

32nd

EECERA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Developing Sustainable Early Childhood Education Systems:
Comparisons, Contexts and the Cognoscenti

Brighton, United Kingdom

3rd – 6th September 2024

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Book of Abstracts

EECERA **BTN**

European Early Childhood Education
Research Association

Conference 2024 Brighton

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

EECERA 2024 organisers would like to thank the Scientific Committee for their freely given time, diligence and scholarship.

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KEYNOTE I

Wednesday 4th September, 9:00 – 9:45

PROF. JOHN SIRAJ-BLATCHFORD

Independent Educational Researcher and Consultant, Executive Member of OMEP UK

From Global ESD Policy to Practice: Research Progress and Paradigms

It is in early childhood that many of the most foundational values, attitudes and understandings that are relevant to sustainability are first put in place. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) has also been regarded as the; “key enabler of all the other SDGs” (UN General Assembly, 2017), and yet early childhood educational research may be considered to have had very little influence upon the policies of many state governments.

Our recent pandemic experience has highlighted many of the problems that we have in reconciling the priorities, knowledge and understanding of policy makers with the public, and with those of the research communities. In education, as in every other field of concern, the research community has a critical role to play in its engagement with policy and public understandings. There is much to learn from the challenges of our recent Covid crisis, and efforts need to be made to improve all of our communicative and collaborative practices and processes in the face of climate change and the threats to biodiversity.

In early childhood education we have already seen misinformation, and conspiracies being peddled through social media and the press to frustrate efforts to promote gender equality and anti-racism. These are both crucial concerns of significance to climate change education and the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In the context of many environmental concerns, adaptations and mitigation efforts, green-washing, and challenges to ‘political correctness’ and so-called ‘woke’ thinking are also increasingly being circulated. We need to stand in solidarity against these challenges and provide a strong independent voice, presenting ourselves as trustworthy ‘honest brokers’.

KEYNOTE II

Wednesday 4th September, 10:30 – 11:15

PROF. INGRID PRAMLING SAMUELSSON

Professor of Early Childhood Education at the Department of Education, Communication and Learning, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

From Global ESD Policy to Practice: The Contribution of Play Responsive Pedagogy

This presentation will link global policy to practice in *Education for Sustainability* (EfS). We are all responsible for supporting the next generation in their future challenges with sustainability, along with parents, educational providers and the wider society. The *United Nations* Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (*UNESCO*) is the world organisation leading the work in developing an *Education for Sustainable Development* as defined by Target 4.7 in the *UN Sustainable Development Goals*. One important aspect of our work with UNESCO has been in developing the EfS curriculum. At this conference we will share many examples of excellent practice with children. In Sweden, a research and development program, called *Sustainable Preschool* provides an insight upon what is happening in practice when preschool teachers, headteacher and preschool managers are involved in competence development for EfS. But it is not only the curriculum content that must be considered in EfS, children's rights and agency are also central to the pedagogical approach. Play is central in young children's life, and highly valued in most preschools, but there are still questions concerning how play can be used for promoting children's learning. One way of looking at this has been in research about teacher's participation in children's play, and this has led to the development of the theoretical standpoint of *Play-responsive Teaching* (Pramling et al, 2019). Play-responsive teaching shows us how we can support children's agency and contribute towards them becoming global citizens who can engage creatively in facing the challenges and problems of sustainability.

KEYNOTE III

Friday 6th September, 9:30 – 10:00

PROF. MICHAEL JOPLING

Professor of Education at the School of Education, University of Brighton, United Kingdom

“That’s an Ofsted answer”: Sustainability and disconnection in early childhood education

The focus of this presentation was prompted by the exclamation quoted in its title, when a child’s response simultaneously delighted the practitioner who made it and unsettled the researcher who observed it. Drawing on more than 15 years’ experience of being a committed fellow traveller in early childhood research, it identifies a number of enduring disconnections – between children and adults, practitioners and researchers, policy-makers and everyone else – which have characterised my experiences of researching in the area. It suggests that removing, or at least reducing, these disjunctures is crucial to sustaining early childhood education, which itself is so crucial to sustaining everything else we value. Finally, the presentation also offers a few observations about how much early childhood and early childhood research have to teach us about research (and life) more generally.

KEYNOTE IV

Friday 6th September, 10:00 – 10:45

PROF. DR. TÜLİN GÜLER YILDIZ

Professor of Early Childhood Education at Hacettepe University, Türkiye

Early Steps Towards a Sustainable Future: The Role of Qualified Early Childhood Educators

Educators play a pivotal role in integrating Education for Sustainability (EfS) practices into preschool education, facilitating the acquisition of EfS-related knowledge and skills by children, families, and society. The success of EfS depends on the competence and motivation of educators. However, early childhood educators often encounter challenges in comprehending and implementing EfS within educational practices.

In recent years, numerous studies have been conducted on EfS, with particular attention paid to the professional development needs of early childhood educators. Despite these efforts, the valuable insights gleaned from research have not always translated into improved competence among educators. A gap persists between research findings and educators' practices of EfS. Even in countries with sustainability-focused education policies, educators may lack a sufficient grasp of EfS content.

Therefore, it is imperative for educators to engage in professional development programs aimed at effectively integrating sustainability into early childhood education. The success of EfS heavily relies on the competence and motivation of educators. Moreover, other actors in the early childhood education system should be knowledgeable and contribute to EfS.

This keynote will provide an overview of the current state of research on the professional development needs of early childhood educators in EfS implementation. Key research areas, recent findings, and emerging trends will be summarized. Additionally, current gaps between research and practice will be identified, and the challenges faced by educators will be discussed. Inspiring examples of teacher professional development programs will be showcased, and recommendations will be offered to empower and inspire educators in EfS implementation.

KEYNOTE V

Friday 6th September, 11:15 – 12:00

DR. RICHARD HORTON

Editor-in-Chief of The Lancet Medical Journal, UK

Taking children seriously: a new manifesto.

Poster Session

Set A

9:45 – 10:30, Wednesday 4th September 2024

Foyer & Mezzanine, Brighton Dome

A1

Physical Characteristics of Nursery Yards and Children's Experiences Within Them: Garden Evaluation Index 2.0

Presenters:

Noriko Nakata, Tokyo Kasei Gakuin University, Japan

Takako Ishikura, Toyama International University, Japan

Co-authors:

Taku Kousokabe, Miyagi University of Education, Japan

The purpose of this study is to investigate children's experiences and how to assist children in yards, using the Yard Evaluation as a guide, and to examine the ways in which caregivers can assist children to enable rich experiences. To improve the quality of childcare, it is important for caregivers to consider what it means for the child (MEXT, 2020). And we are developing the Garden Evaluation to consider the needed assistance that will enable children to have rich experiences (Nakata et al. 2023). The behavior of people is based on Lewin, K's "field theory", which states that human characteristics and the environment interact with each other. 115 nurseries were asked to give their opinion as to children's experiences in the yards and caregiver's assistance. These responses were analyzed bearing in mind the relationship between the physical characteristics of the yards and the assistance provided by the caregivers. The ethical concerns are that the nurseries will be identified and these responses will be evaluated. Therefore, the names of the nurseries in the data obtained were anonymized and used. It was found that caregivers provided more assistance to the 5-year-olds in creating situations and environments while taking advantage of the unchangeable environments in their own nurseries. The Japanese government has loosened the standards for the establishment of nurseries. Therefore, the number of nurseries with narrow yards have increased recently. We believe that this study will allow for a richer experience for children regardless of the physical conditions of the nursery yard.

nursery school, narrow yard, nursery environment, yard evaluation, quality of childcare

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A2

The longitudinal effects of different types of pre-kindergarten experiences on children's academic achievement in kindergarten and first-grade.

Presenters:

Ithel Jones, Florida State University, United States

Co-authors:

Youn Ah Jung, Sookmyung Women's University, South Korea

The study, conducted in the United States, examined the relationships between early educational experiences and students' academic achievement in kindergarten and first-grade. Impacts of public preschool programs on children's academic outcomes at the end of the preschool year are well documented in the literature (e.g., Phillips et al., 2017). Beyond the preschool year, however, researchers have documented a "fade out" effect such that the academic outcomes of attenders and non attenders converge (e.g., Ansari et al., 2020; Lipsey et al., 2018; Puma et al., 201) in the primary grades. Research evidence supports the importance of early education on children's development, Yet, effects of participation in early education programs on children's development and learning can vary depending on the types and quality of programs. Selection bias has limited the findings of previous studies, as has their reliance on comparisons of attendees versus non-attendees, as opposed other types of out of home care experiences. Data were drawn from the nationally representative Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010–2011 (ECLS-K: 2011) (N≈13,400). Associations of different types of early care arrangements prior to kindergarten entry were examined using propensity score matching (PSM) analyses for trajectories of reading and mathematics. Ethical considerations included informed consent, voluntary participation; right to discontinue; anonymity and confidentiality. Findings suggest that there was a relationship between children's early educational experiences and educational outcomes in kindergarten, but not the first grade. The findings validate the importance of providing children with access to quality early educational experiences.

pre-kindergarten, longitudinal study, preschool, early years, kindergarten

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A3

The effects of the early childhood practitioner's professional development and action research on respecting children's agency and social-emotional skills

Presenters:

Sachiko Kitano, Kobe University, Japan

Focused on children's social-emotional skills, the purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of professional development and action research. To ensuring children's rights, children are expected to express their opinions and children's perspectives should be reflected in practice (Cameron & Moss 2011, Clark et al. 2005, Sheridan & Samuelsson, 2001). To determine the results, a questionnaire that include the five-factor model of personality of psychological trait theory was administered regarding the development of their social-emotional skills when children graduate the settings. The research group worked for six-year professional development and action research. For two hours each month, the group shared documentations and examined the children's development and the practitioner's educational intervention in play-based practice. Each practitioner challenged to have more circle time, respect children's perspectives and decisions, and reduced teacher-oriented events. The results were compared to a survey conducted in another city with all first-grade students. This study was approved by the Human Ethics Committee of Graduate School of Human Development and Environment, Kobe University. The leaflet was prepared for parents to promote their understanding for play-based practice and social-emotional skills. The study revealed that social-emotional development of the children (637 children) was significantly higher (10-16 percentage-points higher) than those of large-scale surveys (9,958 children). It showed more positive attitudes toward cooperation, resilience, self-esteem, and curiosity. The results will help many ECE practitioners to understand the importance of the development of social-emotional skills, ensuring children's human rights with respecting children's perspectives, and to avoid implementing a push-down curriculum.

professional development, action research, social-emotional development, children's perspectives, the five-factor model of personality

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A4

The process of participation in novel play environments in 2-year-old children from the perspective of affective attunement.

Presenters:

Makiko Hayashi, Aichi University Of Education, Japan

The purpose of this study is to explore the process by which 2-year-olds initiate novel play from the perspective of affective attunement. The analysis will focus on three items: facial expressions, vocalizations, and actions of the subject children, together with the physical environment that affords them and the caregivers' responses. Affective attunement is most commonly observed in intersubjective relationships (Stern, D.N.,1989:166), but intersubjective relationships are not based on an adult's unilateral understanding of the child's condition, but rather in a mutually subjective relationship (Shun, Kujiraoka.,2016:42-45). The theoretical framework of this study is the affective attunement proposed by Stern, D.N. It qualitatively captures the child's interactions with the novel play environment and the caregiver's responses. In this study, a micro-analysis based on videotaped observation data was conducted as a method to appropriately evaluate the facial expressions of 2-year-old children who are in the process of developing verbal communication skills. In conducting this study, the nursery director explained to parents and obtained their approval. It was also confirmed that the images of children would be processed and that all names would be pseudonyms. Before doing the activity, the children were told that they were free to cancel the activity. The result of this study indicate that caregivers can deepen children's engagement with novel play environments by responding appropriately on an individual basis, based on an intersubjective understanding of the reasons for children's facial expressions and behaviors. These findings suggest one of the skills that caregivers need to ensure independent play in 2-year-olds.

2-year-old children, affective attunement, intersubjectivity, novel play, fingerpainting

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A5

Development of Non-Cognitive Skills in Early Childhood: Longitudinal Study

Presenters:

Yuko Suzuki, Aichi University of Education, Japan

This study examines the primary factors regulating the development of non-cognitive skills in early childhood from the perspective of differences by age. Although previous findings have shown that non-cognitive skills develop in early childhood when the brain has a high level of plasticity (OECD, 2015), there is a strong tendency to believe that these skills develop naturally in line with the quality of childcare and play. However, no malleable factors related to education have been identified yet (Endo, 2017). This study was inspired by the theoretical issue of conceptual overlap and gaps in the meaning of non-cognitive skills (Nishida et al., 2019) – longitudinal studies around the world have identified success factors but have not addressed the effects of education (Gutman & Schoon, 2013). Based on the factor structure framework of non-cognitive skills (Suzuki, 2022), a constructive longitudinal study was conducted with 295 participants aged 3–6 years at five early childhood education facilities and verified by statistical methods such as variance and multiple regression analysis. The study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee, and consent was obtained from the target teacher and the child's surrogate parent/guardian to protect personal information, ensure anonymity, and guarantee freedom to participate in or withdraw from the research. The study explains factors (independent variables) affecting non-cognitive skills (dependent variables) in line with changes over time. The findings suggest the possibility of elucidating the determining factors in developing non-cognitive skills in early childhood and the mechanisms leading to their acquisition.

non-cognitive skills, longitudinal study, aged three to six, non-cognitive skill factor framework, determining factors

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A6

Exploring Teacher's Experiences of Facilitators and Barriers of Mentalisation

Presenters:

Melanie Audier, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Co-authors:

Myron Friesen, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

E. Jayne White, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

This presentation reports the results of a study that explored teachers' experiences of the facilitators and barriers of mentalisation in their practice and how teachers recognise the divergence between their roles and the systems and services they operate within. Mentalisation is a process utilised to anticipate, understand, and respond to mental states which may encompass thoughts, feelings, intentions, and needs (Mata López et al., 2020). Previous research has recognised mentalisation as a key process in fostering secure attachments and healthy socio-emotional development (Alvarenga et al., 2020; Shai & Belsky, 2017). Studies comparing parent and teacher mentalisation have revealed that teachers employ mentalisation language more frequently than parents; however, a substantial percentage of teachers demonstrated inadequate mentalisation (Andrews et al., 2020; Farkas et al., 2017). The present study extends the limited research on mentalisation in ECE by examining teacher-infant interactions in the natural and dynamic centre context by considering teachers' understanding, centre environment, and ECE policy. Employing interpretative phenomenology, this study offers a nuanced understanding of observed and self-reported mentalisation in the lived experience of eight teachers. Participation was completely voluntary, and participants could withdraw from the study at any time. All teachers and parents were provided with information sheets and consent forms and children were carefully monitored for signs of dissent during the observation. Teachers identified facilitators and barriers of mentalisation including teacher education, team collaboration, centre support, and teacher-child ratios. These findings provide insight into how we might attain more synergistic and sustainable systems to support quality education.

mentalisation, teacher-child interactions, infants and toddlers, teacher experience, systemic facilitators and barriers

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A7

Math Gender Beliefs in Kindergarteners Utilizing Mosaic Approach

Presenters:

Macarena Angulo, Universidad Diego Portales/Millennium Nucleus for the Study of the Development of Early Math Skills (MEMAT), Chile

Co-authors:

Francisca del Río, Universidad Diego Portales/Millennium Nucleus for the Study of the Development of Early Math Skills (MEMAT), Chile

Discussing the effectiveness of a Mosaic Approach proposal to access kindergarteners' math gender beliefs. Results from the latest standardized math test which measures the quality of Chilean education system reveal a significant

setback in gender equality in mathematical learning, particularly affecting girls from low socioeconomic status backgrounds (Quality of Education Agency, 2023). Literature situates the causes of math gender gap in the existence of beliefs that associate this domain of knowledge with masculinity (González et al., 2020; Guel & Martínez, 2018). In Chile, gender-related beliefs concerning mathematics have been studied quantitatively and identified among teachers, parents, and 5 year-old children (del Río et al., 2019, 2021; García et al., 2022), in contrast to other countries where they've been identified at later age (Cvencek et al., 2011; Galdi et al., 2014; Lummis & Stevenson, 1990). These beliefs are "...subjective judgments [...] regarding the truth or falsehood of something" (Pajares, 1992) which explain people's actions (Kane et al., 2002). A Mosaic Approach proposal was tested with a group of 5 year-olds to evaluate its effectiveness for discussing math gender beliefs. Specifically, drawings, short stories discussions, modeling play dough and mediated interviews. Informed consents and assents were discussed with adults and children. The effectiveness of drawings, short stories discussions, modeling play dough and mediated interviews in terms of discussing math gender beliefs with kindergarten children will be discussed (data collecting ends in may 2024). Findings will provide information on how to access, discuss and study math gender beliefs with children at early age.

children beliefs, math gender stereotypes, Mosaic Approach, kindergarten math learning, children participation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A8

The effect of kindergarten teacher's digital competency on play support competency : focusing on the mediating effect of teaching creativity

Presenters:

Yoon Hee Seo, Korea National University of Education, South Korea

Co-authors:

Ju Won Jang, Korea National University of Education, South Korea

The study aims to investigate the mediating effect of teaching creativity on the relationship between the digital competency of kindergarten teachers and their ability to support play. In the digital age, teachers are expected to use technology to support play(Cho, 2023; Ferrari, 2013). Previous research suggests that kindergarten teachers need to have educational imagination and creativity to effectively incorporate digital technology in early childhood education(Kim & Ryu & Byun & Seo, 2020). Theoretical evidence includes a quantitative study on the effect of media literacy of infant teachers on teaching creativity(Kim & Jang, 2023) and another study that revealed the relationship between teaching creativity and play support capacity(Lim, 2021). The subjects of the study are 252 kindergarten teachers in 16 cities and provinces. For data analysis, SPSS was used to conduct Pearson's correlation analysis and mediation effect analysis using process macro bootstrapping. For the surveys in this study, participants were informed of the purpose and procedures of the study, their right to withdraw, and their anonymity. The results showed a positive correlation between the digital competency, teaching creativity, and play support competency of kindergarten teachers. Additionally, teaching creativity was found to mediate the relationship between digital competency and play support competency. This study is significant because it demonstrates the mediating effect of teaching creativity on the relationship between the digital competency and play support competency of kindergarten teachers. This study can serve as fundamental data for the development of teacher education programs aimed at enhancing the digital competency of kindergarten teachers.

kindergarten teachers' professionalism, kindergarten teacher's digital competency, teaching creativity, play support competency, mediating effect

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A9

An Initial Exploration of Interpersonal Interaction Behaviors in Young Children A Case Study of Inter-Generational Education Activities

Presenters:

Ya-Lun Tsao, National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan

Meng-Chih Chang, National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan

The study aims to identify the strategies employed during inter-generational educational activities that facilitate enhanced interpersonal interaction among young children. Research findings indicate that those who have participated demonstrate higher social acceptance, a greater willingness to assist mildly struggling individuals, empathy towards the elderly, and exhibit more positive attitudes and better self-regulation behaviors (Femia et al., 2008; Holmes, 2009). Additionally, it draws on a theoretical framework emphasizing inter-generational interactions' role in boosting community participation. Aligned with the findings of Hernandez et al. (2020), it highlighted that inter-generational gaming activities not only foster community engagement but also forge meaningful connections between elderly participants and the children. This study adopts a case study methodology involving twelve preschoolers and twelve elders from a daycare center, utilizing observation and semi-structured interviews for data collection. Before participating in the study, informed consent forms will be distributed to the parents/legal guardians of the children and elderly individuals. High-quality inter-generational activity planning, which involves community partnerships, diverse activity design, and the integration of structured and unstructured elements, successfully fosters emotional connections between young children and the elderly. This approach not only establishes sustainable community partnerships but also contributes to future inter-generational cooperation. Strategies like guiding interactive processes, designing activities around shared interests, and creating interactive environments lead to a robust system of interpersonal interaction for young children, improving the quality of inter-generational activities. Additionally, it also shows positive progress in interpersonal interaction for five children, particularly in areas like interpersonal relationships, communication expression, cooperation, and empathy.

inter-generational educational activities, interpersonal interaction, elderly, empathy, case study

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A10

Parental technoference in relation to the quality of toddler-parent attachment

Presenters:

Urška Fekonja, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Department of Psychology, Slovenia

Co-authors:

Ana Jurglič, Primary School Zagradec, Slovenia

The aim of the study is to investigate the frequency of parental technoference during interactions with toddlers and the relationship between parental technoference and the quality of toddler-parent attachment. In addition, we were interested in how technoference is related to child's age and the amount of toddlers' screen time. Parental technoference refers to disrupted interactions between parent and child due to the parent's use of technology and thus poses a threat to the quality of the parent-child relationship (Mackay et al., 2022). Studies have shown links between parental technology use and less attentive and responsive parenting (Kildare & Middlemiss, 2017). We based our study on attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1970; Bowlby, 1982), which defines attachment as the emotional bond between a child and its caregiver. A secure attachment is characterized by the child's trust in the caregiver's availability and responsiveness. This was a quantitative study involving 110 parents of toddlers, aged 1 to 3 years. Parental reports on technoference and the quality of toddler-parent attachment were collected. The corresponding statistical analysis was carried out. We have followed the ethical guidelines of the Slovenian Psychologists' Association in conducting this research. A signed informed consent was obtained from all parents and their

anonymity was provided. The results show that technoference occurred most frequently during play, outdoor activities and mealtimes. Higher parental technoference was associated with less secure attachment between toddler and parent. These results underline the need to inform parents about the negative effects of technoference on children's psychological wellbeing.

parental technoference, toddler-parent attachment, screen use, play, parental technology use

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A11

Mutual understanding of occupational values in interprofessional education of childcare and psychology students

Presenters:

Yuki Ishida, Kurume University, Japan

Akemi Yamashita, Nakamura Gakuen University Junior College, Japan

The purpose of this study is to explore how mutual understanding of other professional perspectives in the training of childcare fosters competency in interprofessional work (IPW). Childcare workers and psychologists who work in child development support facilities are required to play a central role in supporting children's growth and development, and collaborating with other professions (MHLW, 2022). However, an inadequate understanding of the expertise of other professions has been pointed out (Kinjo, 2004). Interprofessional Education (IPE), which helps people understand the expertise and responsibilities of professions (CAIPE, 2002), is included in the curriculum at medical universities, but not in childcare departments in Japan. Participants included 25 childcare and psychology university students. They presented occupational values on their own profession. Subsequently, they wrote reports on what was common and different in each profession. The reports were analysed using KH Coder, text mining software (Higuchi, 2020). With the code of ethics of the affiliated university, participants were informed and consented to remain anonymous, unrelated to evaluation and they could withdraw from the study at anytime. The result showed words relating to points in common between the childcare and psychology professions frequently included 'individuality' and 'cooperation', while words differing frequently included 'subjects', 'time', and 'purpose'. Additional comments included: 'It made me think about the reason for becoming a childcare worker' and 'I felt a connection between professions'. These findings suggest IPE could foster the ability to 'understand other professions' and 'reflect on one's own profession', which are competencies for IPW for childcare students.

occupational values, interprofessional education, childcare students, psychology students, competencies

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A12

Blockplay.ai: an experiment in using AI object recognition to enable young children to model climate chemistry with interlocking cubes

Presenters:

Michael Rumbelow, University of Bristol, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Alf Coles, University of Bristol, United Kingdom

The IPCC's 2050 target of net-zero CO₂ emissions is expressed in chemical terms. Yet according to the RSC, few primary-school children, parents or teachers understand what 'CO₂' is, or where it comes from. We propose young

children can grasp climate chemistry, using interlocking cubes they already enjoy playing with to model atoms of Carbon, Hydrogen, and Oxygen as black/white/red blocks. For example if coal (C) is a black cube and oxygen (O₂) two reds, then burning coal may be modelled by connecting the cubes to make CO₂. We developed an app, <https://blockplay.ai>, which uses AI to recognise connected cubes placed under a webcam, displaying child-friendly molecule animations. Patron et al. (2024) demonstrate 6-year-olds can learn chemistry through participatory multimodal learning activities including creating digital molecular models. Shvarts et al. (2022) propose analysing children's use of artefacts as dynamic body-artefact systems. We adapted Shvarts's theoretical framework to analyse children's creation of molecule animations with blocks via the app as a dynamic child-blocks-app system, that learns by iteratively adjusting perception-action loops. These perception-action loops were observed by snapshotting iterations of block placements and consequent app-generated audio. Parental consent was obtained to record interactions of six-year-olds invited to combine block 'atoms' using the app. Initial analysis suggests that children (systemically coupled with blocks and the app) could model and narrate combinations of block 'atoms' into simple molecules such as CO₂ and H₂O. While technically the app is an early prototype, initial findings suggest future iterations may facilitate young children to model basic climate chemistry reactions.

carbon literacy, AI, visualisation, sustainability, block play

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A13

Development of a rating scale for the assessment of cognitive adaptivity in learning-supportive interactions

Presenters:

Heike Wadepohl, Leibniz University Hannover, Germany

Co-authors:

Fenja Lampe, Leibniz Universität Hannover, Germany

Theresa Johannsen, Leibniz Universität Hannover, Germany

Katja Mackowiak, Leibniz Universität Hannover, Germany

The poster presents a newly developed rating scale for assessing cognitive adaptivity in learning-supportive interactions. Previous studies show that learning support is rare and of low quality in ECEC - not only in Germany, but internationally (Egert et al., 2020). An adaptive design of learning-supportive interactions in the triad "adult - child - subject" (Neuss, 2013) is considered an essential condition for success; however, there is currently a lack of (economic) instruments assessing adaptivity facets (Hardy et al., 2019). The rating was created deductively on the basis of a literature review; the categories were then sharpened inductively by viewing videos from learning-supportive situations in ECEC institutions. Participants were informed in detail about the study and signed a consent form. High data protection precautions were taken for the recording, storage and processing of the videos. The rating consists of five indicators of cognitive adaptivity (not all need to be observable every time): Joint Attention, Shared Intentionality, Cognitively Stimulating Impulses, Prolonged Engagement with a Topic and Flow in Interaction. The indicators are rated on a five-point Likert scale; an overall rating is also carried out. In addition, the observed situations are classified according to various characteristics (cognitive potential, distribution of cognitive stimuli, didactic principles). A review of the quality criteria (e.g. observer agreement) is still pending, but should be completed up to the conference. The rating procedure is intended to contribute to the (time-efficient and global) operationalization of an adaptivity facet, namely cognitive adaptivity in learning-supportive interactions, and thus close a research gap.

adaptivity, learning support, teacher-child interactions, ECEC quality, rating scale

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A14

On the Leadership of the Principal Enabled an Agentic Reflective Learning Community among ECEC Teachers

Presenters:

Chika Inoue, Shizuoka University, Japan

Ikuko Goto, Ochanomizu University, Japan

The objective is to examine how teachers' agency has been assured and their agentic reflective learning community emerged in one ECEC center. The high number of early career leavers among Japanese ECEC teachers has been noted (OECD, 2017). To support their professional development, conducting in-service training is recommended. However, mentoring within the same organization is affected by the hierarchical relationship between mentor and mentee, and challenges from the perspective of active learning by the mentees have been pointed out (Ehrich et al., 2004; Edwards and Protheroe, 2004; Goto, 2013; Mena et al., 2017). On the other hand, it has been noted that there is a need to support not only the professionalism who are looking to improve their knowledge and skills but also their identity as teachers (Rippon & Martin 2003, Kupila et al., 2019). The analysis has been done qualitatively and focused on the narratives about how the leader assures the teacher's learning community. The principal didn't participate in the teacher's reflection but rather watched their process. Hence, the agency of teachers maintained and endured the learning community. The researcher involves as a collaborator for several years and obtained research consent. The data was collected by interviewing one leader to respect privacy and confidentiality. The Ochanomizu University Ethics Committee has been approved. The presentation reports the process of creating an atmosphere for teachers to have a voice will be revealed and the leader's philosophy that creates the space. The research has an impact on how the teacher could develop their professionalism in their community.

leadership, agency, reflection, learning community, professional development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A15

Exploring effects attachment-based video feedback intervention to promote maternal sensitivity of mothers with cerebral palsied children.

Presenters:

Demet Gülaldı, Uskudar University, Türkiye

Co-authors:

Prof. Hacer Nermin Çelen, Atlas University, Türkiye

This research aimed to promote maternal sensitivity of mothers through attachment-based video feedback intervention. Previous research has shown that Video Feedback to promote Positive Parenting (VIPP) is an effective intervention to increase maternal sensitivity (Bakermans-Kranenburg, van IJzendoorn, & Juffer, 2003). The VIPP has been studied with different target groups (Poslawsky et al. 2014; van IJzendoorn et al. 1992). The theoretical framework for this study draws upon attachment theory (Patterson, 1982; Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1988). Maternal sensitivity is the ability to accurately perceive, interpret, and respond to the child's signals. (Ainsworth et al., 1978), Children with cerebral palsy may have difficulty exhibiting attachment behaviours to activate maternal sensitivity. The current study is the first to examine the effectiveness of VIPP in Cerebral Palsy. "The study was conducted within a qualitative mixed-method research paradigm (Pickard, 2013). 40 mother-child dyads were studied VIPP effectiveness on maternal sensitivity. The analysis was conducted through repeated measures and Pearson correlation within a phenomenological hermeneutical approach (Oerther, S. 2020)." A consent form was provided to all participants. Participants' names have been replaced by pseudonyms. Participants were

allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. Following the research, intervention was given to mothers in the control group. The findings demonstrate that the VIPP promotes maternal sensitivity in mothers with children with CP. Using video feedback methods could be included in early intervention programs. These findings suggest implications for professionals the attachment-based early intervention to promote maternal sensitivity to mothers of children with cerebral palsy.

positive parenting, cerebral palsy, maternal sensitivity, VIPP, attachment

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A16

Influencing teacher learning with narratives of care-full teaching.

Presenters:

Alexandra C. Gunn, University of Otago, New Zealand

Co-authors:

Roberta Carvalho, University of Otago, New Zealand

Sonya Gaches, University of Otago, New Zealand

Michael Gaffney, University of Otago, New Zealand

This research aims to explore how narratives of care-full teaching, involving ethical and political decision making, can influence teachers' professional learning and understandings of care within early childhood education and care (ECEC). ECEC systems have been increasingly shaped by technicist and neoliberal perspectives, emphasising investment and human capital maximisation – including in relation to children (Biesta, 2007; Moss, 2013). Despite this, research argues care to be fundamental to education provision (Moss 2018), calling for response-able ECEC (Sadowick, 2023) and a re-personalised teaching ethics (Bauman, 1995). Post-foundationalism and critical theory underpin the study which explores political and ethical decision making of ECEC teachers. Using co-constructed narratives to explore complexities within care routines, thematic analysis unveils tacit aspects of teacher practice making them visible for critical reflection. This reflective process visibilises how teachers' personal ethics and politics shape their work, granting them agency in navigating the intricate landscape of care-full ECEC. Qualified ECEC teachers who were guiding student teachers practicum were invited to participate. As expert teachers, their teaching provides context for student learning. Informed consent for human participants was sought and granted with oversight of ethics processes managed by the researchers' institution. Care-full teaching involves the analysis of everyday educational practices to explore and understand the myriad considerations informing teacher actions including relations of power relations, agency, ethics and politics. Positioned against technical approaches, care-full teaching directs attention to the political and ethical dimensions of teaching. Ultimately, the research aims to re-centre care as pivotal to ECEC.

narrative research, care-full teaching, ethical teaching, teaching as political, teacher learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A17

Fieldwork Initiatives to Broaden the Perspectives of Students in the ECEC Training Program: Through Fieldwork Activities with Students from Other Departments

Presenters:

Yoshiko Shirakawa, Kyoritsu Women's University, Japan

Makiko Fujimoto, Kyoritsu Women's University, Jordan

Students in ECEC training program learn specialized knowledge and skills through classroom lectures and off-campus training, but they also learn through fieldwork in seminar classes. The purpose of this study is to clarify what kind of learning occurs when students in ECEC training program engage in fieldwork activities together with students from other departments. Shirakawa et al.(2021) found that trained ECEC teachers improved their communication skills compared with the students in ECEC training program. Focusing on students in ECEC training program, this study examines fieldwork that broadens students' perspectives. Our study draws on the theories of L. S. Vygotsky who described 'zone of proximal development' and Wood's theory dealing with 'scaffolding'. We surveyed 5 students in ECEC training program and 13 students from other departments with a questionnaire. Participants were provided with a consent form prior to the start of the study and were also offered the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The fieldwork used in this study included visits to an elementary school, a nursery school, an orphanage, local buildings, and nature experiences during a 3-day/2-night training program on a remote island. It was evident that the students in the nursery school and elementary school were able to learn the importance of the physical environment of the buildings from students in other departments studying architecture through observation, fieldwork, interaction with children, and interviews with parents. This research can contribute to the development of implications to enhance the childcare qualities of students in ECEC training programs.

ECEC teacher program, students in pre-service, fieldwork, childcare qualities, scaffolding

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A18

Features of the guarantee of children's suffrage in Japan's Basic Law for Children - Comparison with EU policy

Presenters:

Hiroaki Sono, J.F.Oberlin University, Japan

The Basic Law on the Child was enacted, and a system was put in place to protect children's rights. However, Japan does not have a function to guarantee rights. Considering the reasons for this, we will consider how to guarantee rights tailored to Japan. Europe has systems that guarantee children's rights. ". Member states indicated that they have a National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) (a study on Council of Europe member states chp.3 2024). There are the following issues regarding the commissioner system to children's rights in Japan. Two areas have different systems for protecting children's rights. Since this study is a comparison of institutional theory, the method is as follows: Handbook of Research Methods and Applications in Comparative Policy Analysis (B. Guy Peters, Guillaume Fontaine, 2020 Google books.com). This study considers the issue of "strengthening systems and institutions, including the establishment of national advocacy organizations" (Tanaka, Yuki 2023). The research method asks local governments that have adopted the ombudsperson system about the reasons for introducing ombudspersons and the reasons for not including a commissioner by using the questionnaire method. The contents of the questionnaire method for this research will be approved by the ethics committee of the university. The contents of the questionnaire method for this research will be approved by the ethics committee of the university to which you belong. It is hoped that in designing a system for guaranteeing children's rights in Japan, a system for guaranteeing children's rights will be established that understands the characteristics of children.

the Children's Basic Law, the Children and Family Agency, the Children's Rights Strategy, children's rights protection, children's policy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A19

Exploring practitioners' and policy makers' critical reflections on the impact of the "accelerated childhood" culture in Scottish ECEC

Presenters:

Konstantina Paspaspyropoulou, The University of Edinburgh, Moray House School of Education and Sport, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Dr Lynn McNair, The University of Edinburgh, Moray House School of Education and Sport, United Kingdom

This study provides an insight into practitioners' and policymakers' views on the hurried nature of children's lives and the value of an unhurried approach. Slow Pedagogy and Froebel's ideas served as the foundation for the exploration of "the cult of speed" (Honoré, 2004), which defines modern society and has a significant impact on early education (Clark, 2023). In the neoliberal culture of "viewing education as a running race" (Clark, 2023), Slow Pedagogy can offer a foundation for challenging current practice. The Froebelian principle of knowledgeable, reflective educators served as the ontological foundation for this study. Following an interpretivist paradigm, this study valued participants' critical reflections on their lived experiences. The study draws on data from one qualitative research project: Froebelian Futures. In the project, qualitative data has been collected over a three-year period. In this study, after attending an hour-long presentation on 'Slow Pedagogy' participants (N=80) were invited to respond to two open-ended questions, which were analysed through thematic analysis. Moray House School of Education and Sport provided ethics approval and EECERA's ethical code was followed. Also, the director of Little Busy Bees and all participants obtained informed consent. The emerging themes indicated that children are "hurried" during their daily routines, play, learning, engagement, mealtimes and tidying up; whereas an "unhurried" practice allows play to flourish as adults follow the child's pace. This poster aims to serve as a provocation to challenge competitive neoliberal cultures and highlight the potentialities of critical reflection and the power to influence ECEC policy.

slow pedagogy, early childhood, Froebel, unhurried, early childhood practitioners

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A20

Collaborative learning In Kindergarten Teacher Education

Presenters:

Monica Gjelsten, Høgskulen i Volda, Norway

Co-authors:

Ingrid Løvik Saure, Høgskulen i Volda, Norway

The aim of this study is to investigate how play based learning activities may contribute to increase quality in kindergarten teacher education for kindergarten teacher students to develop their professionalism. The findings show that working with playful activities can develop the students' thoughts and experiences with the didactic problems they will meet in the field of practice. The didactic relational model, developed by Hiim and Hippe in 1993, serves as a model for didactic relational thinking. The model provides teachers with a tool for reflective analysis and awareness of the various elements to consider. The study builds also on Hargreaves et al (2019, p.169) thoughts on professionalism through collaboration. In his qualitative study we observe kindergarten students activating children with play-based activities. The activities are based on principles of the method of problem-based learning (PBL). The effectiveness of the PBL approach will be evaluated with asking the students questions before and after. According to NESH Research Ethics Guidelines for Social Sciences and Humanities, the students gave informed consent to participate in the study. The method of problem-based learning is relevant to contribute to affective experiences in education to develop quality. This approach recognizes the significant role of play in children's learning and

development. Observations indicates that several of the students engaged in theory- and research-based discussions on how to carry out their activity prior to implementation. Problem-based learning contributes to education to develop quality in education. This approach recognizes the significant role of play in children's learning and development.

collaborative learning, kindergarten teacher education, play-based learning, problem-based learning, professional understanding

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A21

Principles for Engaging with the Arts in Early Learning and Childcare

Presenters:

Jane Heffernan, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Ireland

First 5, a whole-of-Government strategy to improve the lives of babies, young children and their families (Government of Ireland, 2018) incorporates a focus on advancing the inclusion and participation of babies and young children in cultural life and the arts. Given patterns of cultural engagement are established at a young age (Smyth, 2016), the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Inclusion and Youth (DECDIY) undertook a participatory approach to policy development to devise and test principles for engaging with the arts in Early Learning and Childcare. The National Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making (Government of Ireland, 2015) informed by the Lundy model of participation (DCEDIY, 2021) underpinned this research. The use of the framework ensured that the voice of babies and young children was included in policy development that directly affects them and their lives. Taking a pragmatic approach, this research incorporated Participatory Action Learning and Action Research methodologies over a four-year period, spanning four key stages: a consultation event with artists and educators, an action research bursary program, a public consultation, and an artist-in-residence pilot scheme. Ethical considerations include the safeguarding of children, educators and artists in the action research. Informed parental consent and children's assent was sought. Findings indicate the potential for participatory approaches to foster sustainable collaborative connections across stakeholder groups. The principles were positively received, yet further resources are required. This research has influenced the strategic actions of the DCEDIY to further support and embed quality through the arts.

arts principles, early childhood arts, participatory approach to policy development, cultural life and the arts, creativity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A22

Kindergarten teachers' expectations of climate awareness training materials

Presenters:

Lehte Tuuling, Narva College of University of Tartu, Estonia

Katrin Saluvee, Narva College of University of Tartu, Estonia

The aim was to find out Estonian preschool teachers' assessment of the existing teaching materials and from which principles teachers base their choice of suitable teaching materials for teaching the topic of climate. The main goal of developing children's environmental awareness at a younger age is to cultivate the ability to empathize and increase the sense of responsibility towards the natural environment (Värri, 2021). Since the topic of sustainable living contains terminology considered difficult for children, teachers may feel insecure when dealing with it (Spiteri, 2022)

and therefore refrain from discussing climate issues in kindergarten. When dealing with the topic of climate, the teacher is supported by suitable study materials. The research was carried out using a quantitative approach and a questionnaire survey with 56 kindergarten teachers. All standard ethical procedures were followed. The teachers were informed about the purpose of the study and their anonymity was guaranteed. According to preschool teachers, there is a lack of teaching materials and it does not support the teacher in dealing with the topic of climate in kindergarten. When choosing the study material, they are primarily based on the content and the comprehensibility of the text. Kindergarten teachers' expectations for educational materials concern content, appearance, motivation and support for various aspects of the child's development. Based on the results of the study, it is possible to create educational materials that increases the self-confidence of teachers and helps to better handle climate awareness topics in an age-appropriate way.

climate awareness, early childhood, educational materials, learning, preschool teachers

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A23

What's the Role of Economic Education in ECEC Curriculum? A Comparative Analysis of Six European Countries

Presenters:

Fabio Dovigo, Northumbria University, United Kingdom

Despite the significant relevance of economic education for sustainability education in early childhood, it continues to be an underestimated topic within ECEC curricula. Research in this field indicates that teachers' preparation regarding economic education in the ECEC area is limited (Birbili & Kontopoulou 2015; Holed et al. 2009). Furthermore, many teachers find this subject tedious (Jayaraman, 2022). The lack of attention from teachers is linked not only to inadequate education and training but also to the limited space and scope that the ECEC curricula allocate to economic education in relation to sustainability themes (Ärlemalm-Hagsér & Elliott, 2020; Engdahl & Furu, 2022). The study reviewed and compared the curricula of six European countries in the ECEC area. A textual analysis, both quantitative and qualitative, of the sections pertaining to economic education was conducted. The research was conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines defined by EECERA in 2014. Respondents were provided with a description of the study, a privacy statement, an indication of what type of questions were going to be asked, and if any questions were particularly sensitive. The study reveals that the examined curricula adopt a predominantly uncritical approach to economic education, favouring an individual and financial perspective over a community vision of the economy. Economic education and sustainability are poorly integrated throughout the curricula. In addition to enhancing teacher preparation on economic education, it is essential to revise the ECEC curricula to allocate more space and widen the scope, adopting a more critical and sustainable perspective.

economic education, sustainability, curriculum, transnational comparison, preschool

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A24

The process of constructing a professionalism frame for new childcare providers. Focusing on the combination of new childcare providers and veteran childcare providers.

Presenters:

Takahiro Sakurai, Aichi University of Education, Japan

This study focuses on frames, a key concept of professionalism, and identifies the process of how new childcare providers construct frames. Sakurai (2023) clarifies that childcare providers and assistant childcare providers constitute a shared frame, but does not clarify how the frame each has is structured. The theoretical framework for

this study is based on Frame Theory, a key concept in Schön's (1987) expertise. This study was conducted in semi-structured interviews with childcare providers and veteran childcare providers in a 3-year-old class at a private kindergarten. The method of analysis was through qualitative data analysis (Sato, 2008). Consent forms and information sheets were provided to all participants. Informed consent was negotiated with the participants involved and with the children's parents. Participants' names have been replaced with pseudonyms. Participants (including parents of children) were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. It was evident that the veteran childcare provider's frame was constructed as a hypothetical frame while constructing her own childcare providers frame through an intra-self dialogue. In doing so, they gradually become able to set tasks similar to those of veteran childcare provider, which suggests that they are structured in such a way that they unconsciously incorporate the frames of veteran childcare providers. This would provide one insight into how frames of expertise are constructed and further professionalisation.

frame, new childcare provider, professionalism, set tasks, issue status

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A25

Integrating Design Thinking, STEAM Concepts, and Cooperative Learning into the Training Course for Pre-Service Daycare Teachers.

