiente, 2016). The development of self-regulation has an effect on peer relationships, social competence, commitment, academic competence and relationship with the teachers (Blair & Raver, 2015; Denham et al., 2003; Duckworth & Seligman, 2005; McClelland et al., 2007). Sociocultural theory. A controlled 10-week intervention took place in five ECEC day-care groups and in two pre-primary school groups with 121 children aged 4 - 7 years old. The intervention involved 80 children and 41 children in the control groups. This study is a mixed method case study. Research ethics followed recommendations from the Finnish advisory board on research integrity. The results showed that there was a significant difference in the children's self-regulation gains between the intervention and control groups. The findings highlight that Kids' Skills is an effective tool for enhancing a child's self-regulation skills, but its use requires pedagogical sensitivity, stimulation and the appreciation of the child's autonomy. Kids' Skills is the potential method that teachers can use as part of their everyday practice in early childhood education to enhance children's self-regulation skills.

*self-regulation, kids' skills, mixed methods ECEC, teacher engagement*

### **Parent's experiences of children's belonging in early childhood education institutions**

Karin Larsson, Linneaus University, Sweden

This study is within the field of values and values education. The aim is to provide knowledge of how to promote children's belonging in early childhood education by focusing on parent's experiences. The study is part of the international research project Politics of belonging - promoting children's inclusion in educational settings across borders, funded by NordForsk. Researchers have pointed out that values education as an educational practice is a neglected field in research (e.g. Puroila, et. al. 2016). A growing concern is how to prevent children's exclusion and improve their belonging (Johansson, 2017; McKay, 2014). The study applies to Habermas' (1995) dual perspective of the world: life-world and system. This allows for explorations of belonging in ECEC from both the participants' point of view and a broader societal context. The study has a critical hermeneutic approach. Data will be collected by interviews with parents and observations of the intermediate knowledge domain between the family and the institution. The project has been ethically proved. Ethical dimensions will be conducted continuously and cautiously. The study will provide empirical knowledge about parents' views on children's belonging in ECEC and what is important values in the intermediate knowledge domain between the family and the institution. It will provide societal and practical outcomes to promote children's inclusion and sense of belonging in everyday life in ECEC. By enhancing parents' experiences the quality of values education in the ECEC institutions may increase. The project will inform educational policy and child outcomes for citizenship.

*values education, children's belonging, parent's experiences early childhood education, politics of belonging*

### **Subjective well-being of Syrian and Turkish children in primary schools: Home and environment conditions**

Şeyda Uçar, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University, Turkey

This study investigated Syrian and Turkish children's subjective well-being (SWB) in the domain of Home and Environment. In this respect, it was aimed to determine the perceptions of children about their Home and Environment conditions in their SWB. The indicators of the domain of Home & Environment may differ in accordance with the participants and contexts they are in. Therefore, the data gathered by second phase of the Children's world project for Turkey may not totally reflect the well-being indicators of population living in Turkey with immigrants of Syria. Conceptualization of child well-being includes the holistic and multidimensional view to the development of child while regarding the child in the centre as a subject of the study. Design of the study was an explanatory mixed methods design. This design encourages the use of multiple worldviews and paradigms. The permissions of Boğaziçi University Ethics Committee (INAREK), the İstanbul Provincial National Education Directorate were obtained. There were significant differences between children born in Turkey and Syria in terms of indicators of housing and environment conditions domain. Some of the preliminary qualitative findings include that both Turkish and Syrian children regarded the personal bedroom, computer as the condition of being much happier in the home. The study has implications with

regard to supporting educational experiences of Syrian and Turkish children in public primary schools and has the potential to inform social policies that aim to improve life conditions of children living in impoverished homes and communities.

*subjective well-being, home & environment conditions, primary school Syria, Turkey*

II 22

### **Motives behind early childhood teacher candidates' choices of teaching as profession: How they relate to conceptualisations of child/childhood?**

Ersoy Erdemir, Zeynep Berna Erdiller-Yatmaz, Fetiye Erbil, Bogazici University, Turkey

This study explored the reasons behind first-year Turkish undergraduate students' decisions to pursue early childhood teaching as a professional career based on their perceptions of child and childhood. The study extends previous research that examined exclusively career choice factors (Richardson & Watt, 2006) by uniquely juxtaposing preschool teacher candidates' motives behind career choice along with their perceptions of child/childhood. The study draws from sociological studies on factors of teacher candidates' career choice as situated three overarching categories: altruistic, internal and external motives (Court et al., 2009; Chang-Kredi & Kingsley, 2014). This was an in-depth qualitative case study. 16 first-year undergraduates from Preschool Teacher Education Program at a state university in Turkey were interviewed based on a multi-layered protocol. Data were analysed using emergent coding and constant comparison. Interview protocol comprised questions inclusive of participants' varying backgrounds regarding belief systems and sociocultural conditions of their childhood. Informed consent was obtained. Four reasons were identified: Internal resources (enjoyment from working with children), external reasons (peer, familial, role-model influence), compromising conditions (struggling between decisions, lack of choices), altruistic motives (aspiration to transform children's lives), and personal experiences (childhood memories, previous school experiences). Those who perceive children autonomous, agent, capable, transformative had more internal motives whereas those who perceive them needy, immature, dependent, adult-reductionist had more altruistic and external motives for career choice. Examining ECE teacher candidates' career choice based on their conceptualizations of child/childhood can lead Preschool Teacher Education programs to respond to varying motives of students as they construct teacher identities.

*pre-service teachers, profession choice, child perception preschool teachers, career choice*

II 23

### **Improving children's social-emotional competence through Story Magician's Play Time method**

Merja Koivula, Leena Turja, Marja-Leena Laakso, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

This present study introduces a playful, narrative, vignette-based storytelling method "Story Magician's Play Time" (SMPT). The aim is to investigate how SMPT sessions function as a mean for children to express social-emotional reasoning and practice social performance skills through storytelling and joint play. The method was built upon the foundation laid by theories of Gumpel (2007) and Gresham (2002). Their ideas of listening to children's own voice and interpretations about narrated social interactions, supporting their social-emotional reasoning, and practicing social performance skills are at the heart of the SMPT method. As suggested by Gumpel (2007), many children encounter performance deficits on social-emotional domain, i.e. the children, despite their knowledge, are unable to execute socially responsible behaviours in practice. SMPT targets on rehearsing children's reasoning and performance skills. The data of this qualitative case study research were collected by video-recording SMPT sessions and analysed by thematic analysis. Altogether 9 boys and 2 girls participated in the study. During SMPT sessions the children used vignette pictures, emotion cards, wooden dolls and play materials to elicit storytelling. Ethical considerations included gaining informed consents from children, respecting children's rights to anonymity, confidentiality and self-determination. Throughout the research process these were constantly evaluated. The results suggest the children were motivated in storytelling and joint play with play materials. Their narrations dealt with emotional knowledge, social problem-solving, and positive and negative social behaviours. SMPT enabled children to reflect their roles, emotions, and social functioning, and thus, practice socially responsible behaviours in the safe context of play.

*social-emotional competence, storytelling, play children's perspective, intervention*

II 24

### **Dyadic analysis of peer relationships in 3-year-olds: Comparison of children's sociometric data and teacher's reports**

Noriko Kawahara (1), Koichi Negayama (2), (1) Kyoritsu Women's University, Japan; (2) Waseda University, Japan

The present study aimed to examine the short-term longitudinal change of peer relationship in 3-year-olds by comparing children's sociometric data and teacher's reports. It is essential for children's social development to make good peer relationships (Lewis,

2005). There was a difference between sociometric data and teacher's report in 3-year-olds compared to 4- and 5-year-olds (Kawahara & Negayama, 2018). Sociometric data is effective for the developmental study of friendship relations in preschool children (Daniel et al, 2016). The present study adopted dyadic analysis, which compares children's sociometric data and nursery teacher's report (Shin et al, 2014). Two nursery teachers were asked to fill in a questionnaire asking whether each child has "good friends to always play with". 20 three-year-olds were individually interviewed to name their friends. The study was conducted twice at two months (P1) and eight months (P2) after the new fiscal year. The purpose and method of this study were informed to the director of nursery school and the children's guardians, and their consents were obtained prior to the study. This study was approved by the Ethical Review Board of Kyoritsu Women's University. The P1-P2 consistency in the names mentioned as the children's friends were 40% in both the children and the teachers, but the child-teacher agreements in their judgments increased from 45% at P1 to 80% at P2. The increase in agreement would be due to more understanding of the peer relationship by the teachers. These findings are important for group activities and group formation in nurseries.