Presenters:

Chien-Huei, Hsu, Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan

This study evaluates the effect of cooperative learning in the "Children's Teaching Toys" curriculum, focusing on enriching it with STEAM and design thinking to improve teaching quality. Huang, Li-Feng, and Chen, Ya-Ling (2020) demonstrated that Design Thinking significantly improves student collaboration, teacher-student engagement, and students' ability to design educational science games and conduct scientific inquiries with children. This study adopted the ADDIE model for curriculum development, enhanced by feedback from industry, students, and academia. It prioritized student-centric design thinking to improve analytical and practical skills, fostering a collaborative learning cycle focused on experiential learning and collective knowledge building between instructors and students. This study uses action research and cooperative learning to assess design thinking and STEAM integration in the "Children's Teaching Toys" curriculum, using a cycle of planning, action, observation, and evaluation. It analyzes teacher reflections, student work, interviews, and surveys. This study will inform students at the first class of the semester that they have the absolute right to participate voluntarily. Participation or non-participation will not affect their grades. This study has been submitted to and approved by the Ethics Review Committee. This study shows that incorporating cooperative learning, design thinking, and STEAM in curriculum enhances creativity, teamwork, and student involvement, turning learners into knowledge co-creators and improving motivation, efficiency, and curriculum depth. This study reveals that integrating cooperative learning, design thinking, and STEAM into the "Children's Teaching Toys" curriculum boosts creativity, teamwork, and student engagement, making learners co-creators of knowledge and significantly enhancing motivation, efficiency, and curriculum breadth.

cooperative learning, design thinking, STEAM education, curriculum development, children's teaching toys curriculum

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A26

The Emotion Regulation Strategies of Children with High and Low Effortful Control in Three Frustrating Episodes

Presenters:

Pei-Ling Wang, University of Taipei, Taiwan

This study is to explore the differences in emotion regulation strategies adopted by preschoolers with high and low effortful control in frustrating episodes. Effortful control is associated with the regulation of attentional neural patterns and emotional responses (Rothbart et al., 2007). Vroman and Durbin (2015) pointed out that children with high effort control are better at controlling their emotions than children with low effort control. Preschooler's proactive emotion regulation strategies begin to emerge (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2011), gradually employing a variety of regulatory strategies. Eisenberg and colleagues (2011) mentioned that temperament, specifically effortful control, plays a crucial role in the process of emotional self-regulation. Post-positivism guided the study. The subjects have 81, including 40 high-effort control children and 41 low-effort control children. The frustrating situations consisted of three types of toys. Data encoding followed Jahromi et al. (2012) for children's emotion regulation strategies, encompassing 13 subcategories including goal orientation, venting, avoidance, etc. In three frustrating situations, although differences in children's regulation strategies were observed, after each experiment, researchers would allow the children to play with toys again and instruct them on problem-solving techniques to calm their emotions back to their normal state. Preschoolers with high effortful control often utilize goal-oriented strategies in emotion regulation, while those with low effortful control frequently resort to seeking social support through eye contact and verbal communication, physical venting, avoidance, and engaging in destructive behavior. Parents and teachers should guide young children with low effort control to learn appropriate emotion regulation strategies.

preschooler, high effortful control, low effortful control, emotion regulation strategies, frustration

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A27

Integration of Ukrainian children in early childhood education in Hungary

Presenters:

Renáta Bernhardt, Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, Hungary

The aim of the study is to explore the integration of Ukrainian non-native children and to examine experiences and beliefs of kindergarten and primary school teachers regarding educational challenges in Hungary. The study relates to diversity (Oliveira, 2011), it enhances the importance of education in improving the future prospects of non-native and prioritizes perspectives of teachers (Gudovitch et al, 2021). Theoretical framework refers to education playing a vital role in ensuring equitable access for all children, regardless of their background (Unicef, 2023). Preconditions for social integration (Berry & Kalin, 1995), language teachers and intercultural mediators would be highly important as 4,856 Ukrainian students enrolled in schools (UNHCR, 2023). Qualitative constant comparative method was employed to investigate what pedagogical perspectives are explored with Ukrainian children. Data was collected by semi-structured interviews with teachers (N=12) in Jaszag region and analyzed by MAXQDA. Non-probability purposive sampling was used in order to find information-rich cases and focus in depth on small sample. The anonymity of the interviewees are crucial by obtaining informed permission. Results show that conceptual categories of inclusion, sensitisation, collaboration and methodological variability could be thematised. The findings suggest that Hungarian children are very concerned about the war, accept non-native peers, but find it difficult to interact. Cooperation among teachers, differentiation and equal treatment are highlighted. The findings have implications for teacher training programs, emphasizing the need to enrich their knowledge about diversity, develop skills in order to create safe school spaces and to emphasize intercultural attitude, trauma-informed teaching practices.

integration, non-native children, kindergarten education, primary school education, teachers' beliefs

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A28

Nurturing children's intercultural sensitivity in monolingual preschool education

Presenters:

Rita Szaszko, Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, Hungary

The present research aimed to explore and describe pre-service preschool teachers' beliefs about how to foster preschool children's intercultural awareness raising by applying traditional and 21st century methods. It is revealed by previous research (Karras, 2021) that the development of preschool children's intercultural sensitivity is relevant, since intercultural and global competences and awareness must be cultivated and nurtured constantly, ideally from an early age. Hence, preschools also play a crucial role in fostering these competences during children's formative years (Oxfam, 2015). This research framework reflects the Constructivist Paradigm (Kuhn, 1967) and Intercultural Theory, i.e. reality is organized according to the observers' perspectives. This qualitative data was conducted by eliciting information from pre-service preschool teachers through two focus-group semi-structured interviews (n=33, n=14). Subsequently, the transcribed data was processed with content analysis. Research-ethics was guided by EU Regulation 2016/679 (European Parliament and Council) to ensure confidentiality. A written consent secured participants' anonymity and the option of resigning from volunteering. The main results suggest, that the participants believe that in monolingual preschool education. intercultural awareness can be fostered with both traditional and up-to-date age-appropriate methods. However, there is a debate among the participants over the relevance of intercultural awareness development in monolingual educational programs, particularly in preschools. Hence, these findings imply that pre-service preschool teachers must be provided with a varied and rich repertoire of methods and techniques, as well as appropriate training and guidelines for institutionalized early age intercultural awareness raising, which is a crucial responsibility of preschool teacher training programs.

intercultural sensitivity, preschool, monolingual education, awareness raising, methods

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A29

WAISP- Wellbeing And Involvement Starting with Play

Presenters:

Rita Melia, Atlantic Technological University, Ireland

This collaborative project between ATU Ireland & University of Zagreb, explored approaches to play, wellbeing & involvement in both countries. Considered how play supports wellbeing, Supported the development of early years educators competencies & skills. Laevers (2012) suggests if we want to know what it feels like to be a child in an ECEC setting we should measure levels of wellbeing & involvement. While Maslow (1954) confirms that to reach self actualisation children's basic needs must be met. Equally Ryan & Deci (2000) confirm children's basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence & relatedness must be met to support wellbeing. Children's basic psychological needs can be met in play which is freely chosen (Gray, 2015). When children have choice, wonder & delight in their play (Mardell et al 2016) When their basic psychological needs are met they will have high levels of hedonic & eudaemonic wellbeing. 20 early years educators from Zagreb University visited ATU Ireland, Oct 2023. 25 early years educators visited Zagreb University March 2024. Collaborative & reciprocal learning supported increased competencies & exploration of how play supports wellbeing & involvement. Educators over 18 years signed informed consent to participate in the project, learning, autonomous, independent travel, peer learning, shared sustained thinking. norming of the group. increased confidence & critical reflection. 42 Posters developed, increased quality provision. Policy recognition re providing short term Erasmus study visits to meet the needs of the ECEC sector.

play, wellbeing, involvement, Erasmus Plus European Project, early years educators

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A30

Italian teachers' willingness to the use of Outdoor Education: the role of Nature Relatedness, Mindful Attention Awareness and Wellbeing

Presenters:

Daniela Paoletti, Lumsa University, Italy

Co-authors:

Benedetta Ragni, Lumsa University, Italy

Antonino Callea, Lumsa University, Italy

Carmen Berenguer, Universidad de Valencia, Spain

Nicoletta Rosati, Lumsa University, Italy

Simona De Stasio, Lumsa University, Italy

This study aims to explore Italian teacher's willingness about the use of Outdoor Education (OE) considering the possible association with nature relatedness (NR), wellbeing (WB) and Mindful Attention Awareness (MAAS). Previous studies highlighted a positive association between NR and the willingness to teaching outdoor (Barable & Lakin, 2020); considering the link between NR, MAAS and WB (Sadowski et al.,2020) we investigated the aforementioned variables within a single model in an Italian sample. OE is a pedagogical approach enhancing opportunities to experience the outdoor environment as a source of education which positively influence child's development (Dahlgren & Szczepanski, 1998). Nowadays, the interest among preschool teachers in OE is growing (Sjöblom et al.,2021). 94 teachers (97.9% Female, Mage=42.8) completed: Nature Relatedness Scale (NRS; Nisbet et al., 2009); The Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF; Keyes, 2009) Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS; Brown & Ryan's,2003) and ad-hoc scale to investigate teacher's willingness to teaching OE. Quantitative methodology: correlations and mediation model were performed based on the paradigm that recognizes benefits of mindfulness in the relationship between NRS and WB (es.Sadowski et al.,2020). Ethical principles of informed consent, confidentiality of data and anonymity of participants were respected. Results showed significant associations between NRS and MAAS ($b=.377$, $p=.005$), NRS and willingness to OE ($b=.109$, $p=.000$) and a significant mediation effect of MAAS on the relationship between NR and WB (indirect effect=.126, $p=.030$; $R^2=.18$). This study illustrates Italian teachers' perspectives on Outdoor Education, emphasizing the need for OE training incorporating NR and mindfulness to enhance teacher wellbeing.

outdoor education, Italian teachers, nature relatedness, mindfulness, wellbeing

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A31

Process Model for Exploratory Practice - Children as Co-Creators

Presenters:

Anette Sofie Bernsen, NLA University College and USN University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

This study employs a/r/tographic approaches to investigate how children can engage as co-creators in a creative and interactive process design of spaces and play environments within ECEC settings, using a seven-step model, named the Palette Model. Research on children as co-designers in and for play (Druin, 2002; Skovbjerg et al., 2022) has

emerged in recent years. Studies have shown that the form and content of a play space have a direct impact on how children explore and participate in play spaces (Nordtømme, 2019; Waterhouse, 2022). The theoretical framework draws upon Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of rhizome or rhizomatic thinking, facilitating a dynamic and continuously evolving process. Methods used were participatory observation, photo-documentation, and focus-group interviews involving children and staff from three ECEC facilities. Analysis was conducted using a deductive qualitative thematic approach (Gilgun, 2019). The study was approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data, and written information as well as written consent were obtained from all participants. Results indicate that placing children at the center of the design process serves as a motivating factor for both children and the staff. The staff gained awareness of their role in promoting children as co-creators, suggesting potential for further exploration of strategies to facilitate children's participation in daily ECEC activities. This study suggests a path to a more interactive child-centred process approach to designing play spaces, and contributes to both practice and researcher communities by providing an interactive process model and amplifying children's voices through bodily and interactive processes.

children as co-creators, process model, exploratory practice, collaboration, creative processes

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A32

The potentials of a child-centered early childhood computing education: Examining technological change process with 3-5-year-old children

Presenters:

Robin Samuelsson, Mälardalen University, Sweden

The poster presents the technological change process in implementing programming for 3-5-year-olds. Programming activities for children are quickly integrated into ECE (Su et al., 2023). A surging debate in coding education is that initiatives uncritically implement programming with a narrow skill focus (Tissenbaum et al., 2019). As programming is becoming a matter of critically interacting with children's world, programming education needs to engage all children. The study builds on activity theory as a framework for studying learning as a change process (Sannino & Engeström, 2010), involving technological change (Kaptelinin & Nardi, 2009). The study ethnographically tracks the activity system tensions leading to change during a seven-month project developing programming activities for 3-to-5-year-olds mainly using video-recordings. Tensions in the activity systems (artefact, subjects, rules, community, division-of-labour, and object-of-learning) were tracked in formative sessions (Sannino & Engeström, 2010), raising critical discussions on childhood programming design choices. The project was approved following a review by the National Swedish Ethics Authority regarding the children's and teachers' participation and the anonymity of recordings. The study details the critical transformation toward a child-centered, inclusive early computer science education based on projects, children's tinkering, and play, but also the pitfalls of adding computing into existing ECE-activities and the strenuous change process that was needed. Programming in ECE-settings fits well with childhood learning based on playfulness, project-based learning, and tinkering (cf. Resnick, 2017). The study shows how this requires considerable change involving whole activity systems transformations. The potential and change needed for a child-centered programming education are discussed.

programming, playful, activity theory, technological change, critical computing

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A33

Factors enabling smooth and rich connections between early childhood and elementary school in music expression education

Presenters:

Yurina Watanabe, Chugoku Junior College, Japan

This study aims to identify factors that allow for a rich and smooth connection between early childhood and elementary music expression education. Therefore, the study will examine how early childhood and elementary school teachers' views of music and development influence their criteria for evaluating children's musical expression. I focused on the problem that differences in values regarding music expression education between early childhood and elementary school teachers (Nishikawa, 2021) (Watanabe, 2022) make mutual understanding and dialogue complex (Noguchi, 2007) and hinder connection education. This study is based on the Bridging Program theory, which connects early childhood and elementary education by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). This program is designed to help educators work together across positions to foster a foundation for learning. Relying on the multi-vocal visual ethnography method (Tobin, 1989), teachers watched and group-debated edited videos of music expression scenes from each institution. The texts were analysed by qualitative coding. The Research Ethics Committee approved the study, and consent was obtained from the target teacher and the child's surrogate parent/guardian to protect personal information, ensure anonymity, and guarantee freedom to participate in or withdraw from the research. Therefore, the critical opinion of "unfamiliar situations (of different educational institutions)" expressed different perceptions among each institution's educators, allowing me to present factors that prevent and enable the connection. The results promote mutual understanding between early childhood and elementary school teachers and contribute to realizing a curriculum connecting early childhood and elementary school education.

connection between early childhood education and elementary school education, expression section and music classes, teacher's perception of musical expression, view of music expression, view of development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A34

Korean Early Childhood Teacher Educators' Mindfulness and Psychological Stability through Online Suda(수다) Reflection

Presenters:

Sukyoung Park, Konkuk University, South Korea

Young-Mi Go, Soonchunhyang University, South Korea

Co-authors:

Soo-Jin Lim, Dongshin University, South Korea

Yoon Hee Seo, Korea National University of Education, South Korea

This study aims to find out how Korean early childhood teacher educators perceived their own mindfulness and psychological stability through Suda which involves participants' emotions and being talkative during his/ her engagement derived from Korean cultural background. Meacham et al. (2022) adapted the Suda method (Oh, 2005) to explore challenges against mainstream epistemology, which was also a journey to acclimate a culturally different environment and to be successful where their underestimated performance. These findings prompted us to explore mindfulness and psychological stability in Korean context. We reflected upon concept of mindfulness and psychological stability in work life and drew on Meacham et al. (2022)'s Suda methodology. We analyzed 4 participants' autobiographical journals and group discussion descriptions to understand mindfulness and psychological stability and re-interpreted identity and agency as teacher educators. After obtaining informed

consent (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017) from all participants, the data was collected and analyzed by seeking to maintain the anonymity of others and to minimize ethical conflicts. By analyzing our teaching life, we could clarify our viewpoint as a teacher educator and develop a new perspective. And we could experience a reconstruction of ourselves while realizing it with a psychological approach. Also, we understood that our behaviors in university teaching different from our perspective in situating us in Korean early childhood education contexts. This study suggests university faculty in teacher education program using the shared online Suda method to reinterpret one's mindfulness and psychological stability to become aware of one's professional identity more clearly and deeply.

early childhood teacher educator, mindfulness, psychological stability, reflection, Suda

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging

A35

Inclusive practices by early childhood educators in diverse classrooms

Presenters:

Solange Armijo, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile

We evaluate the inclusive practices of early childhood educators (ECE) in an after-school program for children between 4-7 years old delivered by a university in Chile. Despite the crucial teacher's role in promoting inclusive education, ECE still experiences difficulties responding to diversity. The main challenges faced by ECE are often i) a lack of resources (Chhabra, 2018), ii) inadequate professional training (Zhu, 2019), iii) lack of pedagogical competencies, and iv) an overload of work (Sukumaran, 2015). We explored inclusive educational practices as a process of addressing and responding to learners' diverse needs from the children's rights perspective. As such, it aligns with the postulates of the inclusion index (Booth, 2002) and the framework of inclusive pedagogy in action (Florian, 2011). A case study was conducted in January 2024 in a six-session after-school program comprising 140 students divided into eight courses. Documentary analysis, teacher surveys, and classroom observation strategies during the sessions were used to collect and integrate the data. The dean and the participants signed the informed consent, and the university ethics committee approved all the procedures. We ensured ethical guidelines of voluntary anonymity and secure data storage and used the information for research purposes. The results highlight the relevance of planning according to the learners' needs, flexible methodology, peer collaboration, and material conditions in the classroom to enhance inclusive practices in early childhood education. The findings and discussions of this study aim to inform the pedagogical practices that ECE use to meet the educational needs of students.

inclusive practices, preschool education, special needs, case study, diverse classroom

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A36

Musical instruments at Japanese kindergartens and their use; Awareness of teachers towards activities using musical instruments

Presenters:

Yasuko Murakami, Kyoritsu Women's University, Japan

Sayuri Nishizaka, Kyoritsu Women's University, Japan

This study was conducted to clarify the availability and use of musical instruments in kindergartens in Tokyo, as well as to clarify the awareness of teachers towards activities using musical instruments. It has been pointed out that among musical activities in early childhood education, only few are activities that use musical instruments (Ehrlin & Tivenius 2018). The frequency of such activities would vary depending on the instruments owned by the school. First of all, what kind of musical instruments are available in kindergartens? Looking at Japan, there was a study that

clarified the current availability of musical instruments and their use in elementary schools (Arimoto, Nezu, & Kojima, 2010). The questionnaire for the abovementioned study was used as a reference to create the questionnaire for this study. A survey was requested to 953 kindergartens in Tokyo, and a total of 162 kindergartens responded to the survey. The survey included 102 items. All participants were informed in writing of the following three points: (1) Purpose of this study; (2) Assurance of anonymity; and (3) Consent to participate in the study by responding to the survey. Almost all kindergartens had tambourines, triangles, bells, and castanets. In terms of activities using musical instruments, teachers placed more importance on creating an enjoyable experience for children, rather than acquiring musical skills. The results suggested that while most kindergartens provided "Simple rhythm instruments" as indicated in the Course of study for Kindergarten, the experience of "Having fun interacting with musical instruments" was provided in various ways.

kindergarten, musical instruments, musical activity, teaching materials, awareness of teachers

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A37

The Early Years Library: Mobilising Common Elements of evidence-based intervention practice in the Early Years

Presenters:

Julia Birchenough, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Sara Baker, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

Jane Lewis, Centre for Evidence and Implementation, United Kingdom

Stephanie Smith, Centre for Evidence and Implementation, United Kingdom

A free online resource aimed at practitioners, the Early Years Library (EYL; Clarke et al., 2022) provides guidance on how to put into practice the common elements of effective intervention programmes for early years education. Research in youth mental health contexts found that common elements can be an effective way to improve practice (Chorpita et al., 2013) with limited specialised training (Dowling et al., 2019). However, currently the EYL is a static resource online. How can we support its uptake in nurseries so that it can usefully support early years practitioners? Guided by the EPIS framework, our Nuffield Foundation-funded study will explore the feasibility of adopting and implementing the EYL in preschool settings. To understand the support that practitioners and settings need to select specific areas for improvement, the EYL resources relevant to them, and to implement them well in the setting, we will review the literature and engage with practitioners in focus groups and through a survey. All data will be pseudonymised to maintain participant anonymity. Using the BCW/COM-B model of behaviour change (Michie, Atkins, & West, 2014), we will assess which enabling measures could be put in place to mobilise the EYL. We present our first findings from this phase. This study is a first step towards mobilising the EYL to strengthen early years practice. Our aim is to develop a low-cost approach to supporting implementation which is easily scalable and could be made accessible at a nation-wide level and beyond to support practitioners and, ultimately, children's outcomes.

early years library, common elements, knowledge mobilisation, research to practice gap, behaviour Change Wheel

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A38

Exploring changes in children that emerged during the collaborative implement process for outdoor play which reflected the voices of young children

Presenters:

YungEui Yoo, soonchunhyang university, South Korea

Co-authors:

MiJeong Song, soonchunhyang university, South Korea

sun hee yang, soonchunhyang university, South Korea

We aimed to analyze changes in children through a collaborative implementation process for outdoor play that reflects children's voices. The phenomenon of children's outdoor play positions them as active participants within a framework that promotes autonomous play choices (Tovey, 2007). The spontaneous outdoor play experiences of children are increasingly acknowledged for their contributions to learning and development through active engagement. Consequently, a variety of studies are being conducted to explore these effects. (Bilton, 2010; Tovey, 2007; Nah & Kim, 2012). The right to participate is realized when children are given the opportunity and space to express their views in a child-directed manner (Lundy, 2007). Children's outdoor play should not be controlled by adults, as it builds positive attitudes such as autonomy and initiative through child-directed problem exploration and solving (Maynard, 2014). The research subjects are the teacher and 25 children aged 5 at kindergartens located in South Korea. The research repeatedly applied Kemmis and McTaggart's (1998) action research model, data analysis involved categorizing key words, organizing and interpreting them into generalized statements. The purpose and methods of the research were explained to the children. They were informed that they could refuse to be observed, and in such cases, the collected data was immediately discarded. The children began to show initiative and spontaneity as active participants in outdoor play, revealing their voices as participants in play. They freely explored their surroundings and tackled problems as they emerged. This study stands out for actively seeking ways to reflect the voices of children as players in the process of implementing outdoor play that incorporates children's voices.

children's voices, outdoor play, collaborative action research, collaborative implement process, exploring changes in children

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A39

Exploring Observation Criteria for Understanding Early Childhood Play

Presenters:

Yungeui Yoo, Soonchunhyang University, South Korea

Co-Authors:

Misun Lee, Soonchunhyang University, South Korea

Bokyoung Cho, Soonchunhyang University, South Korea

The purpose of this study is to explore criteria for observing early childhood play that can help early childhood teachers understand early childhood play. Although the value and importance of free play time is very high (Rogers & Sawyers, 1998), the observation tools for early childhood play developed so far have focused on tools for evaluating rather than deeply understanding the play itself (Pyle & Deluca, 2017). In order to properly understand early childhood play, it is necessary to understand the essential characteristics of play (Garvey, 1990; Pellegrini, 2009), and based on this, it is possible to provide various educational support (OhYongsook, 2019; Shun Ah Chung, 2004). The subjects of the study were 40 5-year-old children from Chungcheongnam-do, South Korea, and 8 early childhood education experts. The collected data was analyzed using the convergent design method among Creswell's (2017) mixed research design methods. The purpose of the study was explained, consent for the study was secured, and if the children expressed refusal during the study, it was immediately stopped. The final criteria for observing early childhood play consisted of 7 questions about play immersion, 7 questions about play motivation, and 7 questions about peer play behavior, and consisted of 21 questions in 3 areas. Therefore, it is anticipated that these criteria will

be helpful for early childhood teachers to understand and support early childhood play in challenging on-site situations without feeling overwhelmed.

early childhood play, understanding early childhood play, observation early childhood play, observation criteria for early childhood play, convergent design method

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A40

How Can We Improve University Students' Insight into Children's Perspectives in Early Childhood Teacher Preparation? (2) By Sharing Field Experiences in the University Program

Presenters:

Ayako Fujikake, Notre Dame Seishin University, Japan

Co-authors:

Sachiko Kitano, Graduate School of Kobe University, Japan

This study aims to examine the process of university students' learning in a project that ensures the continuity of learning between kindergarten teaching practice and university learning. Previous studies aimed to improve university students' sensitivity to sounds and the ability to express themselves (Yoshinaga, 2013). However, few studies have focused on how to improve practical skills and apply what they have already learned to their next experiences. There has been an increasing awareness of the need to ensure a learning environment that maintains students' motivation and keeps them open to new ideas and perspectives (OECD, 2019). This study adopted the AAR cycle. The participants were 30 children and 12 university students in the second semester. The students were provided with learning opportunities both in Forest Kindergarten and in university. The analysis was done with reference to playful pedagogy (e.g., Weisberg, Hirsh-Pasek, & Golinkoff, 2013). The authors examined changes in children's play (PECERA, 2023) and further examines the university students' learning. This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number JP21K02418, and approved by the Ethics Committee of Notre Dame Seishin University. Participants were informed, and consent was obtained using a form. The reflection on the episode prompted university students to reconsider children's words and actions in the assessment of the children's interests. The reflection allowed university students to design practices appropriate to the children's interests in playful environment. The university program which used the AAR cycle ensured that students learned how to make decisions and design thoughtful practices for children.

reflection, playful pedagogy, early childhood teacher preparation, university students' learning, music

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A41

Acknowledging the knowledgeable: Children as pedagogical informants

Presenters:

Amelia Ruscoe, Edith Cowan University, Australia

This research aimed to listen to children's authentic experiences of school-based early childhood as knowledgeable informants, and to reveal the impact of different pedagogical approaches upon children's emerging identities as learners. The study upholds and amplifies children's right to contribute to pedagogical decision-making as a significant process that affects them directly (United Nations Rights of the Child, 1989 [Article 12]). Children are

competent and reliable informants of their lived experiences in the early years, and offer unique and valuable insights, previously unknown to the adults, who make decisions on their behalf (Murray, 2019). Gibson's affordance theory (1977) underpins realisation that adult decisions for children inevitably afford one thing at the expense of another. Foucauldian theory suggests these decisions are discursively influenced (1976), limiting the adult panopticon of view and risking marginalisation of children's contributions. A post-structuralist paradigm, using the qualitative method of Dialogic Drawing was developed and used with 28 five-year-old children in three Western Australian schools. The method embraced a democratic approach to share power between children, who held the pencil, and adults, who held the research question, to navigate the complexity of school-based pedagogical affordances. Dialogic drawing ethically marries visual and dialogic modes to sensitively and responsively research with children. The children clarified how three distinctly different discursive priorities in early childhood - inclusion, achievement and play - impacted their opportunities and attitudes to school and learning. The findings call for children to be reconceptualised and critical pedagogical informants in decision-making processes and policy design in early childhood.

children's voices, dialogic drawing, policy decisions, school-based affordance, transition to school

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A42

Kindergartenlife on Norways island Bragdøya: Power of being and moments of resonance.

Presenters:

Lisa Annika Brandt, University of Agder, Norway

Co-authors:

Soern Finn Menning, University of Agder, Norway

Merete Lund Fasting, University of Agder, Norway

We aim to explore the place-responsive pedagogy (Vladimirova,2022) exemplified through a Norwegian kindergarten almost daily going by boat to the small island Bragdøya, spending their day outdoors apart from the mainland. Research suggests that direct encounters with nature can deepen the context for decisions regarding sustainability (Sandell&Öhman,2010) and outdoor life may have a positive effect on life-skills (Fasting et al., 2023). Building on these perspectives, we include the concept of resonance (Rosa, 2019) and different approaches to and conceptualizations of time and progress (Barad, 2017; Clark, 2023). In our study we follow this kindergarten group during all seasons and weather conditions. Using visual ethnography (Pink, 2007) and embodied inquiry (Snowber,2016) we are both responding to the island itself and the kindergartengroup spending their days in this environment. We draw on our observational notes, conversation with children and kindergarten staff as well as exploring more a speculative post-qualitative visual analysis (Menning et al.,2021). Kindergartenstaff and parents have signed a consent form following the Norwegian guidelines for Research. The importance of childrens temporary passive consent (Menning & Kampmann,2021) has been taken into account, opening up for their ongoing right to withdraw. A preliminary analysis suggests that the island setting invites the children to certain ways of being, playing and reflecting. The island likely has several dimensions in children's life such as a place of challenge, a place of change and a place as resonance. Our study makes visible this unique ECEC-childhood-context, and may inspire further reflections regarding the role of place in children's institutional lives.

place-responsive pedagogy, post-qualitative, sustainability, islandness, resonance

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A43

Environmental Rating Scale for Sustainable Development in Early Childhood (ERS-SDEC): The Operationalisation of a Research Instrument for Curriculum Development

Presenters:

John Siraj-Blatchford, OMEP, United Kingdom

The research provides a critical analysis and continuing review and development of the OMEP UK Early Childhood Education for Sustainable Citizenship Award. The ERS-SDEC has been applied in support of numerous ESD research projects in the UK and abroad. The ERS-SDEC was first published by Siraj-Blatchford et al in 2016, the instrument was then adapted and operationalised to audit curriculum practice in the OMEP UK ESC Award scheme. Research associated with its development have increasingly applied a theoretical model that is grounded in the ecological account of child development of provided in the work of James and Eleanor Gibson, and in emergent, embodied and extended cognitive perspectives. The analysis has been carried out using mixed methodology. The study applies secondary archival data and protective measures have included ensuring that the secondary studies themselves have complied to established data privacy and protection, and BERA guidance, that all available evidential sources were accessed to avoid the possibility of bias, and that no identifiable sources of primary data are reported. The poster provides an assessment of the value of the instrument, and a summary of its the revisions and the development of the instrument. It will also provide guidance on its use, and access to a free download link. This analysis and the application of the revised and adapted ERS-SDEC is contributing towards revisions of the OMEP UK accreditation scheme, and to the 2024 UNESCO Greening Education Partnership Global Basic Standards of Accreditation initiative.

research instrument, curriculum development, sustainability, ecological, accreditation scheme

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A44

What Promotes Retention of Early Childhood Education and Care Workers in Japan: Insights from ECEC Facility Directors

Presenters:

Yoshinori Wakao, Nippon Sport Science University, Japan

Directors of early childhood education and care (ECEC) facilities in Japan were surveyed to determine what they believe is effective and what they are practising to keep ECEC workers in the workforce. In Japan, ECEC workers have short employment durations (Basic Survey on Wage Structure (2022)). The most common reasons for leaving the workforce are cited as working conditions, work environment and life events such as marriage or childbirth (Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Social Welfare, 2023). A cluster sampling and questionnaire surveys were conducted at three types of childcare facilities in Japan (kindergartens, daycare, and certified childcare centres). Directors of ECEC facilities were asked what practices are effective in retaining childcare workers. Questionnaires were sent to 10,823 facilities, and responses were received from 830 facilities. The study's purpose and handling of personal information were explained on the cover of the survey form. Only those individuals who provided their consent were allowed to respond. Effective measures to help ECEC workers keep their jobs longer include raising their salary (94.6%), improving workplace relationships (87.7%), and reducing their workload (83.1%). The most common actions taken by directors to ensure that ECEC workers continued to work longer were making it easier to take childcare leave (84.9), reducing overtime (78.8), and improving relationships in the workplace (76.0).

Lengthening rest periods and increasing staffing are policies that would lead to the retention of ECEC workers.

ECEC workers, directors of ECEC facilities, questionnaire survey, working conditions, work environment

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A45

The tutor function in Problem-based learning (PBL) in Early Childhood Teacher Education (ECTE)

Presenters:

Nina Anette Angeltveit, NLA Høgskolen, Norway

Co-authors:

Hilde Kartveit Sundnes, NLA høgskolen, Norway

PBL is a key method for student active learning in ECTE at NLA University College. The research aim is to explore and develop new knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of the tutor function in PBL used in ECTE. Research has shown how important it is for the tutor to support students and develop engaging interventions for learning (Jarrah, Girmay, Ezezika, 2023), on the other hand, other research shows that there is uncertainty about the role of supervisors for student groups. (Sando, Pehrson, Helldal, 2018) The project is based on social constructivist learning theory (Vygotsky, Bruner). Further the project draws upon theory about PBL (Pettersen, 2017; Bransford & Steins, 1993; Barrows, 1994), the function of the PBL-tutor as a facilitator (Azer, 2005), and supervisors' theory (Skagen, 2013) The method is a semi-structured interview, with a phenomenological approach. The selection of informants is linked to current or previous experience with problem-based learning in ECTE. The study follows the guidelines of the Norwegian National Committee for Research Ethics (SIKT). No personal information will be asked for, and the participants can withdraw from the study at any given time. Participants will give informed consent and will be anonymized. The findings will be centered around the analysis of the interviews, to find the strengths and weaknesses of the tutor-function in PBL. The research will have implications for the perspectives and knowledge on the tutors' function in PBL in ECTE, and link to how we can facilitate PBL in the future in ECTE.

problem-based learning (PBL), PBL-tutor, student active learning, early childhood teacher education (ECTE), group facilitator

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A46

Parents' and educators' perspectives about belonging in early years settings

Presenters:

Sue Walker, Southern Cross University, Australia

This study explored parent and educator perspectives of belonging in five European countries: Finland, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden. Families come from different circumstances and ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds and possess differing experiences, abilities, and resources. As this diversity increases, concerns grow about children's experiences of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2011). This study examines these concerns by exploring educators' and parents' perspectives about, and pedagogies for, belonging. This study used the 'politics of belonging' as a theoretical framework (Yuval-Davis, 2011, 2015). This theoretical perspective enables us to understand that processes for belonging in early years education are intersectional which is important for understanding and promoting belonging in early years settings. This study used a quantitative paradigm with survey design and method to collect data from 648 educators and 1,598 parents. Participation in the survey was anonymous, informed and voluntary. The study received Ethical approval in each of the participating countries. Results indicated that, in general, parents and educators felt positively about belonging in their (pre)schools. However, experiences of belonging cannot be taken for granted, and a number of parents and educators worry about children being excluded and alienated. Findings indicate that pedagogies promoting belonging built on intersectionality and meta-awareness

are yet to be developed in early years educational settings. A pedagogical approach in which meaningful and critical dialogue takes place between teachers and children is required if teachers are to take a social justice approach which shows deep respect towards children and their families (Kuusisto & Lamminmaki-Vartia 2012).

politics of belonging, preschool, early education settings, parents, educators

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A47

Professionalism of kindergarten teacher from the Perspective of "Interaction with Parents": A Case Study of Child A with Anxiety

Presenters:

Keiko Ito, Yasuda Women's University, Japan

Yu Ito, Hiroshima University, Japan

Co-authors:

Honomi Uneme, Shimane University, Japan

This study aimed to address the support provided by teachers for parents' anxieties and concerns by analyzing the transformation of verbal interactions between teachers and parents that occur daily in kindergarten. Currently, many parents in Japan feel anxious in environments where it is difficult to discuss their worries and anxieties about parenting. Support from teachers in nurseries and kindergartens is expected to reduce parental worries and anxieties about parenting. Almost no recent research on parental support has actually examined the everyday verbal interactions between teachers and parents. This study was based on theories of parental support and working with families (Ota, 2016 et al.). The analysis was also based on observations of young children's behavior in kindergartens and teacher interviews. The subject of the analysis was the interactions between teachers and mothers concerned about Child A. The study was conducted after obtaining consent from the target kindergarten principals, homeroom teachers and parents. The results showed that the mother of Child A initially focused only on the problematic situation of her child but gradually became able to grasp the child's development. The following two factors were found to be responsible for the transformation of mothers, and their importance was suggested: First, teachers informed parents about the concrete way things are done in kindergarten. Second, teachers should be aware of the parents' concerns and anxieties about childcare and provide kindergarten practice information to soothe them.

We believe that the findings of this study will contribute as part of the support for parents.

parental support, teacher-parent interactions, kindergarten teacher, professionalism, daily verbal interaction

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A48

Addressing the Continued Exclusion of Multiply Marginalized Children

Presenters:

Courtney O'Grady, University of Alabama, United States

Co-authors:

Michaelene Ostrosky, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, United States

Using a DisCrit lens we examined educators' descriptions of discipline policies and procedures to understand multiply marginalized children's experience of exclusion. Findings highlight the need for policy reform and continued support for teachers. Although disparities inherent in suspension and expulsion practices have been documented (Gilliam, 2005), with concern for children of color and children with disabilities (ECTA, 2023; Zeng et al., 2021), a paucity of research has examined the exclusion of multiply marginalized children. Using a DisCrit lens (Annamma et al., 2013) we assumed that teachers' punitive responses to behavior may be informed by biases regarding race, ethnicity, gender, and ability (Love & Beneke, 2021). Using a qualitative research paradigm (Brantlinger, 2005), interviews were conducted. Data were analyzed following DisCrit theory (Annamma et al.), using In Vivo coding (Saldana, 2016). After University approval, teachers signed consent forms and were given pseudonyms. Teachers shared their perspectives on disciplinary policies/procedures, and described reactive and marginalizing punitive approaches (i.e., children missing activities, being sent to areas designed for exclusion). Teachers described sending children home for the day and making enrollment contingent on things that were not feasible for families. Teachers reported feeling frustrated, overwhelmed, and stressed while trying to support children who engaged in challenging behavior; they noted systemic barriers to providing adequate support. Changes are needed so that pre-service teachers can engage in multifaceted work to disrupt deficit based, racist and ableist views that impact our understanding of child development, behavior, and pedagogy (Annamma & Morrison, 2018).

teacher perceptions, challenging behavior, equity, discipline, bias

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A49

Exploring a new model of Reflective and Analytical Practice: Reflection with Guidance

Presenters:

Sue Bennett, Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC)/Froebel Partnership, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Tony Bertram, Tina Bruce, Sally Cave, Anne Denham, Helen Lyndon and Chris Pascal, Froebel Partnership, United Kingdom/New Zealand

The aim of this research was to develop reflective and analytic opportunities for educators and researchers. We draw on a cross-national project developing, documenting and analysing pedagogic practice in England and New Zealand using Froebelian principles and ethics (Bruce et al, 2019; Pascal and Bertram, 2023). This three-year project adopts a Praxeological paradigm (Pascal and Bertram, 2012; Formosinho and Formosinho, 2012) drawing upon Froebelian principles and practices (Bruce, 2022) and maintaining ethical standards throughout. This small scale, qualitative, project uses case study methodology and adopts a new approach to data and evidence analysis, *Reflection with Guidance* (Pascal et al 2022). An ethical commitment to distributed power ensured educators and researchers worked collaboratively and all contributions were highly valued. The reflective framework developed utilises four lenses to provide depth of analysis and to support professional flourishing. *Reflection with Guidance*, when used over time within a community of practice, can radically deepen pedagogy and learning as well as transforming professional and child wellbeing and fulfilment by enabling humans to flourish. It offers an empowering model for professional development which can secure practitioner retention, reduce mental stress and enhance professional wellbeing.

Froebelian principles, reflective practice, analytical approaches, reflection with guidance, data analysis.

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A50

The relationship between practitioners' nature-sensitive reactions and views of symbiosis with nature and childcare practice 2

Presenters:

Mariko Miyata, Shiraume Gakuen University, Japan

Co-authors:

Kiyomi Akita, Gakushuin University, Japan

Kaori Ishida, Preschool Outdoor Environment Design Office, Japan

Machiko Tsujitani, Ochanomizu University, Japan

Yuta Miyamoto, University of Fukui, Japan

This study aims to identify what children need to fully engage with nature in preschool and learn its importance. It is clear that the quality of children's experiences is related to the quality of processes. Therefore, this study aims to clarify how caregivers' attitudes towards nature (their view of nature) are related to children's experiences. Few previous research works have revealed the relationship between practitioners' views of nature and their educational plans. Based on the factor scores identified by Miyata (2023), this study analyses the relationship between practitioners' views of nature and their educational plans about nature by classifying them into three groups according to similarities in their views of nature. This study takes an environmental psychology perspective, which identifies the relationship between environmental cognition and specific behaviours. An original questionnaire was developed and a web-based survey was conducted in November 2022. Responses were received from 300 practitioners in pre-schools in Japan. The survey was anonymous, and all respondents agreed to participate. It was suggested that a group of practitioners with less positive values about nature were more likely to use only certain states of nature in their education. In addition, it was suggested that a group of practitioners who held a good respect for nature were more likely to use education that actively incorporated changes in events of nature. In this study, training practitioners to expand their positive values about nature was shown to be effective in promoting environmental education.

ecosystem sustainability, environmentally conscious behaviour, nature-sensitive reactions, views of symbiosis with nature, practitioners setting up preschool environments

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Poster Session

Set B

11:15 – 12:00, Wednesday 4th September 2024

Foyer & Mezzanine, Brighton Dome

B1

Building Eco-Conscious Communities: A Study of Practices for Sustainability with Early Childhood

Presenters:

Mariana Rodriguez, Universidad de Chile, Chile

Co-authors:

Johanna Camacho, Universidad de Chile, Chile

The study aims to systematize the practices for sustainability carried out by early childhood practitioners, families, and 3 to 4-year-old children in a preschool in Santiago, Chile. The above is to identify new interests and/or needs within the educative community to strengthen their ties to sustainability. Empirical research on the experience, skills, awareness, and actions over time to build sustainable lifestyles is still scarce (Güler et al., 2021; Davis & Elliott,

2024), and to project onto children a conscious connection with their socio-environmental surroundings (Pörtner et al., 2022). Early Childhood Education for Sustainability (ECEfS) is crucial in helping mitigate the effects of climate change (UNESCO, 2020); it requires the participation of families and the local community to collectively address the main eco-social issues that concern them (Bascopé et al., 2019). The study is framed within a critical paradigm, with a qualitative focus, through Action Research and is part of the initial stage of a doctoral investigation. It has received approval from an ethics committee for its development, including ethical consents and agreements. The main findings indicate that the preschool practices are situated at the level of the educational project, general coordination plan (outdoor areas, gardens, food), and classroom activity plan (waste recycling, plant care, and composting). Once the practices have been systematized, there is a need to enhance sustainability practices in the preschool involving families and neighbors, especially from a socio-economic perspective (the environmental issues being the most addressed), to involve the educative community systematically.

practices for sustainability, climate change, early childhood practitioners, educative community, child participation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B2

Examination of the learning environment for young children through digital storytelling workshops

Presenters:

Kana Suematsu, Tokyo Kasei Gakuin University, Japan

Chika Inoue, Shizuoka University, Japan

Co-authors:

Akihiro Osaki, Ochanomizu University, Japan

This study aims to clarify the meaning of using digital tools and the role of scientific themes in a young children's learning environment and conducted children's workshops featured storytelling in which participants used digital devices to create picture books. From previous workshops, research has shown that the use of familiar scientific themes, the unfixed body, and the presence of adults to facilitate support children's free imagination as well as responsive interactions of childcare workers (Inoue et al., 2020). As L'Ecuyer (2014) suggests, "wonder is the center of all motivation and action in the child"; it's assumed that attention to the "wonder" of nature lead to creative activities. Further, the interactivity of digital would help create a collaborative relationship between the adults and children (Reggio Children, 2019). In this study, a total of seven workshops were held. The workshop was based on the theme of "leaves," which are familiar natural objects. Participants were children between the ages of 4 and 6 and their parents. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Informed consent was negotiated with the children and parents involved. Based on the analysis of iPad screen recordings, the children drew various emotional expressions with the "leaves" as the characters and projected their personal experiences into their respective stories. According to the analysis of the questionnaires, the parents gained new insights into their children's imagination and thoughts. These findings suggest that encounters between digital and nature provide new perspectives on children's potential.

digital tools, science, storytelling, responsive interactions, wonder of nature

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B3

Playing in multiple languages - Participants use of linguistic resources in play

Presenters:

Hiba Abou-Taouk, The Department of Education, Communication and Learning, Sweden

The purpose of the study is to contribute with knowledge about how social sustainability can be included in preschool teaching, focusing on participation when several languages are used in play. Within ECEC there is a large number of studies about play and learning (Pramling et al., 2019). However, studies focusing on teachers participation in multilingual play are limited, especially studies conducted within the field of Play-Responsive Teaching in Early Childhood Education (Kultti, 2022). The study is founded in the sociocultural perspectives on language and communication. Linguaging is seen as an action that the participants are engaged in. Play-Responsive teaching is used as theory for conceptualizing and understanding play and teaching, where teaching is viewed as a mutual activity. The empirical data is produced by video recordings of play in a preschool setting, and a Socioculturally-informed Interaction Analysis was conducted (Wallerstedt et al., 2022). Consequently, the study is within a qualitative paradigm. The study is ethically approved by the Swedish Ethical Review Authority. Parents were informed in writing and through video about the study. Additionally, children were informed about the study by the researcher before filming. In the empirical data participants and local names of the area have been anonymized. The findings show that the teachers used different strategies to include children in multilingual play. By engaging in play discussions about different languages was made possible for the participants. The study highlights the importance of teachers' responsiveness in play, and how teachers participation in play can enable multilingual play.

multilingualism, play, play-responsive teaching, ECE, sustainability

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B4

Early Years Educators knowledge, views and attitudes to developmental monitoring in Early Years Services in Ireland.

Presenters:

Aoife Gallagher, Atlantic Technological University, Ireland

This two-year pragmatic mixed method study examines Early Years Educators [EYEs] knowledge, attitudes, and practices on developmental monitoring [DM] in Ireland's Early Years Services [EYS]. Recent research suggests that EYEs can monitor children's development and identify delays/disabilities (Kiing et al 2019; Chödrön et al 2021). Due to COVID-19, many Irish 0-6-year-olds missed their public health nurse developmental checkups (HSE 2020; HSE 2021). To date there is minimal research in Ireland on EYEs views on DM and their role. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to track children's outcomes in key dimensions from 2-5 years (UN2023). Research on 'High Quality' in early years highlights the importance of DM/Assessment for children's optimal development and early identification of delays/disabilities (OECD 2012; OECD 2015; Barger et al 2018). Research suggests that EYEs can effectively identify delays in children's development (Boh and Johnson 2018; Kiing et al 2019). This study was conducted using a pragmatic mixed methods paradigm (Creswell 2014). Questionnaires were completed by n=208 and n=19 participated in the online focus groups [OFGs]. Analysis was done using SPSS and NVivo 12 for the OFGs utilising thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006). All participants received information sheets and consent forms, and the OFGs data was pseudonymised. The finding reveals that most EYE's view DM as part of their role. However, in practice barriers to it being conducted well included time and staffing issues. These finding highlight the need for more in-depth research in the subject to ensure EYS in Ireland maintain 'high quality' practices.

early year educators, developmental monitoring, early intervention, practices, attitudes

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B5

Development of In-nursery school Training Tools to Create an Inclusive Environment in Japan

Presenters:

Motoko Igarashi, Shiraume Gakuen University, Japan

Gaku Miyama, Aichi Prefectural University, Japan

We aim to develop in-house training tools to foster inclusive environments of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in Japan. This research outlines our initial steps. Using evaluation indicators for inclusive environments of ECEC, we facilitated discussions among nursery school teachers and examined whether teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards inclusive ECEC changed before and after conducting in-house training, and discussed improvements for the in-house training. Hamatani et.al(2023) proposed an influential theory of inclusive ECEC in Japan based on Social Model of disability and the Rights of the Child. In addition, Hongo(2010) and Kanaya(2018) developed evaluation indicators related to inclusive ECEC in Japan. This study was based on theory of social inclusion. Longitudinal analysis of ECEC practices involved comparing assessment results (3 times) and discussion protocols among three nursery teachers per two nursery schools. Additionally, changes in attitudes towards inclusive ECEC were tracked using initial and final questionnaire items by Miyama(2022). We were allowed to publish this report by children's parents and nursery teachers. This study was conducted with the approval of the Research Ethics Committee of Shiraume Gakuen University(Approval No. 2023-3.) and Aichi Prefectural University (Approval No.Kyofuku2023-01.). Using checked assessment indicators not only enhanced the quality of discussions among caregivers, encouraging reflection on their own childcare practices, but also deepened understanding through differences of opinion with colleagues regarding children and childcare. When considering as a tool for in-house training, the study emphasized the importance of reflecting on teachers rather than just aiming for higher scores on indicators.

Inclusion, In-nursery school training tools, reflection, meeting with colleagues, dialogue

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B6

Transition process from kindergarten to school in Slovenia

Presenters:

Marta Licardo, University of Maribor Faculty of Education, Slovenia

The research aims to analyze the transition process between early childhood education and elementary education in Slovenia. The transition process from kindergartens to schools has a lack of research and guidance on suitable methods for transition (Stein, 2015). The organization process can involve several common issues from both kindergarten and school perspectives, e. g. adjustment difficulties of children during the transition phase, reduced learning motivation and increased behavioral difficulties of children, lack of cooperation between professionals, poor effectiveness of the transition process, etc. (Purtell et al. 2020; Talts, 2022). We analyzed the transition process from the perspective of ECE teachers (N =2110), ECE counselors (N = 155), ECE management staff (N = 208), 1st-grade teachers in school (N = 442), school counselors (N = 241) and school management staff (N = 220). The data were collected within the National Evaluation study of short-term early childhood education programs in Slovenia in the years 2022 and 2023, including informed consent of all participants. Teachers in the 1st grade of school expressed concerns related to the lack of teamwork between kindergarten and school staff, lack of information about children, poor organization of the transition process, and care for children from deprived groups. The management staff of kindergartens expressed most concerns related to the lack of continuing pedagogical approaches from kindergarten to school. The findings underscore the need for integrated transition strategies that foster collaboration between kindergarten and school staff, ensuring a seamless pedagogical continuum and comprehensive transition planning.

transition process, early childhood education, elementary education, teachers' perspectives, transition strategies

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B7

Exploring Digital Citizenship Competence among Early Years Educators: A Comparative Study of Scotland and Türkiye

Presenters:

Mustafa Ciftcioglu, The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Ensar Yıldız, Sivas Cumhuriyet University, Turkey

The aim of this study is to assess and compare the digital citizenship competence levels of early years educators in Scotland and Türkiye. Research underscores the significance of educators' digital citizenship competence for effectively integrating technology into classrooms (Instefjord & Munthe, 2017). Moreover, studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between the digital citizenship levels of educators and those of their students (Lauricella, 2020; Martin, 2020). In the current digital age, digital citizenship emerges as a prominent competency (Condruz-Băcescu, 2023; Milenkova et al., 2021). As educators reflect on the profound impact of the digital age on classrooms, the significance of fostering digital citizenship skills becomes increasingly apparent (Kolata, 2022; Xu et al., 2019). The researchers collected the data using the Digital Citizenship Scale (Choi et al., 2017). In this preliminary descriptive study, 187 early years educators (80 from Scotland and 107 from Türkiye), working with children aged between 4 and 6 years old, participated. Informed consents and institutional review board examinations were ensured in each country at the local university. The preliminary results indicated that the mean scores of the educators from the digital citizenship skills scale were 5.14 in Scotland and 4.26 in Türkiye. Furthermore, almost 90% of educators in Türkiye stated that they had not received any training on promoting digital citizenship in the classroom, while this rate was only 28% in Scotland. The study underscores the importance of addressing digital citizenship education in early childhood settings and tailoring strategies to the specific needs of educators in different regions.

cross-country comparison, digital citizenship, early years educator, professional development, teacher education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B8

Teachers' perceptions of the use of augmented reality in preschool education

Presenters:

Arwa Alzahrani, Queen's University Belfast, United Kingdom

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of preschool teachers regarding the use of AR as an educational tool, which plays a crucial role in its acceptance and actual use in their future classrooms. Despite empirical evidence indicating the importance of augmented reality for supporting the teaching and learning process in preschool education (Shams, 2019; Van Koll et al. 2020), the integration of augmented reality into the classroom remains a challenge for teachers (Abdul Rahman, 2020). Activity theory (AT) and the technology acceptance model (TAM) was used. Aspects of constructivism are intimately linked to a post-positivist strategy in this research. To investigate the factors that influence preschool teachers' acceptance of augmented reality, a mixed method approach was used. The article only discusses the results of a questionnaire administered to 105 pre-school teachers. Descriptive and correlational analyses were performed on the data. All participants were provided with

consent forms and information sheets. As part of this research study, contribute to the literature on the integration of augmented reality into preschool education. Based on the findings of the study, pre-school teachers are positive about the use of augmented reality in the classroom. In addition, the study found that teachers' attitudes are a key indicator of their behavioural intentions when using AR in the future. Nonetheless, attitude and perceived usefulness of AR in preschool education were both valid predictors of teachers' intentions to use the technology. A major implication of the findings is for teacher training.

teachers' perceptions, augmented reality, activity theory, technology acceptance model, preschool education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B9

Unlocking potential: Integrating coding and robotics in South African early childhood classrooms

Presenters:

Kayla Willemse, The University of Pretoria, South Africa

This visual presentation explores the transformative benefits of incorporating simple coding and robotics (CR) activities into early childhood (EC) classrooms in South Africa. Drawing on insights from my thesis (Willemse, 2023), the poster showcases the potential benefits of such integration, which include equipping children with essential skills for future success, as well as fostering innovation, collaboration and critical thinking. The theoretical framework which guided this research is rooted in the technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (TPACK) framework (Koehler & Mishra, 2005; 2009), emphasising the seamless integration of technology and content within educational settings. Using an interpretivist paradigm and qualitative approach, the study engaged ten EC teachers from diverse backgrounds. Data generation methods included semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and collaborative discussion groups. Ethical considerations were paramount, with meticulous attention given to obtaining informed consent and assent as well as safeguarding participant privacy and confidentiality. Measures were implemented to protect participant confidentiality, minimise harm and maintain objectivity, upholding the highest ethical standards in the research process. The main finding underscores a significant positive correlation between children's engagement in coding and robotics activities and improvements in problem-solving abilities and creative thinking skills. This poster highlights the urgency of supporting teachers to integrate CR into the EC curriculum, especially in anticipation of forthcoming curriculum changes in South Africa (DBE, 2021; 2023). Recommendations are put forth for teachers to seamlessly integrate CR activities into their classrooms, ensuring optimal learning for young children.

early childhood education, coding and robotics, technology education, TPACK, STEAM education

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B10

Sustainability through food literacy in early childhood education and care institutions

Presenters:

Claudia Melis, Queen Maud University College for Early Childhood Education, Norway

Anna Maria Billing, Queen Maud University College for Early Childhood Education, Norway

Kathrine Bjørgen, Queen Maud University College for Early Childhood Education, Norway

Farhana Borg, Dalarna University, Sweden

Per-Arvid Wold, Queen Maud University College for Early Childhood Education, Norway

Co-authors:

Francesco Cherubini, NTNU, Norway

Konstantin Stadler, NTNU, Norway

Gabriella Falcicchio, University of Bari "Aldo Moro", Italy

Our overall objective is to improve food literacy in ECEC, and develop a research based, easy to use, free of charge digital tool to support the adoption of more sustainable and healthy diets in ECECs. What we eat has an impact on our health (Ward et al., 2021), and it is responsible for 25% of our carbon footprint (Tilman & Clark, 2014). Moreover, it has a huge impact on biological diversity on land, in fresh and in salt water (Vijay et al., 2016). The younger generation will bear the consequences of inaction on the climate crisis and should therefore be empowered to effectively engage in climate action (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2022). We will use a both a positivist and pragmatic paradigm approach to collect, compare and analyse several types of data (using quantitative and qualitative methods), such as questionnaires, interviews, LCA. All participants will sign an informed consent form. Children's participation will be voluntary with the possibility to withdraw at any time. All data will be anonymized after the link between data from different sources is established. ECECs can help promoting sustainability in many ways. In this project, we focus on three aspects: children eating habits, the environmental footprints (and its potential mitigation) of dietary regimes in ECECs, and children understanding of energy flow in ecosystems. This research will have a direct impact on the ECEC sector and on children health and will contribute to a better understanding of ECEC and sustainability.

carbon footprint, food literacy, comparative study, environmental sustainability, food webs

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B11

Four different ways of intersecting place and educational content. Outdoor teaching and learning for sustainable development in early childhood education.

Presenters:

Sara Frödén, Örebro University, Sweden

The study aims to explore the relationship between place and educational content in ECE teachers' outdoor teaching and learning for sustainable development. Research reveals the importance of rich outdoor experiences for fostering a deeper connection to nature (Giusti, 2019), sustainability awareness, and ecological literacy (Orr, 1990). Yet, teachers hesitate to implement outdoor teaching due to a lack of knowledge, experience, and motivation (Kiviranta et al., 2024). The study draws on the educational philosopher John Dewey's work (1938). Various methods were used, including walk-and-talk and semi-structured interviews with 19 teachers, participant observations and on-site conversations. The data comprise field notes, audio recordings, and photographs from two long-term field studies in nine ECE settings. The thematic data analysis is conducted as a part of a learning evaluation within an action research paradigm (Svensson et al., 2009). The teachers and the children's guardians gave informed consent. Any sign of unwillingness to participate during observations or conversations was fully respected. The participants' names are replaced with pseudonyms. The results show that teachers' appreciation of the learning potentials of different natural environments guides the choice of content, lesson plans, and activities. Four approaches were identified:

1. Teaching pre-given content outdoors without using the place as a learning environment.
2. Teaching pre-given content using the place's natural elements and materials.
3. Teaching by intertwining the content and the place.
4. Teaching in a particular place without any pre-given content.

The paper provides tools to analyze and further develop outdoor teaching and learning of environmental and sustainability issues.

outdoor education, environmental and sustainability education, place-based education, place-oriented pedagogy, locally-based curriculum

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B12

Exploring the quality of educational orientations in nurseries: what are the variables of context, person and time that influence educational quality in nurseries from the point of view of the educator?

Presenters:

Emma Bernard, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada

Co-authors:

Lorie-Marlène Brault-Foisy, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada

Lise Lemay, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada

This project delves into the quality of pedagogical orientation in nurseries, focusing on educators' beliefs, values, attitudes, and professional identity. While the significance of educators in ensuring high educational standards is well-documented (Xie et al., 2021), subjective influences on quality are often overlooked. Prior research often focuses on educational quality as assessed by a standardized tool (Cadima et al., 2020), while few explore subjective influences such as educators' experiences and perceptions (Lemay et al., 2017). Notably, understanding quality through pedagogical orientations remains underexplored. Using Bronfenbrenner's Proximal process, person, context and time model (PPCT; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998), this presentation considers the factors influencing educators in their profession. Through an interpretative qualitative method, a multiple case study involving six educators from four settings in Quebec (Canada) was conducted, employing stimulated recall videos and individual semi-directed interviews. Participants reflected on personal and professional experiences, contextual factors, and their educational actions. All participants, childcares, and parents of the filmed children agreed to consent and confidentiality protocols. Children were given time to acclimatize before filming and, per the Youth Protection Act, it was clarified that if a child's wellbeing was at risk, confidentiality could be breached. Findings highlight that educators' educational decisions in the nursery are influenced by support received from childcare management and colleagues, personal experiences, and considerations of comfort, respect, and responsiveness to children's needs. This research addresses gaps in knowledge regarding quality of the pedagogical orientations in nurseries and advocates for greater consideration of staff-related factors in evaluating educational quality.

early childhood, educators, nursery, ECEC quality, quality of pedagogical orientation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B13

Parents' experiences with their child's transition when school and ECEC collaborate for a better start at school.

Presenters:

Else Johansen Lyngseth, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway

Tuva Schanke, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

Co-authors:

Kristine Warhuus Smeby, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway

The research aims to explore and contribute new knowledge about parents' perspectives on transition- activities and collaboration between ECEC and school. The project focuses on the possibilities and outcome of collaboration between ECEC, school and parents. Previous research indicates that it is expected that children and parents experience continuity between the two institutions (Hogsnes, 2020; Lillejord et al. 2015). Research shows that parental involvement and collaboration are key factors for a successful school start and educational outcomes (Bull et al. 2013; Paccaud et al. 2021). The theoretical and conceptual framework intersects with childhood studies (Gopnik, 2016; Øksnes & Sundsdal 2020), transitional theory (Balduzzi, et al. 2019), in addition to sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertch, 1991, 1998), and some selected theory from anthropology with a focus on rites of passage (van Gennep, 1960; Garpelin, 2014). The approach is qualitative, applying an action research design. The method used are 20 interviews with parents of children in ECEC/ school (Creswell, 2018). The analyses were done using thematic qualitative analysis (Nowell et. al. 2017). Ethical considerations include informed consent from all participants. All materials are anonymized. Preliminary findings indicate that parents struggle to leave behind old habits from ECEC culture and acquire the school culture and new ways of being parents. We find that collaboration and transition-activities have been positive for the whole family. The results are useful to improve local practices in Norway by critically discussing current framings and ways to re-frame the collaboration between parents in ECEC and schools.

transition, parents, transition-activities, collaboration, thematic analysis

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B14

Inspiring and Leading Change in Outdoor Play within Early Learning

Presenters:

Jaime Barratt, Brock University, Canada

Co-authors:

Laurel Donison, Brock University, Canada

Cyndi Frizelle, YMCA of Southwestern Ontario, Canada

Debra Harwood, Brock University, Canada

The research objectives included 1) garnering perceptions related to outdoor play (OP) within the YMCA organization from multiple perspectives and 2) examining the role of professional learning on OP provision and quality. Outdoor play is an essential aspect of childhood (Dietze & Kashin, 2018; Lee et al., 2021). Yet, young children spend the bulk of their daily lives indoors and favouring 'indoor' time is most obvious within early learning and care programs. Adults act as gatekeepers, either promoting or minimizing children's access and experiences with the outdoors, nature, and specifically nature-based risky play (McFarland & Laird, 2020). Based on the bioecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner 1979; Pope et al., 2021) multiple stakeholders have an important role in ensuring outdoor play provision. Yet noticeable gaps exist (Leggett & Newman, 2017) and research on these varied stakeholders is scarce (Chen et al., 2023). Partnered with the YMCA, the poster focuses on the results of a descriptive-interpretative qualitative inquiry exploring: How educators, supervisors, pedagogical leaders, and senior administrators describe their beliefs and perceptions of OP practices and the impacts of professional learning. The methods used included questionnaires and reflective blogs. This study was granted institutional ethical approval (following Tri-Council policies). All data was anonymized, de-identified, and kept completely confidential. Outdoor play was highly valued by all stakeholders within the YMCA, but gaps in knowledge persisted and a lack of understanding was evident between the varied roles. Recommendations include the integration of OP curriculum and innovation with continuous professional learning within communities of practice.

outdoor play, professional learning, bioecological theory, educators' roles, stakeholders perspectives

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B15

Implementation and Scale-up of a Program-Wide Approach for Promoting Young Children's Social-Emotional Competence

Presenters:

Lise Fox, University of South Florida, United States

Elizabeth Vorhaus, Vanderbilt University, United States

Mary Louise Hemmeter, Vanderbilt University, United States

Adrienne Golden, Vanderbilt University, United States

This poster will illustrate how the Pyramid Model is being implemented and scaled up statewide across early childhood programs and systems. The Pyramid Model (Fox et al., 2003; Hemmeter et al., 2006) is a framework of practices to promote young children's social-emotional competence and address challenging behavior in early childhood settings. The approach is being implemented in 35 states across the United States and in Australia, South Korea, and Canada. The Pyramid Model provides a promotion, prevention, and intervention framework of practices. In the United States, implementation science guides statewide implementation and scales up the approach. Implementation science defines the systems needed to implement and sustain an innovation to achieve socially significant outcomes (Fixsen et al., 2019). Pyramid Model implementation and scale-up are implemented through four structures: (1) a state implementation team; (2) a professional development network that trains and guides programs; (3) implementation sites with program-level teams and practitioner coaches; and (4) data. Quantitative evaluation of state-reported data from early childhood programs shows growth in implementation fidelity of systems and practice fidelity by early educators. States reported aggregated data across programs that were de-identified for this evaluation. This poster will illustrate the structures for implementation and scale-up, use of implementation science, and resources that can be used for this approach. The poster illustrates the successful implementation and scale-up of an innovation and how these features might be used to support other innovations that a community or geographic entity might want to implement and scale.

Pyramid Model, Program-wide implementation support, social-emotional development, challenging behavior, professional development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B16

An Analysis on Kindergarten Teacher's Concept Map of Language Education for Young Children

Presenters:

Yoon Hee Seo, Korea National University of Education, South Korea

The purpose of this study is to analyze kindergarten teachers' knowledge of early childhood language education through concept map analysis. Previous studies (Hindman & Wasik, 2011; Lee & Kim, 2004) have shown a strong correlation between kindergarten teachers' understanding of language education and their classroom practices. This study is based on previous research that highlights the significance of linguistic knowledge, language development, and teaching methods in preschool teachers' language teaching expertise (Cho & Oh, 2016; Yoon, 2007, 2009; Seo & Byun, 2021). This study involved a total of thirty-three preschool teachers in Seoul and Gyeonggi Province, South Korea, with at least three years of experience. The data were collected through individual interviews using the

concept mapping method proposed by Novak and Gowin(1984). The purpose and procedures of the study were explained to teachers who agreed to participate in the study. The results of the study showed that kindergarten teachers' main concepts of early childhood language education, in order of frequency, were "domain", "approach", and "teaching method", with "domain" having the highest hierarchy level and characteristic value. In the analysis of the subordinate concepts under the superordinate concepts, the “domain” section included listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The “approach” section included balanced approach, holistic approach, phonological approach, and literature-centered approach. The “teaching method” section included scaffolding, modeling, play, picture books, and demonstrations. This study provides a foundation for the professional knowledge and teacher education of kindergarten teachers in language education.

language education for young children, kindergarten teacher, concept mapping, kindergarten teachers' knowledge, kindergarten teachers' concepts of early childhood language education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B17

Practice-Based Coaching: An Evidence Based Approach for Effective Practice Change

Presenters:

Elizabeth Vorhaus, Vanderbilt University, United States

Adrienne Golden, Vanderbilt University, United States

Lise Fox, University of South Florida, United States

This poster provides an overview of the research supporting Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) and key components of the PBC coaching cycle. PBC is an evidence-based approach for providing coaching to teachers (Hemmeter et al., 2016; Snyder et al., 2018). Research shows PBC resulted in improved teacher practices in social emotional instruction (Artman-Meeker et al., 2014; Hemmeter et al., 2016, 2021), literacy practices (Diamond & Powell, 2011), tier 2 behavior interventions (Sutherland, 2018), and culturally responsive practices (Kranski & Steed, 2022). PBC is grounded in a collaborative relationship between the teacher and coach and follows a cyclical process with three components: (1) action planning, (2) focused observations, and (3) reflection and feedback. When implemented with fidelity, the PBC cycle is associated with changes in teacher’s proficiency with effective practices that is related to positive changes in children’s social skills and challenging behaviors (Hemmeter et al., 2016; Hemmeter et al., 2021). Data from randomized trials examining PBC implementation fidelity and teacher practice change will be summarized. Both intervention and control data will be shared. A teacher-coach agreement for the coach and the coachee is used. Data on coaching delivery and teaching practices are de-identified for analysis and reporting. This poster will review key components of the PBC framework, describe how coaching can enhance practice change, and present the research supporting PBC in diverse settings. The use of PBC can support effective change in ECEC teachers' use of classroom practices that lead to improved learning outcomes for children.

practice-based coaching, Pyramid Model, implementation supports, collaborative partnerships, challenging behavior

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B18

The findings from a local Forest School Intervention for Primary School aged Children, examining personal, social and emotional development.

Presenters:

Sam Robinson, University Campus Doncaster, United Kingdom

To discuss the potential benefits of a local forest school intervention programme on the personal, social and emotional development (PSED) of primary aged school children. There is a growing need to enhance young children's PSED and Forest School is one approach currently used to support these fundamental areas (Knight, 2013; Blackwell, 2015). This study draws upon current theories of learning outdoors, in particular the Forest School ethos (Forest School Association, 2018) alongside more general theories associated with how children learn (Piaget, 1932; Vygotsky, 1978). The study was conducted within an interpretivist, exploratory case study paradigm. Interviews were carried out with the Forest School practitioners (FSP), questionnaires were completed by children taking part in the interventions and weekly questionnaires were completed by FSP. Consent forms and information sheet were provided to all participants. The parents of participating children gave written consent and the children gave verbal consent. Pseudonyms replaced the names of participants to protect their identity. There was a clear increase in children's personal, social and emotional development. In particular, there were significant increases in children's levels of wellbeing, challenge and engagement. These findings argue that access to a Forest School Programme over a substantial period of time is beneficial for children's outcomes. Forest School should be accessible for all children in the local area. Forest School Practitioners should receive ongoing, personal and professional development support in order to encourage effective practice and the continued use of the Forest School approach to support the longevity of the Forest School ethos.

forest school, emotional wellbeing, pedagogical practice, sustainability, positive outcomes

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B19

Perception of Early Childhood Wellbeing Education by Preschool Teachers: Analysis through Borich and LF Model

Presenters:

Yungeui Yoo, Soonchunhyang University, South Korea

Co-Authors:

Eunjung Jang, Soonchunhyang University, South Korea

Yunho Jang, Soonchunhyang University, South Korea

The purpose of this study is to explore the differences in the perceived importance and Performance of early childhood wellbeing education as recognized by preschool teachers. The UN convention on children's rights, ratified by countries worldwide, also includes the right to early childhood wellbeing. Particularly, in the field of early childhood education, numerous previous studies emphasize the significance of early childhood wellbeing (Clarke, Islam, & Paech, 2006; McMullen, 2014). Cultivate students' abilities effectively, the competence of teachers is crucial. How teachers modify the curriculum and design the learning environment is significant in this process (Byun, Sookja, & Park, Jongchan, 2021). The subjects are 139 teachers working in kindergartens and childcare centers located in Chungcheong Province, South Korea. The collected data were analyzed using Borich Needs Assessment and The Locus for Focus Model, with SPSS Statistics 25.0 and MS Office Excel 2016. The purpose of the study was explained, and a survey was conducted targeting teachers who expressed a willingness to participate in the research. The ranking of Borich Needs Assessment showed that the role of teachers in early childhood wellbeing education appeared most prominently. Additionally, in the LF Model, 'Teachers' roles in early childhood wellbeing education' was identified in the HH quadrant. Among the sub-factors of preschool teachers' perceptions of early childhood wellbeing education, 'Teachers' roles in early childhood wellbeing education' emerged as the top priority. Subsequently, support for the role of teachers in early childhood wellbeing education is needed for the advancement of early childhood wellbeing education.

early childhood wellbeing education, preschool teachers' perception, importance-performance analysis, Borich Needs assessment analysis, The Locus for Focus Model

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B20

Parents' Roles in Directing Children's Digital Curiosity in Saudi Arabia: Mediation and Influential Factors

Presenters:

Nouf Hassanin, University of Reading, United Kingdom/ UQU University, Saudi Arabia

Co-authors:

Prof. Billy Wong, University of Reading, United Kingdom

While Saudi Arabia has made substantial progress in digital growth in recent years, following Vision 2030, research on parents' roles in coping with their children's online curiosity and formation of digital citizenship (Ribble, 2009, 2017) is limited. This paper examined how parents guide their children towards digital citizenship as they manage their children's curiosity in digital technology. Several studies have shown that children are exposed to digital technology at a young age (Livingstone & Third, 2017; Smahel & Wright, 2014). As primary socialisation agents, parents should guide their children's interests and provide them with appropriate online skills and knowledge (Kalmus, 2013). The study was guided by Vygotsky's (1978) mediation concept and Bronfenbrenner's (1994) macrosystem view. A qualitative interpretative paradigm (Crotty, 1998) was used to collect data through online interviews. Pseudonyms were given to ten parents of children aged 4 to 9, and consent forms with withdrawal opportunities were presented. Thematic analysis identified five parental strategies for mediating their children's digital interactions: supervision, active, co-use, role modelling, and restrictive rules. The data showed that the participants had positive attitudes towards their children's digital usage. Parents believed that children's online experiences and the creation of digital citizenship were influenced by sociocultural values, digital media, and home and school interactions. This exploratory study had a limited timeframe and area of investigation. Parents' perspectives on their interactions with their children's digital curiosity and the societal influences on their online activities might be interesting topics for future investigations.

digital curiosity, digital citizenship, parental mediation, early childhood, Saudi Vision 2030

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B21

Supporting Authentic Coaches to Implement Practice-Based Coaching with PreK and Kindergarten Teachers

Presenters:

Adrienne Golden, Vanderbilt University, United States

Elizabeth Vorhaus, Vanderbilt University, United States

Mary Louise Hemmeter, Vanderbilt University, United States

Lise Fox, University of South Florida, United States

This study evaluates the effectiveness of Practice-Based Coaching (PBC; Snyder et al., 2022), delivered by authentic coaches, on teacher implementation of Pyramid Model (PM; Fox et al., 2003) practices in PreK and Kindergarten classrooms in school districts across the United States. This poster focuses on the role of authentic coaches and the coaching supports provided to the coaches. Previous research indicates expert coaches can effectively implement PBC to support teacher implementation of the Pyramid Model (Golden et al., 2023; Hemmeter et al., 2016). PBC is a cyclical framework involving shared goals and action planning, focused observations, and reflection and feedback delivered within the context of a collaborative partnership. PBC is often delivered by research staff (Shannon et al., in prep), a model that is effective but not sustainable. The effectiveness of PBC delivered by authentic coaches and the supports needed for those coaches to implement PBC with fidelity needs to be evaluated. Within the context of a randomized control trial, authentic coaches were trained to deliver PBC to support PM implementation in PreK and Kindergarten classrooms. In addition to training, coaches received ongoing support (e.g., meetings, written

feedback). Implementation fidelity was monitored. Informed consent was obtained from coaches and, to maintain confidentiality coaches were assigned unique identifiers used on all data and documents. Preliminary findings indicate authentic coaches can deliver PBC with fidelity, with training and ongoing support. These findings indicate PBC can be installed in programs with authentic coaches, provided there is ongoing coach support.

practice-based coaching, authentic coaches, coaching support, Pyramid Model, professional development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B22

Children's transition from preschool to primary school on the Faroe Islands

Presenters:

Sonja Olsen, Fróðskaparsetur Føroya, Faroe Islands

This research investigates children's transition from preschool to primary school in the Faroe Islands. Dockett and Einarsdóttir (2017), Peters (2010), González-Moreira, Ferreira and Vidal (2021) highlight that continuity and discontinuity are focal points during this transition. Different contexts, systems and approaches intersect, resulting in a complex adaption process, which has a significant influence on the child's continuous development and confidence in learning. The theoretical landscape is interwoven with the methodological approach of Situational analysis (SA) (Clarke et al., 2018) where conceptualization is situation driven. Key concepts are context, settings, tools, and options as a situation comprises both micro and macro levels. The method includes a multi-dimensional framework with societal-, institutional-, individual-, practical-, and other significant actors. The project entails several different types of data- a literature review, a survey, document analysis, interview analysis, and fieldwork from observations. Informed consent will be received from children, parents, community, and practitioners. Information and gathered data will be confidential, anonymized and secured (Dátueftirlitið, 2020; EECERA, 2015). Reflexive navigation is crucial to bear in mind throughout the research process as multiple relations networks and social integration are infused with social connections that typify small island societies (Gaffin 1996; Vigh 2009). While transitions have universal similarities, they are also dissimilar as they are anchored in multiple dimensions, contexts, and settings with actors significant to that situation. The project sheds a light on "situational transitional pedagogy" as being an important component in transitional studies.

transition from preschool to primary school, Faroe Islands, situational analysis, wellbeing, learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B23

Imaging and co-constructing eco-community and just society in the 21st century: voices of children and parents

Presenters:

Fengling Tang, University of Roehampton, United Kingdom

This poster presents provisional findings of British Educational Research Association funded project 'Shifting youth environmental activism from the public imagination to community engagement: implications for education for sustainability in the 21st Century'. This study arises from increasing concerns about impacts of human activities on natural resources, biodiversity, humanity and planet earth. Radical, transformational, justice-oriented actions to disrupt social, cultural, economic and political landscapes are prevalent among youth environmental activists in the 21st century (Vogler, 2016; Bryan, 2022). The study is inspired by youth environmental activist efforts to decentre the human and challenge Anthropocentric consumerism for harmonious co-existing and co-living among human and non-human beings (Haraway, 2016; Pickard, Bowman and Arya, 2020; Lack, 2022). This qualitative study values

importance of participant agency and researcher-participant partnership in co-constructing new knowledge and understanding (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). This study is conducted via four workshops with participants in Wokingham, England. This presentation focuses on perspectives of a small group of children and parents. The study addresses ethical principles to protect participants' wellbeing, their rights to voluntary participation and withdrawal from research (EECERA, 2015; BERA, 2018). Whilst there is strong recognition of the importance of sustainability, urgent issues considered are immediate needs regarding education, health, social and economic issues that participants have experienced. A sense of community and belonging was alluring during the pandemic but with promise of eco-community and just society. This study has important implications for community engagement and local policy developments by working together and widening education for sustainability in the 21st century.

youth environmentalism, community engagement, education for sustainability, eco-community, social justice

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B24

Benefits of the embedded parenting support programmes: 'Growing Up Together' in Croatian kindergartens

Presenters:

Ninoslava Pečnik, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Co-authors:

Ana Tokić Milaković, University of Zagreb, Croatia

The study aims explore benefits of parenting support programmes provided by public kindergartens in Croatia, to parents of young children "Growing up Together", parents of young children with disabilities "Growing up Together PLUS" and fathers of young children "Fathers' Club Growing up Together". Previous external evaluation (Keresteš et al., 2016) established that "Growing up Together" and "Growing up Together Plus" were highly relevant for the needs of parents (including parents of children with disabilities) and kindergarten practitioners. "Growing up Together" (Pečnik & Starc, 2010) was co-created by academics, kindergarten practitioners and parents of young children, in response to the Council of Europe's Recommendation (2006) on positive parenting. It aims to support parents in providing nurturing care, guidance and routines and autonomy support. So far, over 7000 parents throughout Croatia and abroad participated. This study analyses quantitative and qualitative data from participants in 64 kindergartens in Croatia, collected on standardized measures of parents' cognitions (parental self-efficacy; parenting morale) and positive and negative interaction (joint play, violence) and with open-ended questions about perceived benefits for self and the child. Participation in evaluation study was voluntary and anonymous. Pre-post data were linked with the parent-generated code. Results revealed changes in parental self-reported experience and practices (higher parental morale and self-efficacy, more involvement and attempted understanding of the child's perspective; less harsh parenting practices) among participants in all of the three programmes. These findings demonstrate potential of kindergartens for supporting positive parenting by embedded, evidence-informed, sustainable programmes implemented by trained and supported practitioners.

parenting programme evaluation, Growing up Together, fathers, parents of children with disability, positive parenting

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B25

Early childhood educator decision-making about digital technologies; supporting quality early childhood education.

Presenters:

Jubilee Smith, Southern Cross University, Australia

This qualitative research investigated the influences on Australian early childhood educator decision-making regarding digital technologies. The rapid increase in digital technology in society is reflected in an increase in ECE around the world (OECD, 2020). This has resulted in ECE making decisions about digital technology in their practice. Research has indicated that ECE use digital technology for planning and programming (Hatzigianni et al., 2023) yet are unsure about use with children for creative purposes (Fielding & Murcia, 2022). This study draws upon Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) framing the research around decisions within a socio-cultural/cultural historical context. The bioecological systems model of Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) enabled the interpretation of the influences on early childhood educator's decision-making. The study was conducted with 16 ECE in Australia using a qualitative research paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Semi-structured interviews were conducted and analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). ECE elected to participate in the research and a consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Pseudonyms replaced names of participants; all were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. Ethics: SCU ECN-16-319. ECE were influenced by the societal context, early childhood policies, learning frameworks, and ECE setting, as well as their experiences, confidence, and professional knowledge. ECE expressed a desire for professional learning to inform decisions regarding digital technology. The findings have implications for providing a decision-making matrix regarding how digital technology could be used to enhance the quality of their early childhood practice.

digital technologies, decision-making, quality, professional learning, practice

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B26

What do Japanese daycare directors think about the quality of care for infant and toddler?

Presenters:

Junko Minowa, Musashino University, Japan

Hiroko Inokuma, Komazawa Women's College, Japan

This study aims to find what the directors of daycare centers think quality of childcare for infants and toddlers and what they think important in providing childcare. Japanese childcare providers ideally value carefully interacting with children and grasping their individuality (Japan Research Institute, 2022) and emphasize meeting children's needs from their perspective (OECD, 2019). According to the Japan Public Health Association (2008), the framework for activities and actions by public health nurses to address individual or group health issues includes "observing, connecting, and moving." This framework's philosophical core is "perspective, attitude, and value. we had Semi-structured interviews with ten directors of daycare centers. The directors were asked, "What do you consider to be the quality of childcare for infants and toddlers?" A qualitative analysis of the data was conducted. We explained the purpose and content of the study and asked only those who agreed to cooperate to fill out the questionnaire. We also told them that they could withdraw their consent later. It was found that the directors of daycare centers think of the importance of "respecting children's human rights, fostering attachment, acquiring basic daily habits, cooperation among care workers, management. And directors have the framework of "seeing, accepting, and responding" in providing childcare for infant and toddler, and that "viewpoints and values" are at the core of these ideals. This study can provide preschool directors with a perspective on building an environment and system for providing childcare and on the content of childcare.

ECEC in Japan, Infant and toddler, daycare center, perspective of directors, quality of infant and toddler care

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B27

Peer Relationships in Hand-holding Behavior of 3–5-Year-Old Children in Japan

Presenters:

Noriko Kawahara, Kyoritsu Women's University, Japan

This study aimed to elucidate the characteristics and functions of hand-holding behavior in peer relationships among young children aged three to five years in Japan. In early childhood, verbal communication has not developed adequately; therefore, the “body” plays an important role in communication by complementing or replacing language (Seno, 2023). However, previous studies treated hand-holding as a part of body contact (Tsukasaki & Muto, 2004) and approached it experimentally (Shibata, 2007). The theoretical framework for this study relies on attachment theory regarding body contact (Bowlby, 1976) and the idea of “embodied knowing” (Muto, 1997) based on affordance theory. Employing a qualitative research paradigm, this study relies on detailed descriptions of episodes derived from observations of videos. Children in the same class were followed up for three years at a nursery school in Tokyo. An episodic analytical approach was utilized, with prior information and consent obtained from the head of the nursery school and the parents of the children. This study was approved by the Ethical Review Committee of Kyoritsu Women’s University. The results showed that hand-holding behavior varied among 3- and 4-year-olds compared to 5-year-olds. Hand-holding in younger children served several functions, such as facilitating approachability, accepting playmates, and sometimes leading to exclusion or rejection of those not holding hands. In contrast, 5-year-olds displayed hand-holding behaviors associated with multiple friendly body contacts, suggesting a potentially stable background in peer relationships. These findings are essential for caregivers seeking to support the development of children's relationships.

hand-holding behavior, peer relationships, 3–5-year-olds, body contact, longitudinal study

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B28

Are we setting children up to fail in the 21st century? The need to reflect and advocate for a more sustainable approach

Presenters:

Angela Scollan, Middlesex University London, United Kingdom

Naomi McLeod, Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Kerrie Lee, University of Hull, United Kingdom

This research explores the ‘wicked problem’ (Rittel&Webber 1973) of high-stakes testing/assessment impacting on notions of quality EC education. This was the fourth in a series of papers by the ECSDN Sustainability Group and explored the detrimental effect high returns has on EC education as introduced by Moss (2019) alongside the challenge set by Wyness (2000) to consider if childhood is in crisis. Pascal&Bertram’s (2018) praxeology is drawn upon to encourage educator reflexivity and the interconnected nature of sustainability, quality and the 3 pillars (UN 2015) whilst valuing the UNCRC (1990) and SDG4 (UN 2015). As the research took place within, and for, the discipline of EC Studies, practice and Sustainable Pedagogy, a Critical Interpretive Synthesis (CIS) Literature Based Research was paradigm taken with the position that the reviewers’ voice had an explicit role (Dixon-Woods et al 2006). The use of CIS allowed an investigation whilst highlighting new research that is needed to be undertaken (Newman&Gough 2020). Ethical considerations for the use of secondary data included the range of sources and possible author bias in line with University’s, BERA (2018) and EECERA (2014) guidelines. The research questions

current perceptions of quality and the skill of reflexivity in practice supporting the need to challenge the wider influences to allow consciousness of different perspectives. The main findings argue for the need for personal questioning to appreciate the interconnected nature of Early Childhood Education for Sustainability in both Practice and Policy.

SDGs, sustainable pedagogy, 21st century practice, reflexivity, neoliberalism

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B29

Thinking together about the profession of pedagogist (in Italy)

Presenters:

Federica Mascia, University of Verona, Italy

My PhD project focuses on the role and skills of the pedagogist. The aim is to attempt to at least partly fill the void created by the lack of identity of this profession. This study, directly involving professionals, aims to establish a research community promoting the identification of this profession. A study on the educational professions (Olivieri, 2020) has shown how complex it is to define the figure of the pedagogist both in the European and Italian context. Other studies also reveal some degree of vagueness concerning the specific nature of this career (Negri, Simeone, 2002). Different studies (Melacarne 2020, Iori 2018) reveal some degree of uncertainty concerning the specific nature of this career (Perillo 2022; Crispiani 2022; Negri 2014;) and this is the reason why I intend to act by directly involving a group of pedagogists. The study is conducted through the Grounded Theory qualitative research paradigm (Glaser and Strauss 1967). To creating a pedagogical community by using M. Lipman's Community of Research methodology (Cosentino, 2021), the meetings between pedagogists were recorded and transcribed and analyzed using the NVivo software (Tom e Lyn Richards 1981) A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. The project was approved by the ethics committee. The results demonstrate that this figure is an expert in the knowledge of relationships and knows well how to work in contexts by giving operational advice. These results can be the first starting point for a better definition of the figure of the pedagogist.

pedagogy, community of research, meta-reflection, pedagogist, professional

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B30

Listening circle – a tool for learning listening skills

Presenters:

Ingrid C. Nordli, UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

Co-authors:

Kristian Skog, Ameliahaugen Kindergarten, Tromsø/UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

This ongoing inquiry on children's listening development, explores listening circle as a suitable tool for acquiring active and attentive listening skills. Listening circle is a structured group dialogue with room for all voices. Research has shown that acquiring active and attentive listening skills requires practice (Itzchakov & Kluger, 2017a), and that listening circle is a suited learning strategy for experiencing listening and improving listening skills (Bommelje, 2012). The theoretical framework for this study draws upon current theories on active and attentive listening (Bodie et al., 2015; Boudreau et al., 2009; Wolvin, 2010), listening circles (Bommelje, 2012; ILA, 2023; Itzchakov & Kluger, 2017a,

b), and dialogic listening, essential when communicating (Floyd, 2010; White, 2015). The study was conducted within a qualitative interpretive research paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Observations as part of pedagogical documentations (Essén et al., 2018) based on video recordings during music activity, were used. Analysis was conducted through a grounded approach (Charmaz, 2006). A consent and information sheet was provided to parents of all 10 participating children (3-6) in one kindergarten. All observations are included as standard activity in the project, which is formally approved by the Norwegian Sikt. Preliminary results reveal that taking part in listening circles increase children's listening skills, stimulate their concentration, and motivate their active and attentive listening. Findings suggest implications for kindergarten teacher's work regarding implementing listening circle in their pedagogical strategies.

listening circle, listening skills, active and attentive listening, equality in dialogue, mutual participation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B31

Digital Classrooms: Cultivating Sustainable Engagement in Online Education

Presenters:

Linnéa Jermstad, NLA University College, Norway

Svitlana Holovchuk, NLA University College, Norway

This study focuses on identifying strategies for sustainable student engagement in digital classrooms in response to new societal demands for online education. Our study is based on previous research related to online education such as - Robertson, 2019; Nagel, 2021; Astrop, 2022, Holovchuk, Jermstad & Jokstad, 2024, etc. Despite efforts to embed digital tool proficiency in teacher education, Robertson (2019) and Nagel (2021) point out a critical gap in research on digital engagement's impact on education. Arstorp (2022) argues that policy documents often overlook the transformative challenges technology poses to education. Holovchuk, Jermstad & Jokstad (2024) highlight the importance of teacher's digital literacy in promoting active and engaged learning among students. The project uses the theories by Dewey and Merleau-Ponty to explore engagement in digital environments. A qualitative research paradigm guides the phenomenological exploration of digital learning experiences. The study's method is a digital survey with 23 teachers in Bergen to investigate engagement strategies in the digital classroom. Ethical considerations included anonymity, voluntary participation, and data protection. The findings were structured into 3 approaches: society's press for digitalization in education (need for digital strategies that are flexible and responsive to the changing landscape of education); teachers' digital competencies as important factors for student engagement (how and what kind of digital tools to use in the digital classroom); and teachers' experiences of student's engagement in a digital classroom (body language, motivation, learning outcomes, active learning) Recommends a revision of digital pedagogies to meet contemporary educational requirements and prepare for future challenges.

digital education, sustainable engagement, pedagogical innovation, digital literacy, active learning

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B32

Professional Development Through Online-Based Training: Promoting Positive Behaviours in ECEC

Presenters:

Sara Barros Araújo, Polytechnic Institute of Porto, Portugal

Co-authors:

Vitor Hugo Oliveira, inED School of Education Polytechnic of Porto, Portugal
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 Aleksandra Szproch, Institute of Child Education and Psychology Europe, Ireland
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 Sílvia Barros, inED, School of Education Polytechnic of Porto, Portugal

The PBS-ECEC project aimed to enhance professional development (PD) in the area of children's socioemotional learning (SEL). Five online learning modules were developed to support professionals in the sustainable implementation of a Programme-Wide Positive Behaviour Support approach. This study aims to present the contents of the course and report the perspectives of ECEC professionals (n = 120) regarding their experiences during training and exploration. It is essential to invest in comprehensive PD programmes that address the challenges faced by ECEC professionals at the level of children's SEL. However, a better understanding of the optimal design of such programmes is required. The PW-PBS is an evidence-based approach aiming to create an inclusive environment that promotes children's SEL and prevents challenging behaviours. A perceived impact assessment was conducted in Ireland, Portugal, Greece, and Cyprus with ECEC professionals, who used the platform to train during a period of 12 weeks. Online questionnaires were completed to assess their experience regarding the learning contents, activities, and resources of the modules. Participants provided an informed consent. The project complied with national data protection recommendations. The findings showed positive impacts, namely that the participants appreciated the flexibility of asynchronous training and expressed satisfaction with its content and structure. They found practical implications relevant to their daily work with children. These findings emphasize the importance of comprehensive online PD programmes that enhance professionals' competences to effectively support children's SEL and promote innovative ECEC practices.

challenging behaviours, inclusion in ECEC, online training, professional development, social and emotional development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B33

'You are a camera woman': children's perspectives on the researcher's roles in using video-stimulated reflective dialogues for researching with children

Presenters:

Jialing Li, The University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

This poster provides a reflexive account regarding how children understand the roles of a researcher who used video-stimulated reflective dialogues (Moyle et al., 2002) to engage them in a PhD project. The increasing use of videos as cues to elicit children's perspectives has highlighted the importance of ethical considerations in such research (Peters et al., 2021). Limited research reveals children's experience being filmed by and having conversations with researchers. Grounded in Childhood Studies, this poster views children as active constructors of their lives (Prout and James, 1997). The primary data source in this qualitative interpretive study comprised ten children's drawings and the corresponding drawing-elicitation interview transcripts. While collecting data for PhD research, some children spontaneously drew the researcher in their paintings, sharing these during the video-stimulated reflective dialogues. Informed consent was gathered from the children and their parents, including the assurance that participants could withdraw at any time. Consent for data presentation in this poster was also

reaffirmed by both parties, with pseudonyms ensuring participants' anonymity and confidentiality. The findings demonstrated children's positive perceptions of their filming process and their diverse insights in having dialogues with the researcher while watching videos. Children's perceptions of the researcher's role were multifaceted, viewing the researcher as a documenter without the authority of teachers, yet incorporating elements of their teachers' pedagogical of inquiring and documenting into the research process. This poster discussed the implications of adopting researchers' roles that balance the power relationship with children in similar types of participatory approaches.

video-stimulated reflective dialogues, researcher's roles, children's perspectives, participatory approaches, reflexivity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B34

Core Practice in early childhood education, a framework to promote initial training.