*3-year-olds, peer relationship, sociometric data nursery teacher, short-term longitudinal study*

II 25

### **Executive functions and play in preschool age**

Daria Bukhalenkova, Kristina Tarasova, Vera Yakupova, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia

The aim of our study was to specify how the different kinds of role (positive, clever or negative fabulous hero) will effect to executive functions (EF) task implementation in senior preschool age. Play is an important activity in preschool age in which the child develops (Vygotsky, 2004; Leontyev, 1996; Fisher, 1991). One of the main components of play is the acceptance of a role (Vygotsky, 2004) that requires a work of all EF components. Currently, there are few papers that would explore the developmental potential that role-playing has for EF in preschool age (Carlson, Davis, Leach, 2005; White, Carlson, 2016). We have based on the cultural-historical approach to child development (Vygotsky, 1962; Leontyev, 1996; Elkonin, 1976) and the Miyake model of EF (Miyake et al., 2000). The study used NEPSY-II subtests («Inhibition» and «Statue») and the DCCS method for EF assessment. Preschoolers performed the same EF tasks three times with an interval of 2 weeks: 1) as a regular task, 2) presenting himself as a fabulous hero, 3) again without a role. The procedure was approved by the Board of Ethics Faculty of Psychology Lomonosov MSU. The parents gave their written informed consent for their children's participation in the study. The results shows that the acceptance of different role help children to control their behaviour in task on inhibition and motor persistence. Our results have practical implications for the creation an intervention programs for the EF improvement in the preschoolers.

Research was supported by the RFBR Grant №18-013-01057.

*preschool age, executive functions, play role play, inhibition*

II 26

### **Implementing the Art in Children's Life Program (AinCL) – the parents' point of view**

Vasiliki Karavida (1), Eleni Tympa (1), Xariklia Dimitriou (1), Eleni Poulakida (1), Fotini Stelianou (1), Zoi Tussi (1), Stratoula Mantziou (1), Dimitra Panousi (2), (1) University of Ioannina, Greece; (2) Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

The aim of the AinCL program was active learning, interdisciplinary and creative teaching. This process sets the foundations of lifelong learning. Sensory-based food education provides new prospects for promoting healthy habits and children do use all of their senses when exploring new foods (Hoppu, 2015). Art related nutrition programs at school can be transferred from children to family and affect eating habits (Bautista, 2017; Hayes, 2018). 111 children, aged 2.5 - 4, participated in the implementation of AinCL program in Greece, while the program was implemented by the students of Early Childhood Education and Care Department, University of Ioannina. The study of the results of the program was based upon the AinCL checklist which had been given to the parents before and after the implementation and upon the parents' interviews following. All participants voluntarily participated and anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed with the option to withdraw. Parent interviews revealed that children were more cautious about consuming ready-to-eat foods, consumed fruits and vegetables, identified food ingredients, talked about art and paintings, rehearsed the program at home, and finally advised their parents on matters of good operation of the heart. Also, parents found the students' participation in the study interesting for them and their children. The results of this research showed that although parents were not active participants in AinCL they were able to recognize the positive effects of the program on the knowledge and behaviour of their children towards a healthy lifestyle.

*art, healthy food habits, parents children, students*

### **The Adaptation of parents during their children's school transition from nursery school to elementary school in Japan**

Sayuri Nishizaka, Suzuko Ayano, Keiko Gondo, Yasuko Murakami, Kyoritsu Women's University, Japan

We aimed to clarify mothers' consciousness as a parent during their children's elementary school transition. In this study, we also aimed to see whether the mothers' employment status influences upon their consciousness. In the past studies, we targeted mothers of kindergarten children who were mostly stay-at-home mothers. The results indicated that the three factors of parents' consciousness such as "Worries about child's school life", "Expectation towards a new lifestyle" and "Confidence to become a parent of schoolchild" were found. In the study, we targeted employed mothers of nursery school children in order to compare the results with the ones of stay-at-home mothers. Wildgruber et.al. (2011) established a theoretical model of the parents' consciousness during the transition in 3 distinct levels. In this study, the questionnaire was created by referencing the theoretical model. The questionnaire consists of 70 items on the parents' consciousness. We administered it to 100 Japanese mothers of nursery school children before they entered elementary school. We compared the results with the previous studies. This study had been approved by the Ethical Review Board of Kyoritsu Women's University. Employed mothers showed lower scores than stay-at-home mothers in two factors of parents' consciousness such as "Expectation towards a new lifestyle" and "Confidence to become a parent of schoolchild". It is suggested that mothers' employment status influences upon mother's consciousness as a parent. Mother's employment status needs to be considered when developing parent support programs during the elementary transition.

*parents' adaptation, children's school transition, mothers' employment states the mother's consciousness, elementary school*

### **Visual-spatial abilities: Their relations with mathematical abilities in preschoolers**

Aleksander Veraksa (1), Anna Fominykh (2), Irina, Rzhanova (2), Olga Alekseeva (2), (1) Lomonosov Moscow State University; Russia (2) Russian Academy of Education, Russia

The aims of the present study were to analyse interrelations between different visual-spatial tasks and to investigate the association of visual-spatial abilities with mathematical performance in preschoolers. Visual-spatial abilities allow individuals to understand the relationships between objects, and incorporate visual, motor, and cognitive components. Many studies have demonstrated the association of visual-spatial abilities with academic performance in children, particularly in the mathematics and the natural sciences (Geary, 2004; Leneman et al., 2001; Mathewson, 1999; Mazzocco et al., 2006). The first sample included 94 children. Mean age was 3.5 years (SD - 3.6 months). The second sample included 74 children. The mean age was 6.5 years (SD - 3.4). The current study used the WPPSI and WISC-V visual-spatial subtests to assess visual-spatial performance. Also in the older group we measured the ability to solve simple mathematical problems. The research was carried out in accordance with the Code of Ethics of the Russian Psychological Society. In the first group of children the association between two visual-spatial subtests (Block Design, Zoo location) was less close than expected. This is evidenced by both the data of correlation analysis and the confirmatory factor analysis data. We assume that this fact can be explained by the heterochrony of the development of visual-spatial abilities in early childhood. In older group we found out high correlations between different visual-spatial subtests compared with younger age group. Children's visual-spatial abilities were positively correlated with mathematical performance in the preschoolers group. Received results can be used in psychological work with children

*visual-spatial abilities, WPPSI, WISC-V mathematical abilities, academic performance*

### **Preschool teachers' preference for developmental and/or academic practices about the first learning of the written language: case of Quebec**

Krasimira Marinova, Mirela Moldoveanu, France Dubé, Université du Québec, Canada

The objectives are to describe the preschool teachers' preference for developmental and/or academic practices about the first learnings of the written language and to verify the differences according to the socioeconomic context. The previous research show that preschool teachers favour academic practices for the learning of written language, as direct teaching and decrease the use of developmental practices, as play. (Thériault, 2010, Ansari and Purtell 2017, Marinova et al., 2019,). We refer to a double theoretical framework: the historic-cultural theory to understand the work addressed to others and the ergonomic to analyse human activity at work (Piot, 2014). The teaching practice is defined as the singular way a person does things, his or her own real way of performing a professional activity: the teaching (Altet, 2002). A questionnaire including 36 items (18 developmental, 18 academic practice) was administered to 161 teachers. Three continuous scales were used: functional, conventional and

phonological aspects of written language. Ministry of Education data including family income, mother's education, single parenthood) were used to assess socio-economic context. Since respondents participated anonymously and voluntarily, this research is below the threshold of minimal risk. The results indicate that teachers prefer academic practices for the learning of functional and phonological aspects. Concerning the conventional aspect, no preference has been statistically confirmed. The socioeconomic context does not influence the teachers' preference. The results will be applicable for ongoing teacher training which aim to transform practices and to promote developmental practices.

*written language, developmental practices, academic practices preschool teachers' practices, socioeconomic context*

II 30

### **Conceptualising fathers as literate beings as diverse socio-cultural and linguistic texts: How fathers contribute to their 3-year-old children's early literacy development**

Rosiena (Rose) Walton, Brock University, Canada

Critical literacy ethnography explores the evolving term of 'literacy' in relation to fathers' contributions to children's literacy development situated in families' daily lives. Family literacy research is dominated by mother-child interactions (Quiroz & Dixon, 2012; Puglisi, Hulme, Hamilton & Snowling, 2017; Mount-Cours, 2016) engendering roles of care as feminine in nature (Hegarty, 2016). Children engage in literacy activities with families at home before formal school entry (Jarrett & Coba-Rodriguez, 2017) where meaning-making occurs within relations and experiences. Bowen's Family Systems Theory (BFST) explores naturally occurring systems within reciprocal relationships (Kerr & Bowen, 1988) whereby families negotiate ongoing structures as processes leading to changes in behaviour patterns. Hegemonic masculinity is constructed as a gender position with its hegemonic roots (Gramsci, 1971) espousing dominance through consensus. Ethnographic case study exposes hegemony and themes through descriptions of shared behaviour patterns, beliefs and language in ordinary settings. Integrating information from focus group conversations, cultural material artifacts and observations of shared culture group interactions through a constant comparative methodology. As a female ethnographer building respectful, trusting relationships while describing masculine issues, declaration of gender bias as a participant-observer immersed in behavioural observations, explanations and experiences. Potentially this ethnographic case study will suggest the relationship of three-year-olds and fathers is shaped by care and education. Negotiating ongoing structural processes of change, I conceptualize fathers as diverse, socio-cultural, literate beings. Family literacy practices are defined as a learning continuum supporting knowledge-building and community participation. Fathers as facilitators within community organizations require flexible hours, diverse resources and programs.

*hegemonic masculinity, family literacy practices, new literacy studies father-mother-child relationships, family literacy programs*

II 31

### **Changing ECE teachers' play practices based on teacher observation and reflective action**

Sofia Avgitidou (1), Kyriaki Velkou (2), (1) University of Western Macedonia, Greece; (2) Ministry of Education, Greece

The aim of the research is to show how teacher observation and reflective action led to various changes in play practices within ECE settings. Emphasis on observing play has been related to rethinking ECE teachers' priorities and practices during children's play (McDonald, 2018; Avgitidou, et al. 2014; Forman & Hall, 2005). Current sociological and pedagogical theories view children as active agents of the social world they live in (Mayall, 2008; Clark & Moss, 2010). Observations of children's play provides important information for teachers to both acknowledge their perspectives and support their free and structured play (Fox, 2008; Frost, 1992). Seven ECE teachers were supported in an action research project to observe children's play and interview children about their perspectives on play. Collected data were analysed by teachers that led to a design of relevant actions. The facilitator of the action research supported teachers' reflection both during the research and design process. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study and participated voluntarily. ECE Teachers re-organised their play practices and role during both free and structured play through research and reflection. They supported children's voice and active participation in re-shaping their play environment and shaping the ways and forms of their play. Teachers acknowledged the role of observation in designing their educational work. This study has implications both for the support of ECE teachers' professional learning but also for the process of designing their educational work.

*children's play, action research, professional learning teacher role, educational design*

II 32

### **Measuring the quality of home learning environment: Results from the pilot study in Greek families**

Katerina Krousorati (1), Athanasios Gregoriadis (1), Eleni Nteli (2), (1) Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece; (2) Municipality of Kalamaria Preschool Centres, Greece

The aim of the presentation is to report the results from the pilot study, which examines the factorial validity of the early Home Learning Environment Profile (HLEP), a self-report instrument, in Greek families with children aged 4 to 7 years old. Evidence showed the critical role HLE can play in children's long-term developmental trajectories (Sammons et al., 2015; Anders et al., 2013). However, the existing measures of HLE have limitations and are relatively outdated. The bio-ecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), the family investment model (Conger & Donnellan, 2007) and the attachment theory (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991) are the theoretical framework of this study. A mixed methods approach was used to develop the HLEP, a self-report instrument for preschool children's HLE, comprising of seven steps. This study is a part of a doctoral dissertation which is approved according to the ethical guidelines of the Greek Institute of Educational Policy and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and is been funded by the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation. Participants have been informed about the study's purpose and have signed consent forms. The HLEP was pilot tested by being administered in 175 parents with preschool children. Exploratory factor analysis was applied which verified the factorial structure of HLEP. Moreover, Cronbach's alphas indicated high level of internal consistency for each factor. HLEP questionnaire is providing valuable information about the quality of HLE in Greek families.

*home learning environment, quality of HLE, instrument for HLE early childhood education, assessing HLE*

II 33

### **Two professions, one assignment**

Karin Sälj, Linnéuniversitetet, Sweden

The aim of the study is to understand how two different professions in preschool class, preschool teachers and primary school teachers, understand the same teaching assignment in terms of both professional understandings and policy interpretations. The last few decades of intensive school reform has affected teacher's work and the construction of professions (Lundström 2018). The preschool class has been described as a transition zone between preschool and school (Ackesjö, 2010) and is right now undergoing major educational policy change. How different professions handle the same teaching assignment (Kallberg, 2018) and the policy change (Ackesjö & Persson 2016) is of importance to study further. Policy enactment theory will be used to analyse how teachers interpret and do policy (Ball et al., 2012) and professional theory (Abbott 1988) will be used to analyse the different professional interpretations. A combination of methods (Silverman, 2005) will be used including teacher interviews and observations in selected preschool classes. All respondents are guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. They are free to leave the study at any time. Both preschool teachers and primary school teachers are qualified to teach in preschool class but their professional competences differs. The results will show how they understand the same teaching assignment in terms of professional understandings and policy interpretations. The study can show how policy and the educational practice is re-contextualized in relation to different professions and teachers' understandings of the assignment.

*preschool class, professions, policy teaching, Sweden*

II 34

### **Measuring the adult's social self-efficacy: A literature review**

Anastasia Vatou, Athanasios Gregoriadis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

The aim of this systematic literature review is to examine the modern literature about adult's Social Self-Efficacy (SSE) and how it is measured. Recent evidence has shown the impact of Social Self-Efficacy to the quality of interpersonal relationships and to mental health (Fan et al., 2013). However, the current literature lacks a comprehensive review about measuring the adult's SSE. The Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) and the Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1977, 1997) are the theoretical framework of this study. To examine the most commonly used tools on measuring SSE, a systematic search of the literature was undertaken. Articles were selected from databases such as ERIC, PsychInfo, ScienceDirect and Scopus and keywords relevant to adult's SSE were chosen. Via a criteria-based review approach, eligible abstracts and full-text articles were included for analysis. Data has been carried out without any manipulation according to the ethical guidelines of literature review. This review is a part of a doctoral dissertation which is approved according to the ethical guidelines of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Review found five instruments-scales for measuring adult's SSE: 1) Perceived Social Self-Efficacy (Smith & Betz, 2000), 2) Perceived Social Self-Efficacy (Di Giunta et al., 2010), 3) Social Efficacy and Social Outcome Expectations (Wright et al., 2013), 4) Workplace Social Self-Efficacy (Fan et al., 2013), and 5) Cognitive-Behavioural Social Self-Efficacy (Grieve et al., 2014). Findings from this review can promote the discussion about the need to develop a new measure for the evaluation of SSE in the educational context.

*assessing adult's SSE, ECE, literature review professional development, social self-efficacy*



### **Learning from our experiences: An implementation of educational autobiography in a Greek early years academic context**

Athina Charissi, George Vrionis, Zoi Dalala, Chrysoula Arvanitidou, Paraskevi Liarou, Maria Tsigarida, Evanthia Sdoukou V, Konstantina Ntai, University of Ioannina, Greece

This study explored the use of Educational Autobiography (EAB) as an innovative educational tool in Early Years academic context and its effects on students' learning and growth. Previous theory and research associates autobiography with personal development and inquiry (Ware, 1979; Goodson & Sikes, 2001). In the field of Education and Adult Education, biography is indicated as a creative context of interpretation (Pazioni-Kalli, 2009, 2012) with transformational dynamics (Koulaouzidis, 2013, 2017). Implementations of EAB in academic contexts provide further evidence and guidelines (Dominicé, 2000; Monteagudo 2014, 2017). Adult learning consists of understanding experiences' meaning (Mezirow, 2007). EAB is a personal story, critical reflection and interpretation, of the learning experiences that have influenced one's growth, personal and professional choices (Koulaouzidis, 2017; Monteagudo 2014). Biographical-narrative approach encompasses a variety of research methods and techniques. Biography is considered as a social construction, built through narration. In this project 87 academic students participated in writing their own EABs, combining oral exercises and writing, mixing together individual and group work, completing an evaluation form. Participants agreed in undertaking the project and were given from the outset a guidelines framework, including respect for privacy and right to anonymity. All students engaged in reflection on past experiences. Most of them found EAB an interesting, self-enrichment process, leading to a better appreciation of experiences in shaping themselves and their role/practice as Early Years Practitioners. Findings indicate further implications of EAB within a critical ecology approach to the profession of Early Childhood Education and claims for reflective practitioners.