Presenters:

Tatiana Lopez, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile

Natalia Vargas, Universidad de Viña del Mar, Chile

Co-authors:

Victoria Zulueta, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile

Valentina Toro, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile

The study aims to identify and characterize the core practices implemented by early childhood education teachers in teaching and learning activities. is part of a larger research (Fondecyt 11231120). The study of core practices (Grossman, 2018) in teacher training has been consolidated as a phenomenon of interest allowing the identification of core practices specific to pedagogical disciplines, English language teaching (Barahona & Davin, 2021), social sciences teaching (Cuenca, 2021) and music education (Windschitl et al., 2012). The incorporation of core practices in teacher education programs (Grosser-Clarkson & Neel, 2019; Matsumoto-Royo & Ramírez-Montoya, 2021) is still a challenge. Opted for a qualitative methodology supported by the interpretive paradigm, with multiple case studies. We performed 18 video recordings of learning situations, carried out by expert educators. The analysis used a simplified version of the interactivity analysis model (Coll, Mauri and Onrubia, 2008) supported by atlati (version 8.2.4) the ethical aspects were authorized by a specialized committee at the national level, it contemplates the signature of the informed consent of the teachers, parents and the assent of the children to carry out the video recordings and the voluntary participation in the research. The main results point out that the most recurrent core practice is to elicit thinking, in a systematic way in order to favor children's representational levels, in addition to Explaining and modeling. These findings suggest implications on how core practices could be included in the training of early childhood education teachers to enable children's integral development

Core Practice, early childhood teacher education, pre-service teachers, peer interaction, teacher education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B35

Enhancing Sustainable Language Education - The Role of Transfer Stations in ECE Systems

Presenters:

Sarah Girlich, LakoS - Institute of Language Promotion Saxony | Landeskompentenzentrum zur sprachlichen Bildung und Sprachförderung an Kindertageseinrichtungen in Sachsen, Germany

Co-authors:

Robert Jurleta, LakoS - Institute of Language Promotion Saxony | Landeskompentenzentrum zur sprachlichen Bildung und Sprachförderung an Kindertageseinrichtungen in Sachsen, Germany

This study investigates the role of transfer stations, such as LakoS (Institute of Language Promotion Saxony), in enhancing sustainable language education initiatives in ECE-systems. It emphasizes LakoS's role as an intermediary, advising policymakers, providing research access for practitioners, and amplifying practitioners' voices. Additionally, it explores how LakoS fosters successful knowledge exchange processes while meeting stakeholders' specific needs in language education and multilingualism. Drawing upon insights from network research (Miller, 2013) and competence and transfer models (Fröhlich-Gildhoff et al., 2011; Grossman & Salas, 2011), this study delves into the role of LakoS in fostering collaboration. By leveraging Miller's (2013) network research and competence and transfer models by Fröhlich-Gildhoff et al. (2011) and Grossman & Salas (2011), our study aims to elucidate how LakoS facilitates effective knowledge exchange and collaboration in ECE systems. Using a mixed-methods-approach, our research combines qualitative analysis with quantitative assessment of knowledge dissemination and collaboration effectiveness in the ECE context. Methods include interviews, surveys, and document analysis to capture insights. Ethical considerations focus on transparency, confidentiality, and respecting participants' autonomy. Measures for informed consent, data confidentiality, and conflict of interest mitigation have been implemented. Highlighting LakoS's pivotal role as a transfer station, the study demonstrates how it translates research evidence into actionable strategies and advocates for policy reforms promoting effective language education and multilingualism practices. Moreover, it underscores LakoS's contribution to stakeholder dialogue, intensifying exchange within the overall transfer system. Our research can impact policy and practice by advocating for increased investment in transfer hubs like LakoS.

sustainable educational initiatives, language promotion, transfer station, multilingualism, stakeholder dialogue

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B36

Supporting lifelong learning: Co-producing a toolkit for postgraduate reflective practice

Presenters:

Marie McQuade, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom

Elizabeth Black, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom

This poster outlines a toolkit supporting recent graduates to reflect on their learning experiences, scaffolding their lifelong learning journeys. This is the second stage of a research project focusing on University of Glasgow MEd Childhood Practice students. At EECERA 2023, we presented findings on graduates' framing of learning experiences, connecting to research into identities of professionals engaging in lifelong learning (Trodd and Dickerson, 2019). Here we again utilise Wingrave and McMahan's (2016) professional learning model as a conceptual framework but focus on creation of a resource to embed reflective practices in the transition from formal, supported learning at university. The initial interpretivist research (Waring et al, 2012), used collaging (Butler-Kisber and Poldma, 2010), a 'learning story' narrative writing approach (White and Sands, 2022), and short Zoom interviews to identify participants' perceptions of their own agency and personal/professional development within the learning process. We continue to foreground the individual practitioners' perspectives and experiences, taking a participatory approach (Martens et al., 2019) to development of the toolkit by working with current students to adapt methods used in stage one (Bovill et al., 2016). In working with current students, we followed all University and BERA ethical guidelines and were especially mindful of lecturer-student power dynamics. Phase one showed that dialectical methods allow representation of students' interpretations of their professional learning journeys and their identities as knowledge holders. This toolkit (phase two) provides a flexible resource to support practitioners engaging in sustainable critical reflection, embedding a commitment to continuous improvement of practice.

professional learning, learning journeys, reflective practice, collage, toolkit

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B37

Collaboration between Early Childhood Schools and the University of Córdoba (Spain) to bring female scientific references to children

Presenters:

Elena Gonzalez-Alfaya, University of Córdoba, Spain

Rosario Mérida Serrano, University of Córdoba, Spain

Co-authors:

Julia Rodriguez Carrillo, University of Córdoba, Spain

María de los Ángeles Olivares García, University of Córdoba, Spain

This contribution investigates the potential of the activity "científicas recicladas" framed in the INFACIENCIA coeducational programme of collaboration between schools and university. The aim is to prepare activities in which pre-service early childhood education teachers, characterised as relevant female scientists, show children between 2 and 6 years of age fundamental aspects of their scientific work. Building on previous (Mérida et al., 2023) and relevant work (Bian et al., 2017) that shows the importance of taking action in early childhood education to prevent gender bias in the study of STEM subjects. The theoretical and conceptual framework of the study is grounded in feminist theory and critical pedagogy, emphasising the importance of challenging traditional gender roles and promoting inclusive educational practices. The research paradigm is qualitative and uses participatory action research methodology. Therefore we investigated with the future teachers about the advantages and proposals for improvement of their work on characterisation and representation of female scientists for children. Ethical considerations include ensuring representation of diverse voices, respecting cultural sensitivities, and promoting inclusiveness. The main findings of the study underline the importance and relevance of collaborative efforts between pre-service and in-service teachers to enhance their professional competences in real and meaningful practice contexts. The implications of the research highlight the potential for transformative educational practices that promote gender equality and diversity in STEM fields from an early age. The findings contribute to the development of inclusive educational policies and practices, highlighting the importance of school-university collaboration to promote gender-sensitive education.

co-education, collaboration, female scientists, participation, professional development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B38

Teachers' experiences of the eco-systemic factors causing fear in young children

Presenters:

Francinah Masola, University of Pretoria, South Africa

The study explored teachers' perspectives of the eco-systemic factors causing fear in the 8-9 year-old children. Lippard, La Paro, Rouse, and Crosby (2018) argue that young children are more likely to show fearful emotions and difficulty adjusting to the school environment when the teacher lack warmth and support. The study used Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory to understand the teachers' perspectives of how the family, peers, school, and community influence fearful experiences among young children. The study used interpretivist paradigm, to allow the teachers to narrate their understanding of the factors causing fear in young children (Creswell, 2018). Data was collected through semi-structured interviews in a qualitative study. Three teachers from low, middle and

high-income classes participated in the open-ended questions. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Pretoria's ethical committee. The Gauteng education department granted me the permission to continue my studies. All principals from the three selected schools granted permission to carry out my study. Participants were informed of the process and purpose of the study. Participation was voluntary, and all participants were permitted to withdraw from the study at any time. No inducements were offered to teachers they were guaranteed safety, anonymity, privacy, and protection of their identities, thus using pseudonyms. The findings highlighted that negligence, domestic violence, bullying and COVID-19 are causing fear in young children, and negatively affect their wellbeing. Teachers must create a warm and safe classroom environment in which all learners feel secure.

fear, young children, neglect, teachers, violence

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B39

Addressing curriculum continuity: A preliminary analysis of Japan's policies on transition from ECE to primary education

Presenters:

Keiichiro Yazaki, National Institute for Educational Policy Research, Japan

This research aims to analyse recent trend of Japan's policies on transition from ECE to primary education. Fukumoto (2014) summaries transition policies for the period up to the early 2010s. They have two trends: the focus on ECE as a national strategy for educational reform and the prevention of 'first-year student problem'. However, there has not been summarised for the period since the 2010s. OECD (2017) notes three core elements of continuity in transition process: professional continuity, pedagogical continuity and developmental continuity. In line with my research, curriculum continuity, which is emphasised as of pedagogical continuity, is considered appropriate as a framework for analyzing policies. Within a paradigm of comparative education, this study research adopts a qualitative methodology to investigate curriculum continuity in detail. The method is to analyse the Japan's policies from documents such as government guidelines and national curricula. All the data gathered is free access on the website of national ministry of education. Two key policies have been pointed out in the perspective of curriculum continuity: the first is 'the image by the end of childhood', which was specified in national early years curricula in 2017; the second is the 'bridging programme for ECE and primary education', which was launched in 2022. In recent trend, from the late 2010s to the present, the transition policies have been progressed in the context of the development of educational reform with a more specific agenda of improving the quality of education during between ECE and primary education.

transition from ECE to primary education, curriculum continuity, Japan, educational policy, quality of education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B40

Investigating Teacher Use of Block Play for Academic Learning in Prekindergarten

Presenters:

Lori Walter-Carro, Florida State University, United States

This research describes Florida prekindergarten teachers use of block play and how this relates to external pressures, the teacher's role during play, and teacher beliefs. Previous research indicates that block play can support specific

math (Casey, 2008; Nath, 2014) and literacy skills (Cohen, 2010; Christakis, 2007). Correlations have also been determined between long-term literacy achievement (Hanline, 2010) and mathematics achievement (Wolfgang et al., 2003). Zhu (2021) outlines how teachers in China use block play to teach mathematics. By studying block play, I will use a specific learning context to describe how teachers relate play and learning. Studies from Pyles and Daniels (2017) describe teachers' varying definitions of play-based learning and how this manifests in the classroom. They developed a continuum of play-based learning that is the theoretical framework for the study. Using an online survey, the researcher will survey pre-k lead and assistant teachers to run descriptive statistics and frequencies on how teachers use block play. In addition, the researcher will use multiple regression to determine correlations between their practices and beliefs. As the study seeks to describe teaching practice, with current academic pressures and debates on teaching practice, teachers will respond anonymously to maintain safety. The results from the study will add to the literature base for both block play and learning through play as it quantifies specific ways that teachers accomplish this. The survey results provide a lens for policymakers to understand play's relationship to learning. It also offers insight into instruction for future educators.

teacher practice, block play, construction play, developmentally appropriate practice, preschool

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B41

Developing Sustainable Learning Cultures for Babies in Early Childhood

Presenters:

Caroline Guard, Kingston University, United Kingdom

This poster presents findings from a completed PhD study, based in England and funded by The Froebel Trust between 2018-2022. The project set out to understand how the voices of babies are situated in the culture of private 'for profit' ECE settings. Building on the work of The Baby Room Project (Goouch and Powell, 2013) that highlighted the low status of baby room practice and responding to calls for increased attention to be paid to the 'voices' of babies attending formal day care (Elfer and Page, 2015: 1778), the study examined baby: educator interactions and looked at the influence of the broader setting culture. The study was framed by three theoretical strands: Froebelian Principles, Dialogism and Cultural Historical Theory which sought to elevate the visibility of a baby's contribution in ECE settings. An ethnographic visual methodology comprising written, and video recorded observations, interviews, and video interaction dialogue (Guard, 2023) was used to generate data across two field sites over six months. Ethical considerations were navigated sensitively, with care and integrity, taking into account the complexity of filming babies' close interactions in intimate spaces. Findings revealed a culture of conflict arising in spaces between baby: educator dialogic encounters. Moments of close interaction were often ruptured by a culture of speed and haste which was unsustainable and fragmented, compromising quality of learning. Policy leaders must commit to establishing guidance to prioritise an advantageous conceptualisation of babies and must prioritise attention to policies that actively promote relational pedagogy and investment in the workforce.

babies, voice/agency, interactions, Froebel/Bakhtin, early childhood educators

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

B42

Developing 6-7 year olds' understanding of emotions through Storytelling

Presenters:

Zlatica Zacharová, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia

The aim of this paper is to highlight the possibility of developing children's ability to communicate emotions through story work. The research was inspired by the Perma Model (Seligman 2024) created by Michael Seligman for the purpose of preventing learned helplessness syndrome. Namely by focusing on the development of positive emotions, Engagement, Accomplishment, Meaning and Good Relationships. Emotional regulation is one of the most important functions developing in preschool and younger school age. Understanding emotional experience promotes stability and, consequently, school performance and social inclusion as well as better theory of mind development (Conte, et al., 2019). Eighteen children were involved in a longer-term collaborative storytelling activity, with 6 stories focusing on exploring basic emotions. The children's task was to imagine an emotion as a character and then draw this character. The children's drawings were collected and subsequently analyzed. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all parents of children. All activities were voluntary, children and their parents could withdraw their participation at any time. The results are anonymized. The researcher observed increased activity in the children. During free drawing of the figures, the emotion of joy was dominant in the children. The results of the analysis of the children's drawing are interpreted in relation to the children's age and gender. The results point to storytelling as an appropriate form of working with children and the need to develop children's understanding of emotions.

knowledge of emotions, drawing analysis, storytelling, Perma Model, first year at school

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B43

„It costed blood sweat and tears“. Integrating services in Iceland

Presenters:

Jonina Saemundsdottir, University of Iceland, Iceland

The aim of this research is to explore the experiences of municipal staff that play key role in implementing new legislation intended to improve the coordination of services to children and their families in Iceland. Coordination/collaboration between school services, health care and social services is considered an important factor in accommodating successfully to children with special educational needs. However it can be complicated and does not necessarily happen naturally (e.g. Carière, Gascon and Déschenés, 2013). Recent legislation in Iceland is intended to address this issue and four pioneer municipalities have been selected to begin implementation of the law, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. was used as analytical framework in the research. The poster presents results from a small qualitative study where six key members of two pioneer municipalities were interviewed by using semistructured interviews. Data was analysed according to thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2013) All participants gave informed consent, were given pseudonyms and informed that they could quit the research at any time. First findings show that participants find that the legislation is serving the intended purpose, which is to coordinate and integrate services to children and their families and ensure the provision of appropriate services. However there have been some difficulties/obstacles in the early days of implementation as institutions may have different working methods. The research shows the successfulness and hurdles in the implementing of legislation intended to ensure the coordination/integration of services

integration of services, children, families, special educational needs, legislation stipulating coordination of services

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B44

Practice arrangement in ECTE

Presenters:

Ingrid Trætteberg, NLA University College, Norway
 Lene Jaer Nottveit, NLA University College, Norway

This 2- year research project aims to increase the connection between theory and practice in ECTE. In this pilot project, we changed the usual arrangement of practice. Instead of three weeks, we carried out continuous practice with 2 days a week and 1 concentrated week over a period of 4 months. The project's goals: 1) Increase students' security and involvement in their relationship with the children and staff. 2) Better opportunities to experience the links between theory and practice by moving workshops, practice-tasks and guidance out in the practice field, including the staff. 3) Mutual development of the practice scheme in ECTE as the national strategy encourages. Building bridges between theory and practice (Molander and Terum,2008),makes it sustainable with the intention that the students will be integrated into a learning community (Lindboe,1 Kaarby, KM 2019) The National strategy-document for Quality and Cooperation in Teacher Education (KD: 2017b) has an overall goal to strengthen a "stable and mutually developing cooperation between the teacher training institutions and the nursery sector" with "knowledge-based and involved partners in the nursery sector" We use qualitative methodology, based on phenomenology paradigm (Yin, 2011) as we intend to seek to understand the uniqueness of our case without generalizing. Data Collection Methods include interviews and participant observation. All participants has been informed,given consent and data treated confidentially. Preliminary findings show greater satisfaction with this practice arrangement. We hope our project can expand and develop the practice scheme in ECTE as the national strategy encourages.

theory and practice, cooperation, teacher training, development, synergy

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

B45

Presenters:

Yu Ito, Hiroshima University, Japan

Co-authors:

Honoka Kuroda, Shimane University, Japan

This study aimed to specify the process of transformation and identify the factors contributing to changes in children's peer relationships by continuously observing and studying the peer relationships of children entering a 4-year-old kindergarten. Many previous studies have indicated that good peer relationships are essential for young children to be safe and comfortable (Matsumoto, 2022). In order to better understand the process of change in children's peer relationships, it is necessary to study the peer relationships of children with various characteristics, but previous studies have not examined this issue in detail. This study is based on research theories of peer relationships and play(Ogawa, 2010 et al.). The method involved 45 days of observation, from May 2023 to November 2023, focusing on three children with difficulties joining their peers, using Kindergarten F as the target school. The study was conducted after obtaining consent from the target kindergarten principals, homeroom teachers and parents. In addition, the child's informal consent was obtained through the parents. The results revealed the following two factors that contributed to the transformation of target children's peer relationships : The first point is the interaction of the teachers. The children, who were anxious when they first entered the school, showed how they developed a trusting relationship with their teachers and became more aware of their peers. The second point concerns the positive involvement of other children with the target children. We believe that the findings of this study can contribute more to improving the quality of children's play.

peer relationship, 4-Year-Old, kindergarten children, behavioral change, kindergarten, transformation

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Symposium Set A

13:05 – 14:20, Wednesday 4th September

Set A1, Sallis Benney Theatre, ground floor, Grand Parade building

CHALLENGING RACISM AND DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE MULTILINGUAL PRACTICES

Seyran Bostanci, Deutsches Zentrum für Integrations- und Migrationsforschung (DeZIM), Germany

Access to Education: Unraveling Racism in Early Childhood Institutions

Presenters:

Seyran Bostanci, Deutsches Zentrum für Integrations- und Migrationsforschung (DeZIM), Germany

Benedikt Wirth, Deutsches Zentrum für Integrations- und Migrationsforschung (DeZIM), Germany

We explore institutional racism in early childhood education and care (ECEC) settings, challenging the notion of their inherent inclusivity and their effectiveness in reducing educational inequality. Our analysis utilizes findings from two major studies conducted by the German Center for Integration and Migration Research's Racism Monitor in 2021 and 2023. Guided by theories from Stuart Hall (1989) and Philomena Essed (1991), our analysis identifies institutional racism in ECEC as a socio-structural force that affects individual and group dynamics. The study shows that racism manifests in knowledge creation, everyday routines, and practices, systematically disadvantaging racialized individuals. Our methodology includes qualitative analysis based on 35 semi-structured interviews with various stakeholders in the childcare sector and direct field observations, with a particular focus on specific Berlin districts. This approach facilitates an in-depth understanding of the operationalization of racism within these educational settings. To ensure ethical adherence in our research, we developed audience-specific consent forms, obtained participant consent both verbally and in writing, and transparently communicated project details. We also consulted external experts, including a data protection officer, to address ethical and data protection issues, ensuring confidentiality and data anonymity. Ultimately, our research will discuss how institutional racism plays a role in ECEC settings and to what extent they are not free from discrimination, as well as how they create structural barriers for racialized children. Based on our research findings, we recommend implementing transparent admission policies, establishing effective complaint mechanisms, revising content that perpetuates racism, and integrating anti-bias training into pedagogical programs.

racism, early childhood education, institutions, diversity, migration

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

'They say "yes", but they mean "no"'. Childcare professionals' views on their relationship with multilingual parents in a monolingual-oriented society.

Presenters:

Brecht Peleman, Ghent University - Department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy | VBJK Centre for Innovation in the Early Years, Belgium

Co-authors:

Michel Vandenbroeck, Ghent University, Belgium

This study explores ECEC-professionals' views on their relationships with multilingual parents in the Flemish Community of Belgium. In ECEC, professionals are increasingly faced with more complex forms of multilingualism (Duarte & Kirsch, 2020). Existing research shows, however, that their practiced language policies are the product of ingrained monolingual ideologies, deeply rooted in socio-political contexts (Shohamy 2006). Moreover, ECEC-professionals often lack knowledge and experience on how to positively support multilingualism (Bergeron-Morin et

al., 2023). In this research, ECEC is conceptualised as a culturally hybrid space (Bhabha, 1994) in which parents and professionals share the child's upbringing. The dialogue through which this occurs, is a pedagogical encounter (Davies & Gannon, 2009) that centres on difference and disagreement (Vandenbroeck, 2009). Rooted in a socio-constructivist approach, this study foregrounds perspectives of 42 childcare professionals (0-3). Data-collection consisted of 9 video-elicited group interviews wherein videos of multilingual educational practices were shown. Throughout the research process ethical considerations of informed consent, voluntary involvement, anonymity, safety and wellbeing were adhered to. The interviews revealed that the interplay of a multilingual reality and a monolingual orientation shapes professionals' perceptions of their relationships with multilingual parents. Professionals stressed the importance of speaking Dutch only, mainly for the purpose of preparing children for school. Although they often found themselves feeling insecure in approaching linguistic diversity, the topic of multilingualism was mostly silenced in childcare teams and in dialogue with parents. Pedagogical encounters in ECEC benefit from making multilingualism a prominent rather than a silenced topic in processes of professional support.

multilingualism, childcare, parent-professional relationship, monolingual orientation, professionals' views

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set A2, Room G4, ground floor, Grand Parade building

CITIZENSHIP IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTINGS

Gemma Ryder, University of East London, United Kingdom

Sustainable interaction and citizenship in the kindergarden context

Presenters:

Natalia Alfarnes, NLA University College, Norway

Co-authors:

Miroslava Tokovska, Kristiania University College School of Health Sciences, Norway

The kindergarden sector is changing and in recent years more responsibility and authority has been delegated to individual units and specific managers. The kindergardens management is tasked with creating health-promoting and inclusive spaces to provide good conditions for children's education, as well as offering staff a sustainable working environment. The aim of this study is to gain deeper insight and knowledge about what characterises health-promoting interactions in relation to the perspective of citizenship among kindergarden leaders, with an emphasis on sustainability. Research shows that management plays a crucial role in promoting sustainable interactions and citizenship in a kindergarden (Farewell et al. 2022). The theoretical basis of the project is The Sociocultural Theory of Vygotsky (1978). The study is based on a systematic narrative literature review that includes 10 scientific studies. The project has been conducted in accordance with the Norwegian Guidelines for Research Ethics (2021). The literature has been interpreted with an independent and critical approach. The results show that 1) democratisation of inclusive partnerships within cultural diversity; 2) communicative and relational means in health-promoting interactions; 3) learning of recognition at individual, group and local level can be identified as possible factors that kindergarden leaders should practice in their daily work in order to continue the implementation of health-promoting interactions with a focus on citizenship and sustainability. The study contributes new knowledge about the leadership role in health-promoting interactions in kindergardens and further to the development of conscious attitudes as a potentially structured approach for educational institutions.

health-promoting interaction, citizenship, kindergarden, leadership, sustainable interaction

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Meta-ethnographic Investigations of Citizenship (s) in Progressive ECE Programs

Presenters:

Muge Olgun Baytas, The Ministry of National Education, Turkey

Co-authors:

Allison Sterling Henward, Pennsylvania State University, United States

This research explores the realization of intended praxis—liberal universalism, color blindness, and justice—in progressive, faith-based kindergarten classrooms. It aims to understand how these practices shape the learning experiences of children in the diverse landscape of contemporary US classrooms, considering both privileged and marginalized spaces. Extending Maxine Greene's challenge into the 21st century, this research builds upon the inquiry into "super-diverse" classrooms, contributing nuanced insights into how democratic citizenship is learned in diverse kindergarten settings using critical race theory. Drawing on critical race theory, the research analyzes intended praxis in kindergarten, unraveling the complex interplay of liberal universalism, color blindness, and justice in shaping the educational experiences of young children. This research employs a critical meta-ethnographic approach, comparing 2 kindergartens in urban Hawaii and rural Northwest in the US. It emphasizes the strengths and challenges of situated engagement in exploring global citizenship construction through consistent analytical methods. Ethical considerations related to the involvement of young children, teachers, and the broader school community are prioritized. Informed consent, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivity ensure the ethical conduct of the study. The findings reveal significant disparities in how democratic citizenship is learned in kindergarten classrooms, with practices often negating intended democratic curriculum and perpetuating local and societal inequities related to race, religion, nationality, and ethnicity. The study raises concerns about interpretations of ECE grounded in universal, liberal notions of citizenship. It calls for a reevaluation of pedagogical approaches to consider multilayered power relationships, emphasizing the potential unintended consequences for both classrooms and communities.

progressive education , cultural citizenship , democratic citizenship , meta-ethnography , power relationships

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Young Children's Enactments as Citizens in Early Childhood Settings

Presenters:

Gemma Ryder, University of East London, United Kingdom

Co-authors

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

This research examines enactments of young children's citizenship in early childhood settings in England. We understand citizenship as a contested concept within early childhood literature (Bath & Karlsson, 2016). Conceptualizations of citizenship in this paper, emerge from a consideration of values, rights and understandings of children as social actors (Robson, 2022). This study draws on the theoretical concept of prosocial behaviour (Eisenberg, Eggum-Wilkins & Spinrad, 2015). Constructs of children are informed by a sociology of early childhood (James & Prout, 1997), which includes recognising children's rights and children as capable of constructing values. Working within a Deweyan pragmatist paradigm, we revisit the data from a doctoral study by Ryder (2021). Data was collected using a mixed-methods multiple-case study approach, where children were observed participating in their day to day activities in a range of early childhood settings. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with early childhood practitioners to explore their understanding of children's actions. Informed consent was provided in writing from adult participants. Assent from children was acquired through verbal and non-verbal communication. Participation was voluntary with the right to withdraw respected at all times. Pseudonymisation was used to ensure privacy and confidentiality. The findings highlight the complex ways in which prosocial behaviours, child rights and values inform children's citizenship, often through physical expressions of values. We suggest that learning about young children's citizenship in practice arises from reflection on micro events in the daily lives of the setting and momentary encounters between children, and between children and adults.

citizenship, early childhood, values, child rights, birth to three years old

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set A3, Room G62, ground floor, Grand Parade building

CODING TOYS AND WEARABLE TECHNOLOGIES IN ECEC

Julia Gillen, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

Mediating young children's higher-order thinking skills in ECEC. The role of mathematics, coding toys and educators

Presenters:

Enrico Pollarolo, University of Stavanger, Norway

The aim is to explore higher-order thinking skills (HOTs) in ECEC, proposing a theoretical perspective that emphasizes the significant role of mathematics, coding toys, and educators in mediating higher mental functions. In facing the future, children need to develop key skills, identified as the 21st century skills. The shift from acquiring information to equipping children with skills to process and confront challenges is crucial, and literature shows that it can be supported enhancing children's HOTs already in the early years. Although HOT is a popular concept in education from primary school onwards, few studies have focused on HOT in ECEC. The study is grounded in Vygotsky's theory of mediated activities. The research is grounded on a qualitative hermeneutic research tradition. Three different studies are analysed and compared: studies I and II (based on the analysis of 10 semi-structured interviews with Norwegian educators through thematic analysis), study III (a systematic literature review, Prisma 2020 statement was followed). Ethical considerations were presented to and approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD), now Sikt. Mathematics, coding toys, and educators serve as potential mediators of HOTs. Mathematics contributes to cognitive skills, while educators address socio-emotional aspects, and coding toys have the potential to foster both cognitive and socio-emotional skills. This research offers valuable insights into cultivating HOTs in ECEC, bridging a gap in studies focused on this crucial developmental stage. A practical implication of the studies concerns the approach to ECEC mathematics in a more problem-solving-oriented way that supports the children's higher-order thinking skills.

higher-order thinking, ECEC teachers, mathematics, coding toys, Vygotsky's theory of mediated activities

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Our Digital Toy Store: Embracing Problem-Solving Through Technology in ECE

Presenters:

Judith Fabrega, Innovamat Education, Spain

Co-authors:

Mequè Edo, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

Incorporating play and technology into mathematics education can foster meaningful learning experiences for young children. Our goal is to showcase how combining interactive math games and hands-on activities makes learning significant and accessible. Recent studies highlight the potential of educational technology (ET) in stimulating preschoolers' mathematical development, yet there remains limited understanding of its actual utilization in classrooms. In exploring technology's role in EC math education, we'll draw on Ginsburg, Lee, and Boyd's (2008) insights on effective pedagogy and Clements and Sarama's (2003, 2016) emphasis on integrating developmentally appropriate technology. We analyzed ways in which mathematical processes and concepts manifest during these engagements and explore the strategies educators employ to leverage these resources for optimal learning outcomes through systematic observations of real classrooms scenarios. Our study is grounded in ethical principles centered around equity, inclusivity, child safety, and transparency. We provide equitable access to rich mathematical experiences for all children through technology, ensuring inclusivity. Safety measures are essential, with age-appropriate content to protect children's privacy and wellbeing. Transparency guides our approach, including

informed consent and data confidentiality. Our findings will center on the mathematical content and processes inherent in these activities, showing how teachers effectively utilize these tools. Through our research, we aim to highlight the symbiotic relationship between technology, pedagogy, and mathematical understanding in early childhood education. These technological tools help teachers to understand students' emerging mathematical brilliance as they explore various math content and practices through captivating applets designed to resemble toy stores, making math an exciting adventure.

mathematics education, educational technology, play and learning, problem solving, early mathematics

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Fostering inclusion in early childhood education: A scoping review of wearable technologies for supporting neurodiversity

Presenters:

Savannah Olivia Mercer, Università degli Studi di Palermo, Italy

Co-authors

Ylenia Falzone, Università degli Studi di Palermo, Italy

Elif Gülbay, Università degli Studi di Palermo, Italy

Alessandra La Marca, Università degli Studi di Palermo, Italy

We critically present the findings of a scoping review on wearable technologies for neurodiverse users, and their application in early childhood education (ECE). Research into emerging technologies presents innovative approaches to learning experiences (Chu et al., 2022). Wearable technologies inclusive of smart watches, biosensors for physiological markers, and augmented reality devices show promise in supporting neurodiverse users (Cibrian et al., 2022). Inclusive education for neurodiverse children is crucial, ECE settings must provide personalised support to meet their needs, whilst fostering connection, empowerment, and autonomy. Despite promising findings, there is a real need to recognise and embrace neurodiversity through a neurodiversity-affirming lens, recent discussions have raised ethical concerns surrounding current interventions being inherently ableist (Williams & Gilbert, 2022). This review is approached through a critical disability framework, research has highlighted accessibility issues, advocating for the need to design wearables 'for and with' neurodiverse users (Genaro Motti et al., 2022; Spiel et al., 2022). As a scoping review, this contribution aligns with an interpretive research paradigm. Examining existing research, identifying themes and gaps for alternative research directions for employing wearable technologies to support children through neurodiversity-affirming approaches. This review uses only secondary data but prioritises ethical considerations for a thorough portrayal of sources, addressing biases and ensuring fairness and integrity. We contribute to discussions within the field of innovative technology for didactics, advocating for inclusive practice for more empowering learning outcomes for neurodiverse children. We provide implications for ensuring the meaningful, child-centred implementation of wearable technologies into ECE curricula for neurodiverse children. This research was funded by "SiciliAn MicronanOTech Research And Innovation Center "SAMOTHRACE" (MUR, PNRR-M4C2, ECS_0000022), spoke 3 - Università degli Studi di Palermo "S2-COMMs - Micro and Nanotechnologies for Smart & Sustainable Communities"

wearable technologies, neurodiverse children, critical disability studies, scoping review, inclusive education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A4, Room G63, ground floor, Grand Parade building

INCORPORATING DIGITAL TOOLS INTO EARLY YEARS PRACTICE

An Piessens, KdG University of Applied Sciences, Belgium

Mediating good care through the use of a tablet: how staff engages with parents throughout the day

Presenters:

An Piessens, KdG University of Applied Sciences, Belgium

Co-authors:

Leen Dom, KdG University of Applied Sciences, Belgium

Liesa Lammens, KdG University of Applied Sciences, Belgium

In ECEC, the presence of digital media in young children's lives is a topic of pedagogical concern and professional resistance. This research wants to understand how care is enacted through the use of digital media for daily management, for registration of care activities and for communication with parents (Mol, Moser & Pols, 2010). This research shifts the focus away from so-called 'integration research' about digital media to the pedagogy of digital media use in care administration. (Piessens & Dom, 2024) The research team builds an empirical-philosophical account of the care enacted in ECEC through media-use for registration and communication with parents. (Pols, 2006; Law, 2006; Noens & Ramaekers, 2014; Truong, 2023) In this social constructionist approach, data are derived from two separate researches. Six smartphonediarists (Plowman & Stevens, 2012) led to the observation that professionals handle digital media in a divided way. (Piessens & Dom, 2024) A second research (in progress) aims to better understand media-use for registration and communication via two detailed casestudies, involving professionals and parents. Permission for the research was sought with the Ethical Committee of Antwerp University Association. The research originates in an uneasiness about the consequences of media-use for registration and communication. Therefore, several perspectives are mapped. Professionals use media for administrative purposes, but they seem to assume that children do not notice. Should parents be constantly informed? How does this impact children's right to privacy? The pedagogical debate about media use with young children should include reflection about the consequences of constant monitoring.

digital media, caring democracies, digital natives, digital anonymity, growing up in a digital world

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Examining Early Childhood Teacher Education (ECTE) Instructors' Perspectives on Preparing Preservice Teachers for Technology Integration in ECEC Settings

Presenters:

Sara Esmaeeli, University of Stavanger, Norway

Co-authors:

Marianne Larsen Undheim, University of Stavanger, Norway

This study investigates attitudes, beliefs, and acceptance of Early Childhood Teacher Education (ECTE) instructors regarding the preparation of preservice teachers to "use technology with children" in their future work within Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings. Instructors' attitudes and beliefs significantly influence their pedagogical approaches and willingness to adopt new strategies (Biesta et al., 2015), besides the formal guidelines for Educational Programs and official frameworks. This study applies the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to predict technology adoption behavior. TAM, initially proposed by Davis (1989), suggests that our attitudes and intentions are strong predictors of our actual behavior regarding technology. We employed a mixed-method approach involving quantitative and qualitative data; a survey (N=83) and focus group interviews (n=5). Throughout the study, we adhered to Norwegian ethical guidelines (NSD), ensuring voluntary consent and participation, as well as maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of the data. Preliminary findings discuss whether participating ECTE instructors educate preservice teachers on 'how they can use technology with children in their future work.' While the majority of responses point out the importance of integrating this topic into ECTE, the rationales for how and why vary. Furthermore, the discussion will focus on the perspectives and attitudes of these ECTE instructors regarding "the use of technology with children in ECEC settings". The findings suggest significant implications for both practitioners and policymakers within ECTE Programs, by indicating pathways for enhancing the preparation of future EC preservice teachers for "using technology with children" in their future work within ECEC settings.

early childhood teacher education (ECTE), teacher's perspectives and attitudes, preservice teachers' preparation, digital technology, early childhood education and care (ECEC)

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Does the app achieve its goal? Digital vs. analogue ways to improve early childhood educators' observation and language promotion skills

Presenters:

Carolin Machens, RH Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Co-authors:

Nadine Madeira Firmino, Hochschule Bielefeld – University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSBI), Germany

This study investigates the use of different documentation formats (analogue vs. digital) for the observation method 'BaSiK' (a standardised observation method for assessing children's language development; Zimmer, 2019) in early childhood education settings. Previous findings have already shown that analogue forms of documentation can increase the competence of early childhood educators in the context of a daily-integrated language promotion (Knauf, 2019; Rintakorpi, 2016; Weltzien & Viernickel, 2012). Similar effects were found for 'BaSiK', but so far only the analogue format has been investigated (Machens, 2021). In the present study, competence was comprehended in accordance with the general competence model of Fröhlich-Gildhoff et al. (2011) and so-called dispositional skills were examined in more detail. Using online surveys based on a validated questionnaire (Machens, 2021), the study employs a mixed-methods approach to gather quantitative and qualitative data on observation practices, documentation formats and professional competence. The study adheres to the ethical code regulations of good scientific practice by the German Educational Research Association (GERA/DGfE, 2010). Participation in the survey was voluntary. Likewise, no data was collected that could have led to the identification of individuals. The results focus on differences in the perceived competence of early childhood educators who work with either the analogue or the digital format. Particular emphasis is placed on selected influencing factors, such as the use of documentation in team or parent meetings. The empirical findings can be fed back into pedagogical practice for the future use of digital observation systems.

observation and documentation, app, language development, language promotion, professional competence

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A5, Room M2, Mezzanine, Grand Parade building

CHILDREN'S INDIVIDUAL REALITIES AND VOICES MATTER: SUSTAINING CHILDREN'S SOCIOCULTURAL WELLBEING

Wilma Robles Melendez, Nova Southeastern University, United States

Sustainable development and children's wellbeing are intrinsically linked in a society aspiring to meet present/future challenges. Children's wellbeing is a child's right where their development is a factor contributing to societal sustainable development. In a time of challenges, children's holistic wellbeing remains at forefront of early childhood education. Efforts sustaining children's wellbeing need practices on what is integral to their realities with consideration to sociocultural realities and individual children's lived experiences (Rogoff et al., 2018) where their voices matter (Murray, 2019; Maybin, 2012) and influence their social and cultural identity development. Demand exists for culturally responsive early childhood praxis centering children's wellbeing. In response to this need, presenters in this symposium explore three perspectives contributing to sustaining practices for children's wellbeing through conscious integration of their sociocultural experience, children's diverse heritage in rurality, and intentional engagement of child's voice. Together, they pose questions on current/future practices and policies.

holistic_well_being

How does the ecology of child voice within a child friendly city relate to the discourse on sustainability?

Presenters:

Clionagh Boyle, Liverpool Hope University, United Kingdom

A locality informed multimodal toolkit was developed to explore children's perspectives on neighbourhood, community and city in Liverpool. Artefacts and documentation of this process were analysed to better understand young children's perspectives to both challenge and inform the approach to Liverpool's UNICEF Child Friendly City Action Plan. The research was situated in scholarship such as that of Alderson (2016) and builds from Spyriou (2011) and challenges an individualized perspective- voices are situated in the discursive fields of power which produce them. Children's voices are seen as multi- dimensional, relationally interconnected and interdependent with their social, material, temporal and spatial contexts (Street, 2022). The research is located in the interpretivist paradigm. Multimodal provocations such as drawing, puppetry storytelling, mapmaking (Clark 2005, Epstein 2008, Mitchell and Elwood 2012) were designed for young children (n=86) to explore their neighbourhood, community and city. Parents perspectives (n=100) were heard through implementation of a survey circulated through the five children's centres in the city. Ethical approval was obtained through Liverpool Hope University. The approach was guided by EECERA principles: ensuring children are seen as subjects, culturally situated in the context of their families and communities in the city of Liverpool. As such it embodies an awareness of social responsibility towards the communities in which it is conducted. The key findings from the research on play, inclusion and place are used to inform CPD and advocacy strategy with practitioners and policy makers. The main research impact is on the action plan for UNICEF Child Friendly City status.

ecology of rights, child voice, community, multi-modal, Child Friendly City

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Keeping my voice alive! Sustaining the diverse cultures of children in rural communities: Reflections on representations and conceptualizations of rural culture

Presenters:

Wilma Robles Melendez, Nova Southeastern University, United States

Co-authors:

Wayne Driscoll, Nova Southeastern University, United States

Project guided by need to sustain rural cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2019) given its influence on children's sociocultural identity development and wellbeing (Esteban & Moll). Explored representations, conceptualizations of childhood cultural paradigms in rurality and aimed at identifying practices supporting children's heritage in rural program contexts. Anchored on equity developmental framework, expands presenters' work on practices supporting children's cultural heritage of children in rural communities. Relates to research efforts by Moll and those spearheaded by Rogoff, Nieto and Derman-Sparks on responsive pedagogy addressing needs of individuals with diverse characteristics and intentional support for their heritage as children's right. Conceptual framework anchored by Convention on Rights of Children on right to their cultural identity drawing from theoretical tenets of Rogoff et al role of lived experiences, Esteban and Moll culture-based funds of identity and Moll's funds of knowledge. Addresses paradigm of cultural heritage as developmental factor influencing children's identity formation and need for support. Data collected through literature analysis, unstructured teacher interviews, and critical-literacy analysis of rurality-themed storybooks. Literature revealed community heritage influence on children's cultural learning and identity formation. Storybooks analysis provided window into conceptualizations/ representations of rural childhood experiences. Interviews generated data about classroom practices guided at supporting heritage. Participants received information about project goals and included those who consented following ethical guidelines. Reaffirm cultural influence on identity formation and wellbeing calling for intentional practices to sustain children's heritage in rural communities. Need exists to support knowledge on rural cultural heritage and for culturally-sustaining classroom practices.

cultural identity, rural communities, culturally based praxis , equitable practices, children's wellbeing

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

World Friends: world-centred early education in a wellbeing perspective

Presenters:

Anette Boye Koch, VIA University College, Denmark

Erika Zimmer Brandt, VIA University College, Denmark

The study explores the pedagogical potential of conveying young children's perspectives to other children in relation to global child wellbeing. Biesta (2022) argues for world-centred education that redirects students' attention to the world. In a wellbeing perspective, this calls children to be and to flourish into the world (Biesta 2022:27), and opens up for slow pedagogy, where children listen and develop knowledge of their being with the world (Clark 2022:39). The research draws upon theories of young children's wellbeing (Seland et al. 2015, Koch 2016) and the idea that pedagogues work towards children's perspectives with pedagogical tact (van Manen 1991). The method is to generate and share stories of children's ECEC everyday lives child-child in Denmark, Arctic Norway and Tanzania (Tobin et al. 1989) through production of children's books within a qualitative interpretive research paradigm (Denzin&Lincoln 2018). The analysis is conducted within a phenomenological hermeneutical approach (Dahlberg et al. 2008). All inquiries depended on informed consent and voluntary participation and high ethical standards were applied both at home and abroad. Empirical findings are presented to illustrate children's efforts to 'be with', 'go off track' and 'dive deep' in relation to the children's books and discuss how wellbeing may evolve in a universal world orientation towards peer children in different life circumstances. The 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development point to Quality Education and Reduced Inequalities as two of 17 SDGs, which calls for pedagogues to raise a broad variety of child voices in order to facilitate existential child wellbeing and flourishing.

wellbeing, world-centredness, child voices, children's books, slow pedagogy

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A6, NEW ROOM: Room 306, third floor, Edward Street building

EARLY READING STRATEGIES

Katie Crouch, University of the West of England, United Kingdom

Exploring the strategies and types of fathers' and mothers' shared reading with 9-month-old infants

Presenters:

Ming Fang Hsieh, National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan

This study aimed to investigate and compare the reading strategies used by fathers and mothers when reading with 9-month-old infants and the types of shared reading facilitated through these strategies. Previous research has highlighted the importance of parents' strategies during shared reading, as they can elicit varied responses from toddlers (Duursma et al., 2020; Sénéchal et al., 1995). Shared reading has been shown to positively impact children's development and learning, particularly in infancy (Auger et al., 2014; Cohrssen et al., 2016; Hutton et al., 2015). However, there is limited research on how parents engage in shared reading with infants. Drawing on Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the "zone of proximal development", this study viewed parents as "scaffolds" in facilitating infants' reading experiences. This qualitative study involved 48 pairs of fathers, mothers, and their nine-month-old infants. Data collection included observations and interviews. Fathers and mothers read two different books with their infants. All participants provided informed consent following approval from the ethics review board. They can adjust reading speed and content based on their infants' cues. The common strategies used by fathers and mothers included questioning, labeling, describing, clarifying, and predicting. Their shared reading was categorized into five types: interactive, stable, single-strategy, uncertain, and passive. While most mothers engaged in shared reading using various strategies and held infants' attention, many fathers seemed unsure or passive, viewing shared reading as unnecessary due to their infants' perceived lack of understanding. Interventions for parent-child shared reading should consider parents' beliefs and provide tailored guidance accordingly.

infants, shared reading, fathers and mothers, strategies, qualitative research

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Why Are Some Children Struggling to Learn to Read?

Presenters:

Susan Catapano, University of Central Florida, United States

Lynn Navin, University of Missouri St. Louis, United States

This ten-year inquiry identifies how young children develop early literacy skills in Belize and the US. Early literacy skills developed in Pre-K are critical to success in learning to read for young children (Piastra & Wagner, 2010; Majorano, et al., 2022). Theoretical framework for this study uses Nelson's theory of cognition and language development (Tomasello, 2002) and Bandura's social learning theory in developing language skills (Schunk, 2012). Information was collected over ten years of working with young children reading below grade level. Observations and screening data (350 children in PreK programs in Belize) contribute to understanding this inquiry. Analysis of the information collected used a Phenomenological and Content Analysis approach (Fuster, 2019; Mayring, 2014). Consent for screening was handled by Ministry of Education representatives. Only children with consent were screened. Researchers had no identifying information on aggregated data. Literacy skills are critical for children to progress within grade level; schools serving low-income, diverse speaking first languages other than English report reading scores falling well below grade level. Research on children's literacy informs policymakers, educators, and families; yet, why are so many children struggling? Ten years of research on supporting all children in the development of literacy skills and success in translating those skills into successful reading skills offers perspectives on strategies to help our most vulnerable children succeed as readers and learners.

literacy, reading, international, learning, culturally relevant

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

“Because [k] looks like a robot.” How can we sustain children’s diverse approaches and cognitive processing when encountering new linguistic experiences?

Presenters:

Katie Crouch, University of the West of England, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Anna Piasecki, University of the West of England, United Kingdom

Minna Kirjavainen, University of the West of England, United Kingdom

This study explored links between pictures and the visual presentations of letters, which influences children aged 24-72 months. Previous investigations into psycholinguistic development indicated the typical pairing of pointed letters with sharp shapes and rounded letters with curved shapes (Cuskley et al., 2017). Previous hypotheses linked associated sounds of the letters with the characteristics of the shapes presented (De Carolis et al., 2018). This study investigates sound and visual associations with children's phonic development and individual funds of knowledge (Feist, 2013). Conceptual framework was influenced by the researcher's experiences of supporting children's language and early literacy. This professional heritage draws from the slow pedagogical approach and sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Clark, 2022). The reconceptualist paradigm informed an inclusive research methodology, making it distinct from previous studies in this field (Pascal and Bertram, 2018; Tuzo et al., 2011). Data creation was achieved through a series of experiences and discussions with children. Children were encouraged to be experts in their thinking (Donegan et al., 2022). Data creation followed institutional guidelines. Assent was valued as an on-going dynamic (BERA, 2019). A series of games and discussions enabled an insight into children's perceptions of letters and shapes. Outcomes indicate environmental interactions upon children's processing of shapes and letters. These outcomes help to inform dynamics of teaching phonics. Children's critical thinking, meta-language and literacy development can be scaffolded through rich experiences and discussions around phonic understanding. These outcomes may influence approaches to the teaching of phonics to young children.

shapes, letters, phonics, sound-symbolism, literacy

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A7, Room 144, first floor, Grand Parade building

EXAMINING BELIFES AND APPROACHES TO MATHEMATICS TEACHING AND LEARNING

Natalie Flint, Loughborough University, United Kingdom

Examining Pre-service Preschool Teachers' Beliefs about Mathematics, Mathematics Teaching and Learning

Presenters:

Elif Naz Altaş, TED University, Turkey

Co-authors:

Seçil Cengizoğlu, Atılım University, Turkey

Fatma Yalçın, TED University, Turkey

This study aims to examine pre-service preschool teachers' beliefs on mathematics, teaching early mathematic and learning in line with various demographic variables before and after taking "Mathematics Education in Early Childhood" course. Pre-service teachers' beliefs on mathematics affect their practices (Mainali, 2022) and pupils' mathematic beliefs and achievement (Maasepp & Bobis, 2013). The idea that teachers' beliefs fundamentally influence their classroom practices (Fives & Gill, 2014) creates a frame for researchers and guides this study. A quasi-experimental study was employed for this study. The sample includes sophomore and junior pre-service preschool teachers (n=45) from two universities (one public, one private) who took the course 'Mathematics Education in Early Childhood'. The researchers created an identical 14-week course content for participants to learn about how early mathematics looks like and how children explore mathematics in early years. Data was collected at the beginning and end of the semester through a demographic information form, and "Instrument for Beliefs Related to the Teaching and Learning of Math" scale. Besides approval from the TED University Ethical Committee, consent forms were used to ensure volunteer participation. Pseudonyms were used for participants' names. The study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of designed course. Thus, it is expected to identify statistically significant variations in pre-service teachers' beliefs on mathematics, teaching early mathematics and learning before and after the course. This study has potentials to encourage early childhood experts to integrate mathematics in their daily routines and enhance a path for preschool education bachelor programs at various universities.

early mathematics, mathematics teaching, pre-service teachers, belief, early childhood

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Maths is Everywhere: Practitioner Approaches to Mathematics Learning Environments in Early Years Settings

Presenters:

Natalie Flint, Loughborough University, United Kingdom

Tim Jay, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

Katie Seabridge, Loughborough University, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Colin Foster, Loughborough University, United Kingdom

Gaia Scerif, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Victoria Simms, Ulster University, United Kingdom

Elizabeth Stokoe, London School of Economics, United Kingdom

Ann Dowker, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

This research aims to understand how Early Years (EY) practitioners working with 3–4-year-olds design for mathematics learning. Children’s mathematics learning outcomes depend on the quality of EY education they experience before starting formal schooling (e.g. Melhuish et al., 2013), and the quality of mathematics instruction in EY predicts outcomes (Pohle et al., 2022). Pyle and Danniels (2017) recognise the continuum from child-directed through to teacher-directed approaches. There is some evidence of effectiveness of guided play (e.g. Fisher et al. 2013), but Wickstrom, Pyle & DeLuca (2019) found that this is relatively rare. However, there is a gap in evidence on how EY practitioners design for mathematics learning. We conducted interviews with 24 EY practitioners from a variety of EY settings, including those attached to primary schools, private day nurseries, and charity-funded playgroups. As participants had diverse training backgrounds, there was not a clear shared language, therefore the research uses reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Participants provided informed consent and their information was anonymised throughout. Participants could withdraw at any time. We identified considerable variation between settings in how practitioners create mathematics learning environments, the practitioners’ intended outcomes, and how practitioners vary the ways they engage in mathematics teaching and learning for individual children. The UK Government are investing in EY education to address inequalities. However, there is little understanding of the quality of learning taking place – this research may help shed light on how pre-school educators can best create opportunities for mathematics thinking and learning.

mathematics, quality, planning, design, qualitative

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

How useful is the Rtl-model for preschool-class-teachers' mathematics teaching?