*educational autobiography, early years academic context, critical reflection learning experiences, adult learning*

### **"Not a Book": Children's literature and content knowledge in initial early childhood teacher education**

Maria Figueiredo, Helena Gomes, Isabel Aires de Matos, Ana Catarina Fernandes, Ana Margarida Almeida, Polytechnic of Viseu, Portugal

In our initial Early Childhood Teacher Education Master's Degree, a multidisciplinary project is underway to contribute to the mathematically relevant use of Children's Literature. In a course focused on content knowledge, books were used to promote learning about content knowledge and didactic knowledge. The poster presents an analysis of the experience focused on Mathematics. The diversified contributions of Children's Literature are recognized. In Mathematics, books for children have been studied and valued as support for meaningful learning. Content knowledge in Early Childhood Education and ECE Teacher Education is contested but important (Figueiredo, Gomes & Rodrigues, 2018; Hedges & Cullen, 2005; Oppermann, Anders, & Hachfeld, 2016; Trawick-Smith, Swaminathan, & Liu, 2016). From the available research (Van den Heuvel-Panhuizen & Elia, 2012; Flevares, & Schiff, 2014), we drew arguments for the use of books as basis for didactic decision making in Early Childhood Education and criteria for selecting books. The study, under interpretivist/constructivist paradigm, used a student teachers' report about the book "Not a box" for promoting learning of Math concepts. The analysis focused the interaction between content knowledge and didactic decision making. Informed consents from the students were collected. The book revealed rich and meaningful opportunities to present and discuss different ideas with children. Relevant ideas and processes were present in images, story structure, and character actions. The content identified was complex and sophisticated and aligned with the curriculum, therefore relevant. Common practicum artefacts like children's books are good ways to ground and contextualize content knowledge in initial teacher education.

*initial teacher education, mathematics, content knowledge children's literature, geometry*

### **What is mathematics education for children under three years of age?**

Amy MacDonald, Charles Sturt University, Australia

This project investigates mathematics education for children under 3 by examining the beliefs and practices of their educators. Early childhood mathematics education research has largely focused on ages 4-8. The limited existing research on Under 3s' mathematical knowledge largely considers this knowledge out of context and relies on clinical assessments, rather than considering mathematics education. Research demonstrating the mathematical engagements of very young children in context and in educational practice is required. The mathematics accessed by the children and the educators is conceptualised using Bishop's Mathematical Activities (Bishop, 1988). Additionally, Practice Architectures (Kemmis, 2007) provides a framework for

recognising and interpreting educators' understandings and self-understandings; skills and capabilities; and values and norms in mathematics education. This project employs a multi-phase mixed-method design. Phase 1 is a national survey of early childhood educators to ascertain their beliefs and practices regarding mathematics education for Under 3s. Phase 2 gathers case study data using video and still recordings and document analysis to build an evidence base of when, and how, mathematics education is provided for Under 3s. The study has sought informed consent from educators and families, and assent from the children. This study has shown that many mathematical opportunities exist in Under 3s educational settings, both intentional and opportunistic. Educators have varying degrees of confidence, but are generally positive and are able to recognise mathematics in their practice with Under 3s. These findings will inform the development of professional learning materials which could lead to improved mathematics education in the early years.

*early childhood mathematics education, birth to three education, educator beliefs survey research, case study research*

II 38

### **The effect of physical play experiences on early childhood non-cognitive skills development**

Yuko Suzuki, Aichi University of Education, Japan

This study aims to verify the hypothesis that the acquisition of non-cognitive skills is affected by physical play experiences (PP) in early childhood (EC). Through the research of OECD, some reports state that the development of non-cognitive skills in EC is affected by factors such as the quality of care and play experiences. However, there isn't enough evidence to prove this. This study is a hypothesis verification type. In order to provide some concrete evidence on non-cognitive skills, the cross-sectional retrospective study was used despite its difficulty in finding out the confounder in retrospect. Firstly, a questionnaire survey was conducted with university students. Then a Structural Equation Modelling as a basic model for the hypothesis was done to study how much of an effect PPE in EC had on non-cognitive skills in university, as represented by the Big Five personality traits. Secondly, to examine the perceived benefits of PPE, subjects were asked to write freely about their autobiographical memories of PPE in EC. The narratives were visualized through co-occurring network analysis with text mining using KH Coder. These surveys were conducted under the Aichi University of Education Code of Ethics. The results showed a correlation between sufficiently rich PPE in EC and the personality trait of attachment as an adult. Additionally, correlation between personality traits and the quantity and quality of the subjective benefits of PPE was also observed. These findings imply the importance of physical play experiences during early childhood and the determinants on the development of non-cognitive skills.

*non-cognitive skills, physical play experiences in early childhood, big five personality structural equation modelling (SEM), co-occurring network analysis in text mining*

II 39

### **Relationship between upskilling and job satisfaction of nursery school teachers in Japan**

Masuharu Shimizu (1), Toshiaki Mori (2), (1) Tezukayama University, Japan; (2) Okayama University of Science, Japan

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between upskilling and job satisfaction of nursery school teachers in Japan. Kurland and Hasson-Gilad (2015) indicated that the quality of job skills training is an important factor affecting job satisfaction. By the way, Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has reported that approximately 10 percent of nursery school teachers leave their job every year, and average length of service years is less than 7.6, suggesting that reform of job skills training programs is necessary to prevent them from leaving their job. Therefore, a questionnaire survey regarding quality of job skills training program and job satisfaction was carried out. A total of 1850 nursery school teachers evaluated the quality of 25 job skills training programs, i.e., program for chief teacher of infant class, support program for children's development of life skills, support program for families raising children, and so on. They also rated job satisfaction for 10 situations in their workplaces, such as 'when they were paid more', 'when they felt children's development', and 'when they finished relegated work', on a 6-point job-satisfaction scale. Prior informed consent was obtained from their centre managers. Multiple regression analysis of rating scale data indicated that voluntary participation in the programs and experience of on job and off job training are significant predictors for job satisfaction. These results were discussed in relation to reform of job training programs for nursery school teachers in Japan.

*upskilling program, job satisfaction, job leaving rate length of service years, nursery teachers*

### **Parental involvement and early childhood music education**

Lelouda Stamou, Rafaela Troulou, University of Macedonia, Greece

The study aimed at investigating parents' opinions about their participation in an early childhood music program. Research findings (Stamou & Theodoridis, 2016; Zdzinski, 2013; Kendall, 2012; Koops, 2011; Ilari et al., 2011; Creech & Hallam, 2009; Freire & Freire, 2008; Li, Corrie, & Wong, 2008; Green et al., 2007; Sichivitsa, 2007; Englund et al., 2004; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Cardany, 2004; Jeynes, 2003) have underlined the significant role of parents during the first years of life for the child's growth and future educational achievements. The importance of understanding parents' life contexts and views affecting their involvement has been underlined in several research studies (Stamou et al., in print; Stamou & Skandalaki, 2017; Wheeler & Conor, 2006; Bjorklund et al., 2002; Berger, 2000). The study of parental involvement requires multiple sources of data so as to improve the validity of findings (Bakker & Denessen, 2007; Morsbach & Prinz, 2006). The study followed a mixed-methods approach, employing (a) parents' self-report questionnaire, (b) parent diary, (c) teacher/researcher diary, and (d) systematic observation, with a sample of 126 parents as well as three pairs of parents-children who served as case studies. Researcher interpretations were presented to participating parents for verifying data validity. Findings revealed parents' characteristics and views relating to children's musical and social behaviours in the music class. Findings may contribute to better understanding parental views and expectations, which is crucial if we want to facilitate better communication with parents and optimal environments for children's growth.

*early childhood, parental involvement, music education roles, participation*

### **Beyond the veil of parents: Deconstructing conception of parental involvement in early childhood education and care**

Yan Li, Jochen Devlieghere, Michel, Vandenbroeck, Ghent University, Belgium

This article aims to explore the meanings of parental involvement (PI) and the conceptualization of parents in this meaning. The related literature first and foremost refers to the positive effects of PI on children's school outcomes. However, the issue is that it is unclear how parents themselves are viewed within these conceptualizations and to what extent parents are included in the conceptualization. This is troubling as parents are the key stakeholders when talking about PI. Parental involvement reflects participatory education underlining the reciprocal process and dialogic participation in democratic ways. Defining parental involvement entails a dialogue with parents as well as professionals on what is good for children, which should enable diverse parents to participate in the co-construction of parental involvement. We performed a systematic literature review using the SSCI database. The content of the articles was analysed by using NVivo 11 Pro for conducting a thematic analysis. In order to avoid personal bias, a review protocol was established which comprised a structured table for collecting and categorizing key information from each article. The literature review reveals two central and overriding themes: parents' (dis)involvement; and parents' instrumentalisation. The school's position, school-initiated activities as the centre of the relationship, and overemphasizing the positive influence for children's schooling intensifies parent's instrumentalisation. It asks for a paradigm shift, away from instrumentalising and silencing parents and towards a reciprocal, symmetrical dialogic relationship between teachers and parent.