Presenters:

Benita Berg, Mälardalen University, Sweden

Co-authors

Johanna Lundquist, Malardalen university, Sweden

The aim of this study was to co-construct knowledge about the Rtl-model (Response to Intervention). The study pays attention to its perceived usefulness for preschool-class-teachers when monitoring, planning, and implementing teaching in mathematics for six-years-old. Previous studies indicate that the model is useful for teachers in school-classes (Fuchs et al., 2021.) The model can be understood as a special educational framework (Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2010). It explains what is needed to achieve quality inclusive education and adequate support and stimulation for all students, both those who need additional support and students who are gifted and talented. Therefore, it relates to multi-tiered system of supports. It is not well-known in the Swedish preschool context but holds potential for developing a sustainable, equitable and inclusive education. The study was conducted within a qualitative research paradigm. Four preschool-class-teachers were enrolled and their perceptions were collected via five focus-group interviews. These were analysed using content analysis. Ethical recommendations were followed. Consents were obtained, no sensitive data were collected and data collection was planned with the participants. Preliminary finding shows that the model is considered useful. It provides a structure through the categories tier 1 to tier 3, and stimulates self-reflection regarding teaching in mathematics, curriculum materials, national regulations, assumptions and needs for improvement. Nevertheless, negative reflections also emerged. It does not describe ways to implement teaching, it takes time and requires ample resources. The study contributes with knowledge in the field of quality inclusive education and has relevance for researchers, policymakers and teachers.

Rtl-model, quality education, preschool-class-teacher, teaching, mathematics

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A8, Room 202, second floor, Grand Parade building

DEVELOPING CULTURES FOR EFFECTIVE SAFEGUARDING, INCLUSION & PARENT PARTNERSHIP

Elena Zanfroni, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

"Beyond diagnosis". Navigating communication with families on childhood disabilities: reflections to overcome isolation

Presenters:

Elena Zanfroni, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Silvia Maggiolini, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Beatrice Del Grosso, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

This contribution aims to delve into the gap between the disclosure of a disability diagnosis and the subsequent isolation experienced by many families. Through exploratory research with the support of 99 Family Associations, it explores the role an educational support program could play for all stakeholders from a child's birth.

International literature has extensively explored effective communication across disciplines, particularly regarding vulnerability, family support post-child diagnosis and educational needs of parents facing disability challenges. It also addresses training needs for professionals in this context. This work aligns with a framework addressing the complexity of stages families navigate post-child disability diagnosis. It focuses on guiding them towards increased awareness of their roles and family wellbeing as the backdrop for the caregiving and educational processes (Healey, 1996; Canevaro, 2004; Lou et alii, 2020) The questionnaire used introductory questions to profile respondents and explore prenatal screenings. The semi-structured format combined closed and open-ended questions, allowing adaptability and depth. Administered via email, it was pretested for validity using Google Forms. Parents responding to the questionnaire were informed about the data treatment, ensuring complete anonymity of their responses. This practice aligns with ethical standards and respects participants' confidentiality. Collected data reveals key educational themes for nursery and kindergarten educators concerning relationship management, communication, and school-family co-responsibility within vulnerable contexts. The shared elements among participating parents provide a compelling starting point to inform the training content for ECEC educators. This is crucial for welcoming children with disabilities and fostering constructive interactions with parents.

communication, diagnosis, family, disability, educational professionals' role and support

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

"Our work does not begin and end with reporting": Child safeguarding culture, knowledge, and practice from ECEC and SAC perspectives in the Republic of Ireland

Presenters:

Liz Kerrins, Early Childhood Ireland, Ireland

Co-authors

Lauraine Giacobazzi, Early Childhood Ireland, Ireland

This study aimed to explore child safeguarding culture, knowledge, and practice from the perspectives of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and School Age Care (SAC) professionals in Ireland. Existing research thoroughly recognises the crucial role ECEC has in children's development and wellbeing (UNESCO, 2023, Curristan et al., 2023, Melhuish, 2014). In Ireland, child safeguarding should be foundational in ECEC and SAC, outlined in legislation, regulation, and practice policy overall (Curristan et al., 2023). Yet, there is limited research about child safeguarding culture, knowledge, and practice in ECEC and SAC in Ireland. This study contributes to this knowledge gap. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) underpinned the project, acknowledging individuals' agency and emphasising cognitive processes and sociocultural factors in how individuals learn and form attitudes. Drawing on pragmatism, an explanatory sequential mixed methods design was used (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A survey was conducted, collecting 191 responses. Interviews were then designed to collect qualitative data, which will be analysed using thematic analysis. Ethical considerations were considered regarding respect for persons, beneficence and justice (Bertram et al., 2015). Participants were provided information leaflets and consent forms, with procedures to ask questions or withdraw. Participant identities have been protected by anonymising or pseudonymising the data. Findings from the survey and interviews will be presented and discussed, focusing on exploring child safeguarding culture. Preliminary implications may span practice and policy through advocating for

strong safeguarding cultures at the core of ECEC and SAC, methods of achieving this goal and potential future research recommendations.

child safeguarding, safeguarding culture, safeguarding knowledge and practice, early childhood education and care, school age care

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Military parent partnership in Early years settings - Understanding the impact of military deployment on parenting young children.

Presenters:

Debra Barton, University of Worcester, United Kingdom

Considering the preliminary findings from an ongoing part-time Ph.D study, this presentation, explores how early years settings can effectively partner with parents, during military deployment. Research into whether parenting practices remain the same or change during phases of deployment is sparse, yet it is documented that parenting practices influence the child's wellbeing and overall development (Knauer et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2020). Existing literature suggests that military deployment and the associated stress such as increased parental responsibilities, has an impact on the non-serving parent's mental health, changing their parenting behaviours and ability to cope (Waliski, Bokony and Kirchner, 2012; Nguyen et al., 2014; Flittner O'Grady et al., 2018). Using a qualitative narrative inquiry approach, some at-home parents from naval families living in the Southwest of England, were interviewed using a semi-structured interview format. The findings were analysed using an interpretive and social constructivist paradigm. Consent forms and information sheets were provided to all participants, including their right to withdraw, and pseudonyms will be used in the final thesis and subsequent articles. Preliminary findings suggest that military deployment could influence parenting styles, as the at-home parent attempts to juggle life as a solo parent, their own emotions and the emotions and behaviours of their young child(ren). Some parents utilise an adaptive parenting style, whilst others become overly harsh or lenient. By developing an understanding of the challenges at-home parents face, early childhood educators can tailor support and work in effective partnership, to support and foster resilience throughout the deployment cycle.

military families, parent partnership, support during military deployment, supportive early years providers, challenges for military families

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A9, Room 204, second floor, Grand Parade building

MUSEUM BASED RESEARCH

Nicola Wallis, Fitzwilliam Museum, United Kingdom

Breaking the 'fourth wall' of working with young children in museums: collective knowledge production

Presenters:

Bin Guo, UCL, United Kingdom

This article investigates the use of video when working with young children and their families in a museum in England. Video is a valuable tool in social research involving children, serving as a means to compensate for the perceived limitations of children's verbal articulation, shedding light on alternative communicative and interactive modes often overlooked by adults (Flewitt & Ang, 2020). This study, however, provides important empirical evidence, emphasises an understanding of children's proactive role in collective knowledge production when visiting the museum's two galleries. Taking Activity Theory as the theoretical framework (Engeström, 2014) informed by posthuman ontologies (Murriss & Kuby, 2021), children's interactions are treated as holistic units of analysis for understanding how children manifest their agency during their museum visit. This article presents part of a qualitative exploratory case study (Yin, 2018), that draws insights from the multimodal analysis (Cowan & Flewitt,

2020) of 15 video-recorded family visits with children aged two-to-five years. A consent form and child-friendly information sheet were provided to all participants. The ongoing negotiation of informed consent with the children during the fieldwork significantly contributes to the findings of this paper. The findings focus on the child-initiated interactions with the researcher and camera, including gazing, playful activities, instances of role-switching between the researcher and participants. These interactions break down the 'fourth wall' separating the observer from the observed – including children and exhibits. These findings suggest implications for understanding children's agency as well as material agency and their proactive roles in collective knowledge production process.

video data, posthuman child, human and non-human, children's agency, multimodal analysis

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Children's Museum as a space for students' play-based learning in early childhood teacher education

Presenters:

Miriam Wiik, UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

Maria Dardanou, UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

Co-authors:

Bente Karlsen, UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

In this study we explore how students in early childhood teacher education facilitate play-based activities in a children's museum. According to the Norwegian framework for kindergartens, "play shall be a key focus in kindergarten, and the inherent value of play shall be acknowledged" (Udir, 2017, p. 20). This study builds on previous studies based on children's experiences in museum spaces (Birch, 2018; Dardanou, 2019; Hackett et al., 2020; Karlsen et al., 2024). The theoretical background of the study is based on play-responsive teaching theory (Pramling et al., 2019). Students' activities in the museum build on ways children play and experience museum artefacts and include elements from aesthetic subjects. The study was conducted within a qualitative interpretive paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Data consists of non-participating observation, field notes, didactic plans from student activities and interviews with students and their practice teachers. The analytical methods included content and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Bowen, 2009). The project is guided by strict confidence and anonymity and the participants could withdraw from the project at any time without consequences. Our preliminary findings have showed that children's museum is an arena for students' activities that promote play-based learning for young children. Students' activities invited children to act through play and create meanings, experiences and understandings in the museum. The findings might suggest new ways for students in early childhood education to include the local environment, to facilitate children's play experiences in the museum and may have implications for early childhood teachers and students.

Children's museum, Early childhood teacher education, Play-based learning, Students' learning, Play-responsive teaching theory

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring Cultural Citizenship: young children & families as *cognoscenti* in the art museum

Presenters:

Nicola Wallis, Fitzwilliam Museum, United Kingdom

Kate Noble, Fitzwilliam Museum, United Kingdom

This research explores how museum environments support children to exercise agency by positioning them as capable cultural citizens. Drawing on an understanding of agency entwined with social and cultural context (Abebe, 2019:2), we use a political reading of care ethics (Hobart & Kneese, 2020:3) to consider how the civic museum as a 'space of social care' (Morse, 2020:185) could welcome young children and families as cultural citizens (Schaffer, 2021:26). Our work is based on dialogic pedagogies of museum learning (Hein, 2012; Dysthe, 2021) incorporating

new materialist understandings of the agentic potential of objects and spaces within this dialogue (Murriss, 2022). We undertook qualitative studies based on participatory action research methodology (McTaggart, 1994). Data generation methods included fieldnotes, photography, and journaling, which was processed collaboratively using inductive data analysis. Adult participants were fully informed about their roles in the project, data storage, and their right to withdraw. Children and babies were introduced to the project and researchers in advance, and observed closely to ensure their wellbeing and ongoing assent to participate (Dockett and Perry, 2011). Our findings demonstrate how museum environments enable children to experience agency, a sense of belonging, and interconnectedness at the heart of cultural citizenship. In museums, children and adults are co-inquirers, with freedom to follow their fascinations. They engage in dialogue, bring new perspectives, and challenge pre-conceptions around whose knowledge counts in these spaces. We consider implications for policy and practice that sustain respect for the unique contribution of each child within social, cultural, and community systems.

museum education, cultural learning, community, family leaning, care

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set A10, Room 207, second floor, Grand Parade building

CHILDREN IN PLAYGROUNDS EXPLORING RELATIONSHIPS AND CREATING SERVICE PROJECTS

Merja Koivula, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Tricksters in the Playground: How do Troublemakers Contribute to the Development of Children's Communicative Competency?

Presenters:

Yuji Fujimori, Bunkyo University, Japan

In kindergartens and primary schools, it often happens that some children disturb the order. Their behaviour is frowned upon by their peers, but sometimes it brings new ideas or discoveries to the community. Such functions are similar to those of "tricksters" in cultural anthropology. This study focuses on the children observed as tricksters in playgrounds, explores their contribution to the community, and reassesses positively the meanings of the existence of them. While there are studies that focus on stories with tricksters (e.g., Namikawa, 1993; Oshiro, 2017), there are no studies that have observed real children using tricksters as keywords. This study draws on C. G. Jung's psychology, Vygotsky and Bakhtin's Theory, Mindset (Dweck, 2017) and Play-Based Learning. And this study uses the paradigm of cultural anthropology and Case-Study method (Shulman, 2004). Participants were offered the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time and were given a consent form before the study began. Pseudonyms were used throughout. To avoid negative labelling, the words 'tricksters' and 'troublemakers' were replaced with 'children who have difficulty communicating smoothly' when explaining the research questions to participants. This study discusses and explores the following questions.

- 1) What kind of children are tricksters on the playground?
- 2) What new ideas or discoveries do they bring to their community?
- 3) How do they contribute to the development of the communicative competence of the members of their community?

This study contributes to understanding of children's role relationships in group play settings and to the development of the Smooth Transition methodology.

children as tricksters, playground, smooth transition, development of children's community, communicative competence

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Joint play and conflicts: exploring children's peer relationships through multivocal video-cued interviews

Presenters:

Merja Koivula, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Eija Sevón, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Co-authors:

Essi Hanhikoski, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Mari Laakso, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Anu Palojärvi, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Marleena Mustola, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

This study explores how children's peer relationships are narrated by children, parents, and professionals in early childhood education and care (ECEC). Previous research shows that understanding factors contributing to children building relationships in the ECEC peer group is crucial (Cederborg, 2021; Sevón et al., 2023). We draw from the theoretical premise suggesting children's ongoing negotiations and the dynamics of belonging and exclusion are integral features of peer relationships (Juutinen et al., 2018; Ölofsdóttir & Einarsdóttir, 2021). Data for this qualitative, narrative study were collected through multivocal video-cued interviews (Tobin, 2019) from children (n=34), parents (n=9) and professionals (n=15). In the interviews, a short video compiled from observed ECEC group interactions prompted discussion, and participants voiced their interpretations of the events in the video. Data were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Informed consent was obtained from all participants; from 3-6-year-old children orally and interpreting their embodied cues to assent. Participants' rights to anonymity and confidentiality were respected. Research ethics guidelines (FNBI, 2019) were carefully followed throughout the research. The findings suggest that participants were drawn to children's peer relationships as depicted in the videos. Children emphasized the importance of playing and 'doings' with peers, which parents also considered to be important feature of ECEC. Professionals emphasized children's relationship skills and emotional competence, and their role in supporting these skills. All participant groups expressed conflicts and exclusion as challenging peer relationships. Video-cued interviews enabled parallels and comparisons to be drawn between multivocal perspectives on supporting peer relationships in ECEC.

peer relationships, play, conflicts, video-cued interviews, multivocal perspectives

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

From Empathy to Action: Creating Service-learning Projects with Children**Presenters:**

Miranda Lin, Illinois State University, United States

This study aims to explore what twenty-five preservice teachers who worked with ten k-2 children in a community school to create service projects for their community and those in need perceive of the experience. Research has shown that children bonded with adults through service-learning (Fair & Delaplane, 2015). Further, service-learning is believed to support preservice teachers in connecting theory and practice, enabling them to support the community and build job-related skills (Resch & Schrittmesser, 2021). The study is guided by the theoretical lenses of agency (Adair, 2014) and communitarian citizenship (Delanty, 2002). These lenses focus on the civic capabilities from the perspective of children in early childhood settings. The data collected from preservice teachers were from their reflections. Children were interviewed at the end of the project. The data analysis was inductive to find the meaning of participants' experiences. A research assistant came to my class to recruit preservice teachers. The consent of the k-2 children was obtained through their classroom teacher. All participants were assigned a number. The findings reveal how much young learners enjoyed collaborating with college students and serving their community as they exercised their autonomy to create projects they deemed meaningful and impactful and how they developed empathy. These findings suggest implications for how children can be engaged in service-learning to build character, develop empathy, and skills to communicate and collaborate. This study iterates the fact that all participants need to be a part of it if we want to make early childhood education sustainable.

service-learning, children, preservice teachers, community-school partnership, empathy

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A11, NEW ROOM, Room 209, second floor, Edward Street Building

INTERNATIONAL ECE COMPARISONS

Chair: Claudia Melis, Queen Maud University College for Early Childhood Education, Norway

Exploring Child Standpoint Theory for ECE System Comparisons: Case study in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Presenters:

Annica Källebo, Department of Education, Stockholm University, Sweden

This ethnographic inquiry in Dhaka, Bangladesh explores the use of Child Standpoint Theory (Medina-Minton, 2018) as a framework for comparing and analyzing early childhood education (ECE) systems from the position of the child. System-level comparisons are regarded as difficult (Tobin, 2022: 297) due to ECE system “messiness” and policy approaches do not provide the vantage point to study actual conditions relevant to the child (Guevara, 2022: 340). The methodological approach equips the entangled researcher (Sobe & Kowalczyk, 2017) with the case study tool of tracing (Barlett & Vavrus, 2017) for exploring the applicability of Child Standpoint Theory (Medina-Minton, 2018) in mapping ECE attendances across diverse settings from the position of enrolled children. Within the qualitative interpretive research paradigm, ethnographic fieldwork was conducted in ECE settings with affiliated actors, alongside policy studies (Sharma, 2021). In-situ familiarization of teacher interview data, ex-situ qualitative content analysis (Bryman, 2016), and field observations were deployed to combine structural information from interviews with observations to visualize the local ECE systems from the physical position of the child. Informed participant consent was collected with the opportunity to withdraw at any time. Children in ECE settings were non-participants, voluntary activities opportunities were offered for them to become comfortable with researcher’s presence (Johansson, 2003). The findings reveal the complex interplay of barriers hindering education, including the structure of ECE provision, segregated services, and parental overreliance within the existing split-phase system structure. Implications suggest an integrated methodology for system-level comparison, relevant for comparison of ECE systems, from the child’s position.

system-level comparison, system messiness, child standpoint theory, ethnography, Bangladesh

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Early childhood education for sustainability in Sweden, Norway and Italy, a comparison of national curricula

Presenters:

Claudia Melis, Queen Maud University College for Early Childhood Education, Norway

Farhana Borg, Dalarna University, Sweden

Co-authors:

Gabriella Falcicchio, University Aldo Moro Bari, Italy

The aim of our study is to explore and compare the curricula for preschool in Norway, Italy and Sweden, with special focus on sustainability. Research indicates that national curricula play a significant role in developing educational activities for young children, who will bear the consequences of inaction in the actual climate and biodiversity crisis and should therefore be empowered to effectively engage themselves towards a sustainable future (Ärlemalm-Hagsér et al., 2014; Borg et al., 2022; Ohlsson et al., 2022; United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2022). This study uses Bruner’s theory of learning and process of education (1960, 1966) as well as an integrated approach to sustainability. A qualitative research paradigm will be used to conduct a critical content analysis (Cohen et al., 2018) to interpret and compare differences and similarities among the curricula. Although this is a curricula analysis that is based solely on secondary data, ethical consideration was given to ensuring fair representation of literature from relevant sources, to avoid possibility of bias. The findings indicate that in Norway and Sweden, the term sustainability is explicitly mentioned several times in the curricula as one of the core values of

the Framework plan for preschools. In Italy the term is not explicitly mentioned, although many parts of the curriculum can be directly linked to the UN sustainability goals. Our study contributes to increase knowledge about policies in preschool education in Norway, Sweden, and Italy. The results are discussed in the light of the different national contexts.

sustainability, comparative study, critical content analysis, integrated approach, climate change

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Knowing what matters for babies, toddlers and young children: Embedding Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the update of Aistear, the early childhood curriculum framework (NCCA, 2009) in Ireland

Presenters:

Mary Daly, NCCA, Ireland

Sharon Skehill, National Council for Curriculum And Assessment, Ireland

The aim of this presentation is explain how ESD is embedded in the update of Aistear, Ireland's early childhood curriculum framework. Building on Aistear (NCCA, 2009), the updated framework further embeds sustainability based on consultation findings (NCCA, 2023, French et al 2023, O'Toole et al 2023). Aistear includes principles, themes and guidelines. It is underpinned by a rights-based approach (Lundy, 2007, UNCRC, 1989) and a socio-cultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1932 Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and views babies, toddlers and young children as competent, confident, agentic global citizens. The consultation with professionals and parents was carried out within a qualitative and quantitative paradigm through online questionnaires, focus groups and written submissions. An interpretative lens (Braun and Clarke, 2022) supported the analysis of data to identify key messages. All data was collected and analysed in accordance with NCCA's research strategy (<https://ncca.ie/en/resources/research-strategy-2023-2026>). A consultation with babies, toddlers and young children was commissioned by NCCA to ensure the voices of our youngest citizens informed the curriculum update. This was undertaken by a consortium from Maynooth University, Early Childhood Ireland and Stranmillis College (O'Toole et al., 2023; 2024). Key messages from the consultation (NCCA, 2023 and forthcoming) emphasised the importance of embedding an understanding of sustainability for all children, beginning with babies and toddlers. A particular emphasis was placed on the professional role of the educator in facilitating ESD. This presentation details the findings from the consultation to update Aistear and illustrates the potential of ESD in the lives of babies, toddlers and young children.

Ireland, curriculum framework, children, education for sustainable development, child rights

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set A12, Room 225, second floor, Grand Parade building

DIVERSITIES OF GENDER, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN ECEC

Jean-Yves Plaisir, Borough of Manhattan Community College, United States

This symposium focuses on Promoting Sustainable Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within Early Childhood Education (ECE). The presenters will share current research while contributing to ongoing theoretical/conceptual discussions related to this focus area. The goal of this self-organized symposium is to explore how the topic of gender in ECE can be advanced in a sustainable future.

gender_balance

'You Ask Many Questions,' An Inquiry Into Translanguaging Practices Across Early Learning Settings In New York City: Implications for staff diversity, equity, inclusion, and quality in the ECEC workforce

Presenters:

Jean-Yves Plaisir, Borough of Manhattan Community College, United States

This research aims to share insights on the importance of multilingualism in ECEC settings. Previous studies show that translanguaging and intentional teaching benefit students from diverse cultures (Garcia, 2020; Epstein, 2015). Translanguaging is defined as a pedagogical approach that utilizes more than one language in classroom activities (Garcia, 2020), and intentional teaching strategies along with teacher reflexivity (Epstein, 2015) facilitate children's learning and improve teaching skills. Both theoretical and conceptual frameworks guide this research. Monolingual teachers may at times feel unprepared to teach linguistically diverse children, who are sometimes perceived as great challenges. Providing monolingual teachers with multilingual training and support can change perceptions, facilitate multilingual learners' integration, and yield benefits for all children in ECEC settings. This six-month inquiry utilizes qualitative research methodology (e.g., fieldwork notes and teacher reflections) to gather and analyze data on the translanguaging practices (Garcia, 2020) and intentional teaching strategies (Epstein, 2015) of 10 bilingual preservice early childhood educators in the implementation of lessons and activities to support culturally and linguistically diverse children across preK-2nd grade settings in New York City. The researcher applies APA Ethical guidelines (2017) and strictly safeguards the anonymity of the participants for the duration of this research and thereafter. The study concludes that multilingual staff can provide much-needed support to both emergent bilingual children and monolingual teachers in ECEC. It discusses how multilingualism can be instituted in staff development training and teacher preparation programs as an effective strategy for increasing staff diversity and quality in the ECEC workforce.

translanguaging, intentional teaching, teacher reflexivity, multilingualism, social and emotional learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Chinese Young Children's Gender Subjectivities in Transnational Families in the UK

Presenters:

Zhuoran Chen, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

This paper discusses how transnational family experience provides an opportunity for young children to subvert dominant gender discourses in their home countries. It emphasises the importance of bringing in young children's perspectives in transnational family studies since young children are often seen as passive receivers of family migration decisions (e.g. Entorf & Lauk, 2008; Margarida Marques et al., 2007). Theorising gender as performative (Butler, 1990), this study looked into participants' gender perceptions and performances and applied an intersectional frame of analysis to understand the complexity behind that (Co, Crenshaw, and McCall, 2013). Within a qualitative interpretive paradigm, it examined the narratives and visual materials created by 20 children aged 4-8 living in Chinese transnational families in the UK through picture book reading, drawing, and photo-taking in their households and communities. Besides parents/guardians' consent, children's consent was obtained with a child-friendly information sheet and consent form provided. Children made decisions on which activity they wanted to participate in and whether they wanted to withdraw from the study or not. Pseudonyms were adopted. The preliminary findings suggest that young children in Chinese transnational families in the UK do not necessarily subject themselves to gendered norms set by their parents and they have (re)shaped their gender subjectivities while negotiating with the gender dynamics in the UK. This study can potentially contribute to knowledge on using child-centred methods to explore gender-relevant topics with young children, especially in cases where young children are experiencing the cultural differentiations of constructing gender.

young children's gender subjectivities, Chinese transnational families, young children's perspectives, child-centred methodologies, gender discourses in China and the UK

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

How do men with different cultural backgrounds survive in the 'feminine' ECE profession?

Presenters:

Halah Elkarif, Cairo University, Egypt

Co-authors

Tim Rohrmann, HAWK Hildesheim University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Germany

This study explores how male educators with different cultural backgrounds navigate challenges within the ECE field, traditionally perceived as a 'feminine' profession. While prior research has identified various challenges faced by male ECE educators (Yan, 2018), and explored 'why' they choose to pursue working in this non-traditional career choice (Brody et al., 2021), this study uniquely investigates 'how' they manage to survive within the ECE field; mostly dominated by female staff. The study draws upon identity control theory (Burke, 1991) and stress and coping theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), both emphasizing individual agency, navigation of challenges, and adaptation. Within a generic qualitative approach, 18 face-to-face interviews were conducted with current male ECE educators in Germany, including participants with different cultural backgrounds. Adhering to EECERA ethical code for early childhood researchers, participants provided written and verbal taped consents for recording the interviews, signifying their voluntary participation in the research. The thematic analysis identified a number of actions, choices, strategies, and belief systems developed by the participants, serving as their 'survival mechanisms' within the ECE field. These mechanisms were employed, either consciously or unconsciously, on three different levels: personal, interpersonal, and professional. The adopted mechanisms, initially perceived as individual, were found to be shared among many participants, often unknowingly. Moreover, evidence demonstrates that cultural factors influenced the development of distinct mechanisms among participants with migrant backgrounds. The uncovering of these shared and culturally influenced mechanisms holds practical implications for supporting male ECE educators to 'thrive' rather than merely 'survive' in the ECE profession.

Male educators, feminine profession, survival mechanisms, cultural background, thematic analysis

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set A13, Room 229, second floor, Grand Parade building

STANDARDIZING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: BALANCING POLITICS, PRACTICES, AND SUSTAINABILITY

Line Togsverd, UC South, Denmark

In Denmark and other European countries, early childhood education and care (ECEC) are increasingly embedded in growing national and transnational political agendas aimed at detecting and preventing social issues, wellbeing concerns, and educational inequalities. This signifies a shift for Danish ECEC, traditionally characterized by an emphasis on play, children's perspectives and participatory practices, towards the implementation of various standardized methods and approaches designed to support early detection and interventions. This symposium empirically illuminates how the implementation of standardized methods translates into concrete and practical implications within the pedagogical practices of ECEC. The symposium critically examines the implications of pedagogical standardization for attention to children's voices, engagements, and social communities, challenging both the political and professional ideals of evidence-based systematic approaches in the 0-6 years pedagogy and the social and professional sustainability of such practices.

Sustainability in early interventions in Danish ECEC: A Critical Awareness of Assessment tools' perspectives and consequences for children when regarded as their data-doppelganger

Presenters:

Benedicte Bernstorff, UC SYD, Denmark

This study aims to critically explore consequences for children in early childhood education and care (ECEC) in Denmark when early interventions are based on assessment tools. Building on existing research of implications using assessment tools as an objective way to assess children (e.g. Franck et al 2022, Houmøller 2018), this research contributes by analyzing interventions in pedagogical practice focused on children's individual assessment scores. Theoretically the study draws on a Nordic pedagogical tradition, emphasizing a holistic understanding of children's development through social interactions and play in communities (e.g. Kampmann 2000) in contrast to assessment tools' focusing on children's individual cognitive skills and competences (Oosterhoff et al 2022). The analysis was

conducted within a child's perspective focused on a divided understanding of the child as both a data-doppelganger (Pierlejewsky 2019) and a real child. The data-material consist of observations, in-field conversations and semi-structured interviews with professionals from two ECEC settings conducted within an institutional ethnography paradigm (Smith 2005). The study is ethical approved in consent form by the participating municipality administration in accordance with the EECERA Ethical Code. Participants' names are pseudonyms. The analyses demonstrate that focusing on the data-doppelganger make other conditions invisible and risk to disregard children's exposure in ECEC. These findings point out political and pedagogical implications using assessment tools to define resource allocation and pedagogical interventions for children. The study urges for a reassessment of the sustainability focusing specific on the data-doppelganger to increase wellbeing of children in ECEC.

assessment tools' sustainability in ECEC, children as data-doppelgangers, early pedagogical interventions, resource allocation, exposure

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Navigating Assessment Practices in Danish ECEC: A Critical Inquiry into the pedagogical sustainability of Standardized Tools in Danish ECEC

Presenters:

Line Togsverd, UC South, Denmark

Oline Pedesen, University College UCN, Denmark

Aila Thorup Jensen, University College UCN, Denmark

This study aims to critically explore assessment practices in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in Denmark, often heralded for their potential to establish the foundations for systematic, sustainable, and evidence-based pedagogies. Building upon existing literature on assessment and standardization in ECEC (ex. Robert-Holmes 2014, Houmøller 2018, Franck et al 2022), this research contributes by analyzing assessment practices and the implementation of standards in the everyday context of ECEC in Denmark. Assessment practices are theoretically conceptualized as mundane practices (Bowker & Star 2000) negotiated and enacted (Ball 2011) in socio-material practices (Law & Mol 1995, Fenwick 2015). The study is grounded in institutional ethnography (Smith 2005) and implies observations, in-field conversations, and semi-structured interviews with professionals in two ECEC facilities. The analysis was conducted within a socio-material focusing on 1) assessment practices as performed within heterogeneous networks of relations and 2) the enactment of assessment results in pedagogical practice. The research emphasize the pedagogical and ethical tensions pedagogues need to balance when enacting the standards in practice. Participants' names are pseudonyms, ensuring confidentiality in accordance with the EECERA Ethical Code. Analyses reveal that professionals navigate a delicate balance between loyalty to the indicators of assessment tools, and pedagogical considerations for the specificity of the child and their parents. This delicate interplay is characterized as highly porous and fragile. The study underscores the political and pedagogical imperative to refine and nuance discussions and reflections on assessment practices, standardized tools, and their social and pedagogical sustainability in the realm of ECEC.

assessment and standardization in ECEC, policies and practices of early intervention, enactment, pedagogy, social, ethical and pedagogical sustainability.

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Reflections about social sustainability in applying an anti-bullying concept in ECEC: focusing on children's positions and pedagogue's judgement

Presenters:

Oline Pedersen, University College UCN, Denmark

Aila Thorup Jensen, University College UCN, Denmark

This study explores the role of pedagogues in applying the anti-bullying concept, Best Buddies, in ECEC, and the concepts impact on children's participation. The concept aims to prevent bullying. However, research indicates a lack of critical reflection among pedagogues in using such concepts (Aabro, 2019; Finne, 2021), and a risk of excluding children who don't meet the manual-based concept's criteria (Pedersen, 2018; Buus, 2019). The theoretical framework draws on a post-structuralist paradigm and Hannah Arendt's theory of judgement (Foucault, 1997; Arendt, 2006). This allows analysis of how discursive practices embedded in the manual-based concept condition children's subject positions, and how the concept influences pedagogues' ability to engage in an enlarged and representative thinking. The study is situated in a qualitative research paradigm (Hennink et. al. 2020), and video-observations were made in Danish ECEC-settings. The analysis is conducted through a reflexive thematic analysis. Informed consent was negotiated with the parents of the children involved. Pseudonyms have replaced the names of participants. Despite Best Buddies' aim to create socially sustainable children's environments, observations reveal elements that are not socially sustainable: some of the children's statements are ignored or altered if they don't fit the concept; conflict discussions are abstract and superficial; children are encouraged to respond in certain ways rather than relate to subjects. We argue that the issues we identify are inherent in the conceptualization of pedagogical practice: that pedagogues must follow a predetermined manual instead of engaging in the emergent interaction. The results will be used in reflection-workshops with pedagogues.

anti-bullying concept in ECEC, children's positions, pedagogue's judgement, social sustainability, discursive practice

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A14, Room 318b, third floor, Grand Parade building

ACTION RESEARCH FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ECEC

Victoria Whittington, University of South Australia, Australia

Critical action research as a professional learning tool: a case study across four early years education settings

Presenters:

Victoria Whittington, University of South Australia, Australia

Co-authors:

Jamie Sisson, University of South Australia, Australia

Christine Woodrow, Western Sydney University, Australia

The research explored the use of critical action research (CAR) to strengthen teacher capacity in employing culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogies (CLRP). Research into effective teacher in-service professional learning has established that one-off professional development may not produce long-term positive change (Hayes et al. 2009). Teachers have called for contextualised approaches to professional learning, empowering them as agents in creating sustainable positive change (Sisson et al. 2018). Supported CAR (Kemmis et al. 2014) is one possibility. The study used the theoretical construct of affective atmospheres (Anderson, 2009) to explore teachers' employment of CAR in their practice with families. The qualitative case study explored the CAR experiences of four early childhood teams via participant interviews, professional learning community meeting (PLCM) notes, and videoed presentations of findings. Post University ethics approval (# 205239), participant co-researchers gave informed written consent, which included the right to withdraw without disadvantage. Pseudonyms replaced names. Findings revealed that use of CAR brought about embedded change in CLRP teacher thinking and practice. Enablers included teachers choosing their research topic, participation in regular PLCMs guided by university colleagues including on-site mentoring, support from participating peers and workplace leadership, readings access, and space and time to research. Atmospheric walls included concerns about transgressing accepted practice, workplace overload, pressure from site leaders, and barriers to regular PLCM attendance. Implications for employing CAR include the importance of recruiting motivated, reflective teachers, the value of regular PLCMs with ongoing university colleague support, and settings making time for teachers to create new local knowledge.

critical action research, culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogies, case study, early childhood education, professional learning

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

How critical reflection through Scrapbook compilation became a methodological tool : Now let's talk action research in practice.

Presenters:

Dawn Jones, Wolverhampton University, United Kingdom

Glenda Tinney, University of Wales Trinity Saint Davids, United Kingdom

The research considers how reflection during the construction of children's scrapbooks, led to new meaning making within the mosaic methodological approach. It investigates how scrapbooks might support action research within practice. Building upon the research of Walling-Wefelmeyer (2020) the research team considered how scrapbooks were an accessible way for children and pedagogues to collaborate and learn with each other in practice, supporting action research ideas. The theoretical framework draws upon the 'pedagogy of listening' which is embedded within the Reggio Emilia approach (Rinaldi, 2006) also embodying Clark's (2020) 'slow pedagogy' specifically, reflective thinking through the mosaic approach. The study positioned within interpretative qualitative paradigms, uses an ethnographic approach (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019) to reflect upon two reception teachers action research project, with a group of 10 reception children's ideas around the 'blue mat'. Ethics is ongoing. Daily assent is sought from children whose parents identified they would opt into the project. Both teachers were informed about the research and provided consent, agreed to share their reflections and were aware of their right to withdraw. Data collection is due to be completed in July 2024. Research findings will enable greater understanding of the effectiveness of scrapbooks in action research within practice. Scrapbooks used in a collaborative manner may be a process that enables young children to be viewed as active agents and experts within their own lives, have equal power relations with adult researchers and be heard and listened too (Wilkinson and Wilkinson, 2018).

action research, scrapbooks, Mosaic approach, child's voice, reflective pedagogy

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The Researchful Practice Toolkit Project: Empowering EY Teachers' as Researchful Pedagogues

Presenters:

Frances Giampapa, University of Bristol, School of Education, United Kingdom

There are many gains for schools developing a research literate workforce that can critically assess, engage in and develop research as part of everyday practice. This paper shares outcomes of an impact project - the Researchful Practice Toolkit (Giampapa & Lee 2022). The aim was to understand the impact of the toolkit for supporting EY teachers research literacy & the creation of research learning communities. This research is informed by literature on professional learning & identities and research-engaged practice (Brown 2017; Baumfield & McGrane 2001; Handscombe 2019; Rose et al. 2017), and conceptually driven by research on teacher identities and professionalism (Giampapa & Barrera 2023). Drawing from participatory action research, we used semi-structured interviews, knowledge exchanges & data from the toolkit to understand EY teachers' experiences of using research and executing their own research projects as an empowering and emancipatory process. Guided by an 'ethics of respect' (EECERA 2015) together with a structured ethical reflection (Brydon-Miller, Aranda & Stevens 2015) we considered values such as: collegiality, sensitivity and benevolence & integrity; attention to detail & professionalism in conversation with, for example, consent, power & participant relationships. Findings suggest the importance of understanding the enablers and barriers to EY teachers' researchful practice & how driving their own in-house research can empower them to be change agents. EY teachers' professional learning & development must go beyond engagement with current research models, enabling them to confidently and agentively deal with directives and policy initiatives that impact their working lives.

researchful practice, early years teacher identities, research and pedagogical practice, research-informed practice, early years teachers as researchers

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A15, Room 103, first floor, Edward Street building

STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACHES TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Carol McNulty, University of North Carolina Wilmington, United States

Looking deeper: Using Video Enhanced Reflective Practice and Work Discussion to support professional development in work with 0–3-year-olds.

Presenters:

Julia Manning-Morton, Bath Spa University, United Kingdom

This research explored how educators might develop respectful caregiving physical interactions through using Video Enhanced Reflective Practice (Strathie et al 2011) and work-discussion. Research emphasises the close connections between the quality of physical interactions and children’s development (Hertenstein and Weiss 2011) and VERP has been shown to enhance professional skills in interactions (Kennedy et al 2015). The study centred on concepts of embodiment (Ellingson 2017), intersubjectivity (Trevarthen and Aitken 2001) and attunement (Stern 1998) and incorporated ideas of self-modelling and video feedback as agents of change (Kennedy et al 2015). This was a phenomenological study, using co-operative inquiry, with research methods that were collaborative and participatory (Reason and Bradbury 2006). Educators from early years settings gathered video observations of physical interactions and participated in work-based discussion groups (Rustin and Bradley 2008). Consent to video was gained from the parents of children involved (Bertram et al 2016). Observations were made by key persons, who attended closely to children’s ‘in the moment’ communications of un/willingness to participate, using ‘ethical radar’ (Skanfors 2009) in an on-going process. Data analysis suggests that the taking and reviewing of video clips gives perceptual salience to physical interactions, which, along with a strengths-based approach, contributes to professional curiosity and positive professional self-esteem. The technique of pausing video in the VERP process, supports in-depth analysis and reflection (Jewitt, 2012) and encourages a slowing down in educators’ interactions. This suggests that the use of VERP is an effective model for facilitating professional development in work with infants and toddlers.

video, babies, care, interactions, reflexivity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Using Solution-Focused BRIEF Coaching with Early Childhood Educators

Presenters:

Carol McNulty, University of North Carolina Wilmington, United States

Co-authors:

LeAnne W. Smith, Wilmington, North Carolina, United States

This study evaluated the effectiveness of the Solution- Focused BRIEF Coaching (SFBC) model in helping teacher candidates achieve their goals with students in early childhood classrooms. SFBC is rooted in a clinical approach first developed by a team of therapists (de Shazer et al., 1986) looking for the best techniques to work in the minimal amount of time. What resulted was a paradigm shift to explore clients’ desired future outcomes, instead of analyzing past problems (Visser, 2013). We applied SFBC training in the context of teacher preparation. This study relies on social constructionism as meaning is constructed between coach and participant. Rooted in positive, strengths-based psychology, SFBC asserts that language is powerful. Participants verbally “rehearse” their preferred outcomes. Following the protocols of SFBC, we coached five student teachers in early childhood classrooms. After two sessions, we interviewed participants about their perceptions of the SFBC process as related to their teaching goals. We transcribed the interviews, analyzed data, created codes, and developed these into larger themes. Participants

volunteered for the study and are identified by pseudonyms. Participants credited the “miracle question” for building self-efficacy. Talking about their own strengths encouraged them to move successfully through challenges. The “forced” reflection allowed time to form specific strategies to reach stated goals. Being situated as “experts” in the coaching conversation and the verbalization of preferred futures prompted new ways to process their thoughts. SFBC was perceived as highly beneficial and should be considered as a tool in teacher education programs to promote educator agency.

coaching, teacher preparation, strengths-based, mentoring, interview data

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Promoting high-quality mentoring practices for future workforce sustainability

Presenters:

Edith Nicolas, The University of Melbourne, Australia

Cristina Guarrella, The University of Melbourne, Australia

Co-authors

Parian Madanipour, Griffith University, Australia

This research aims to identify strategies employed by mentors that promote pre-service teacher satisfaction and self-efficacy, and subsequently designing professional learning resources to improve placement practice in the sector. Positive placement experience is a key determinant to pre-service teachers entering the Early Childhood (EC) workforce (Nolan & Rouse, 2013). Given the current crisis in the Australian EC workforce supply, identifying high-quality mentoring practices is key to supporting workforce sustainability. Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) asserts that learning occurs within relationships where participants actively contribute to the process of growth, that cannot be dissociated from its context of occurrence. This qualitative research involved 1-hour interviews with 20 mentor teachers and 16 pre-service teachers. Themes were identified using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun et al., 2019); they informed a model outlining elements of a positive placement experience and the subsequent co-design of resources to support mentoring practice. Human research ethics approval was granted by the University. Participants provided written consent to participate. Involvement was voluntary and participants could withdraw from the research at any stage. Findings demonstrate how the social-emotional dimension of mentoring relationships is intrinsically linked to the pedagogical dimension, which in turn builds teacher identity. These dimensions contribute to both pre-service-teachers' placement satisfaction and sense of teacher self-efficacy. Building an understanding of effective mentoring practices through a dialogue between pre-service teachers, mentors and researchers allows the distribution of knowledge and influence across stakeholders. This shared decision-making process ensures transparency in the design of contextually relevant resources that can positively impact placement practices.

mentoring, pre-service teachers, mentor teachers, practicum, professional learning

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set A16, Room 104, first floor, Edward Street building

PERSPECTIVES ON PROFESSIONAL AGENCY AND RELATIONSHIPS

Kaisu Peltoperä, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Exploring the relationship between early childhood teacher agency and retention

Presenters:

Jessica Ciuciu, Deakin University, Australia

This PhD study explored early childhood teacher (ECT) retention by analysing the relationship between ECT agency and retention. Contemporary research argues that agency is an important facet of ECTs' professional practice (Jones

et al., 2017; Molla & Nolan, 2017) and is important for their professional identity (Jones et al., 2017). A lack of agency contributes to the attrition of ECTs (Ciuciu & Robertson, 2019). Sen's Capability Approach (CA) (Sen, 1999) and Gramsci's theory of hegemony (1971) informed the theoretical framework. Together, the CA and theory of hegemony enabled me to consider factors that enable or constrain ECT agency. The work of Apple (2006) was utilised to understand how neoliberalism acts as a hegemonic force on the professional lives of ECTs. The qualitative multiple case study (Stake, 2006) engaged six ECTs, five service leaders, and two policy agents. The ECTs engaged in two interviews, and generated four video-diary reflections on critical incidents. The leaders and policy agents engaged in an individual interview. Low-risk ethics approval was obtained. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Pseudonyms have replaced participant names. The achievement of agency was found to support short- (i.e., 12 months) and mid-term (i.e., 5 years) retention as it enables ECTs to engage in work that they feel is meaningful which contributes to job satisfaction. A counter-hegemony to neoliberalism is needed to expand capability for agency and promote retention. This requires a systemic approach to redressing the privatisation of ECEC and the working conditions of ECTs.

teacher retention, teacher agency, the capability approach, early childhood workforce sustainability, relational leadership

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Professional agency in early childhood education and care (ECEC)

Presenters:

Kaisu Peltoperä, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Co-authors:

Susanna Paloniemi, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

This study informs the discursive construction of professional agency of the multi-professional personnel working in early childhood education and care (ECEC). ECEC personnel face resource limitations when dealing with changes and lack the ability to influence their own work (Pekkarinen & Pulkkinen, 2023; Kangas et al., 2022). Additionally, professional identities within ECEC have been characterized as vague (Melasalmi & Husu, 2019), which poses challenges since identity plays a crucial role in professional agency (Vähäsantanen et al., 2017). We apply subject-oriented socio-cultural perspective of agency (Eteläpelto et al., 2013) which defines agency as ways in which professionals influence and develop their work while negotiating their professional identities both individually and relationally (Edwards, 2005; Peltoperä & Ukkonen-Mikkola, 2023; Vähäsantanen et al., 2017). This research draws on socio-constructionism (Burr, 2003) and discursive psychology (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, 2001). The data was collected between 2022 and 2024 from 11 in-service trainings and include 23 focus-group discussions where participant discuss a developmental task, they have conducted at their workplace. The analysis focused on the variety of meanings constructed for professional agency and the positions constructed for different occupational groups. Participants received consent forms and information sheets, with the option to withdraw from the study at any time. Pseudonyms were used to protect participant identities The study reveals disparities in professional agency across the occupational groups within ECEC. Notably, developmental tasks provided a space for professional agency to emerge. These findings underscore the need for organizational culture to actively promote professional agency among all ECEC practitioners.

early childhood personnel, discourse analysis, in-service training, professional agency, professionalism

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Workplace Relationships, Emotion Regulation, and Teacher-Child Relationships among Early Childhood Educators in South Korea

Presenters:

Lieny Jeon, University of Virginia, United States

Co-authors

Sooyeon Byun, Yonsei University, South Korea

Youseung Lee, Yonsei University, South Korea

The goal of this study is to examine whether early care and education (ECE) teachers' relationships with colleagues and relationships with directors are similarly or differently associated with teachers' emotion regulation (reappraisal and suppression), which in turn, with the quality of teacher-child relationships (closeness and conflicts). Previous research suggests that positive work environments contribute to teachers' effective classroom practices and high-quality teacher-child relationships, which are essential for children's thriving (e.g., O'Connor et al., 2011). Thus, fostering positive work environments is vital for the success of ECE systems. Particularly in South Korea (SK), where the ECE system exhibits a strong organizational hierarchy, understanding the association between work environments and teachers' experiences may enable better support for teachers, ultimately, enhancing their long-term commitment (Ha & Jung, 2020). The Prosocial Classroom Model (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009) highlights the importance of enhancing positive work environments and teachers' emotional competence to promote quality education systems. This quantitative study analyzed the survey data from 322 ECE teachers in SK, employing structural equation modeling (SEM) to simultaneously analyze direct and indirect associations between the variables. Participants were provided informed consent, and the survey was conducted anonymously without collecting identifiable information. We found significant direct and indirect associations among relationships with colleagues and directors, emotion regulation, and teacher-child relationships. Unexpectedly, teachers' greater satisfaction with their relationships with directors was associated with increased suppression emotion regulation. The findings suggest that efforts to nurture open communications between directors and teachers may support teachers' healthy emotion regulation, ultimately, positive teacher-child relationships.

emotion regulation, teacher wellbeing, workplace relationships, teacher-child relationships, work environment

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set A17, Room 105, first floor, Edward Street building

WATERSCAPES AND THEIR PEDAGOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR ECEC: CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

E. Jayne White, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

This symposium presents findings from a cross-cultural pilot study that set out to understand the pedagogical significance of waterscapes for children and teachers in ECEC contexts across Aotearoa, Norway and Tanzania. Its aim was to understand their significance for children's learning, and to understand how water is represented in curriculum. While engagement with nature holds substantial pedagogical appeal for many ECEC teachers, much less is known about waterways as a source of teaching and learning. Taking an ethnographic approach, children and teachers were invited to share representations of what 'mattered' concerning waterways. Ethical agreements meant that these were anonymised and only shared publicly with their permission. Our findings highlight the sociopolitical and sociocultural status of water in children's learning – its access, use and significance. The extent to which children should play 'with' water, learn 'about' water or take actions towards its preservation in curriculum are deeply impacted accordingly.

sustainability_early_childhood_education

Children's engagement with water in Norway, New Zealand and Tanzania in educational contexts.