*parental involvement, conceptualization, parental instrumentalisation parent's diversity, dialogic relationship*

### **Early intervention for children at risk**

Charlotte U Johannessen, Charlotte U Johannessen, Norway

The aim of this study is to examine if continuing education for kindergarten teachers on the topic "children at risk" -with focus on early intervention, change their practices. This paper builds on earlier qualitative and quantitative, doctoral research studies by fil. Dr Karin Lundén (2004, 2010) and fil. Dr Birthe Hagström (2010). The framework of the research study based on topics from child development and attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1991, Bowlby, 1988, Brandtzæg, Smith & Torsteinson, 2011; Broberg & Hagström, 2012; Killén, 2015). This project evolves from a social-cultural paradigm. It can be seen as educational research with an emphasis on what practice evolves from continuing education. The kindergarten teachers got continuing education in a combination of lectures and supervision groups during one year. A questionnaire is used at the beginning and at the end of the education. The leaders of supervision groups also take process notes to document the group processes. The study is conducted and approved according by the Norwegian guidelines for research ethics (NSD). Another ethical consideration is my part of heading the continuing education and a researcher. Between 2007 and 2014, 149 kindergarten teachers participated in the continuing education. Main findings show that the preschool teachers report that continuing education change reflection on practice and

how they work with children at risk, parents and collaborators. Questions to be raised are if there is a need for a more systematic continuing education program on this topic. The findings can be valuable for the practical field and policy for ECE contexts.

*continuing education, children at risk, kindergarten teachers reflective practice early childhood education, early childhood services*

II 43

### **Making it Count! Engaging educators in the virtual world to promote professional learning**

Jaime Barratt, Debra Harwood, Brock University, Canada

This study examines educators' experiences utilizing digital technology to engage in continuous professional learning (CPL) in remote northern Ontario, Canada. Further, it explores what knowledge, skills, and delivery methods are necessary to support educators' CPL providing a forum for educator professionalism encourages the development and questioning of practices, which is an important part of being an educator (Harwood, Kloppe, Osanyin, & Vanderlee, 2013). Harwood and Tukonic (2016) noted that critical discourse around educator professionalism is largely absent from CPL within Ontario. This study is guided by appreciative inquiry, which Stavros, Godwin, and Cooperrider (2015) describe is "the search for the best in people, their organizations, and the strengths-filled, opportunity-rich world around them" (p. 97). Within the constructivist paradigm (Merriam, 1998), this qualitative case study applies a macro-meso-micro tiered approach to CPL delivery (Jensen & Iannone, 2018). Informed by procedures from the 'Wanda' method (Sharmahd et al., 2018), educators utilize iPads to engage in online co-reflection sessions, focus groups, and anecdotal reflections. Educators were also provided augmented reality resources to supplement their CPL. Pearson, Albon, and Hubball (2015) acknowledge one significant ethical consideration in case study research regards maintaining the confidentiality of personal narratives. Online avatars, pseudonyms, and digital security help address the ethical issue. Preliminary findings indicate that the CPL model positively impacts educators' practices; and offers a replicable model that is particularly beneficial for educators in geographically remote locales. Implications include providing guidance on the development of further equitable CPL opportunities, and future technology-based professional learning.

*continuous professional learning, professionalism, digital and virtual technologies qualitative case study, Wanda method*

II 44

### **Teachers' beliefs and practices with play materials in Norwegian ECEC. A common ideology?**

Tone Rove Nilsen, Nord University, Norway

The aim is to generate new knowledge about selection and availability of play materials, and contribute to the development of good and professional practice. This PhD project has emerged due to low scores in the subscale of activities in quality measurements ITERS-R and ECERS-R within the study Better Provision for Norway's children in Early Years Education and Care (GoBaN). Read more in Bjørnstad and Os (2018). Theoretical and conceptual framework is based within the sociocultural learning theory (Vygotsky, 2001), and also American pedagogy tradition with «Playful learning» (Hirsh-Pasek, K., Michnick Golinkoff, R., Berk, L. E., & Singer, D. G. (2009). An interpretative paradigm. Influenced by phenomenology when looking into teachers' professional practice (McGuirk and Methi, 2015). A mixed method study, with combination of quantitative quality measurements and qualitative in-depth interviews with ECEC teachers. The project is approved by Norwegian Centre for Research data. Fictitious names are used to maintain anonymity and everyone interviewed signed an informed consent letter. Findings show ECEC teachers' beliefs and practices with play materials in Norwegian ECEC. The discussion looks into how their ideologies, pedagogical intentions and consciousness affects their practice. Awareness about the importance of the physical environment in relation to the children's development, play and learning may increase the quality of the ECEC. A good practice is not only based on experience, but in teachers' own reflections about their practice. Educators and policy makers may use results from my project to increase the focus on physical environment in ECEC teacher education.

*professional practice, teachers' beliefs, play materials environment, quality*

II 45

### **How successful can be teaching of social-emotional skills with use of didactical games?**

Marta Licardo, University of Maribor, Slovenia

The purpose of our study is to design didactical games and evaluate learning of social-emotional skills of children. Research consistently shows that children's social and emotional skills are essential for success in school and life (Conn-Powers, 2010). In preschool period, play is one of the best methods to teach. Play is often a context of learning possibilities (Wood, 2009), it challenges children to cognitive activities (Robson and Rowe, 2012) and to learn social-emotional skills (Singer et al., 2006; Wood and Attfield, 2013). In our study we've evaluated differences in children's social-emotional skills before and after using didactical

games. The didactical games were designed to teach social-emotional skills. We've used three games and evaluated behaviour of 5-6 years old children individually (n = 20), before and after playing didactical games. The evaluation (with t-test) included variables: emotional communication, conflict solving, social communication and interaction. Informed consent from parents and kindergarten staff to implement the study was obtained. The research indicates that there are statistical differences ( $p < 0,001$ ) on all measured variables. After relatively short playing period (14 days), children were better in communication with their peers, expressed empathy and respecting the needs of others. They were learning how to make compromises, adjust to others, more often solved conflicts with communication, they respected the rules of the games and interchanged between the groups more than before playing games. The results show that we can intervene with playing games and improve children's social-emotional skills even in the short period of time.

*pedagogy of play, didactical games, social-emotional skills social interaction, social communication*

II 46

### **Collaborated meaning making in free play activities**

Anja Tertoolen, Annerieke Boland, University of Applied Sciences - iPabo Amsterdam, Netherlands

As school is one of the environments children are engaged in from an early age, it is important to understand how these environments affect children's development. How do children act within, and value these educational contexts? In my PhD-research (2017) I explored young children's meanings, ascribed to their school contexts. In this follow-up research children's acting is explored, related to teachers' perspectives, and the processes of mutual meaning making. The research is based on social cultural activity theory. Children are culturally situated human beings, trying to make sense of their environments with the help of others. Children, teachers, this context and how these aspects are interrelated are all parts of the conceptual framework (Clark, 2010; Harcourt et al., 2011; Hedegaard, 2008; Hohti & Karlsson, 2014; Raino, 2017). Pattern analysis and matching are used to describe the individual and interrelational elements of children's acting in play-activities, and how these actions are interrelated to teachers' interventions. Being aware of the relationship of power between researcher and children, special attention is paid to children's involvement with their outspoken consent in every possible way. Their parents and teachers were asked for their written consent (EECERA Code). Key concepts were identified of children's and teachers' collaborated meaning making during play activities, as well as possible misconceptions in children's and teachers' intentions and interventions. Discussing these outcomes with the teachers involved, is important in order to realize educational contexts, in which children have possibilities to show (shared) agency, being actively involved in shaping their development.

*school contexts, children's voices, teachers' perspectives sense and meaning, shared agency*

II 47

### **Function-based treatments versus non-function-based treatments for disruptive behaviours**

Mubarak Aldosari, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia

The intent of study was to extend Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) research by comparing the effectiveness of function-based and Mystery Motivator (MM) treatments in reducing the disruptive behaviours of toddlers with developmental disabilities. A more thorough investigation of function-based treatment utility of Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) should involve comparison between a function-based treatment and an empirically supported non-function-based treatment not matched to function. Function-based treatments are designed and developed based on the findings of a Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA), which determines the antecedents that precede the disruptive behaviours and the consequences that reinforce such behaviours (Sugai et al. 2000). This research was conducted on five toddlers in three parts. In Part 1, a Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) was conducted to identify the function of the disruptive behaviour. In Part 2, both a function-based treatment and a Mystery Motivator (MM) treatment were developed and designed for each toddler. In Part 3, both treatments were implemented in the inclusive toddler program during the most problematic activities for each toddler. Written informed consent was obtained from each participant's parents and the teachers prior to the study. Participation was confidential and voluntary and all the participants had the rights to withdraw from the research at any time. The findings indicate that the function-based treatments resulted in greater reduction of disruptive behaviours for all five toddlers. These results support and extend findings showing that function-based treatments that match the behavioural function of the disruptive behaviour decrease that disruptive behaviour.

*toddlers, developmental disabilities, function-based treatment, mystery motivator, functional behaviour assessment*

# “PED”agogical Talks

9:00 – 10:00, Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2019

## Group A

**Chair:** Tony Bertram, EECERA Board of Trustees, United Kingdom

### **The complexity of risk in early childhood education**

Mandy Cooke, Charles Sturt University, Australia

In recent years, a pro-risk discourse has entered many sectors of Western society, including education (Bialostok & Kamberelis, 2010). Curriculums around the world increasingly identify risk-taking as a valued learner attribute and many early childhood frameworks now include opportunities for children to take risks as an important feature of learning environments. Risk-taking comes in many forms, including physical, social, emotional and cognitive. As an educator, I have observed children taking a broad range of risks. I have taken risks myself. Often risk-taking is associated with courage and resilience. In my experience, risk-taking for both children and educators can also be associated with identity, advocacy and social justice. Identity, advocacy and social justice are vital elements of learning that move education beyond the imparting of skills and knowledge to a morally informed endeavour; an endeavour that works toward the best interests of individuals and societies. This presentation shares personal experiences that led to a research project looking at a broad range of risk-taking in early childhood education. The stories shared reveal the raw and personal nature of risk in a complex human society and the inherent-ness of risk in early childhood environments. This presentation aims to inspire listeners to think more broadly about the risks they take in early childhood education and to explore ways to inspire and support children and educators to take the kind of risks that benefit just and inclusive societies - societies where 'people live well in a world worth living in' (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 25).

*risk, risk-taking, wellbeing, identity, social justice*

### **Using props when teaching young children**

Jakobína Rut Hendriksdóttir, Leikskóli Seltjarnarness, Iceland

What are props and how do we introduce them to young children? How do we use props such as hand puppets and storyboxes when teaching young children? Is it affective? Is there a connection between props in teaching and imaginary play with young children? When I use props while teaching young children I'm inviting them to a world of imagination or fantasy. To them it's real and they get involved. I use face expression and exaggerated bodily movement which I feel strongly about, as we tend to shut it down as we grow up. It's important to develop this fantasy world because it affects children's development, behaviour and understanding of the world they know. It's my duty as a teacher to introduce children to a world where everything is possible. Every teacher can develop the use of props in teaching, from their point of passion as long as the children's interests. Children's play is based on a certain fantasy and they'll play out different experiences and create scenario that emphasizes their needs, longings and what they know. When teachers use props they introduce children to a world of imagination, an important factor when it comes to children's development, behaviour and understanding. In this presentation I'll demonstrate how I use props when teaching young children in multiple ways. I feel passionately about it, it's beneficial to everyone and above all, fun. Hopefully I'll inspire many to start using props when teaching. In a world full of grey, be a rainbow.

*play, imagination, hand puppet, story box, development*

### **Education of non-core languages in early childhood settings**

Ilaria Cantoro (1), Rebecca Jensen-Waud (2), (1) Fröbel - Competence for Children, Germany; (2) International Grammar School, Australia

Play focused research has examined theories, pedagogies, environments, facilitation of play which has resulted in quality benchmarks for play across early childhood settings (ECS). Quite the opposite of research into the teaching and learning of second languages in ECS. Despite the lack of pedagogical research, multilingual programs continue to increase worldwide in ECS. The International Grammar School is a pioneer school (3y-18y) founded on a unique partial immersion language program and philosophy. The current lack however, means we have only limited understanding of learning mechanisms and attainment of additional languages and thus limited quality reference points for best practice. We need to address this lack in order to nurture the critical period of 2nd language acquisition and develop world-ready children. As parents of multilingual children and educators delivering multilingual early childhood programs in ECS's, we are deeply invested in the area. Research has proven that introduction of language (including musical language) in the early childhood years primes the brain for further language learning

and optimal development. Yet there is little evidence around how to best to facilitate this learning with quality pedagogy. Research for language teaching in ECS remains limited. Effective methodology for learning languages has not evolved. As parents and educators invested in developing multilingual learners we need quality reference points and evidence for our practices. An international research initiative involving quantitative testing of language skills in pre-literate children would provide an evidence-based teaching framework for best practice and conviction to stand by a quality approach.

*second language acquisition, multilingual preschools, multilingual research, language arts, multilingual pedagogies*

### **'Children will be what they dream to be'. The indelible imprint of a feminist early childhood education**

Julia Rodríguez Carrillo, University of Córdoba, Spain

An innovative experience has been developed in Córdoba (Southern Spain) which aims at awakening scientific vocations among young children. Its main aims are: to promote an egalitarian image of science, which values women's talent; and to provide children with female role models in order to abandon the image of science as a male-dominated field. When I decided to study a degree in ECE at the University, some people accused me of being a fool. They thought I was wasting my talent, as I had always been an excellent student. Afterwards, when I decided to start my Ph.D. on high-quality ECE teaching, some people, again, were surprised: "But, to be an ECE teacher is just about letting children play and sing, isn't it?". Neither practice nor research in ECE seem to be regarded as worthy careers. Furthermore, there is an unequal presence of men and women in ECE research and practice: very few male teachers but, conversely, countless of successful male researchers in the field. I feel I have an ethical duty with the next generation of passionate and dreamy girls. My desire is to inspire them, so that they don't experience what I've suffered myself. The talk will address: (1) Inspiring the next! My thoughts as a young woman researcher; (2) 'Feminist Education': A timely feature of the ECE curriculum; (3) 'They were silenced once, but we give them voice now'. Lessons from extraordinary women scientists; and (4) Our project: 'INFA-CIENCIA, from today's girls to tomorrow's women scientists'.

*scientific vocations in childhood, feminist early childhood education, innovation experiences, female role models, inclusive early childhood education*

### **Children's happiness and wellbeing...or how we are obsessed with children's academic achievement**

Angel Urbina-Garcia, University of Hull, United Kingdom

There is no question that formal schooling plays a major role in children's development and more specifically in the development of global citizens, however it seems that curricula in most countries around the world, fail to consider the importance of making children happy and ensuring their well-being – not to be confused with safeguarding children which is a different concept. By working in three continents, I've noticed that most stakeholders involved in education seem to be "obsessed" with improving academic achievement in children -as the ultimate goal in life. However, promoting children's happiness and well-being do not seem to play a significant role in educational curricula -let alone in teacher training. Teachers and children are stressed due to global academic pressure and competition. We must teach stakeholders that we're working with human beings, not with learning-machines. Changing this mindset is essential to producing happy and mentally stable global citizens who can be agents of change that the current global challenges demand -rather than producing competitive money-driven citizens. I will share my experience working with "happy" children in highly deprived areas in Thailand and Mexico, encouraging the audience to reflect upon the influence of highly-structured environments (schools) and how these, put our children at high risk of being stressed, anxious, depressed, etc. With this reflection, we'll be able to raise awareness among stakeholders to create innovative research to inform global policies in this respect. Let's make happy children rather than stressed and anxious persons immersed in a highly competitive labour market.

*children, happiness, well-being, emotional development, children's voice*

## **Group B**

**Chair:** Irene Gunning, EECERA Board of Trustees, United Kingdom

### **Literacy in early childhood: Digital play and text production**

Sally Brown, Georgia Southern University, United States

The aim of this talk is to understand what happens when young students are provided the affordances of digital multimodal resources and asked to create a story? First, I am committed to making learning accessible to ALL students. When educators rely on one mode (usually linguistic), learning opportunities are restricted, and therefore, privilege some children over others. This is unfair and unethical. Second, I wholeheartedly believe in the power of play in early childhood. Play has been removed in most cases to make way for standards and a narrowed curriculum. Play opens up spaces for powerful literacy learning experiences, and

I want all children to experience success in learning. The talk will focus on digital play as an essential tool for learning as a function of multimodal storytelling. I will share vignettes of student activity from early childhood classrooms in the U.S. Each vignette will highlight a short transcript of student talk to illustrate the need for digital play in the 21st century. In addition, I will showcase classroom experiences that indicate a need for multimodal learning opportunities. Pedagogical moves for student engagement with multimodal tools will be shared in the hopes that educators will take these strategies back to their classrooms and modify them for use with their own students. Classrooms must become inclusive spaces where all students can learn and be respected for the assets they bring to school.

*digital play, composing, multimodal stories, technology, diversity*

#### **Multimodal play: A threshold concept for early childhood curriculum?**

Susan Grieshaber, La Trobe University, Australia

New practices are needed in response to children's rapidly changing life-worlds and interests in popular culture, multimodality, and digital technologies. I find it puzzling that many children's home play experiences include digital and popular culture oriented play, yet this play can be discouraged in early childhood settings. Professional learning has met with limited success in terms of educators supporting children's interests in popular culture and digital oriented play. Threshold concepts could bring more understanding about this ongoing challenge. I'm interested in threshold concepts because I think they offer opportunities for understanding why educators find it difficult to move beyond long standing practices and try new approaches. Threshold concepts are ways that new practices might develop from existing practice norms of ECE. They are abstract ideas and transformative epistemologically because they reveal new ways of thinking and understanding. However, they are also troublesome because they require undoing of prior learning, can appear counterintuitive, and have sticking points. I grapple with what might be needed to overcome the thresholds required to think and understand children's interests in popular culture, digital and multimodal play; and with the bigger question of how threshold concepts might be useful in changing practices. I'm interested in how professional learning can support teachers to imagine and adopt new teaching and learning practices in play-based contexts; what meaningful learning might be for teachers regarding popular culture, digital and multimodal play, and whether there are spaces for teachers to experience liminality (sticking points) as part of meaningful learning.