Presenters:

Elin E. Ødegaard, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Jayne E. White, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Co-authors:

Veronica Bergan, UiT- the Arctic University of Norway, Norway

Nemes Danstan, non, Tanzania

Ngoroma Williams, Canterbury University, New Zealand
 Aihu Hu, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

This study explores how children and staff are engaged with water in educational contexts in Norway, New Zealand and Tanzania. The aim of value is to encourage a 'glocal' awareness and a just and sustainable praise and use of water in local landscapes. To fill the knowledge gap with descriptive and critical knowledge, we lean on the evidence that, regardless of availability, children's access to water and involvement in water-related experiences ensures sustainable water use (Davis, 2008). The conceptual framework stems from a relational space-place-material-based methodology (Ingold, 2010) and that of practices-developing research, in which collaborative exploration is the encouraged pedagogical approach (Ødegaard & Hedegaard, 2020; Wallerstedt, et al, 2023). Data was created collaboratively with children and teachers in Norway, New Zealand, and Tanzania kindergartens. In all countries, our starting point was 1) Where does the water in my place come from? 2) What is happening to the water in the place where I live? 3) What does this mean for me, my community, and the planet? We got approval from the national ethical review organization in each country, we agreed on only sharing publicly with the permission of all and children's approval by question. We found that water draws children's attention to play and exploration. Local variations and indigenous perspectives revealed elements of conflicts/dilemmas and how to handle them. Findings suggest the need for teachers to learn about local conditions, stories and scientific knowledge to be better prepared to engage in explorative and in-depth dialogue about water with children.

collaborative exploration, glocal mindset, waterscape, sustainability, ECEC

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Indigenous perspectives of waterscapes from Te Wai Pounamu, New Zealand and Norway

Presenters:

Madeleine (preferred name middle name: Ngaroma) Williams, University of Canterbury, New Zealand
 Veronica Bergan, UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

The aim is to investigate how water and waterscapes are perceived by children and teachers in indigenous early childhood education settings in New Zealand and Norway. Sharing of authentic indigenous knowledge is key to this research. The research is underpinned by the "Wash From the Start" initiative (<https://omepworld.org>) and aligns to UNESCO's sustainable development goals concerning access to clean water for drinking and sanitation (en.unesco.org). Kaupapa Māori theoretical and conceptual frameworks were drawn upon: Whakapapa of the genealogical accounts of past, present and future to all the waterscapes, land, and people was brought about through whanaungatanga (relationally connected), manaakitanga (the ethic of care) and tautoko (supporting applications). As a qualitative pilot study with an explorative design with indigenous ECE professionals and children through a 'walking-as-method' approach (Pacini-Kechabaw, 2012). The immersion of researchers in the complex ecology of the life of ECE communities meant that they were deeply involved in the settings, took photographs, dialogic encounters (White, 2020) with children and teachers. All photographs were de-identified however there was a possibility that the ECE setting could be identified due to the geographical locations of waterscapes captured in such cases participants could choose to withdraw such data. Ko te wai te ora o nga mea katoa - water is the life giver of all things. Indigenous knowledge is key to overcoming many of our current global issues - it is time to unite so future generations have access to the same resources too!

indigenous, water, future generations, bicultural curriculum, explorative pedagogy

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Children's representations of waterways - in and out of curriculum view

Presenters:

E. Jayne White, University of Canterbury, New Zealand
 Elin Eriksen Odegaard, Western Norway University of Applied Science, Norway

Co-authors:

Aihua Hu, Western Norway University of Applied Science, Norway

Nemes Danstan Benguye, Tanzania Early Childhood and Community Development (TECD), Tanzania

The aim of this research was to explore the meanings granted to waterways in curriculum by children. Water holds special significance for learning in the early years (Wagner & Samuelsson, 2019). However, tensions are evident in curriculum framings of water as resource versus object for play (Pacini-Ketchabaw & Clark, 2016). While UNESCO (2019) identify declining emphasis on social/emotional dimensions of sustainability in curriculum, in favour of cognition, research advances the centrality of nature in developing positive attitudes (Ritchie & Alcock, 2018), and promoting creativity and health (Jones & Greenway, 2021). Dialogic ethnography explored children's experiences of waterways across ECEC curriculum sites. This interpretive approach enabled researchers to engage in dialogues with children through photography and narrative methods (Denton et al, 2024). Dialogism takes the view that dialogues shape meanings, and that what is prioritised may not be all there is to 'see'. (White & Janfab, 2024). Children's representations did not include any identifiable features and all narratives were anonymised. Juxtaposing espoused curriculum intentions alongside children's representations in practice a series of tensions arose for learning. These highlighted the value that is, or is not, granted to children's playful engagement, scientific learning and/or sustainable practices in/for or with waterways, and why this was the case. Implications arise concerning the profound impact of waterways on learning. We invite speculation concerning the extent to which curriculum approaches and attitudes to learning might best reflect their significance for life long learning and sustainability.

early childhood education and care, children, waterways, curriculum, learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A18, Room 211, second floor, Edward Street building

ASSESSING AND EVALUATING WITH CO-DESIGNED TOOLS, QUESTIONNAIRE AND OBSERVATION

Sandie Wong, Macquarie University, Australia

The Research on Current Situation of Emergent Writing Environment Based on Large-class Kindergarten—Citing Ten Kinds of Kindergartens in BaoDing City as an Example

Presenters:

Juan Zhao, Hebei University, China

The study use observation method to record the emergent writing environment in 10 kindergartens which are in different types and different levels. What are the differences in writing environments in the large classes in China. Marie Clay (1966) mentioned the germination of reading and writing in her doctoral dissertation. Bingham (2015) research shows that teachers encourage children to use these writing materials. Bingham (2017) pointed out that teachers have little knowledge of emergent writing support methods in kindergarten class environment. The term Emerging Literacy (EL) originated from Clay's doctoral thesis at the University of Auckland in 1966. Reading and writing germination emphasizes the perspective of the development and formation of reading and writing, exploring how young children become writers and readers. This study adopts quantitative research, using scales, WRITE, and auxiliary interview methods. In my research, I use written or verbal consent methods to give special consideration to vulnerable groups such as children. This study found that from the score of the environmental quality of emergent writing in the kindergarten, the physical environment is close to the middle level, and there is still a large gap between the psychological environment and the middle level; there are significant differences in the quality of the emergent writing environment of different types of kindergartens, and the writing environment of public kindergarten is better than the private kindergarten. The Chinese Ministry of Education has issued the document "Guiding Points for Kindergarten Enrollment Preparation Education". This study plays an important role in people's understanding of this document.

WRITE tool, emergent writing activities, emergent writing environment, literacy environment, teacher support

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Developing a questionnaire to assess confidence of early years educators in using language support strategies

Presenters:

Rachel Gardner, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Katharina Ereky-Stevens, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Kathy Sylva, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Ariel Lindorff, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

This study developed LangQuest – a self-report questionnaire for early years educators which aims to accurately assess their confidence in their use of language supporting strategies with children aged 2-4yrs. Early language skills are critical for later academic success (Snowling et al, 2016; Spencer et al, 2017). Educator training in high quality adult-child interactions can improve children’s early language outcomes (Dockrell et al, 2011). Yet, there is a lack of validated measures that can be used in evaluation studies to assess practitioner skills and confidence.

Potential items for a practitioner questionnaire were developed through a rapid literature review of the existing research evidence, and the current UK guidance on curriculum and pedagogy for communication and language. Following a modified three-round Delphi technique, a review with 12 experts in the field of early language and communication was carried out to generate consensus on the items to be included in the scale. A pilot study of the resulting questionnaire with 50 EY educators will be completed in April. Ethical approval was granted by the university ethics committee. Ethical principles of decision-making and consent, right to withdraw and confidentiality were followed. This presentation describes the development of LangQuest, and presents results on the consensus on items, and the feasibility and psychometric properties of the scale. This tool will be valuable in intervention studies to measure changes of educator's perceived competency in supporting early language development. There are plans to experiment with its use as a self improvement tool.

language supporting strategies, child-educator interaction, early years educator confidence, Delphi technique , assessing educator confidence and skill

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Enriching and evaluating infant-toddler educational practice through co-designed tools

Presenters:

Sandie Wong, Macquarie University, Australia

Susan Irvine, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

Co-authors

Sheena Elwick, Charles Sturt University, Australia

Sheila Degotardi, Macquarie University, Australia

Belinda Davis, Macquarie University, Australia

Linda Harrison, Macquarie University, Australia

This research aimed to co-design a Pedagogical Documentation Assessment Tool (PDAT) to assess the quality of infant-toddler educators' practice. The PDAT is a critical component of the evaluation of the Observe, Reflect, Improve Children’s Learning (ORICL) project, funded by the Australian Research Council. The ORICL digital tool was co-designed to support and strengthen infant-toddler educational practice (Williams et al., 2023). Pilot work has demonstrated that ORICL provides opportunities for educators to develop specialist knowledge and skills in observing, reflecting and communicating the learning experiences of individual children (Elwick et al., 2023). The PDAT was designed to assess ORICL’s contribution to enhancing the quality of educators’ documentation of children’s learning, development and wellbeing. Principles of implementation science (Metz et al., 2014) informed the collaborative co-design of the ORICL tool and subsequently, the PDAT criteria for assessing the quality of

educators' documentation. The PDAT co-design process included: 1. Generating ideas about quality constructs of pedagogical documentation from literature and a stakeholder focus group. 2. Consolidating, and gauging levels of agreement about the purpose, principles, content and format of the PDAT, through a stakeholder survey. 3. Operationalising the agreed content into criteria and indicators in a rubric; 4. 'Testing' the rubric with stakeholders. Stakeholder participation was voluntary. All data were anonymised. Co-design generated an agreed purpose for the PDAT, principles for its use, and specific indicators of quality documentation. Beyond its use in the evaluation of ORICL, the PDAT has potential to support educator self-reflection, and professional development at pre-service and organisational levels.

Infant-toddler educational practice, pedagogical documentation, stakeholder engagement, co-design, improving learning and teaching

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A19, Room 304, third floor, Edward Street building

METHODOLOGIES OF POWER, VOICE & IDENTITY

Sharon Colilles, Bath Spa University, United Kingdom

These studies demonstrate a common thread within them to position participation, voice, and advocacy. Power sensitive methodologies are explored across all three papers to include marginalised or silenced children in research processes. A discourse attributed to ideas about social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) and Said's (1978) work of Orientalism and Freire's (1970) emancipatory pedagogical work is made explicit. Conceptualisations of power and agency (Foucault, 1977) are also utilised in these papers to suggest that play has an important role to enact connectedness within a pedagogy of advocacy for all children. Findings in these studies also allude to the authentic representation of marginalised children, in which their stories are seen, heard and responded to.

Using a drawing methodology to investigate the post migration lived experiences of very young Syrian refugee children in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in England.

Presenters:

Donna Gaywood, University of Gloucestershire/ Centre for Research in Early Childhood, United Kingdom

This presentation shares a power sensitive drawing methodology which was developed through a small scale-doctoral research study as an ethical way to include very young refugee children in the research process. The methodology draws on Tobin's (2016) research with migrant children, the Mosaic approach (Clark and Moss, 2011), Theron et al (2011) drawing approaches with child victims of the Rwandan genocide and is grounded in Freire's (1970) emancipatory pedagogical work. It draws heavily on Said's (1978) work on Orientalism, Gallien's (2018) critique of representation of refugees in literature and film and Savsar's (2020) requirements of refugees being situated centrally in their own narratives. Using multimodal data, personalised stories were created using cartooning as a method of representation (Cameron and Theron, 2011). These stories offered a springboard for discussion about the children's lived experiences and proved vital for the children's identity formation. (Strekalova-Hughes and Wang 2019). This drawing methodology was careful not to re-enforce colonial attitudes or unhelpful tropes about refugees (Savsar 2020), placing them in disempowering positions of victimhood whilst the host country was positioned as a saviour. The children were positioned clearly as "persons of self-rescue" (Kyriakides et al, 2018:65) and authors of their own scripts of refuge. Ensuring authentic visual representation of refugee children is complex and requires power sensitive methodological practices. This drawing methodology has made their stories visible and proved effective in capturing their post migration lived experiences in ECEC. Issues of voice, power and representation are key for researchers when researching with marginalised children.

refugee children, power sensitive, drawing methodology, representation and voice, multimodal data collection

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Whose decision: Principled approaches for inclusion in pedagogical approaches

Presenters:

Sharon Colilles, Bath Spa University, United Kingdom

This presentation shares how a praxeological methodology from a small scale-doctoral research study examined play-based approaches to include children's perspectives about mixed ethnic identity formation. Methodology uses Moll (1992) funds of knowledge theorisation, children's cultural knowledge Karabon (2017) with mixed-ethnic children to explore their participation in and understanding of ethnicity in learning experiences with peers and practitioners. Sociocultural theorising Corsaro (2015), Rogoff (2003) cultural tools of thought and Broadhead & Burt (2012) work on play as a mediation tool is used for connecting ideas to situate the children's narratives in learner-practitioner interactions. Data collection techniques used socio dramatic play episodes as a culturally responsive method for research interpretation (Pascal and Bertram 2009, 2012). Enabling co-construction of generative themes from meaningful dialogic conversations between all the participants. Terminology heard positioned cultural features of children's narratives (Kabaron, 2017) and their capacity for sharing their 'funds of knowledge' (Barron, 2014). As black researchers' ethical considerations emerge when questioning existing pedagogical practice. Insider outsider contentions relating to positionality are key considerations (Corbin Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). Praxeological approaches ensure democracy, empowerment, and self-efficacy is positioned at the heart of research so that children can name their worlds (Freire, 1970). Giving status to children's unique raced perspectives is complex, requiring understanding of power sensitive methodologies. Praxeological methods affords parity between professional and learner agency so that mechanisms are established for engaging with the perspectives of children with multiple identities and belongings. Issues surrounding practitioner cultural knowledge, power and voice are key for researching ethnic/raced identity.

pedagogy, inclusion, ethnicity, identity, voice

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

How can play provide affordances for the connectedness of newly arrived and host children in ECEC settings in England?

Presenters:

Alison Tobin, Birmingham City University, United Kingdom

This research aims to explore how play can provide affordances for connectedness of newly arrived children in Early Childhood settings. It also evaluates the extent that Foucault's concept of a heterotopia (1998) can support this understanding. The study draws upon research which investigated the empowerment of migrant families (Tobin, 2016) and the challenges affecting identity and relationships (Bove and Sharmahd, 2020) alongside making meaning of migratory experiences (Kirova, 2010). The theoretical lenses applied consider childhood as socially constructed (Vygotsky, 1978), the theory of knowledge and power (Foucault, 1977) and his concept of heterotopian spaces (Foucault 1966). It also reflects that children and families are the cognoscenti in relation to their lived experiences through their funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992). The methodology is qualitative and interpretivist and uses a multiple case study analysis (Yin, 2018) afforded by observations and semi structured interviews. The data analysis applies both thematic (Braun and Clarke, 2022) and diffractive analysis (Barad, 2007). Ethical understanding and consideration are given to protect child participants in relation to advocacy, wellbeing, vulnerability and power relations, using the EECERA ethical code (Bertram et al., 2015) Emerging findings from the study suggest that play has an important role to enact connectedness, agency, voice and power within a pedagogy of advocacy for all children. The knowledge attained from this study will enable educators to support and advocate for marginalised children, providing affordances for children to connect, to become and belong. The power to enact this agency collectively has the potential for influencing policy.

play, power, marginalised children, connectedness, heterotopia

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A20, Room 305, third floor, Edward Street building

SUSTAINABILITY ADDRESSED THROUGH THE CONCEPT OF WORLD-CARE IN EARLY YEARS EDUCATION

Ditte Winther-Lindqvist, Aarhus University Department of Education, Denmark

This symposium unfolds how sustainability in ECEC can be addressed through a focus on world care. The concept of world care is coined as a new way of addressing sustainability in the ongoing collaborative research project 'Green Transition as World-Care'. Together with management and educators in a Danish municipality we investigate how sustainability can be understood and developed as an extension of existing care practices unfolding in ECEC. (1) The first paper presents 'world care' as an ethically and hope-oriented domain of care for ECEfS which is entangled dialectically with other caring domains, based on care-ethics, (eco)feminist theory and phenomenological inspirations. (2) the second paper thematizes how the idea of 'caring for the world' manifests in the educational practice from the perspective of the educational staff. (3) the third paper unfolds how children's experiences with ECEC practices in project institutions show in visual articulations through children's drawings.

World-care as a way of thinking in green transformation in ECEC

Presenters:

Ditte Winther-Lindqvist, Aarhus University Department of Education, Denmark

One of the most important research aims of the research project 'Green Transition as World-Care', is to provide a new ethical and caring basis for ECEfS. Previous and ongoing research works focus on learning about nature, however learning is not a guarantee for caring (Wals 2017), so we suggest care ethics as the basis for ECEfS. The theoretical framework of 'world care' include responsibility for our natural origin (animals, plants, eco-systems, and climate). Based on the care theories of Løgstrup, Tronto, and Jonas', (eco)feminist theory and phenomenology we suggest the terms of self-care, other-care, we-care and world-care as the relevant caring domains for ECEfS practice. Through a qualitative research paradigm we are engaged in action-research as methodology exploring and developing practices of world-care through interviews and research circles together with management and staff in 11 facilities in a Danish municipality. The project is based on care ethics considering the wellbeing of both staff and children when working with the wicked problem of sustainability. All empirical material adheres to ethical guidelines, informed consent and GDPR. Caring domains are conflictual so that they can out-rule, sustain and heighten each other. Fully realizing the human-nature inter-dependency is key for the educators ability to act as role-models for children in promoting change, agency and hope together with children in daily practice. However, taking responsibility in world-care is both burdensome and meaningful and challenge educators personally and professionally. Identifying engaged, collaborate and hopeful ways of transforming ECEC to ECEfS is needed in the field.

care ethics, green transition, world-care, sustainability, eco-feminism

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring visual dialogic methods to study young children's worldviews in the context of World-care practices in ECEC

Presenters:

Anne Maj Nielsen, Danish School of Education, Aarhus University, Denmark

We aim to study how visual articulations in drawings with dialogue can articulate children's perspectives on their lifeworld as participators in Danish ECEC practices addressing issues of climate- and bio-diversity-crisis through world-care for green transition and sustainability. Research has shown how children's articulation in drawings and dialogue offer mediation of experiences in their lifeworld (Drake & Winner, 2013; Nielsen, 1995, 2012, 2017; Walker,

2007), and that very young children worry for our world (Sommerville & Green, 2015). The theoretical framework integrates body-phenomenology (Fuchs, 2011) and culture-psychology (Vygotsky, 1986) conceptualizing experience as; sensory embodied perception loaded with affectivity mediated by intersubjective encounters and sociocultural artefacts in participatory practices (Svinth, 2013). Body-phenomenology and culture-psychology lay the paradigmatic ground for qualitative observations and focus group drawing activities and interviews with children in ECEC (Nielsen, 2023). Within a phenomenological hermeneutical approach, a content analysis was conducted. Informed consent was provided by participating children, their parents, and a reassuring pedagogue in group. The study meets the ethical standards at Aarhus University, Denmark. Visual dialogic methods, and how they can illuminate children's worldviews and ideas of hopeful agency and care for their perceived lifeworld and inspire world-caring pedagogy in ECEC-practice, are discussed. The findings suggest how ideas, artefacts, and caring embodied practices to deal with natural environments and life in ECEC as world-caring places, can further develop world-caring pedagogy in ECEC-practice.

children's drawings, embodiment, sustainability, culture-psychology, world-care pedagogy

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

World care thematized through educators' everyday priorities

Presenters:

Marie Kolmos, Danish School of Education, Aarhus University, Denmark

This presentation focuses on qualities and challenges in translating the theoretical concept of 'world-care' introduced in the project to everyday ECEC practice from the perspective of the educators. As Gruenewald (2003) and Filipova (2021) points out, issues concerning ecology and climate changes are often abstractions from the immediacy of the places where we live and thus also form the practical everyday life in daycare facilities. The paper presents how concepts of place (Wood, 2010, Casey, 1996) and social aesthetics (MacDougall, 2006) can be helpful rendering qualities and paradoxes visible in the educators engagement with the concepts of world-care. This paper presents specifically on insights from the part of the ethnographic field work of the overall research design. This fieldwork involves observations, and interviews in daycare facilities, and in research circles, where selected staff members participate in workshops with topics related to the 'world-care' pedagogy is introduced and reflected together with researchers. Written information has been given to the project's participants and the pedagogues directly involved in this presentation have given their permission for information from them to be passed on in a pseudonymized form. Focusing theoretically on children and the educational staff as emplaced individuals inscribed in the context of their bodily and material existence (Wood, 2010; Casey, 1996) the presentation discusses how elements of sustainability and caring for the world emerge in the educational everyday life. Against this background, this presentation gives examples of how the educators work with sustainability can be integrated into the everyday practice of ECEC.

sustainability, phenomenology, place, everyday practice, educational staff

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A21, Room 307, third floor, Edward Street building

EXPLORING EMOTIONAL LABOR IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS' WORK: POLITICS, RESEARCH, AND WORKFORCE SUSTAINABILITY

Tamara Cumming, Macquarie University, Australia

Workforce sustainability is a challenge for many early childhood education contexts. Alongside structural elements, less-tangible aspects of practice are being explored as ways of improving workforce challenges. Emotional labor - work done to suppress or produce particular emotions in paid work (Hochschild, 1983) - is one such aspect experiencing burgeoning research interest. This symposium engages with politics and research about educators' emotional labor. Saha considers the role of organisational factors in Finnish educators' and centre directors' emotional labor, Dickerson discusses Australian educators' strategic employment of emotional labour with families,

and Cumming uses Foucauldian tools to question the politics of emotional labor. Through these presentations we aim to generate new thinking in relation to who knows about emotional labor, what they know, and what effects this knowledge is producing, as well as questions that could better direct emotional labor research and practical efforts to help improve workforce sustainability.

Early childhood educators' hidden work: Illuminating educators' emotional labour with families

Presenters:

Melanie Kate Dickerson, The University of Sydney, Australia

Co-authors:

Marianne Fenech, The University of Sydney, Australia

Tina Stratigos, The University of Sydney, Australia

This presentation reports findings from an investigation that aimed to reveal educators' emotional labour in their work with families. To date, only four empirical investigations highlight emotional labour in educators' work with families (Brown et al., 2022; Lee & Brotheridge, 2011; Morris, 2018; Quiñones et al., 2022), with limited evidence on how and why such labour is exercised (Dickerson et al. 2024, in press). Furthermore, educators' emotional labour as skilled work, and its wellbeing implications, remain largely unacknowledged (Cumming & Wong, 2019). To challenge maternalistic discourses that undervalue educators' emotion work (Ailwood, 2007) the investigation utilises Grandey et al.'s (2013) conceptualisation of emotional labour theory situated in a critical feminist paradigm. As the second component of a longitudinal mixed-methods study, qualitative case-study data from nine participants was collected over 12-months of interviewing and journaling. Participants' wellbeing was supported through providing participation adjustments (interviewing instead of journaling; shorter interviews more often) and wellbeing support service details. Participants could also withdraw at any time and permission to use data collected prior to withdrawal was sought. Findings illuminate emotional labour as skilful work used to position educators as professionals and strategically sustain family partnerships for positive child outcomes. Emotional labour was also found to impact, and be impacted by, educators' wellbeing in both sustaining and draining ways. Acknowledging educators' emotional labour with families and the associated wellbeing aspects has implications for practitioners, employers, training providers, and policymakers, and may inform strategies seeking to address current workforce wellbeing and attrition crises in Australia and internationally.

early childhood education, emotional labour, families, educators, wellbeing

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Reopening the Foucauldian toolkit: Critiquing emotional labor in the work of early childhood educators.

Presenters:

Tamara Cumming, Macquarie University, Australia

This theoretically-driven presentation engages with the politics of knowledge about early childhood educators' emotional labor. Workforce shortages are impacting families' capacity to undertake paid work and children's access to early childhood education. While structural remedies for poor wages and conditions are the focus of efforts to improve workforce sustainability, these times also offer conditions of possibility (Foucault, 1980) for questioning and reshaping implicit aspects of educators' work. Emotional labor is one such aspect - reportedly present across diverse national contexts and eras (Hong, 2019), and mostly associated with challenges to aspects of educators' wellbeing, their experiences of work and their tenure (Zhang et al., 2020). This presentation utilises Foucault's (1980) work on power-knowledge to question underlying assumptions about the intrinsic nature of emotional labor in educators' work. Drawing on a post-modern paradigm, a Foucauldian toolkit is used to critique assumptions about educators' emotional labor evident in extant research literature. The discussion considers the ethics and politics of knowing-about emotional labor in educators' work - asking who knows, what do they know, how do they know, and what effects do these relations of power produce? Understanding answers to these questions may help equip educators with more tools for understanding the role of emotion in their work, and for how they choose to deploy it. The

discussion will also generate considerations for research agendas and methods used for exploring educators' emotional labor, as well as ways service providers and policymakers might support educators' emotional labor as a means of improving workforce stability.

emotional labor, early childhood educators, workforce, Australia

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Being nice no matter what: Emotional labour and organisational factors among educators and centre leaders in Finnish early childhood education

Presenters:

Mari Saha, Tampere University, Finland

Co-authors

Tamara Cumming, Macquarie University, Australia

Linda Nurhonen, Tampere University, Finland

This presentation explores whether there are associations between stress, emotional labour and organisational factors (i.e. organisational climate) among ECE educators and centre leaders. Working with young children is intensive interpersonal work (Nislin, 2016). It is argued that in order to facilitate quality interactions with children, educators are expected to 'perform emotions' (Wang et al., 2021), namely do emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983). However, research on emotional labour in the context of ECEC is limited. Particularly little is known about its impact on educators' wellbeing (Cumming & Wong, 2019). It is also important to explore what factors in the work environment and organisational culture are associated with it. Hence, the holistic conceptualisation of educator wellbeing (Cumming & Wong, 2019) is used as a theoretical framework in examining associations between stress, emotional labour and organisational factors. Self-reported quantitative survey data measuring stress, emotional labour and organisational factors was collected from 896 educators and 125 ECE centre leaders in Finland. Multi-group path analysis is used to compare mediation models. Participants were informed of the voluntary nature of the survey and their right to privacy with written consent. The presentation will discuss the preliminary findings and also use the findings as a prompt to think about what kind of questions we should ask next to better understand the concept of emotional labour in ECEC. Results could help us to understand what factors in ECEC work environments and organisational cultures contribute to emotional labour and how working conditions can be improved to better support staff wellbeing.

emotional labour, educators, ECE center leaders, stress, organisational factors

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A22, Room 308, third floor, Edward Street building

CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL TRANSITION EXPERIENCES

Louise Hannan, Centre for research and early childhood, United Kingdom

Starting school during Covid (a pandemic!): Exploring the transition experiences of children with special educational needs and/ or disabilities

Presenters:

Emma Kettle, Birmingham City University, United Kingdom

The research aims to explore the experiences of children starting school during Covid-19. This resonates with Sustainable Development Goal 4 - promoting an inclusive and equitable quality education for all children, complementing research around the pandemic, which 'caused learning losses in 4 in 5 of 104 countries studied' (United Nations, 2023). Research highlights the impact of Covid-19 on children starting school, including difficulties in building relationships and shortcomings around governmental guidance on supporting children with SEND (Wythe,

2022; Backopoulou, 2022). However, voices of children and parents/ carers are missing from previous and current research. This study draws upon the Bioecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006) and the Capability Theory Approach (Sen, 1985), considering social contexts in which a child lives, complex landscapes and influences in their wider environment, and agency children had starting school during an unprecedented time. The study is being conducted through a mixed-method interpretive paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and creative research methods have been used. The data will be analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2020). Ethical considerations include participants' rights to informed consent, the right to withdraw, and anonymity. I will reflect on data collected from participants, sharing experiences of starting school during a worldwide pandemic. I will share research aims, methodology, and theoretical frameworks that underpin the study. Study findings could influence school/ local policy changes around transition planning for children with SEND, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality experiences, and support national policy regarding statutory guidance around transition.

transition, Covid-19, starting school, special educational needs and disabilities, children's voices

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

An exploration of two-year-olds experiences of the emotional environment in early years' settings offering funded places

Presenters:

Louise Hannan, Centre for research and early childhood, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Project aims include documenting and interpreting how two-year-olds children experience that emotional environment and to develop practice so that it supports children's emotional development This project positions itself with the social psychology field, which understands that relationships shape our world, including how we understand and experience that world (Gruman, 2016). Therefore, phenomena are understood through human interactions (Smith, 2014). Elfer (2015) identifies 3 aspects that relate to the emotional work within nurseries: attachment and relationships; emotional labour; conscious and unconscious responses. A combined methodology of Praxeology and Phenomenology is used to examine how the emotional experience (as a phenomenon) could be seen in practice. It also aims to provide practice-based insights that will inform future work and research in the field. Methods focus on direct observation in settings. Ethical permission was granted by the University of Wolverhampton. All areas of ethics were considered including protection from harm, confidentiality, debriefing and honesty and openness. Permission was sought from all parties prior to commencement of the project. Three main themes have been identified:

- Emotional environments are often not our primary focus
- Emotional environments are complex
- Emotional environments are interwoven.

The project presents a new theoretical model, combining previously discovered ideas and concepts and blending them so that each are considered next to each other. This will provide a structure for a suggested reflective process that settings can complete. This will allow them to audit their emotional environment and build new insights into their improvement plans for staff and the setting.

emotional, emotions, daycare, relationships, attachment

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A23, Room 309, third floor, Edward Street building

REFLECTIONS FROM THE FROEBEL PARTNERSHIP ON THE IMPACT OF RESEARCHERS AND EDUCATORS WORKING TOGETHER GUIDED BY FROEBELIAN PRINCIPLES

Chair: Helen Lyndon, Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC), United Kingdom

The Froebel partnership represents an international collaboration of Froebel-inspired educators and researchers in England and New Zealand who collaborate in an exploration of pedagogic principles and practices. This symposium set will provide an overview of a Froebelian approach to evidencing practice. The partnership, now in its final phase, is a community of practice (Wenger, 1991) between Guildford Nursery School and Family Centre, Seven Stars Kindergarten and the Centre for Research in Early Childhood. Through this symposium set the impact of a Froebelian approach to evidencing practice on researchers, educators and children will be considered.

The Froebel Partnership: Agentic Professional Development Within a Cross-National Community of Practice

Prof Chris Pascal and Prof Tony Bertram, Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC), United Kingdom

The aim was to explore how professional wellbeing and flourishing develop within a community of practice. This research draws on a cross-national project developing, documenting and analysing Froebelian pedagogic practice in England and New Zealand. It builds upon participatory research projects using Froebelian principles and ethics (Bruce et al, 2019; Pascal and Bertram, 2023). This project adopts a Praxeological (Pascal and Bertram, 2012; Formosinho and Formosinho, 2012) and Affirmative Inquiry (Cooperrider, 2008) approach, drawing on Froebelian principles and practices (Bruce, 2022). This small scale, qualitative, praxeological project uses case study methodology and uses a new approach to data and evidence analysis, Froebel Approach to Data Analysis (FADA) (Pascal et al 2022). The affirmative inquiry reduces risks to participants and researchers take issues of power distribution very seriously. Consent and assent of all stakeholders and anonymity is a primary concern and identities are protected through use of pseudonyms and strict data sharing protocols. The study findings demonstrate that sustained and agentic professional development is highly effective in transforming practice and professional wellbeing and may aid workforce recruitment and retention. The study reveals that practice-led, ethically experienced research can operate as an effective model of professional development which has the potential to radically deepen pedagogy and learning AND transform professional and child wellbeing and fulfilment by enabling humans to flourish. It offers an empowering model for professional development which can secure practitioner retention, reduce mental stress and enhance professional wellbeing.

Froebelian principles, agency, professional wellbeing, professional development, practitioner research

A headteacher's perspective on educators and researchers working together, guided by Froebelian principles

Sally Cave, Guildford Nursery School and Families First Guildford

The research provided the opportunity for educators to develop their pedagogic strategies within a Froebelian approach across the nursery school setting. Froebelian principles (Bruce et al, 2019) have supported previous research (Pascal et. al., 2022) through which engagement with nature, the relevance of the Occupations, the central importance of play and a specific Froebelian Approach to Data Analysis (FADA) have supported reflective professional development. The Froebelian principles (Tovey, 2020) are woven through the development of educators and connect with current issues of sustainability, diversity and inclusion. This participatory research design gave educators and children voice and offered choice in the development of research interest. Educators documented developing interests. Consent and assent of all stakeholders, including parents of children, was a central feature of this praxeological research design which allowed both children and educators freedom to follow their interests. The entire team ensures the children's identities are protected through use of pseudonyms and strict data sharing protocols. The findings indicate that a Froebelian approach to evidencing practice involving researchers and educators working together has an extremely positive impact on educators and children. The impact can be seen in the levels of wellbeing, professionalism, sustainability, autonomy, recruitment and retention. There is relevance and potential for a Froebelian approach to evidencing practice within current English educational policy and beyond with specific scope to support the flourishing of the sector. A Froebelian approach to evidencing practice involving researchers and educators working together supports empowering professional development like no other CPD opportunity currently available.

Froebel, reflection, empowering, wellbeing, sustainable

A perspective on Kaiako (teachers) and researchers working together, guided by Froebelian principles from Aotearoa, NZ.

Helen Lyndon, Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC), Anne Denham and Lynda Harris, Seven Stars Kindergarten, Aotearoa, New Zealand

Empowerment (whakamana) and contribution (mana tangata) are at the heart of Te Whāriki; Seven Stars Kindergarten strives to provide a Froebelian-inspired learning environment woven within a holistic curriculum. This project documents the development of practice around Froebel's principles and seeks to exemplify the connection with Te Whāriki. Froebelian principles (Bruce et al, 2019) have supported previous research (Pascal et. al., 2022) through which engagement with nature, the relevance of the Occupations, the central importance of play and a specific Froebelian Approach to Data Analysis (FADA) have supported reflective professional development. The Froebelian principles (Tovey, 2020) are woven through the development of educators and connect with current issues of sustainability, diversity and inclusion. This participatory research design gave educators and children voice and offered choice in the development of research interest. Consent and assent of all stakeholders, including parents of children, was a central feature of this praxeological research design which allowed both children and educators freedom to follow their interests. Children's identities are protected through use of pseudonyms and strict data sharing protocols. The findings indicate that a Froebelian approach to evidencing practice involving researchers and Kaiako (teachers) working together has an extremely positive impact. Froebelian principles and practice support a culturally appropriate and holistic early childhood curriculum and have relevance within 21st Century Te Whāriki practice. A Froebelian approach to evidencing practice involving researchers and educators working together supports empowering professional development like no other CPD opportunity currently available in Aotearoa NZ.

Froebel, reflection, empowering, wellbeing, sustainable

Set A24, Room 201, second floor, Dorset Place building

EMOTIONAL CLIMATE, TEMPERAMENT AND SOCIOGRAMS

Zoe Raven, Acorn Early Years Foundation, United Kingdom

Making relationships visible: sociograms as a tool to support connection and self-reflection in early childhood education and care

Presenters:

Sally Pearse, Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

Though rarely discussed as part of professional practice, studies have shown the benefits of close, loving relationships between children and practitioners in early years settings. In this study a group of five early years teachers discussed their practice and used a sociogram to map relationships with children over a year. Sociograms have been used to research relationships within education as a tool for teacher reflection and professional development (Lyle, 2003; Elden, 2013; Kim & Capella 2016). The study draws on Page's (2018) concept of professional love and participatory enquiry. The study drew on the participatory research paradigm (Bensimon et al., 2004; Bryden-Miller et al., 2013) to create a collaborative space for critical reflection on an aspect of practice that is implicit, and rarely part of professional discussion (Page, 2018). The participants were five Reception class teachers, recruited through a regional early years charity. Maps were created three times across the academic year to capture relationships and formed the basis of discussions about individuals and groups of children. Participants received information and consent forms on their rights in line with BERA guidance (2018). I highlight three key findings of the benefits of using the map: a space for self-reflection; revealed hidden influences on relationships; ensured that each child was considered, and actions taken to address issues in relationships. The implications of this study are that the opportunity and space to collectively reflect on relationships over time is crucial in supporting teachers' understanding and self-knowledge of their relationships with children.

relationships, mapping, participation, co-design, love

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Children's temperament and learning from ECE to school

Presenters:

Jonna Kesäläinen, University of Eastern Finland (UEF), Finland

Co-authors:

Nina Sajaniemi, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Minna Huotilainen, University of Helsinki, Finland

This is a longitudinal study to investigate the persistence of children's temperamental traits and their links to learning. The study is part of the Daxis project, which included the participation of 663 children from 29 public ECE centers located in Salo, Southern Finland in 2017-2018. Now these children are 3-6th graders and we are collecting the follow up data in 2023-2024. The temperamental trait of effortful control is related to self-regulation, which is core ability in learning. The more effortful control a child has, the better he or she will be able to concentrate. (Rothbart, 2011; Robson, Allen & Howard, 2020) Children's temperament is evaluated by parents with the Child Behavior Questionnaire (CBQ) (Rothbart et al. 2001). To examine learning outcomes, the Finnish Lukilasse 2 test is used. The test assesses children's reading and arithmetic skills. Lukilasse 2 is standardized and adapted to grades 1–6 mirroring the children's skills in relation to their age. The study obtained ethical approval from the University of Helsinki Ethical Review Board in the Humanities and Social and Behavioural Sciences. We collected written informed consents from the guardians and additional consents from participating children. It is important to understand the factors behind learning, such as children's different temperaments, in order to support equal learning opportunities for all children. The current project seeks to illuminate the potential long-lasting effects of the ECE environment, and the obtained information can be used to further develop the Finnish ECE environment and national core curriculum for early education.

early childhood education, ECE, temperament, learning, child behavior questionnaire, CBQ, effortful control

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Assessing Emotional Climate: The Impact of Emotional Interaction Quality in Early Childhood Education Toddler Groups

Presenters:

Suvi Puolakka, University of Helsinki, Faculty of Education, Finland

Co-authors

Marianna Heinonen, University of Turku, Finland

Päivi Pihlaja, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

This research examines the emotional climate concerning the quality of early childhood education professional (ECEP) -child emotional interaction. Previous studies indicate that positive and masking negative emotions benefit children by creating an appropriate emotional climate in ECE settings (Santos et al., 2021), that supports children's social, emotional, physical, behavioral, and cognitive development (Riblatt et al., 2017) This study is based on early learning concepts, especially high-quality interactions between ECEP and children (Hambre & Pianta, 2007) and the theory of emotional availability (Biringen et al., 1998) This ethnographic mixed-method study aims to investigate the dynamics of child-adult interaction within an Early Childhood Education (ECE) setting through video observation. The participants of the research were from 8 ECE toddler groups in Southern Finland and included 80 toddlers and 25 ECEPs. The 64h data was observed by trained observers using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System-Toddler (CLASS-Toddler) and Emotional Availability Scales (EAS). Commencing the study, an introductory phase preceded

data collection, wherein consent forms were distributed to all participants. Ethical considerations were carefully addressed, particularly regarding video recording of children, and participants were given the option to withdraw at any time. Preliminary findings suggest that the positive climate and sensitivity of the ECEP are of moderate to high quality at the collective level. Micro-level analysis is in the process. These findings produce data on the quality of emotional interaction to improve the emotional climate in ECE surroundings.

early childhood education, emotional climate, emotional interaction quality, early childhood education professional-child interaction, toddler

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set A25, Room 401, fourth floor, Dorset Place building

POLICY, GOVERNANCE, AND MONITORING OF HOME-BASED AND PARENT-INITIATED CHILDCARE

Nina Hogrebe, TU Dortmund University, Germany

Childcare services providing a more intimate, familial environment – like home-based care (HBC) or parent-led childcare-centers – represent a pivotal component within early childhood education and care (ECEC) services in several countries (OECD, 2023). However, the extent of regulation of these services differs; in some countries, for example, there is a large unregulated childminding sector, and often there are no education guidelines (Eurydice, 2019). So far, little is known about the relevance of regulation and specific structural elements for service quality and professionalism of such ECEC services. For policies to be well informed, data and empirical knowledge is important (OECD, 2015). The symposium presents data-based knowledge on policy, governance, and monitoring of HBC and parent-initiated services across diverse contexts. Three presentations from Belgium, Japan, and Germany provide investigations into policy frameworks that influence the professionalism and quality of such forms of ECEC provision and their impact on professionals, families, and society.