*play, digital technologies, popular culture, multimodality, Threshold concepts*

#### **Starting at the beginning: Mathematics in the lives of infants and toddlers**

Kelly Johnston, Macquarie University, Australia

Infants are born hard-wired for mathematical cognition (Dehaene-Lambertz & Spelke, 2015) with mathematical thinking developing rapidly during the first three years. This is a critical period for developing foundational understandings (Sheridan et al., 2009), abilities and positive attitudes towards mathematics, which are predictive of later mathematical achievement at school (Clements & Sarama, 2010). However, many early childhood educators lack confidence, and are unaware of the mathematical potential of young children (Hunting et al., 2010) and the pedagogical value of mathematics in curricula for infants and toddlers (Björklund, 2012). As a teacher of pre-service teachers and a researcher in early childhood STEM, I have found that the majority of people I work with show a deep aversion to mathematics. As someone who developed a love for mathematics later in life I can relate, and through my own research on the topic, I understand why. There is frequently a point where people are told they are not good at mathematics based on a reductive, academic or school-based conceptualisation of mathematics. This discussion will look at the questions of: What if we reinforced children as strong mathematical thinkers from the earliest years? And what if we gave them complete confidence in language and foundational understandings of mathematical concepts knowing these would be built upon in their homes, their early learning settings, primary school, high-school and everyday life? It will also cover what this means for us as educators and in our roles as advocate to families and the broader community.

*mathematical thinking and learning, birth to three years, pre-service teachers, early childhood educators, families*

#### **The educators' image of the child is where teaching begins.**

Rita Melia, Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Ireland

How does the educators' image of the child as a learner influence their choice of pedagogical approach and children's subsequent levels of wellbeing and involvement? With unprecedented numbers of children accessing centre-based ECEC provision across Europe, what mechanisms are in place to measure the quality of the provision or the effectiveness of the pedagogical approach in ECEC settings. ECEC is increasingly a policy priority in many European countries with associated increased investment, however, do we know what it feels like to be a child in an ECEC setting? This gap in knowledge needs to be addressed and prioritized if we are serious about our commitment to providing quality ECEC experiences for our youngest citizens. Laevers (2017) suggests that



high levels of wellbeing and involvement are an indicator of high quality provision and are the best indicators that the ECCE programme is effective. This presentation will identify how the pedagogical approach can support high levels of wellbeing and involvement, based on theory and data. The researcher will challenge the audience to consider how a traditional pedagogical approach which is based on an image of the child as needy or a tabula rasa impacts on children's levels of wellbeing and involvement. As educators we have a responsibility to evaluate the quality of ECEC provision and make appropriate changes to support children to have high levels of wellbeing and involvement, starting with the educators' image of the child as a learner.

*image of the child, pedagogy, curiosity, play, autonomy*

#### **English special educational needs coordinators - perceptions of practice and potential**

Hazel Richards, University of Worcester, United Kingdom

Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCoS) have a pivotal role in the identification of need and organisation of intervention for children with a range of additional needs. This includes collecting evidence from such children, their families, involved professionals and setting staff to direct, justify and secure the resources needed to support progress and positive outcomes. I am a researching Speech and Language Therapist who recognises that in England, educational provision for children and young people with SEND exists in a context of inclusion, while coexisting and competing with conflicting priorities such as performance and marketised services. Differences in setting ethos, experience, knowledge, skill and agreements with services also exist. I am passionate about the educational experience and outcomes of children with SEND. Although the scenario described is fragmented, I have found that several basic skills and principles can make a considerable difference. This talk will present and advocate for these. Early identification and intervention is a key responsibility of SENCoS working in early years but different qualification routes and practical constraints such as training access, and reduced Area SENCo oversight, create challenges. As a Speech and Language Therapist, I value robustly held knowledge of developmental norms and contact, which underlies relationships, communication and trust, and contributes to knowledge about individual children and their families. These skills are central to practice in early years, and I propose that the effectiveness of provision and outcomes for children with SEND are improved when these are both established and prioritised

*SENCoS, developmental norms, relationships with parents and families, contact, individualised knowledge*

#### **Group C**

A13, Tower Building, Faculty of Education, A.U.TH.

**Chair:** Chris Pascal, EECERA Board of Trustees, United Kingdom

#### **I could bring my child in her pyjamas to preschool, so supportive they are**

Melissa Bonotto, UNESCO Child and Family Research Center, NUI Galway, Ireland

As a former preschool teacher, I am passionate about the role of a preschool setting supporting children with additional needs and their families. Sciences tell us that the early years of a child's life are the foundation stage for life. It is an incredible rewarding job seeing children growing and thriving at their own rhyme. The reality I experienced was that children with additional needs in preschool were majority of the time, left out without formal support, having only the preschool to support them. Research says that getting there early is not only early in the genesis of the problem, but also early in the lives of the child. So why statistics show that children are accessing the system for support in a late stage? "What works for me? Basically, the preschool, that is it", a parent who access services have said. "Oh, massive (child's name) could not walk. ... but basically, if it wasn't for the preschool, (child's name) wouldn't be walking." I want to change policies to support a child's need at "the right time". Parents have said that preschool teachers, who are earning the minimum wage, are doing all they can for their children, while they are waiting for specific early intervention services. Preschool teachers must receive the value they deserve. The call for the professionalization of the sector, must be matched with compatible wages for their competent jobs. Everyone has the responsibility to break this cycle if it is for all children to thrive.

*preschool children, meaningful interactions, early intervention, family support, preschool settings*

## **Viewing leadership as an action and not a role: Reconfiguring early childhood leadership**

Sharryn Clarke, Monash University, Australia

The ambiguity of leadership in early childhood and how neoliberalism creates 'roles of compliance' rather than 'actions of innovation'. 'In Australia and other parts of the world dominated by capitalism, children have become a commodity. This commodity can be seen through the dominant discourse of neoliberalism where the notion of investment/return, particularly in early childhood education and care (ECEC), will apparently bring about a better life for all (Moss, 2017). Standards of quality (i.e. National Quality Standards (NQS)), must therefore be adhered to in order to produce the ideal 'return.' This discourse also highlights leadership enacting such standards which seems to have driven compliance, rather than innovation in our educational leaders (Sims, 2017). The preoccupation with 'leading' services to exceed 'standards' concerns me because even the notion of 'exceeding' has prescriptive standardisation benchmarks rather than innovation. Therefore, I question the educational leader in such a standardised climate where any resistance or innovative leadership is seen as potentially 'working against' institutionally defined 'quality'? As a leader and a resister, I have learnt to work within the narratives of the dominant discourse to be heard. I propose that leaders think more about their actions of leadership (Adair, 2006) rather than their role as a leader. Leadership actions can bring about change in discourse that prioritises outcomes for children based upon rights, rather than merely for future economic return. Happiness therefore becomes the dominant discourse by seeing children as a citizen in their own right.

*educational leadership, neoliberalism, action-centred leadership, children's rights, critical thinking*

## **Why should teachers get paid more?**

Liz Latto, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

The roles and status of teachers and practitioners within Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). I was first told I was going into the nursery class in my school 7 years ago. I was not asked. I did not want to teach in nursery. I had no knowledge of, nor interest in ELC. However, I was given no choice. Nor were the women (all women) I was expected to line manage. I inherited a staff team whose ELC experience ranged from about 8 years to 28. All staff members had qualifications specifically in ELC. I did not. I was passionate about teaching and had taught in early primary classes for the previous three years, but I was very much a "school" teacher. Within this nursery class I was the least experienced, least knowledgeable in early years pedagogy, but I was paid considerably more and enjoyed a higher status within the wider school community. This seemed unfair. I will share thoughts on the value of life experience and a passion for working with young children. Why it is important to have a range of practitioners, with different backgrounds, skills, qualifications and experience. How to create a team, built on mutual respect and a shared vision. What impact high quality settings can have on their communities? I will end with the sheer joy and job satisfaction to be experienced working with young children and their families.

*professional identities, joy of working with children and families, equity, relationships, lived experiences*

## **A story about quality in discourse: Re-thinking inclusion**

Andy Schieler, University of Applied Science, Germany

Everybody can participate – but not everybody have to. In a common figure, that uses circles (groups) and different single-coloured dots (individuals) to depict the different forms of social-group constellations (exclusion, separation, integration, inclusion), inclusion can be easily misunderstood. This figure suggests two fundamental statements: First, inclusion is something by which people do everything together without being separated in different groups (being in one circle). Second, individuals are one-dimensional (single-coloured dots). Changes of this conceptualisation are explained in paragraph 3. Images have power. My personal rational is to sensitize for the mentioned statements, which contradict the main idea of inclusion. Inclusion means to learn to see the other as the diverse bunch of potentials we all are, within dynamic and permeable groups in which we all live. To draw this picture in ECE practice as one part of quality development is my personal rational. It is the nature of humans to live and act in social groups and it is the idea of an inclusive pedagogy to build social groups inclusive. This refers to a dynamic, permeable formation of social groups based on repeated, interactive negotiation processes based on the individuals' autonomy, preferences and abilities.

It is important to see the other not only as a single-coloured dot with one dimension (disability) but as a diverse bunch of potentials (variety of colourful dots). To see all these dimensions in humans enables a better understanding of humans' dynamic, diverse potentials and motivations they want to share and develop with each other.

*inclusion, individual diversity, quality development, social groups, day care institutions*

### **"Shouldn't we be doing something more important than playing?"**

Joan Turner, Mount Saint Vincent University, Canada

This quote has stuck with me for many years: "Shouldn't we be doing something more important than playing? No, just keep doing what you are doing. You will understand it as you go along". A hospital play/child life pioneer shared this story for it captured the construction of her perspectives on the value of play as a student. It is timeless as it reflects the sentiments of many striving for accountability, particularly in health care play programs.

My interests lie in sharing an appreciation of what children's health care play reveals - in the sense that our image of children as competent may be lost when we do not take the time to pause and look at the unique qualities of their play revealed through what they do and say during free play. To an outsider looking on, the play of children is seen as just that, play. I believe we can change that attitude. I will present ways we can communicate the value of play as it reveals the child explicitly. Children's capacities can be made visible by using participant observation methodology paired with the sharing of learning stories. This approach is of interest when introduced into health care settings where the demand for accountability is evident. We can actively counter efforts to devalue play programs through sharing authentic assessments that reveal children's knowledge, understanding and advancing concepts related to health care. This cross-discipline perspective draws attention to recognizing children as active in their own health and well-being.

*play, hospital play, learning stories, assessment, accountability*

### **Group D**

A14, Tower Building, Faculty of Education, A.U.TH.

**Chair:** Júlia Formosinho, EECERA Board of Trustees, United Kingdom

### **The great equaliser (BEd - Early Childhood Education and Care) in our quest "Eager to live together, yet finding it difficult to recognise shared burdens"**

Keshni Bipath, University of Pretoria, South Africa

The new policy for improved qualifications for Early Childhood Care and Education teachers have created a feeling of uncertainty amongst the ECD workforce. Is this new policy another promise by the government that will lead to the widening the egalitarian gap between the rich and poor. There is an on-going crisis in South African education, and that the current system is failing the majority of South Africa's youth and creating a great divide between the "haves" and "have-nots". Knowing that the first 1000 days of child's life is so essential for brain and body development, it is still a commodity for the parents of young children in SA. As a university, we need to show our support for the under-qualified practitioners and assist them to deliver quality ECCE services. Support and monitoring of the ECCE sites are questionable because ECD officials in district offices are now qualified to provide professional assistance. The territorial war between the department of Social Development as well as the Department of Education and Department of Health has resulted in very little development for the structural as well as education and care development in ECD centres in SA. My concern is how higher educational institutes can assist in developing the ECCE sector. What strategies can we come up with to transform these ECD centres into centres of excellence?

*professionalism, high quality childcare, the 7-point dream plan for ECCE centres, modules for a new quality ECCE programme, collaboration and partnerships to ensure quality*

### **Preschool children's sociodramatic and imaginative play skills enhancement through educational drama**

Anna Georgiou, University of Cyprus, Cyprus

The topic I would like to address and discuss about is how educational drama can foster preschool children's sociodramatic and imaginative play skills. I believe that all children can play but not all of them can reach mature forms of play. The teacher's intervention is of crucial importance in order to scaffold children in need to go a step forward in their play (Leong & Bodrova, 2012). Various studies in the past, have shown that educational drama can be beneficial for children as it can help them develop a number of different skills (Ewing et al., 2011; Cojocariu & Butnaru, 2014) and improve their performance in a number of subject areas such as Language (Ewing et al., 2011; Ewing, 2009; Ewing & Simons, 2004; Miller & Saxton, 2004; Baldwin & Fleming, 2003; O'Toole & Dunn, 2002) and Science (Ceylan et. al., 2015; Taşkın-Can, 2013; Hendrix et al., 2012; Çokadar & Yilmaz, 2010). As an early childhood teacher and a drama specialist I strongly believe that educational drama can also enrich children's play skills. The current presentation will point out how Educational Drama can be an important tool to support children's play skills. Specific connections, between educational drama techniques and children's sociodramatic and imaginative play skills will be shared.

Additionally, through examples from praxis I will pinpoint teachers' actions through drama which best support children's learning and development unfolding their play skills.

*preschool children, play skills, sociodramatic play, imaginative play, educational drama*

### **Whose shoes - body or identity, body and identity?**

Zenna Kingdon, University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom

I seek to explore ways in which children develop notions of self, drawing on research in which children have co-researched notions of body and identity. Schaffer (1996) suggests that children have a clear understanding of themselves as being separate from others from a much earlier age than was suggested by Piaget (1936). Personal identity needs to include bodily identity (Williams 1956) and processes of children asking questions from the mundane to the profound, searching for meaning, in order they can establish their values and identity (Dowling 2005). In previous research with 3 and 4 year-old children, the children were enabled to use digital cameras independently (Cook and Hess 2007, Rogers and Evans 2008). They all took photographs of their feet. Discussions with the children demonstrated that these photographs were intentional. I had misinterpreted the intentionality of the children. Understanding the intentionality of the child is essential if we are to enable them to develop a sense of self, a notion of their own identity. In constructing notions of the self, a range of disciplines are combined: philosophy, psychology and sociology of childhood. To better understand children's development of notions of self then interdisciplinary investigation is necessary (Stoeklin 2012). Within the EYFS (2017), the English curriculum, self is mentioned but not in relation developing real notions of identity. Yet in order for children to flourish (Kingdon, Gourd 2017), then children need to be supported and enabled through exploratory and imaginary activities to develop a clear notion of their own identity.

*notions of self, body and identity, philosophy, photographic data, feet and shoes*

### **Secrets that hurt: Teaching that heals**

Julie Sanders and Vicki Gazis, Box Hill Institute, Australia

How do we as educators empower children to speak up and stay safe when they witness or experience abuse from adults? As early childhood teachers, we are deeply concerned by the alarming increase in predatory behaviour perpetrated against our young students. We want to raise other teacher's awareness of this issue and see more teachers advocating for and empowering children to know when, how, and to whom they can speak to about secrets that are hurting them. Mandatory reporting requirements help when observations suggest possible abuse or neglect has already happened. As educators, however, we can proactively empower our children through intentional teaching to try and avoid some situations occurring. We teach traumatised children that could potentially have been protected from harm if their first teachers had taught them about their rights; how to protect themselves; and how to speak up about issues that worry them. We are forced to be reactive to the harm, but proactive teaching has the ability to prevent, facilitating better lifelong outcomes. We want our audience to see the benefits of investing time in proactively teaching children about safety; skilling children to know about body boundaries; when it is OK to say no; and who they can go to for help. We want more teachers to be empowering children to have a voice and assist them to stay safe. Additionally, we hope to encourage teachers to actively collaborate with families and para-professionals for improved child well-being and safety outcomes.

*children's voices, child safety, empowering children, children's well-being, working with families and paraprofessionals*

### **Professional blog about ECE as a tool of professional development**

Clodie Tal, Levinsky College of Education, Israel

This presentation deals with the operation and meaning of a blog as a tool of sustainable and scalable professional development in ECE. For the last three and a half years I am operating a professional blog dealing with issues relevant to E.C.E policy makers, parents and professionals in Israel. The blog succeeds to attract numerous people. I get feedback from educators showing that the blog succeeds to raise their interest and that it deals with meaningful issues. The blog cannot thrive without the interest of the "audience". Therefore, it has to be responsive and dynamic. The process of operating the blog adds to my own wellbeing as an involved professional in education. The presentation includes a review of the processes involved in operating a professional blog and the dilemmas involved in selecting issues. I will also present an overview of topics covered by the 200 posts published as well as insights about what are the main issues that the ECE community are interested in, and are concerned about. I will also show what motivates me to write about the selected issues. The goal of the presentation is to raise the awareness about new, adaptable to the 21st century, ways to make professional "wisdom" and research findings accessible to relevant audiences. Raising the awareness to the importance of perceiving the professional development endeavour as one that is based on dialogue.

*professional blogs, professional social involvement, 21<sup>st</sup> century dissemination of knowledge, professional development, dialog*

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