Process Quality in home based and centre based ECEC-settings (0-3 years) in Flanders (Belgium)

Presenters:

Bart Declercq, Centre for Experiential Education, KU Leuven, Belgium

Co-authors:

Michel Vandebroek, Ghent University Department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy, Belgium

Jochen Devlieghere, Ghent University Department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy, Belgium

This study is a repetition of the MeMoQ-measurement of 2016 that aims to measure process quality in home and centre based ECEC-settings (0-3 years) in Flanders. This research builds further on European literature reviews (Unicef, 2008; OESO, 2015, 2021; European Commission, 2012), the developed pedagogical framework (MeMoQ, 2014), SICS (EECERA 2007, 2012), MeMoQ-baseline (EECERA, 2017) and similar research in the Netherlands (Slot, 2023). Six independent dimensions are considered as elements of process-quality: 'wellbeing', 'involvement' (SICS, Laevers et al., 2005), 'emotional' and 'educational support' (CLASS, La Paro, 2012; 2014), 'learning environment' and 'cooperation with parents and respect for diversity in society' (MemoQ, 2016). Surveys on structural characteristics and parents views completed data collection. Half-day observations in 304 units (103 home based, 201 centre based settings) are executed by 7 trained observers, using CLASS (La Paro, 2012; 2014), SICS (Laevers, 2005) and the MeMoQ-environment rating scale. Observers had to pass a reliability-test for all instruments. Participants were informed and participated by mutual consent. Ethical guidelines of the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity were followed. Results are processed anonymously. Despite differences in structural quality, home and centre based settings offer similar process quality. Results suggest moderate to high levels of wellbeing and emotional support, whereas involvement, educational support and environment show lower levels. Aspects of structural quality influences results in each of these dimensions. Results will be used for support of ECEC settings and will inform policy on structural elements that impact on process quality (such as group-size and adult-child ratio).

assessment and evaluation, national baseline study, process and structural quality, home and centre based care, ECEC

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Home-based childcare in Tokyo: the progress of multiculturalism

Presenters:

Mikiko Tabu, Seitoku University, Japan

Home-based childcare in Japan is a state funded ECEC provision for children under three. This presentation aims to identify the challenges the providers face in ever growing multicultural and multilingual contexts, and to examine their needs for support to improve their practices. A questionnaire survey conducted by the presenter in Tokyo, 2021, revealed that nearly 90% of respondents were currently or have in the past cared for children with immigrant backgrounds. However, few studies have looked into the actual state and little attention has been paid to the unique role of home-based childcare in helping such children and their families. Developmental research shows that for infants and toddlers growing up in minority cultural and linguistic environments, the mastery of CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) in the mainstream language, along with the acquisition of their home language(s), is vital for their future success. Text-mining using KH Coder was conducted on the open-ended items of the questionnaire to (i) highlight the landscape of the respondents' ideas of good practices for children with immigrant backgrounds, and (ii) identify their need for support from local authorities and academic institutions to attain them. Approved by the Ethics Committee of Seitoku University, the survey was conducted anonymously by postal method. Cross-cultural knowledge, interpreting services and other forms of support were found to be sought. However, local authorities do provide various support for professional development specifically for home-based childcare providers. The survey will assist in closing the gap between demand and supply by identifying where it lies.

home-based-childcare, Tokyo, state ECEC system, children with immigrant backgrounds, professional development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Parent-run daycare in Germany: Challenged by regulation and professionalization

Presenters:

Nina Hogrebe, TU Dortmund University, Germany

Marie-Christin Linde, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Germany

Co-authors

Johanna Mierendorff, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Germany

The aim of our study is to investigate how parent-run daycare in Germany deals with increasing trends of professionalization and regulation in early childhood education and care (ECEC), and what specific challenges they face. Parent-run daycare centers firstly emerged the late 1960s, are operated by a parent board, and parents support day-to-day activities and administration. Especially with the transformation of ECEC since the new millennium, demands and regulation for ECEC—which is often the same for all providers (Mühler, 2010)—increased (Silvester, 2009), and the number of parent initiatives decreased. According to neo-institutionalism, organizations—here: different types of ECEC providers—need to adapt to specific situational contexts. They are exposed to environmental influences in different ways (Meier & Meyer, 2020) and the effectiveness of this adaptation may vary (Hasse & Krüger, 2020). To understand parent-run daycare centers specific organizational processing of changed environmental demands, we conducted expert interviews (n=5) with executives of parent initiatives' umbrella associations in different regions. The analysis was conducted through qualitative content analysis (Kuckartz, 2018). The German Research Association's ethical regulations are obeyed. Data are anonymized and interviewees gave their consent to research/publication. Preliminary results show that pedagogical and substantive developments (e.g., education/language, child protection, participation) are positively evaluated by the interviewees. However, overregulation is perceived as a threat to parental board management and, possibly, the continuity of this type of

ECEC provision. While ECEC regulation is meant to ensure high ECEC quality, it has consequences for service providers. Therefore, policy makers need to evaluate (un)intended effects of their policies.

ECEC transformation, service regulation, professionalization, parent-run daycare, neo-institutionalism

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Symposium Set B

14:45 – 16:00, Wednesday 4th September

Set B1, Sallis Benney Theatre, ground floor, Grand Parade building

MAKING A CASE FOR QUALITY MULTIMODAL LEARNING AND DIGITAL PLAY PRACTICES

Sarika Kewalramani, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

Given that integration of digital technologies as part of play-based teaching methods is a global priority, it is important to gain insights into the value that existing digital and multimodal educational resources bring into early childhood. For example, to provide STEM education, maths education, enhancing children's digital literacy and communication, creativity and problem solving skills. This symposium engages in sense making of how to deduce quality multimodal and digital play resources that educators can meaningfully use with children.

digital_childhoods

Exploring 0-3s' Digital Learning in Family Homes.

Presenters:

Lorna Arnott, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Rosie Flewitt, MMU, United Kingdom

Zinnia Mevawalla, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

Julia Gillen, University of Lancaster, United Kingdom

Karen Winter, Queens University Belfast, United Kingdom

Janet Goodall, University of Swansea, United Kingdom

Sandra El Gemayel, MMU, United Kingdom

Sabina Savadova, University of Lancaster, United Kingdom

Sarah Timmins, University of Swansea, United Kingdom

Andy Dalziell, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

Toddlers, Tech and Talk is an ESRC funded research project that explores birth to 36-month-old children's experiences with technology for talk and literacy learning in the home learning environment across the UK. The project draws on research from DigilitEY Cost Action (Gillen et. al 2019) and knowledge of how very young children engage with technology and media (Dardanou et al. 2020 & Marsh et al 2020), to further unpick digital learning in homes. We draw on a post-digital perspective which articulates the inseparability of child's digital and non-digital world as homes become networked spaces (Flewitt and Clark, 2020). This mixed methods, participatory study consists of three phases: 1) a nationwide survey of parents and legal guardians of 0-36-month-olds (1,603 responses); 2) 40 interviews with parents and 20 with ECEC practitioners; and 3) 40 case studies of individual families at home. The ESRC framework for ethics was followed, approval gained from 5 University partners and written voluntary consent was sought from legal guardians. Children's assent was carefully monitored through gesture and body language. We present deep insights into how digital tech forms part of everyday family life for today's babies, infants and toddlers. Examples of everyday practices with devices as well as children's digital skills at this age will be presented, many of which debunk traditional deficit perspectives of technologies in young lives. The project offers

an opportunity to support parents and educators make best practice decisions to ensure children's quality engagement with digital devices to optimise literacy learning.

toddlers, technology, talk, play, family learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A scoping review of the role of multimodal resources for inclusive STEM participation in early childhood education

Presenters:

Sarika Kewalramani, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

Co-authors:

George Aranda, Deakin University, Australia

Gerarda Richards, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

Lihua Xu, Deakin University, Australia

Jiqing Sun, Deakin University, Australia

Linda Hobbs, Deakin University, Australia

Bridgette Vanleuven, Science Gallery, Australia

Kylie Smith, University of Melbourne, Australia

Jan Vandriel, University of Melbourne, Australia

Victoria Millar, University of Melbourne, Australia

Belinda Dealy, Swinburne University of Technolog, Australia

The research aims to examine the role of multimodal learning resources that promote inclusive STEM participation for children. Research favours STEM teaching and learning should be encouraging children to think beyond one modality (e.g., use of digital technologies) while exploring their everyday world, make interconnections and rationalise choices about which modality communicates their message most effectively (Yelland, 2018). Multimodal resources allow children to manoeuvre and manipulate artefacts available to them. Our theoretical approach is rooted within a social semiotic perspective, where Van Leeuwen (2010) have indicated that multimodality enables children to use different types of expression to communicate a message, share an idea—and thus, make their different perspectives visible to the adults and peers in their learning environment. Using PRISMA methodology and narrative document analysis approach, themes included how the content and resources available on 18 STEM education websites and their underpinning frameworks addressed whether multimodality supports STEM participation. Ethical concerns associated with what and how information was interpreted on publicly available websites was considered by the researchers who reflexively engaged with issues of voice and representation of STEM. Findings revealed there were few multimodal resources that engage children with interactive and meaningful opportunities to be autonomous learners (e.g. children have agency), moving between the digital and hands-on physical spaces, gamification for deep learning and links to everyday STEM scenarios. Implications lie in addressing inclusive STEM participation by considering children's learning abilities and agency, parents/educators' sociocultural backgrounds, confidence in STEM awareness, and functional accessibility for communicating STEM learning.

multimodality, everyday STEM, inclusive learning, digital and multimodal play, child agency

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

An evaluation of maths touchscreen apps and their educational potential for young children

Presenters:

Anastasia Misirli, University of Patras, Greece

Vassilis Komis, University of Patras, Greece

Kostas Lavidas, University of Patras, Greece

Co-authors

Matoula Sarri, University of Patras, Greece
Hara Gotsi, University of Patras, Greece

We are reviewing a sample of commercially available apps that claim to support early childhood children's math knowledge to assess their quality and which features are linked to educational potential. Most apps children use are not designed according to educational principles; thus, whatever indication is provided for their quality is very little, especially in math (Booton et al., 2023; Outhwaite, L. et al., 2022; Papadakis & Kalogiannakis, 2017). The design of digital games for teaching mathematics presents challenges related to the content and the user interface. Game design features allow preschool children to engage in higher-order cognitive processes and formulate problem-solving strategies (Morfoniou et al., 2020). A pragmatic paradigm is adopted, following a mixed methodology and approaching the research questions holistically through the lens of quantitative and qualitative analysis. A large number of apps (n = 73) were selected from Google Play (Statista, 2022), based on included and excluded criteria and additional measures. Ethical considerations applied the guidance provided by the Association of Internet Researchers (Franzke, Shakti, & Anja, 2020), utilising only publicly available data and no collection of personal data from human participants. The up-to-date evaluation of math apps revealed limited interactive characteristics with a practice-based design, the absence of opportunities that encourage off-screen play, and math talk for reinforcing learning. Findings primarily suggest indicators for educators and parents to make appropriate decisions and make implications for how math app interventions can work in the home to empower parents and support children's learning.

touchscreen apps, game-based learning, types of apps, mathematics, problem-solving

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B2, Room G4, ground floor, Grand Parade building

QUALITY IN HOME-BASED CHILDCARE

Lise Lemay, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada

Home-based childcare (HBC) – i.e. regulated childcare offer usually within the provider's home setting – represents a pivotal component within the broader spectrum of early childhood education and care services chosen by families in many countries. Despite its significance, the value of HBC have historically remained underexplored in academic research. We are therefore calling for papers that offer empirical data and insightful analyses on a range of topics including:

- **Quality:** The meaning of quality in the context of HBC and on how the quality can be ensured and enhanced.
- **Professionalization:** The role of education and training for individuals providing education and care at home, along with the creation of support networks and structures.
- **Inclusion and Diversity:** The design of HBC to offer equitable educational opportunities to all children.
- **Family Support:** The importance of engaging and supporting families within the HBC setting to promote holistic child development.

Every Day Quality (EDQ): Building a Practical Toolkit for Continuous Quality Improvement in Family Child Care

Presenters:

Rena Hallam, University of Delaware, United States

The Every Day Quality Project is designed to develop a practical, user-friendly measure of child care quality appropriate to home-based settings and can be used to support continuous quality improvement. Current quality measures used in home-based settings are typically adapted from center-based settings. These measures often fail to address the unique features and strengths of home-based care and are often viewed by educators as not relevant to their daily experience (Bromer et al, 2021; Hooper et al., 2021; Melvin, 2022). This study employs a Transformativist Measurement Development Methodology (Sankofa, 2021). A transformativist research paradigm centers the experiences and perspectives of home based educators in the measurement development process and

moves away from traditional deficit approaches. The proposed session reports on the first phase of the study which is qualitative. Sixteen focus groups were conducted with US family child care educators and data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2021). A consent form was provided to all participants outlining confidentiality measures and participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. Pseudonyms are used in all reporting of the data. Preliminary findings highlight the unique features of home based care with an emphasis on the emotional connection between children and caregivers. Educators often describe high quality home-based care as a “home away from home” with a particular focus on stability of caregiving and individualized attention to children. These findings suggest implications for how appropriate quality measurement can be used to support home-based caregiving settings.

home-based care, family child care, quality measurement, quality improvement, measurement development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Growing Stronger Together: A Mixed-Methods Case Study on Communities of Practice with Canadian Family Childcare Educators

Presenters:

Laura Woodman, University of Alberta, Canada

This study aims to examine how engaging with a community of practice impacts family childcare educators' sense of professionalism, learning, and ability to offer high-quality childcare. Communities of practice are known to support educators' professional identity development and efficacy (Doan, 2021), and continual professional development increases quality of childcare (Ratner et al., 2022). However, most available continuing education is geared towards center-based care and offered by instructors with little to no experience or training on family childcare (Bromer & Weaver, 2016). Wenger's (1998) Community of Practice framework guides this research. Social constructionism is the paradigm used in this mixed methods case study. Educators completed a pre-post test survey on their quality of childcare alongside written reflections to highlight the impact of engaging in this community of practice. Data was only collected and analyzed from those who chose to participate in the research. All participants provided informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity were upheld and data managed securely. Preliminary results show that family childcare educators who regularly attend community of practice sessions offered by a facilitator with lived experience and specialized training experienced increased networking and a stronger practice. Family childcare education offered by trained, experienced facilitators through ongoing community of practice sessions can create support networks to increase educator professionalism and quality of care.

home-based childcare, communities of practice, continuing education, educator support, networking

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Perspectives on quality of interactions offered to 0- to 5-year-olds in home-based childcare: a mixed-method study

Presenters:

Lise Lemay, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada

Julie Lemire, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada

Co-authors

Alexandra Paquette, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada

Joanne Lehrer, Université du Québec en Outaouais, Canada

Nathalie Bigras, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada

Karine Laverdière, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada

This study explores the quality of interactions offered to children in home-based childcare from a universal and a contextual perspective. In early childhood education, little is known about the nature of the quality of interactions in

home-based childcare (HBC). While Teachstone (2020) has outlined options to assess the quality of interactions in HBC with the Classroom Assessment Scoring system, Toddler version (CLASS-T; La Paro et al., 2012), the topic of defining and assessing quality of interactions outside center-based childcare has received marginal attention. This study uses a critical cross-cultural approach to the application of the CLASS-T in HBC (Pastori & Pagani, 2017). The universal and objective approach to quality of interactions from the standardized-based tool' perspective is complemented of a contextual and subjective approach of meaning making from the providers' perspective. The study includes 20 HBC (Montreal, Canada). Interactions in each childcare were scored using the CLASS-T tool (La Paro et al., 2012). To shed light on the CLASS scores, focus groups of 2h were realized. Providers were questioned about their perspective on educator–child interactions in HBC. All providers were informed about the project and signed a consent form before the observations and the focus group. The CLASS scores were higher for Emotional and Behavioral Support, and lower for Engaged Support for Learning. At first, all providers agreed that the CLASS-T dimensions applied in HBC. Then, they talked about their reality missing from the CLASS tool. When assessing quality, adaptations are needed to better capture the socio-educational reality of HBC.

home-based childcare, quality of interactions, meaning-making, providers's perspectives, classroom assessment scoring system

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B3, Room G62, ground floor, Grand Parade building

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE EARLY YEARS: PERSPECTIVES FROM INDIA AND SCOTLAND

Zinnia Mevawalla, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

Developing critical consciousness of social issues is necessary for working towards the SDGs and the anti-bias goals in early childhood education. This symposium brings together three papers focused on developing critical consciousness of social oppressions (racism, caste oppression and ableism) with children and educators in India and Scotland. Creative and arts-based methods were used to understand the processes and pedagogies involved in developing critical consciousness. Centering children and practitioners (as being both "knowledgeable" and "in the know"), implications for policy, research and practice are discussed.

disability_studies_and_inclusive_education

Lightbulb Moments: Examining Scottish Early Years Professionals' Experiences of Critical Consciousness

Presenters:

Zinnia Mevawalla, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

This research sought to understand the impact of developing critical consciousness on Scottish Early Years Professionals' ways of thinking, being and doing. Developing critical consciousness (awareness of issues such as racism and ableism) in the early years is necessary to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for reducing inequalities, as it is during this time that children internalise social oppressions (Connolly, et al., 2002). However, practitioners report feeling uncertain about how to 'do' social justice and equity education with young children (Baily & Katradis, 2016). Informed by critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970) and reconceptualist approaches (Swadener et al, 2022) the research is underpinned by the anti-bias goals in early childhood (Edwards, et al., 2021). An interpretivist and multi-method case study design was developed, with researchers using arts-informed approaches to collect data with practitioners across Scotland. Given the sensitive nature of social issues explored (e.g., ableism), a reflexive and responsive approach to ethics was adopted. This involved explicit reflective discussions on emergent ethical issues (e.g., privacy, coercion, confidentiality) with participants, and providing participants ongoing opportunities to consent before, during, and after data was generated. Emerging reflections from practitioners on the impact of developing critical consciousness are discussed. This includes themes about practitioner's capacity for supporting children's sense of identity, comfort with diversity, ability to recognise injustice, and motivation to act against it. Findings suggest that critical consciousness is key for addressing SDGs and anti-bias goals and it should therefore be a central goal of education and equity-focused policy development.

critical consciousness, social justice education, anti-bias goals, equity education, arts-based research

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Practitioner research exploring young children's understandings of race and ethnicity and developing critical racial consciousness in Scotland.

Presenters:

Caroline Cameron, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

This research aimed to explore children's experiences of developing critical racial consciousness over time using picture books as a pedagogical tool. Pedagogy championing inclusion should embrace social justice learning (Hyland, 2012) as young children are competent to critically consider issues of power and oppression (Escayg, 2019). Critical literacy empowers children to critically explore viewpoints reflecting their experiences and experiences of those different to themselves (Adam, 2021) This research is framed through Freire's notion of critical consciousness (1965), considering how young children develop understandings of inequity using problem-posing education generating change. Using a participatory action research design, the mosaic approach was used, employing a range of data collection tools familiar to classroom routines including discussion and drawing with 12 children over 6 weekly sessions. Picture books were used as a stimulus and data were analysed thematically. The study was explained using the UNCRC framework of rights. Issues around gaining informed consent from children were mitigated using a child friendly consent form. Further at each session children were reminded of their right to remove consent at any point without penalisation. In line with the inclusive aims of the research children's feelings and questions were treated respectfully by an experienced practitioner. The findings offer evidence children hold a range of views including misconceptions and a sense of critical racial consciousness developing over time was noted although this was complex and contradictory. Findings suggest further research could explore practitioner experiences of developing critical consciousness and recognition of critical consciousness development in policy guidance.

critical literacy, critical consciousness, social justice learning, picture books, practitioner research

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Building Young Solidarity Networks: Exploring Children's Inquiries on Caste Oppression and Their Actions to Raise Critical Consciousness in a Primary School in India.

Presenters:

Arushi Mathur, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

This research aimed at understanding the process of nurturing critical consciousness of caste oppression among children in a primary school classroom in India. Studies show that across Indian primary schools, children from Dalit communities (i.e., marginalised caste groups) continue to face segregation, prejudice, and poverty (Ramachandran, 2018). Conversely, issues of caste oppression are silenced for children from caste-privileged backgrounds resulting in children developing and acting on biases from the early years (Mehrotra, 2019). Drawing on the theory of critical pedagogy and Freire's (1973) approach to developing critical consciousness of oppression, this research engaged children 8+ using early childhood approaches in a critical inquiry about caste oppression. An action research approach and participatory methods of co-inquiring/co-researching with children (n=11) were utilised (Fielding & Bragg, 2003; Ryu, 2022). Data was generated using creative and arts-based methods (Farmer & Cepin, 2017). Informed consent was sought from participants initially, and in an ongoing way using child-friendly methods e.g., signing/stamping/drawing-emojis on consent forms. Ethical considerations of power-relations and caste being a sensitive issue emerged. These were addressed by rapport building, creating brave/safe spaces and through a Dalit advisory group. Preliminary findings highlight that a slow, play-based, and dialogical process was useful in engaging children as co-researchers. Children's critical reflections and actions show that developing critical consciousness is an embodied and continuous process where complex, layered understandings gradually emerge. Understanding the process of raising critical consciousness has significant implications for addressing caste oppression in practice. Implications include the development and incorporation of anti-caste pedagogies and policies.

critical consciousness, caste, anti-caste pedagogies, co-researching with children, creative and art-based methods

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B4, Room G63, ground floor, Grand Parade building

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS, AGENTIC CHILDREN AND THE ROLE OF PARTICIPATORY EDUCATORS

Sharon Skehill, Willows and Nursery Outdoor EY setting, (Newtown Kids Club), Ireland

Exploring teacher understandings of participatory pedagogies via approaches to children's rights in Wales

Presenters:

Sarah Chicken, UWE, Bristol, United Kingdom

Jacqui Lewis, UWE, Bristol, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Jacky Tyrie, Swansea University, United Kingdom

Patrizio De Rossi, UWE, Bristol, United Kingdom

Louisa Roberts, UWE, Bristol, United Kingdom

This paper reports on phase-two of an ESRC-funded project, aiming to examine teachers understanding of participation and how it relates to their pedagogy in Wales. Previous research of the team argues that understandings of participatory pedagogies are varied (Chicken and Tyrie, 2023) reflecting 'boudaried' approaches to children's enactment of rights (Clement et al, in press), The study adopted a rights-based approach (Bessell, 2017) and an axiological position with young children constructed as capable, agentic meaning-makers (Malaguzzi, 1998). Rooted in socio-constructionist interpretivism, participatory action research was utilised (Townsend, 2013) for data-generation. During collaborative dialogical workshops, Reggio Emilian pedagogy was explored as an example of a participatory pedagogy and later participants experimented with 'projects' investigating what 'rights' meant to children. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 14 teachers before and after engagement. The research team were steered by a duty of care to participants with 'care to do no harm' as a guiding principle, EECERA (2015) ethical code was adhered to, and appropriate ongoing consent gained. Initial findings suggest that teacher understandings of participative rights and associated pedagogy are underpin by a complex interrelationship between implicit constructions of (a) young children and (b) teachers (and their role) and further, with wider philosophical debates about the purpose of education. Consequently, opportunities for teachers to explicitly unpick constructions of children and teachers may be useful in actualising a children's right agenda, allowing an avenue through which discussions and agitations can be explored to support the increased enactment of participative rights within practice.

children's rights, participatory pedagogies, Reggio Emilia, UNCRC, Wales

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

linking relationship quality, children's rights and child protection in early childhood classrooms

Presenters:

Andrea Tures, Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Germany

The study examines the quality of relationships in everyday practices between teachers and children. We are particularly interested how these practices are linked to children's rights and child protection in day care centers. Studies conclude that adult responsiveness is a key mechanism to foster child development (Weitzman, Girolametto & Greenberg, 2006: 127). It is furthermore linked to children's rights, participation and children's agency (Tures 2022: 85) and to child protection (Boll & Remsperger-Kehm 2024: 15 ff.). The study views child development as a complex system of relationships (Bronfenbrenner 2005). It investigates relationship quality from a children's rights perspective (Press & Cheeseman 2022: 5). The study was conducted as a mixed-methods design and targeted

everyday interactions in 15 German day care settings with children at two measurement points, using qualitative observations and written reports (n= 30) and content analysis as well as standardized observations with the Caregiver Interaction Scale (CIS) (Arnett 1989) (n= 702) and statistical analysis. The study used indebted measures to protect participants through consent forms, confidentiality of participants and discussion of results with participants. Three types of practices were identified in which the relationship quality was particularly low: (1) goal-oriented practices, (2) waiting during micro transitions and (3) non-guided free play. These identified practices were also strongly linked to teacher strategies that did not acknowledge children's rights and were harmful to the children. We therefore argue for the need of a framework for quality which targets relationship quality in the context of children's rights and child protection.

children's rights, child protection, relationship quality, adult responsiveness, professional development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Empowering babies, toddlers, young children and educators as global citizens: Action research in practice

Presenters:

Sharon Skehill, Willows and Nursery Outdoor EY setting, (Newtown Kids Club), Ireland

Co-authors

Lisa Flaherty, Willows and Nursery Outdoor EY setting (Newtown Kids Club), Ireland

The aim of the action research project was to consider what sustainability looks like in our learning environments from the perspectives of the educators and children in our early years setting and to identify ways in which we could engage with the sustainable development goals (SDGs) to develop pedagogical practice. Inspired by O'Sullivan and Sakr (2022) model of social leadership in ECEC, as well as Lundy's (2007) rights-based approach to education, this presentation will link theory to practice through our role as educators (Skehill and Flaherty, 2023). An interpretative hermeneutic phenomenological (Heidegger, 1929) lens is used to present the curriculum from the perspective of the early years setting with analysis of practice creating space for questioning notions of knowledge and routine. Research was carried out within a qualitative interpretative paradigm with questionnaires and focus groups gathering perspectives of educators. Voices of babies, toddlers and young children were documented during practice via child-conversations, observations, anecdotal notes, learning stories as well as reflective dialogue (Braun and Clarke, 2022). Ethical practice is underpinned by the principles of Aistear (NCCA, 2009) as well as Lundy's (2007) model of participation. Child assent is embedded in relational pedagogy and parental consent for non-identifiable practitioner research is in place. Findings illustrate the centrality of the role of educator in embedded ESD and the benefits of outdoor-based pedagogy. Linking SDGs to examples from practice to illustrate how the goals can be realised in rights-based early childhood education and be embedded in curriculum for babies, toddlers and young children.

action research, outdoor pedagogy, rights-based education, babies, toddlers and young children, social leadership

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B5, Room M2, Mezzanine, Grand Parade building

CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES ON THEIR MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS, CASE STUDIES FROM THE GLOBAL NORTH AND SOUTH

David Brody, Orot Israel Academic College, Israel

This symposium presents results from an international collaborative research that examines young children's understandings of the roles of their male and female teachers through a gender lens. The research was based on Nielsen's (2017) theory of gender analysis, and contextualized using Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological approach. Nine research teams from the global north and south participated. Each team investigated children's perspectives in one kindergarten or daycare center using the Mosaic approach for data collection and interpretation. An overall review of the research will be presented with preliminary conclusions on the cross-case analysis. This will be

followed by two case studies - from Brazil and the United States, highlighting the critical importance and influence of culture on children's perspectives. In those countries (and the others involved in this project), children's active participation in (re)producing gendered norms and stereotypes is noted through their perspectives on their teachers' gender; pointing to the global needs of engaging young children in tackling gender issues in early childhood education.

gender_balance

Young children's perspectives on teachers' gender: Cross-case analysis from nine Global North and South countries

Presenters:

David Brody, Orot Israel College of Education, Israel

Co-authors:

Yuwei Xu, Nottingham University, United Kingdom

This multinational study explores young children's perspectives on teachers' gender, situated in immediate and broader socio-cultural contexts. Existing research (e.g., Sumison, 2005; Harris & Barnes, 2009; Perkins et al., 2019) used children's drawings and narratives to understand their views on male and female teachers, but only in single-country contexts, ignoring diverse cultural constructions of gender that shape children's gender subjectivities. Our study employs a cross-cultural lens to understand children's culturally diverse gender perspectives. Theoretical concepts of child agency and power relations enable investigation of children (and adults) producing and/or challenging gender norms (Xu, 2020). Gender constructions are contextual, subject to gender performances (Butler, 1990). This case study paradigm used the qualitative Mosaic Approach (Moss and Clark, 2005) tapping children's perspectives with interviews, drawings, role-play, and photo-elicitation; complemented by parent and teacher interviews. Informed consent was obtained from participating adults and consent and ascent from children. Ethical approval was granted by Nottingham University. Nine cases represent a complex continuum of gender discourses, considering macro, meso, and microenvironments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). More egalitarian attitudes were associated with gender-blind perspectives. In traditional environments, male teachers were associated with play and harsh discipline while females with pedagogical roles and softer discipline. No patterns were found regarding caring behaviors. Professional development encouraging open gender discussion could mitigate stereotypic perceptions, encouraging non-gendered roles in teaching and caregiving.

gender, child perspective, cultural context, teaching roles, teacher gender

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Eliciting Children's Perspectives of Their Male and Female Teachers: Constructing Gender in a New York City Early Childhood Classroom

Presenters:

Mindi Reich-Shapiro, Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY, United States

Chris Martin Aviles, Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY, United States

This study explores how young children view their male and female teachers within the sociocultural context of a New York City ECEC setting. Much research has explored men's motivations to teach young children and their contributions to the early childhood profession (e.g., Brownhill & Oates, 2016; Reich-Shapiro, Cole & Plaisir, 2020; Warin, 2018). However, little academic attention has been paid to the perspectives of young children in early childhood research (Wall & Robinson, 2022). Young children actively co-construct gender identities and experiment with gender roles as they engage with the routines and practices of early childhood classrooms shaped by the pedagogy and perspectives of their teachers (Thorne, 1995; Danby, 2003; Lowe, 2003). In this qualitative study, twelve children (ages 3-5) from two classrooms with male-female teaching teams participated in drawing/telling, interviews, and role play to explore their perceptions of their teachers' roles. Teacher and administrator interviews and parent surveys provided sociocultural context. Thematic analysis identified patterns across the data and

relationships between children's and teachers' perspectives. A consent/assent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Children who provided assent chose the activities they wanted to engage in and how long they wanted to engage. Findings suggest multiple influences in the ways children come to understand gender-based roles, and co-construct and redefine these roles within the ECEC setting. This study highlights the benefit of integrating children's perspectives to understand how the pedagogical practices and co-teaching dynamics of male and female educators can challenge binary perspectives of masculinity and femininity.

male educators, gender roles, children's perspectives, ECEC workforce, gender equity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

"He Plays, and She Teaches": Perspectives of Brazilian children on their teachers

Presenters:

Ricardo Goncalves, Örebro university, Sweden

Co-authors

Sandro Vinicius Sales dos Santos, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil

This case study focuses on Brazilian ECEC aiming to understand children's perspectives on their teachers through a gender lens. Brazilian society, much like that of other Latin American countries, emerged from a binary division of gender and sexuality based on heteronormative ideals and patriarchy (Lugones, 2016; Dimenstein, et al., 2020). Stereotypical ideas prevail and have consequences for gender construction in ECEC (Reis, 2016). This qualitative study is based on gender as a social construction, situational, fluid, and performative, while subject to reflection and questioning (Butler, 1990; Connell & Pearse, 2015). A Mosaic Approach (Clark, 2017) was conducted by using observation open-ended interviews with pictures and drawings as photo elicitation with 15 children, a parent questionnaire, and teacher interviews with female and male teachers. Thematic analysis of data was employed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Information letters and consent forms were provided to all participants, including children, parents, and staff. A negotiated consent process was employed during data collection, and data were anonymized. Preliminary findings indicate that children perceive their male teacher to engage in play, while the female teacher to teach. Results demonstrate how children construct and deconstruct gender in relation to home and the ECEC setting. Male teachers can illustrate to children that care is not inherently gendered. ECEC institutions play a crucial role for the deconstruction of gender stereotypes. Consequently, there is a pressing need to advocate for Brazilian public ECEC policies that integrate gender into official curricula and incorporate gender and sexuality themes into teacher training.

ECEC, children, Brazilian, teacher, gender

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B6, NEW ROOM: Room 306, third floor, Edward Street building

DIGITAL CODING, ROBOTICS AND AUGMENTED REALITY TECHNOLOGY

Bin Guo, UCL, United Kingdom

Exploring the Use of Augmented Reality to Facilitate Young Children's Concept of Chinese Radicals and Character Recognition

Presenters:

Yi-Wen Tsai, National Pingtung University, Taiwan

Chinese radicals are components of Chinese characters. They often provide clues on the meaning or pronunciation of a particular character. This study aims to explore whether the use of augmented reality technology can enhance young children's understanding and learning outcomes related to Chinese radicals. Previous research has asserted

that AR helped to foster various learning outcomes (Garzón, 2021; Chang et al., 2022). In terms of visual stimulation, dynamic objects or images have a greater stimulating effect than stationary elements, and they are also more likely to capture attention (I & Lin, 2006). AR brings flashcards or printed words alive. It can illustrate static images in a magical way while highlighting and visualizing complex concepts, making them easier for learners to perceive and understand. The study will compare two groups: (a) the experimental group will be taught using AR apps, and (b) the control group will be taught using traditional flashcards. A total of 40 young children, aged 5-6, will participate in this study. A pre-test and post-test will be conducted before and after the experimental teaching. Parental consent will be obtained for their children's participation in the study, and participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time. The findings of this study will reveal whether using AR apps can effectively promote young children's knowledge of Chinese radicals and Chinese character recognition ability. The study will conclude with relevant proposals and recommendations regarding the implementation of AR technology in early childhood education and suggests undertaking further studies on this topic.

augmented reality (AR), Chinese radicals, concept of Chinese radicals, character recognition, young children

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring the benefits of coding and robotics in early childhood education

Presenters:

Kayla Willemse, The University of Pretoria, South Africa

This paper delves into the benefits of incorporating simple coding and robotics (CR) activities into early childhood (EC) South African classrooms. Drawing on insights from my thesis (Willemse, 2023) as well as literature (Çakır, Korkmaz, İdil & Erdoğan, 2021; Sapounidis & Alimisis, 2021), the study showcases the potential benefits of such integration, which include equipping children with essential skills for future success, as well as fostering innovation, collaboration and critical thinking. The theoretical framework guiding this research is rooted in the technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (TPACK) framework (Koehler & Mishra, 2005; 2009), emphasising the seamless integration of technology and content within educational settings. Using an interpretivist paradigm and qualitative approach, the study engaged ten EC teachers from diverse backgrounds. Data generation methods included semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and collaborative discussion groups. Ethical considerations were paramount, with meticulous attention given to obtaining informed consent and assent as well as safeguarding participant privacy and confidentiality. Measures were implemented to protect participant confidentiality, minimise harm and maintain objectivity, upholding the highest ethical standards in the research process. The main finding underscores a significant positive correlation between children's engagement in coding and robotics activities and improvements in problem-solving abilities and creative thinking skills. This paper highlights the urgency of supporting teachers to integrate CR into the EC curriculum, especially in anticipation of forthcoming curriculum changes in South Africa (DBE, 2021; 2023). Recommendations are put forth for teachers to seamlessly integrate CR activities into their classrooms, ensuring optimal learning for young children.

early childhood education, coding and robotics, technology education, TPACK, STEAM education

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Exploring hybrid learning activities with six-year-olds

Presenters:

Marina Wernholm, Linnaeus University, Sweden

Emelie Patron, Linnaeus University, Sweden

Co-authors

Kristina Danielsson, Linnaeus University, Sweden

Andreas Ebbelind, Linnaeus University, Sweden

Hanna Palmér, Linnaeus University, Sweden

This paper aims to explore how pupils' positioning, competencies and meaning-making emerge in hybrid learning activities when they create digital animations in different subjects. Children of today have never lived in an analogous world but in a hybrid reality where the physical and the digital are so intertwined that they cannot be separated (Wernholm, 2020). The qualitative project draws on the frameworks of social semiotics (Kress et al., 2001) and Designs for Learning (Selander, 2008), where teaching and learning are seen as a multimodal design. As part of the Design for Learning framework, the Learning Design Sequence model is used as an analytical tool. Data has been generated by filming when pupils, in pairs or small groups, create digital animations in different subjects. The children's digital animations were also used to get them to tell their stories about what they had done and what their intentions behind certain actions were (cf. Wernholm & Reneland-Forsman, 2019). The researchers were sensitive and paid particular attention to the children's nonverbal communication to ascertain genuine consent to participation. Preliminary results indicate that when pupils participate in hybrid learning activities by creating digital animations together, they position themselves in relation to each other and the tablet. Furthermore, they draw on their previous experiences and competencies to make meaning. Thus, this project contributes by providing implications for the early years of schooling by showing how the use of digital tools can put a variety of children's competencies into play and support their meaning-making in different subjects.

designs for learning, digital tools, multimodality, positioning, resources

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B7, Room 144, first floor, Grand Parade building

SPACES FOR LEARNING, LISTENING AND FLOURISHING

Chair: Alison Tobin, Birmingham City University, United Kingdom

Learning Spaces for Wellbeing, Flourishing, Innovation and Creativity

Presenters:

Amanda Bezzina, Institute for Education, Malta

Learning spaces can be conducive to student wellbeing. The study presents the perspectives of students in Malta about present and possible learning spaces. Previous research focuses on the importance of including students in the design of learning spaces. It also presents schools as one of the most central spaces for positive holistic development, thus suggesting participatory designing of learning spaces. The research presented in this paper is based on three principles as outlined by Barrett et al. (2015) which are naturalness, individualisation and stimulation, which make a difference in the impact of the learning space. For the research about learning spaces in Maltese state schools, I made use of an interpretivist paradigm guiding the qualitative methodology. The research included sixteen focus groups with students attending Maltese primary (aged 8-10years) and secondary schools (11-16years).

All students who participated were given an information sheet and their parents or guardians signed a consent form ensuring that they are not subject to harm, their identity would remain anonymous and that they can stop their participation. Results from this research show that students were negative about existing learning spaces. This research confirmed the importance of the dimensions presented in the study by Barrett et al. (2015) and identified another dimension – innovative learning spaces. Evidence from this research also shows that a learning space should have adequate lighting, sound, temperature, relaxing surrounding colours, link to nature and should allow ownership, flexibility, and connection. This paper is particularly inspiring for policymakers as it demonstrates the significance of learning spaces in influencing the happiness and wellbeing of students.

student-centered, innovation, individualisation, stimulation, creativity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Spaces for play: An ethical approach to listening to children's voices

Presenters:

Susan Whyte, University of Dundee, United Kingdom

Mhairi Wallace, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Lynsey Burke, University of Dundee, United Kingdom

Divya Jindal-Snape, University of Dundee, United Kingdom

Angela Lindsay, University of Dundee, United Kingdom

Brenda Keatch, University of Dundee, United Kingdom

Megan McKenzie, University of Dundee, United Kingdom

This paper explores young children's voices about their play spaces in one Scottish primary school. Whilst there is research incorporating children's voices in the design of learning environments, particularly outdoor ones (e.g., Clark and Moss, 2005), most of the literature surrounding children's voices and their play spaces is situated and has evolved within the pre-school context (e.g., Merewether, 2015). We conceptualise voice as a multidimensional construct (Flynn, Shevlin, and Lodge, 2013) and theorise it based on the Lundy (2007) model of voice. Using a participatory approach, 45 children (aged 5-7 years) chose from a range of visual and creative methods (e.g., InPhoTours, drawing, mapping) to share their voices. By incorporating a 'Playful Research Ethics Framework', a developmentally appropriate framework which involved the use of visual aids, puppets, songs, Makaton symbols and discussions as well as attention to any cues of disengagement, this research aimed at achieving children's ongoing informed assent. Four themes were identified: (a) the 'whole child' in the space, (b) space and relationships, (c) function of space, and (d) impact (or lack) of children's voices about space. Children expressed differences in ownership, creativity and imagination in indoor and outdoor spaces. There are implications for both research and practice in terms of adults willingness to effectively listen to children's voices and acting on them. This study makes original and significant contributions which have the potential to impact research and practice with young children internationally, including Scotland where UNCRC article 12 is now enshrined in law.

playful research ethics framework (PREF), play, children's voices, space, visual and creative methods

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B8, Room 202, second floor, Grand Parade building

APPROACHES IN EARLY LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Fríða Jónsdóttir, University of Iceland - School of education, Iceland

Developing a language and literacy self-reflection tool for early childhood educators**Presenters:**

Penny Levickis, University of Melbourne, Australia

Co-authors:

Pam Robertson, University of Melbourne, Australia

Patricia Eadie, University of Melbourne, Australia

Hannah Stark, University of Melbourne, Australia

In this Australian Education Research Organisation-funded study, a rubric-based tool to measure educator use of evidence-based language and literacy practices in early childhood education (ECE) settings was developed. ECE educators must possess content knowledge of language and literacy development and the capacity to implement evidence-based practices to facilitate learning (Weadman et al., 2021). Rubrics guide self-assessment and support self-regulated learning by providing clarity, guidance, and motivation (Panadero et al., 2023). The tool design phase involved collaboration between ECE, child language and literacy development and assessment experts and was informed by the current evidence-based and social interaction theory (Bruner, 1981) and Zones of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978). The final tool consisted of three language and literacy learning capabilities:

1. Use of content knowledge to inform teaching and learning decisions;
2. Use of teaching strategies that promote learning;
3. Use of child-centred learning intentions. The tool was piloted using a think-aloud interview protocol, with four educators, who used the tool for self-reflection and to consider a colleague's practice.

Ethics approval was obtained, and all participants provided informed consent. Participants' identity and confidentiality were protected. Participants were able to withdraw. Interviews confirmed the tool's language suitability and usefulness across the three capability areas. Interviewees reflected on the workforce's varying content knowledge, which could potentially affect how individuals and teams complete the tool. The tool may be used for self-assessment by individuals and teams within professional learning, as an evaluation tool, and by researchers to identify factors impacting the adoption of evidence-based practices.

self-reflection, language teaching strategies, literacy teaching strategies, content knowledge, child-centered practice

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Giving wings to voices: Preschool as an Inclusive Learning Space for Communication and Understanding

Presenters:

Fríða Jónsdóttir, University of Iceland - School of education, Iceland

The objective was to understand how a preschool can serve as an inclusive learning space for multilingual children's language and emergent literacy development, where voices and identities are affirmed and partnership with parents is enhanced. The perspective of the study is sociocultural focusing on successful teacher practices. Teachers' pedagogical choices play a role in children's experience and belonging, affecting their identity and learning (Cummins & Early, 2011; Esteban & Moll, 2014; Ólafsdóttir & Einarsdóttir, 2017). Powerful and critical teachers enhance the linguistic participation of children while creating inclusive learning spaces (Einarsdóttir & Ólafsdóttir, 2020; Mary and Young, 2021; Sapon-Shevin, 2007). Critical pedagogy (Nieto, 2010), multicultural education (Banks, 2010), sociocultural theories (Rogoff, 2003). Theories on multilingual children's language development (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012; Cummins, 2021a; De Houwer, 2009; García & Wei, 2014). Single case study where qualitative methodology is employed (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Heath et al., 2010). Data construction included interviews and video recordings. Data analyzing involved collaboration with teachers. Participants signed a letter of consent and the children gave their permission. The Ethics Committee at the University of Iceland and the Icelandic Data Protection Authority were informed. Participants were given pseudonyms. Findings illustrate the importance of building on children's linguistic and cultural diversity and demonstrates the role of teachers in creating the conditions for language learning to take place through daily activities. Contributes to the research field of multilingualism, practical implications for preschools and policy makers highlighting that the education of multilingual children needs to be addressed from a comprehensive perspective.

multilingual children, social justice, identity, guided participation, inclusive practices with language and literacy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

A randomised controlled trial comparing the efficacy of pre-school language interventions

Presenters:

Christine Jack, Newcastle University, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Cristina McKean, Newcastle University, United Kingdom

Sean Pert, University of Manchester, United Kingdom

Helen Stringer, Newcastle University, United Kingdom

Carolyn Letts, Newcastle University, United Kingdom

Emily Armstrong, Newcastle University, United Kingdom

Elaine Ashton, Newcastle University, United Kingdom
 Kate Conn, Newcastle University, United Kingdom
 Anastasia Trebacz, University of Sunderland, United Kingdom
 Jenny Sandham, Newcastle University, United Kingdom
 Naomi Rose, Newcastle University, United Kingdom
 Robert Rush, Statistical Services, United Kingdom

Increasing numbers of children have language difficulties and require language interventions. Most interventions have not been rigorously evaluated. This randomised controlled trial compared the efficacy of Building Early Sentences Therapy (BEST) to an Adapted Derbyshire Language Scheme (A-DLS) which follows the principles of traditional DLS but delivers the programme more rapidly. Previous small pilot studies had tested the efficacy of BEST. BEST is based on 'usage-based' theory: the systematic manipulation of the nature and quantity of language a child hears, promotes abstract, flexible knowledge and use of a range of sentence structures, accelerating future language learning. DLS incrementally increases the information carrying words children are asked to understand and produce. Twenty schools were independently randomised to intervention. Measures were collected at baseline, outcome, and follow-up by researchers blind to intervention arm. 102 children aged 3; 06-4; 06 received interventions for ~15 minutes twice a week for 8 weeks. Interventions were delivered, with high fidelity, in preschool settings by qualified Speech and Language Therapist researchers. Ethical approval was obtained from Newcastle University and all parents signed consent forms. Both interventions were associated with clinically meaningful improvement in functional communication. BEST was associated with significantly greater gains in comprehension and production standard scores. Comparisons of effective interventions enable informed choices to be made regarding which work best for a given child, context, or family preference. Comparing interventions delivered with the same dosage, delivery context, and treatment fidelity, tests whether it is the specific learning mechanisms exploited by the interventions which promote change.

language and communication, randomised controlled trial, intervention, pre-school, efficacy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B9, Room 204, second floor, Grand Parade building

MOVING, MELTING, MUSICALITY AND MICRO-EXPRESSIONS

Fran Paffard, Comet Nursery School and Childrens Centre, United Kingdom

These three studies independently focus on the power of young children to communicate their needs and ideas through different forms; through behaviour, schemas, through sound, movement and micro-expressions. The studies vary from individual foci to a larger scale study across seven schools, but all share a dependence on open-minded but finely detailed observation and responses to children's actions, thoughts and feelings. The first looks at the micro-expressions and communicative versatility of children with SEND. The second study looks at using play therapy principles to support children's emotional development. The third study uses schema theory to look at children's emerging musicality and our response to it.

Micro-expressions: why details matter

Presenters:

Fran Paffard, Comet Nursery School and Childrens Centre, United Kingdom
 Lisa Clarke, Comet Nursery School & Children's Centre, United Kingdom
 Rose White, London Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

This research with under-fives continues findings from 2023 on children's micro-expressions and staff responses. Finely detailed observations reveal a cornucopia of subtle ways in which children communicate and express themselves. Building on an earlier study 'I mean to say' investigating children's resourcefulness in communication. (Clarke, White & Paffard 2023), it seeks to identify how children communicate through minute changes in movement (Wharton 2016) and sound (Maclure (2016) supporting child-centred approaches (Hedges and Cooper 2018) The

study draws on Comber's pedagogy of belonging (Comber and Freire 2016) and the concept of funds of knowledge' (Moll, 2001, Hedges et al 2011, Chesworth, 2019) informed by Brooker's application of Bourdieu's Cultural Capital (2015) The research explores the communicative versatility of under-fives in a nursery school, using a situated interpretivist paradigm (Lave and Wenger 1991). Methods include observations and video of children's communications and contexts, alongside practitioner discussion and reflection. An open-ended action research methodology collaboratively analyses and adapts research foci as findings develop Rhedding-Jones (2003). The power relationships between education providers, marginalised families and young children with SEND are considered. All staff and families involved in research have given informed consent for use of images and data, and pseudonyms are used. Children's ongoing consent is monitored and responded to. Findings reveal that children developing communication have great inventiveness in expressing their thoughts and feelings. Specific strategies enable responsive practitioners to nurture communicative versatility effectively. Close observation and responses recognising children's own funds of communication, are recommended rather than remedial approaches.

communication, observation, language, special educational needs, inclusion

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Clusters of theories and schemas: Nuances and musicality in play

Presenters:

Christine Parker, Independent Researcher, United Kingdom

The research objective is to explore children's play through a cluster of theoretical frameworks, seeking playful nuances, schematic fascinations, and emergent musicality. Building on notions of close observational techniques developed through an understanding of schema theory (Athey, 2007; Nutbrown, 2011) a focus on children's musicality explores an understanding about the child's embodiment and the value of physical play (White, 2023). The cluster of theories are 1) schema, (Athey 2007; Arnold et al, 2023); 2) communicative musicality, (Trevarthen, 2010) and 3) embodiment (White 2023; Brierley et al, 2024). This longitudinal qualitative case study adopts an ethnographic methodology and favours a praxeological approach (Formosinho & Oliveira-Formosinho (2012); Pascal & Bertram (2012)), seeking to explore the relationship between practice and conscious theoretical thought and processing. Young children, currently aged 3- & 4-years, are closely observed in home environments. Video vignettes inform dialogue between researcher, parents, and children. A child's right to participation in research activities is a constant ethical consideration. Dialogue between the researcher and children's parents informs responses to concerns. Research data is peer reviewed with two academic focus groups for validity and authenticity. Observing a child's play through a cluster of theoretical frameworks; schema, communicative musicality, and embodiment, deepens understanding of playful nuances and musicality in play resulting in attention to the child's concerns and accomplishments. Research findings suggest adults, parents/carers and pedagogues, gain greater insight into children's play when actively applying theoretical frameworks to inform practice thus developing a praxeological approach.

schema theory, observation, praxeology, musicality, embodiment

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Melting the Iceberg: developing self-regulation in young children

Presenters:

Ailsa Higgins, Hetton Lyons Nursery School, United Kingdom

This research follows the introduction of play therapy principles to supporting children's emotional development in nursery schools and evaluates the impact for children and staff. This builds on recent research on Covid impacts (Pascal, Bertram, Cullinane and Holt-White 2020) and on neuroscience (Head, R Teach Early Years Vol 13.1, 2023), identifying a research gap in self-regulation (Murray, D.W. & Rosanbalm, K. 2017) The study draws on Axline's (2012) psychosocial principles of therapeutic play and takes a strengths-based approach to practice (Fenton, A., Walsh, K.,

Wong, S., & Cumming, T. 2015). Using a sociocultural paradigm, and a 'mixed methods' research design, using Qualitative and Quantitative methods. It takes both an inductive and deductive approach (Streefkerk, R. 2022). Following the self-regulation of 300 children over a year, data was collected through questionnaires, case studies, observation, reflection and discussion. All staff have given informed and ongoing consent. In working with young children consideration was given to anonymity, confidentiality, assent and potential harm and responded to accordingly. Findings demonstrate that addressing the emotional needs of children, enabled them to regulate themselves more effectively and engage positively with their peers and learning. The project demonstrated an impact on staff as they collaborated to understand and manage children's behaviour, through a whole team approach. Behaviour should be seen as a form of communication and a whole team approach to behaviour management supports both staff and children. It is essential that practitioners access training linked to the impact of trauma to support emotional needs.

emotion, self regulation, behaviour, play, therapeutic

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B10, Room 207, second floor, Grand Parade building

USE OF PICTUREBOOKS IN ECEC

Monica Gjelsten, Høgskulen i Volda, Norway

Stimulating children's early literacy through wimmelbooks

Presenters:

Monica Gjelsten, Høgskulen i Volda, Norway

To find out more about wimmelbooks as an educational tool for learning language Cornelia Rémi (2011) points out reading of wimmelbooks as playing. In wimmelbooks, a large number of details and characters emerge in a playful, wordless environment and can create a cognitive challenge for children. As an educational tool, picturebooks are powerful tools (Daly, & McKee, 2022, s.1) and knowing more languages opens up new worlds (Chaudhri & Torres s. 2022, s.1). Studies have shown that bilingual books are lacking in linguistic complexity, and wimmelbooks may be a way to open up conversations about concept and words (Chaudhri & Torres s. 2022, s.237). This study contains observation and interview about reading these books. The research question is: How are these books inviting early readers to explore both verbal and visual literacy? Can these books introduce bilingual children's early literacy to different strategies of coping with the world and to telling of stories about their own, everyday life? According to NESH Research Ethics Guidelines for Social Sciences and Humanities, the attendees were given informed consent. An analyze of these books shows that they may offer a learning possibility for bilingual children's early literacy and to introduce them to different strategies of coping with the world and to telling of stories. In a unique way, these books invites the readers to find their own way through manifold reading options and a highly active response from children and adults (Rémi, 2011) Impact early readers to explore both verbal and visual literacy

early literacy, reading development, wimmelbooks, understanding words, visual literacy

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Young children's responses to salient printed words in picture books

Presenters:

Anne Marta Vadstein, Volda University College / University of Stavanger, Norway

Co-authors:

Trude Hoel, University of Stavanger, Norway

This study aims to explore young children's responses to picture books with salient printed words: i) highlighted, colored or varying font size, ii) words as part of the illustrations or, iii) placement of words on the page (Evans & Saint-Aubin, 2005; Evans et al., 2008). The research question is twofold: How does young children respond to picture books with salient printed words? And, in what ways does these features and the children's responses contribute to conversations about the written text? Shared reading gives young children experiences with literacy such as printed words (Barton, 2007; Heath, 1983). Thus, picture books are relevant literacy artefacts for children (Hamilton, 2000). Within New Literacy Studies (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2021), emphasis is placed on how exploring the visual aspects of words can be a gateway for conversations about the written text. Nevertheless, conversations concerning the written modality is scarce during shared reading in ECE-institutions (Piasta et al., 2012). This is a qualitative case study in a socio-cultural literacy paradigm. Video recordings from shared reading sessions with three reading groups of young children in ECE-settings are planned. The videos will be transcribed and anonymized before thematically analyzes will be conducted (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Informed consent will be collected from the participants. At the conference we will present the initial analyzes of the transcribed video from the first case. The study seeks to uncover strategies for supporting conversations around the written modality, which may have an impact on literacy practice in ECE-institutions.

salient printed words, print referencing, shared reading, picture book, early literacy

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Shared reading of picturebooks with poetic qualities in the ECEC context

Presenters:

Ellen Tveit, University of Stavanger, Norway

The aim of this study is to illuminate the nature of the communication in cases of shared reading of picturebooks with poetic qualities between an adult oral reader and groups of children in ECEC institutions. Poetic language is playful (Kalogirou, 2019) and resembles young children's inclination of playing with words and language (Chukovsky, 1980). Many picturebooks for children have poetic qualities (Alfredsson, 2021), which may ignite a playful dimension during shared reading, considering the performative dimension of reading aloud (Mjør, 2009) and children's "ludic reception" (Solstad, 2015). The theoretical approach relies on an overall sociocultural perspective on children's language development (Vygotsky, 1978) and theories regarding mediation of texts during reading (as for instance Cochran-Smith, 1984). The study is a qualitative case study (Starman, 2013), using video observation as main method of data collection. Participants received comprehensible information prior to the video observations. Staff signed informed consents for their participation and parents/guardians signed consent forms on behalf of participating children. Additionally, staff were instructed to inform children in a suitable manner and let them withdraw from the video observations if they signaled that they wished to do so. Findings will disclose examples of how the oral reader and children as co-readers engage with the poetic qualities in the text. The study aims to increase knowledge around the importance of play related to picturebooks, reading and communication in the ECEC context. This knowledge is important for creating meaningful reading experiences in the ECEC, considering both an aesthetic value and enhancing language development.

ECEC, picturebooks, shared book reading, language play, poetic qualities in picturebooks

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B11, NEW ROOM, Room 209, second floor, Edward Street Building

EXPLORING CHILDREN'S PLAY EXPERIENCES

Sara Margrét Ólafsdóttir, University of Iceland, School of Education, Iceland

Observations of pre-primary children up to 4 years of age over 3 years whilst interacting with toys of their choice in a local playgroup in S.E. England

Presenters:

Sue Dale Tunnicliffe, UCL IOE, United Kingdom

Is there a pattern to the child's free choice toy play? Could STEM actions be identified? Gelman and Brennerman (2004) acknowledged children's construction of understanding as they interact with objects. Hands-on- experiences enable children to build on knowledge and skills across other learning. Sikder and Flear (2015) identified everyday science in action with pre-preschoolers. Krapp's (1999) theory of situational interest applies to children's free choice play, with what interests them, There is sequence in children's interactions in school situations (Milford and Tippett, 2015) and IBSE sequence (Constantiou et al. 2018). Observations in a playgroup for 90 sessions were observed and field notes recorded afterward. Applying Grounded Theory (Glaser, 2011) STEM actions, e.g. push,. An interaction sequence similar to ISBE was identified. A current DBS was necessary . Parents signed a Church consent form. Only anonymous observations were made, no interactions. STEM actions were observed and a sequence of stages represented in the Play Cycle (Tunnicliffe, 2022 p.159) was designed. Practitioners need to know and be able to recognise basic STEM actions, skill and constituent concepts which they contribute and the investigative sequence. There are implications for training of early STEM practitioners

toys, hand-on, STEM, inquiry, free choice

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring children's preschool practices in Sweden with postqualitative inquiry: play as ongoing processes with various agentic actors

Presenters:

Jenny Lindberg, Umea University, Department of Education, Sweden

This paper aims to explore 3-5-year-old children's preschool practices in Sweden. The focus is to unfold what emerges in free play situations, and how it is enacted. The entangled relationships between human and non-human actors are analysed, assuming that realities and meanings are actively co-constructed rather than predetermined. The field of research about phenomena in preschool through postqualitative approaches is growing in Sweden and beyond (Aronsson, 2019; Giamminuti, Merewether & Blaise, 2022). Children's play is one phenomenon that is explored in that field (Black Delfin, 2021; Haus, 2020). The study embraces a sociomaterial framework to examine early childhood education (ECE) (Fenwick & Edwards, 2019). Concepts are added along the analytical process. Situated within a postqualitative inquiry paradigm (St Pierre, 2021), methodology drawing on Actor-network theory (Latour, 2005, Law, 2004), posthumanism (Barad, 2007) and new materialism (Coole & Frost, 2010) is used. Data produced are fieldnotes and sound recordings during visits over four months in two preschools. Ethics approval was obtained according to national guidelines (Swedish Ethical Review Authority, 2023). The children's families were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. In each moment of observations, verbal permission was requested from the children. The data material shows that different phenomena, and specifically play situations, emerges in diverse ways in preschool practices in ECE. More findings to come. This paper contributes to ECE practice by exploring free play situations and to research practices by challenging and rethinking the way we approach and research children's preschool practice and play.

children's preschool practices, postqualitative research, play, posthumanism, human and non-human

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Children's views on their learning through play

Presenters:

Sara Margrét Ólafsdóttir, University of Iceland, School of Education, Iceland

Elín Guðrún Tómasdóttir, University of Iceland School of Education, Iceland

The aim of this study is to better understand children's learning through play in preschools. Research has found that children do not make a distinction between playing and learning (Pramling Samuelsson and Asplund Carlson, 2008).

Thus, they are seldom asked about their learning in preschools (Colliver and Fler, 2016). Play is an important part of children's learning and wellbeing. Children's learning occurs in social contexts, where they share and construct knowledge with peers (Karlsdóttir et al., 2019). Play provides children with opportunities to learn about themselves and their world (Greenway and Hutchings, 2022). This ethnographic study builds on the view that children are important participants in construction of knowledge concerning their own lives. The children explained their learning in play through video-stimulated conversations. Ethical issues were considered in every part of the research process (Bertram et al., 2016). All gatekeepers gave their consent, and the research was explained to the children who gave their assent which was renegotiated regularly. The findings indicate that the children seldom thought about learning during play. However, when they watched the recordings with the researcher and were asked to discuss their learning, they gave various examples, such as making friends, participating with peers, following rules, negotiating, practicing good manners and solving problems. In addition, they learned to deal with different aspects of reality. When children are given an opportunity to watch and discuss their play activities, they reflect on their learning processes. No less important, educators can better understand and support children's learning through play.

Children's perspectives, Play, Learning, Preschool, Ethnography

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B12, Room 225, second floor, Grand Parade building

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD MATHEMATICS EDUCATION

Bob Perry, Charles Sturt University and Peridot Education Pty Ltd, Australia

This symposium, organised by the EECERA SIG 'Mathematics Birth to Eight Years', features three pioneering studies in early childhood mathematics. Bob Perry and Sue Dockett present a research-based revision of the 'Let's Count' program designed to assist families in playing and working with their preschool children to notice, explore, and talk about mathematics in their everyday lives. The revision builds on input from Australia's approach to reconciliation with its Indigenous people and comprehensive reviews of early childhood and mathematics research. In the second talk, Linda Amrar explores the role of 'collective play-related thinking' (CPRT) in pretend play, analysing teacher-child interactions to highlight effective mathematical communication strategies. Finally, Elizabeth Carruthers discusses the transformation of early years' teaching practices through teacher-led research, emphasising democratic teaching and teacher agency. Each study contributes to a broader understanding of enhancing mathematical experiences in early childhood, offering practical insights for educators and researchers.

mathematics_birth_to_eight_years

On-line early years professional learning: Notice, explore and talk about mathematics in everyday lives

Presenters:

Bob Perry, Charles Sturt University and Peridot Education Pty Ltd, Australia

Sue Dockett, Charles Sturt University and Peridot Education Pty Ltd, Australia

The aim of this research was to develop a research-informed and culturally appropriate revision of the long-standing and effective Australian Let's Count mathematics program which provides preparation for early childhood professionals to assist families as they play with their preschool children to notice, explore and talk about mathematics in their everyday lives. This presentations builds on an earlier one at EECERA2022. It shows how research-informed principles and literature review have led to the enhancement of on-line opportunities for early childhood professionals. Although Let's Count is a very successful program, reflection on current research identified areas could be enriched, through enhancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, family engagement and on-line professional learning. The COVID crisis and other research provided impetus for the revision of professional on-line learning (OECD, 2020, Philip, 2022). Based on the previously-reported literature review and the derived principles for revision, on-line materials were drafted, created, and trialled over several iterations before being finalized. After the earlier extensive consultation, trialing was completed in-house by the research and development teams. All participants provided informed consent, with special protocols utilized for the inclusion of

Indigenous people and knowledges. The uptake of the (revised) on-line professional learning available to early years professionals in 2024 has increased from previous years, as has the satisfaction with the product of the participants. Let's Count continues to provide opportunities for early childhood professionals, children, and families to develop a strong dispositional and learning foundation to enjoy their current and enhance future mathematical experiences.

mathematics, families, early years professionals, on-line learning, preschool

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Teachers reflecting on mathematical events associated to pretend play activities with 5-year-old children: identification of mathematical events and productive verbal behaviors

Presenters:

Linda Amrar, Haute Ecole Pédagogique Vaud, Switzerland

This study investigates the interactions at stake during discussions about mathematical events associated to a pretend play activity between 5-year-old children and their teachers. During pretend play, children's mathematical explorations constitutes mathematical teaching opportunities (van Oers, 1996). To seize these opportunities, the teacher can guide a collective discussion about a mathematical event associated to a pretend play activity: also called Collective Play-Related Thinking (CPRT) (Truffer Moreau, 2020). However, little is known about the mathematical events discussed and the quality of the verbal behaviors at stake during CPRT with young children. Studies drawing on historico-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1933/2016) highlights the need for children to learn through high-quality interactions and for teachers to take into consideration children's-initiated activities (Pramling et al., 2009). Four teachers participated to a continuing professional development on the seizing of mathematical teaching opportunities associated to pretend play activities during CPRT. Data analysis was therefore designed to capture the variety of mathematical events and productive verbal behaviors demonstrated by 5-year-old children and their teachers during a CPRT associated to a pretend play activity. Teachers and parents signed a consent form validated by the university of Geneva. Participants names are replaced with pseudonyms. Descriptive analyses show that teachers and children use a large variety of productive verbal behaviors. The use of productive verbal behaviors to talk about mathematical events and non-mathematical events differ between teachers and children. Results suggest that high-quality interactions take place between teachers and 5-year-old children discussing mathematical events during a CPRT associated to pretend play activities.

pretend play, mathematics, interactions, collective play-related thinking, early childhood education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The Role of Teacher Researcher to Conceptually Change Mathematics' Pedagogies.

Presenters:

Elizabeth Carruthers, Children's Mathematics Network, United Kingdom

This study notes the development of two early years' teachers understanding of children's own mathematical knowledge and the shifts in practice needed to provide optimum conditions for mathematical learning. This research was part of my doctoral thesis which was to uncover pedagogies that support children's mathematical graphics (Carruthers, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2020). It was a longitudinal, qualitative study within a conceptual socio-cultural framework, highlighting democratic teaching and teacher agency. The participants were two early years teachers in England. Data were gathered from questionnaires, interviews, and teachers' written reflections of their classroom practice and were analysed from an interpretative socio-cultural paradigm using case study methodology. This study was approved by the University of Bristol Ethics Committee. Ethical issues were considered throughout the study allowing participants to reflect on their changing positions, giving them opportunities to withdraw if necessary. At first, the teachers struggled with democratic practices in mathematics and realised that they had to make cultural and conceptual changes in their teaching to uncover and support children's mathematical thinking. Eventually, researching their own practice became the vehicle that broadened their pedagogy to take on children's mathematical ideas. The role of teacher researcher, therefore, became pivotal in changing their pedagogy.

To understand children's mathematics and teach in ways that empowers children then teachers need high level professional development that gives them the freedom to explore, reflect, rethink and innovate their own individual pedagogical theories.

pedagogy, mathematics, teacher researcher, teacher agency, praxiology, mathematics, teacher researcher, teacher agency, praxiology

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B13, Room 229, second floor, Grand Parade building

POLICY SHIFTS IN IRELAND, SWEDEN AND UK

Maelis Karlsson Lohmander, University of Gothenburg, Department of Education Communication and Learning, Sweden

Fulfilling the vision: Implementing First 5: A whole-of-government strategy for babies, young children and their families

Presenters:

Eimear Carron, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), Ireland

Co-authors:

Ailbhe Booth, DCEDIY, Ireland

Anne-Marie Brooks, DCEDIY, Ireland

First 5 is a ten-year whole-of-Government strategy to improve the lives of babies, young children and their families. This presentation will outline key actions that have been implemented and summarise how the research programme has supported monitoring and evaluation infrastructure and evidence informed policy making. Evidence unequivocally points to the importance of the first five years of life for health, wellbeing, education and employment outcomes (Lingar et al., 2022; Melhuish, 2011). The core conceptual basis for First 5 is progressive universalism which prioritises strengthening state-funded supports for all and proportionate measures for those who need additional support. The strategy also draws on central theories of development and attachment, as well as literature on early intervention, parenting, neuroscience and health (Bowlby, 1977; Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Using a systemic paradigm, evidence synthesis as well as quantitative and qualitative methodologies with multiple stakeholders (Government Departments, Agencies, service providers) informed the development and evaluation of actions in the strategy. The strategy was informed by evidence and sought to promote children's right to be heard as enshrined in the UNCRC, through best practice approaches (Coyne et al 2018; <https://hubnanog.ie/participation-framework/>) Applying evidence to inform policy, the strategy has implemented a range of measures to promote child health, support parents and reform early learning and care (Government of Ireland, 2023). The progress to date on First 5 showcases how evidence from a suite of research, evaluation and data projects were applied in an Irish context and can be used to contribute to the policy making process.

young children, parents, preschool, policy, family

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Teamwork in the Swedish preschool: the impact of policy shifts on staff roles and responsibilities

Presenters:

Maelis Karlsson Lohmander, University of Gothenburg, Department of Education Communication and Learning, Sweden

This study aims to investigate reforms that have taken place regarding organisation and governance of the Swedish preschool and the implications of these reforms for the workforce, their roles, responsibilities and relationships.

Since the 1990s, new pedagogical professional discourses of practice have developed (Beach, 2010). Preschool has been subject to significant shifts regarding governance, organisation and competence requirements of the workforce (Eriksson, 2014; Cervantes & Öqvist, 2021). The theoretical framework draws on education policy and critical education frameworks (e.g. Ball, 2003, 2006) and learning within communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). Employing a qualitative interpretative research paradigm, analysis was employed on national and local policy documents (Bowen, 2009) to examine policy reforms and highlight shifts and transformations regarding preschool complemented with interviews with preschool staff. Interview data were analysed through content analysis (Krippendorff, 2018). Ethical guidelines were followed (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017) ensuring a fair representation of documents. Participation in the interviews was voluntary and anonymous. Signed consent was obtained and participants could withdraw at any stage. Findings indicate that the reforms resulted in a major paradigmatic shift. Preschool became regulated through a 'top-down' approach where the state changed the organisation from a 'flat' to a hierarchical structure. It replaced staff members' 'self-governing power' and autonomy with increased state control and management by results leading to tensions and challenges. These findings suggest that for reform work to be successful it is crucial to include those who will be responsible for implementing the reform and to take into consideration the psycho-social aspects of the workforce.

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B14, Room 318b, third floor, Grand Parade building

EXPLORING THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF ONLINE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Heather Smith, Bright Horizons, United Kingdom

Shifting a Safeguarding Culture: Observational auditing, exploring expectations and coaching within Bright Horizons Nurseries.

Presenters:

Heather Smith, Bright Horizons, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Cathy Hart, Bright Horizons, United Kingdom

Addressing potential cultural weaknesses embedded in practice; recognising misaligned safeguarding practices and identifying potential for risks to children due to unintentional inaction. We use 'Safeguarding children: audit of staff knowledge' audits to identify knowledge of legal requirements, highlighting gaps to identify practitioner training needs (Nursing Children & Young People). NSPCC (2022) find a 'strengths based approach' is effective in identifying areas for development and supportive peer review is key to change. We consider Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) to ensure children's safety. When identifying solutions to address key issues, the audit promotes engagement, prioritises children, and embeds continuous improvement. Reflective practice discussions ensure children's wellbeing is prioritised. This praxeological investigation (Pascal and Bertram, 2012) included 286 English settings over a 12-month period, interviewing 2,000+ practitioners. Employing environmental audits, assessing routine documents and records, and analysing face to face interviews we gathered quantitative and qualitative data. Contributing adults could withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was maintained, sharing audit outcomes only with relevant parties. We evidence that auditors observed positive culture shifts over time. Staff and Designated Safeguarding Leads developed heightened awareness of roles and responsibilities, and greater knowledge of effective daily safeguarding practices. Research is ongoing, remaining agile, adapting with changes to legislation, policy, and trends. Our approach focuses on embedment of practice. The culture shift is gradual but there is already evidence to indicate greater awareness of safeguarding practices across the nursery teams.

safeguarding children, culture, innovation, internal audit, behavioral observation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

ECE teachers perceptions of a MOOC-inspired PD-program - problematising the scientific basis for effective PD for ECE teachers

Presenters:

Pernilla Sundqvist, Mälardalen University, Sweden

Benita Berg, Mälardalen University, Sweden

Co-authors:

Tor Nilsson, Mälardalen University, Sweden

Developing sustainable early childhood education (ECE) demands competent staff. For this, regular professional development (PD) is significant. This study aims to problematise choices about scientific basis for PD-programs for ECE teachers. A concept for PD that has drawn attention the last years is massive open online courses (MOOC). Although researched and found promising for PD (e.g Herranen et al. 2021), the concept is not entirely compatible with other research on effective PD (Desimone, 2009). We draw on Desimone's (2009) program theory for effective PD which include five core features: content focus, coherence, active learning, duration and collective participation. This will be discussed in relation to the results and problematised in relation to MOOC. This ongoing study is conducted within a qualitative research paradigm. Through a qualitative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) of the 14 participants' written and oral evaluations of a PD-program designed with inspiration from the MOOC-concept, we study their perceptions of the form of the PD-program. In line with the guidelines of the Swedish research council (2017) consent was collected after the participants had been informed in writing about the aim of the research, voluntary participation and confidential treatment of personal data. Early results show the participants even before starting the PD-program recognized the lack of one core feature - collective participation - as they themselves organized meetings to discuss the course content. The results will contribute knowledge about whether the MOOC inspired PD-program is perceived to provide an effective learning environment for early childhood teachers.

professional development, MOOC, scientific basis, core features, teacher perceptions

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Sustainable professional development: Analysing online training for early childhood educators from the trainers' perspective

Presenters:

Eva Pölzl-Stefanec, University of Graz, Austria

Since COVID-19, online training programmes (OPD) have become an integral part in ECEC in Austrian . A complete return to face-to-face events seems unlikely (Meier & Seufert, 2022). The quality of (online) PD training depends heavily on the qualifications of the staff, an aspect that is often overlooked in research and represents a research gap (Hippel, 2011). Digital formats can be as effective as face-to-face education and training (Stone-MacDonald & Douglass, 2015). The success of an online format depends, among on the formats , the methods used and, above all, the interaction between participants and trainers (Kim, 2020; Stevens, et al., 2021) Studies confirm the effectiveness of constructivism (Lai, 2015; Nelson et al., 2008; Schrader, 2015). For the study, four online group discussions were conducted according to the guidelines of Sander & Schulz (2015), which took place from January to February 2024 with 6 to 8 participants each. The discussions lasted 90 to 120 minutes and the systematic analysis included transcription and content analysis according to Mayring (2022). The research was conducted in accordance with established guidelines and standards for scientific integrity, data protection and ethical conduct. The trainers show a differentiated view of OPD, recognise both advantages and disadvantages and reflect critically on their experiences. The research findings could thus contribute to strengthening the implementation of the European Commission's Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027) by addressing concrete experiences and challenges of adult education trainers in the field of ECE.

online professional development, early childhood education, trainer in online professional developments, group discussion, continuing education

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B15, Room 103, first floor, Edward Street building

TEACHERS' PREPARATION, TIME, DOCUMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Krisztian Jozsa, University of Szeged, Hungary

Development and Validation of a Measurement Tool for Assessing Teacher Practices in Supporting the Learning Habits of First-Grade Students

Presenters:

Krisztian Jozsa, University of Szeged, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Hungary

Oo Tun Zaw, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Hungary

Co-authors:

Andrea Anikó Bencéné Fekete, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, MTA-MATE Early Childhood Research Group, Hungary

Judit Podráczy, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, MTA-MATE Early Childhood Research Group, Hungary

The study aims to provide a suitable instrument for measuring how teachers develop students' learning habits in first grade. School success, influenced by the initial developmental level at school entry (Amukune et al., 2022), shapes the life span. Existing research explores socio-cognitive aspects of school entry (Russo et al., 2019), however, a gap still exists in systematically measuring and supporting children's learning habits. For assessing students' learning habits, the study considered several dimensions; teacher attachment, school connection, community-building, parental involvement, learning environment, agenda-related habits, motivation, learning techniques, strategy development, and student roles (Józsa et al., 2022). The survey questionnaire evaluated how teachers facilitate the development of students' learning habits. It consisted of ten dimensions (50 statements) and was distributed online to 269 practicing teachers. The study followed the Declaration of Helsinki and obtained the IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval. Participants gave informed consent, outlining study purposes, their rights, and confidentiality measures. The study maintains confidentiality ensuring participants' privacy and anonymity through anonymous surveys. Experts confirmed the content validity with a valid content validity index (CVI > 0.75). Multi-group confirmatory factor analysis revealed the questionnaire demonstrated measurement invariance across genders and teaching experiences. The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha > 0.72, CR > 0.73, AVE > 0.51) affirmed the convergent validity. The HTMT ratio (0.85) validated the questionnaire for measuring teacher practices in supporting first-grade students' learning habits. This study contributes to understanding teacher practices in shaping learning habits and holds promise for integration into programs to encourage effective study habits.

learning habits, questionnaire development, first grade, school entry, teachers' ratings

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Pedagogical Documentation in ECE Programs: Applying the Reggio Emilia Approach for Assessment and Evaluation - A Case Study in Kosovo.

Presenters:

Arlinda Beka, University of Prishtina, Kosovo

Engjerlina Dukaj, " Botanika" - Community-based Kindergarten, Kosovo

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the Reggio Emilia approach to pedagogical documentation in Early Childhood Education. The study will focus on Kosovo and aims to examine the principles and methodologies of the approach, implement strategies in selected ECE programs, evaluate the impact of these strategies on children's

learning and development, and analyze the challenges and opportunities of adopting the approach in Kosovo's ECE context. This study builds on the relationship between prior research in pedagogical documentation and the Reggio Emilia approach. Literature by Malaguzzi (1993), Gandini, and Edwards (2001), Rinaldi (2001), Moss (2013), Dahlberg (1999), Pianta and La Paro (2003) has highlighted the benefits of pedagogical documentation for assessment, evaluation, and the holistic development of children. The literature on pedagogical documentation and the Reggio Emilia approach, including works by renowned authors, provides a theoretical framework for this study. Dahlberg and Moss's (1999), research on implementing the approach in diverse cultural settings offers valuable insights. This study examines pedagogical documentation and the Reggio Emilia approach in early childhood education settings using photography and a constructivist approach. The study prioritized ethics by obtaining consent, ensuring privacy, maximizing benefits, and maintaining transparency. Research shows effective approaches for early childhood education. Educators can learn from successful practices to improve learning outcomes for children. Findings can inform professional development, curriculum development, and policies. Policy research findings can provide new insights that shape issue-framing and policy-making processes, helping to conceptualize issues and frame problems.

pedagogical documentation, Reggio Emilia approach, early childhood education, visual methodology, constructivism

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Preparation (time) for pedagogues in ECEC institutions

Presenters:

Hjørdis Brandrup Kortbek, UCL - University College, Denmark

Christina Haandbæk Schmidt, UCL - University College, Denmark

In discussions of the scope of the professional development of pedagogues we lack knowledge about the time pedagogues have for preparation. How can we understand the concept of preparation in an ECEC context, how much time does pedagogues have, and how is preparation used? From research we know that the development of quality in daycare institutions depends on pedagogue's capacities to critically and evaluatively engage with their practical experiences (Sheridan et al., 2009; EVA, 2018). This prerequisite can be understood as structural quality, which includes, among other factors, preparation time – the time during which pedagogues, along with their colleagues, can reflect on and evaluate their own practices, also known as 'attendance without child interaction' (Dalsgaard et al., 2023). This presentation presents and discuss the preliminary results of a survey among 500 daycare center leaders in Denmark (Reimer & Sortkær, 2017). The respondents are informed that their answers and personal data are kept in a save online platform and that their answers cannot be traced in the final report. In the presentation we will focus on the structural conditions and practical arrangements of pedagogue's preparation time. Insights from the project can contribute to discussions on day care pedagogue's working conditions and professional development.

quality, professionalism, day care institution, preparation time, working conditions

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B16, Room 104, first floor, Edward Street building

IN-SERVICE EDUCATION AND TRANSFORMATIVE PROCESSES IN ECEC

Emilia Restiglian, Università degli Studi di Padova, Italy

ECEC is currently undergoing significant changes in Italy. The integrated 0-6-year-old system, which should gradually overcome the split system (nurseries and preschools), is based on Pedagogical Lines (2021). In the Veneto Region (north-eastern Italy), despite enjoying one of the most advanced socio-economic situations in the country, the ECEC system continues to identify itself as educational care. Sometimes also in preschools. The symposium intends to present three research experiences to support the processes implemented by educators, teachers and socio-educational practitioners, focusing on transitioning from a scheduling idea to participatory progettazione by enhancing reflective contexts. What tools should be put in place to accompany the work of educators in a nursery by transforming established practices into pathways based on a child-centred mindset? How do we involve families in

the progettazione processes? How can self-reflection within in-service training lead to a change in ECEC professionals' educational practices?

Reflective connections between in-service education and professional practices

Presenters:

Daniela Moreno, University of Padova, Italy

Co-authors:

Emilia Restiglian, University of Padova, Italy

Marina De Rossi, University of Padova, Italy

The study aims to identify and describe transformation processes in the progettazione and education practices of ECEC professionals after an experience of in-service training. Research points out that in-service training is a significant impact factor on pedagogical quality and learning outcomes (Egert et al., 2020), being professional self-reflection and collegiate reflection a core domain (Lazzari et al., 2013). Conceptual framework is informed by Schön's (1983) reflective practitioner, highlighting the importance of developing awareness of the implicit knowledge that motivates practices, giving the possibility to learn from one's own experience. Informed by a pragmatic paradigm that intends knowledge as an active intervention process on reality (Dewey, 1938; Peirce, 1992), an action-research methodological approach was used. 35 in-service professionals were requested to develop a project work by the end of the course, implementing one innovative pedagogical intervention in their services. The output was a narrative document including a description of the experience and a comparison with previous practices. Professionals' views and reflections on the learning and transformative processes were explored using qualitative content analysis (Miles et al., 2020). Informed consent to participate in a voluntary basis included sharing project work documents. Children and adult privacy and anonymity is guaranteed. Course contents helped professionals to enrich progettazione, by proposing new educational experiences to the children. The extent to which reflective processes led to greater awareness towards children's initiative, agency and relationship with adults will be discussed. Since professionals found Project Work helpful, it could be a suitable tool for in-service pedagogical supervision.

in-service training, reflexivity, quality process, project work, ECEC curriculum

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Challenges towards a child-centred mindset at the nursery

Presenters:

Monica Gottardo, University of Padova, Italy

Paola Zoroaster, University of Padova, Italy

The research aims to explore and describe strategies and actions for supervising and supporting the staff transition towards a practice of progettazione, recognizing the challenges they have addressed. The topic follows other similar research, such as Greaves and Bahous (2021) and Kinoshita et al. (2016). Progettazione, inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach (Rinaldi, 2009), states the centrality of the child in the educational planning process. The National Orientations (2022) encourages services to embrace and develop this perspective, by considering the pedagogical project as a research action (Fortunati & Catarsi, 2012), enhancing an intentional action that considers the educational event's complexity and the opening to the unexpected (Martini et al., 2015). The research follows a constructivist approach (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), that builds knowledge by exploring the meanings that subjects handle while interacting within an specific historical-cultural context. From a qualitative approach, document analysis, interviews and a focus group (Cohen et al., 2018) will be used to reconstruct the views of practitioners and pedagogical coordinators. Participation in research is under a voluntary basis, given informed consent, where anonymity is guaranteed. The data will be shared with the participants. Preliminary findings indicate that the greatest challenge to face is a change of the educators mind-set from an approach focused on children's educational goals to one that reads the needs of children expressed in their daily interactions. A child-centered mindset is a precondition for the integration between education and care, as stated in the European Quality Framework.

child-centred mindset, progettazione, reflexivity, participation, transformation processes

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Participatory needs assessment and co-progettazione of individual care plans in socio-educational practices

Presenters:

Armando Bello, Università di Padova, Italy

Co-authors

Paola Milani, Università di Padova, Italy

Sara Serbati, Università di Padova, Italy

The research aims to assess the impact of the “Maps to Explore the 0-3”, a tool for the participatory assessment and co-progettazione of multidisciplinary care plans for children aged 0-3 within a parenting support program for vulnerable families called P.I.P.P.I. Previous research suggests that a participatory approach can be unfolded in reflexive practices (Serbati & Moreno, 2022) that benefits from tools that support social and ECEC professionals in shared tasks of observation and co-progettazione with families (Moreno Boudon et al., 2021). The Participative and Transformative Evaluation framework (Serbati & Milani, 2012) posits that dialogical and participatory assessment and progettazione provide learning environments (Mezirow, 1991), where supportive educational experiences are built. Adopting a pragmatic paradigm (Patton, 1975) and a pluralistic evaluation approach (Fives et al., 2017), a mixed-method study is conducted to assess the impact of the Maps on outcomes, through a quantitative counterfactual analysis, and underlying processes, employing qualitative methods such as focus groups and semi-structured interviews. This research adopts ethical standards of P.I.P.P.I. program, ensuring anonymity to participants voluntarily engaged after signing an informed consent. The tool is expected to aid parents and practitioners in accurately assessing children's needs leading to more appropriate responses to them. Preliminary data from a focus group and survey indicates positive feedback from professionals, emphasising its role in improving understanding of needs and facilitating co-progettazione. Maps are shown to be a valid tool for promoting reflexive practices of observation and co-progettazione in early childhood, supporting child-centred participatory approach in social and ECEC services.

parenting support, needs assessment, co-progettazione, evaluation, participation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B17, Room 105, first floor, Edward Street building

PLAY: A CATALYST FOR SCIENCE & STEM TEACHING AND LEARNING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN ACROSS CONTEXTS

Chair: Jenni Vartiainen, University of Helsinki, Finland

This symposium encourages researchers, practitioners and policy makers to consider the synergies across learning contexts for the playful learning of science and STEM for children aged 0-6 years. Adopting qualitative approaches, these studies exemplify the role of play as a catalyst for Science and STEM teaching and learning in nature-based settings for very young children and in preschool classrooms. Findings discussed will challenge our current thinking on the environments, processes and power relations in relation to the playful teaching and learning of science and STEM.

Preparing Belgian preschoolers for independent research and design through a variety of STEM activities involving fine motor skills

Presenters:

Thijs Eeckhout, Odisee, Belgium

This one-year inquiry aims to prepare 4 and 5 year old preschoolers in typical Flemish classes with high diversity to independently design and/or research through a diversity of STEM-activities in which fine motor skills are addressed. The goal is that they will be able to use these tools independently during the performance of STEM activities. There are good arguments to stimulate STEM and fine motor skills together. While carrying out scientific activities, preschoolers are challenged to learn fine motor skills (Postma, 2011). Preschoolers who do more fine motor activities at home, such as tinkering, are also more adept at this (Suggate, Stoeger, & Pufke, 2017). This project fits within the research tradition to design and evaluate responsive language and thinking stimulating approaches (Wright & Gotwals, 2017). The research questions are answered using an Educational design research methodology in which educational materials are designed, tested and implemented by experienced teachers through different development cycles (Plomp & Nieveen, 2007). Daily feedback forms, field notes, observations, and interviews with the teachers will be analyzed qualitatively. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Pseudonyms have replaced the names of participants. Participants could always withdraw from the study. 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. These findings suggest implications for how STEM-activities might be designed to enable preschoolers to work more independently while performing STEM-activities.

early childhood education, STEM education, Language of schooling stimulation, fine motor skills, professionalization

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Dialectics of play and exploration: Science inquiry in children's imaginative play practices

Presenters:

Jenni Vartiainen, University of Helsinki, Finland

This study aims to unfold the dialectics of play and inquiry among preschool children during free play. It's generally agreed that children explore in free play and learn about causal relations of the environment (e.g. Golinkoff et al., 2006). Children's inquiry acts during play have been scrutinized exhaustively: the studies are dominated by the viewpoints that have aimed to study how to utilize play to serve inquiry (Vartiainen & Kumpulainen, 2020), how the physical environment promotes science exploration (Wight et al., 2016) and how spontaneous experiments occur in play (Cook et al., 2011). However, less attention has been paid to the contradiction between play and inquiry. The study is nested in the cultural-historical understanding of children's development (Hedegaard, 2008), early science education (Roth et al., 2012), and play (Van Oers, 2014). The qualitative ethnography-inspired study follows the cultural-historical paradigm. The data was created through video recordings and field notes. The participants were 31 preschool children (ages 5 - 6 years). Consent was acquired from the municipality, guardians, teachers, and children. Children were informed why the researcher was there and that they could tell her to stop filming at any point. The researcher paid careful attention to children's non-verbal signs indicating possible discomfort with being filmed. The results are presented through vignettes that unfold dialectics of play and inquiry from three perspectives: parallel, merging, and separating. The results indicate that inquiry can serve the purposes of play and invite us to revisit the definition of inquiry in young children's play.

play, inquiry, cultural-historical approach, dialectics, early science education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring Norwegian ECEC teachers' perspectives and approaches to early childhood science education for toddlers in nature.

Presenters:

Adrian Kristinsønn Jacobsen, University of Stavanger, Norway

Co-authors

Thomas Moser, University of Stavanger Faculty of Arts and Education Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioral Research in Education, Norway

Tuula Helka Sarvas Skarstein, University of Stavanger, Faculty of Arts and Education, Department of Early Childhood Education, Norway

The aim of this research was to get a better understanding of early childhood education and care (ECEC) teachers' perspectives on implementing science education for toddlers in nature contexts. Our research question was: "How do teachers in Norwegian ECEC institutions perceive and approach early childhood science education for toddlers (EST) in nature?" Science education for children under three years old is under-researched (O'Connor et al., 2021). Previous studies have identified nature as an important arena for EST in Norway (Kaarby & Tandberg, 2017), but also pointed out cultural contradictions in ECEC teacher's perspectives and approaches to science education in nature (Sundberg et al., 2016). The current study is grounded within Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory, particularly focusing on the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). The paradigm is social constructivism. The information was collected through individual interviews of eight Norwegian ECEC teachers. The interviews were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The participants gave their informed written consent and pseudonyms were used to replace the names of participants. The analysis generated three themes: (1) EST includes science processes, (2) EST is intertwined with socio-emotional aspects, and (3) Nature has many qualities that support EST. The results illustrate opportunities and challenges for implementing EST in nature contexts. and highlight the need for considering holistic aspects. Further research should examine EST in nature through observations, to be able to gain a more detailed understanding of EST practices and possibilities.

early childhood science education, infants and toddlers, outdoor play and learning, teacher perspectives, nature

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B18, Room 211, second floor, Edward Street building

CREATIVE METHODS TO EXPLORE EXPERIENCES IN ECEC

Susan Catapano, University of Central Florida, United States

From the Mosaic approach to cultural probes: why research improves when participants can choose.

Presenters:

Judith Brown, University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Helen Kara, Helen Kara Research, United Kingdom

The study aims to explore how parents' practice of mindfulness meditation influences their parenting perceptions and responses. It examines a shift in awareness how this might contribute to the dissemination of mindfulness practices in supporting parenting. The Mosaic approach (Clark & Moss, 2001) to cultural probes (Gaver et al., 1999) prioritises participant choice in engagement methods, advocating a co-created and inclusive research methodology centred on preferences and agency, informed by creative methods for co-participatory voice. Mannay (2016) advocates participatory research to challenge power dynamics. Co-created methods foster insights, reduce hierarchy (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995). The conceptual framework incorporates mindfulness by integrating elements such as intention, attention, and attitude (Kabat-Zinn, 1997). This interpretative phenomenological case study invited participants to record individual experiences through creative culture probes and participatory user self-documentation (Thoring et al., 2013; Gaver et al. 1999) and dialogue using layers of mindful inquiry. (Shapiro and Bentz, 1998). Aligned with ethical approval, information sheets and consent forms were provided for all adult participants. Full details of anonymity and the right to withdraw were also included. Names of any co-researchers have been anonymised. Emerging reflexive thematic and interpretative analysis indicates that autonomy and choice increase participant engagement, which can enrich analysis and improve the quality of findings (Kara, 2022). promoting diversity perspectives, ownership, and empowerment over their data. This participatory and inclusive

research methodology prioritises participants' agency, aiming to honour individual choices and enhance the quality and depth of insights, leading to more impactful and meaningful research outcomes.

creative methodologies, participatory, inclusive, empowerment, innovative

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The experience of Scottish Early Years Teachers: Exploring professional experience through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory.

Presenters:

Laura Gilbertson, The University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

This presentation focuses on the development of creative methods to capture the lived experiences of Early Years Teachers in Scotland. Prior research identifies the positive contribution of Early Years Teachers, with a skilled, highly qualified workforce seen as key to meeting Scotland's policy aspirations (Dunlop, 2016; Siraj, 2015:10). Research, however, (Dunlop, 2016: 8) also raised concerns towards a reduction of the workforce due to government legislation. To understand the experience of a declining workforce, a phenomenological approach investigated Early Years Teachers' lived-experience, developing new knowledge of their role. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model (1994) provided a framework to explore local and national factors influential to their pedagogy. The study used an interpretive research design, with a questionnaire followed by mediated interviews and guided reflection. Creative research methods were used with matryoshka dolls mediating narrative data, nested dolls representing the concentric elements of Bronfenbrenner. Analysis will be through reflexive thematic analysis. Due to the sensitive nature of studying a workforce in decline, a pilot was undertaken to determine feasibility and appropriateness. Pseudonyms were used, with participants located regionally to protect anonymity. Information and consent forms were provided during each element of the study, with the opportunity given to withdraw at any time. Creative methods allowed for participant ownership and individuality. Emergent findings highlight the influence of factors such as initial training and professional learning to teacher experience. Conclusions target the experiences of Early Years Teachers and the extent to which there should be parity in the role, both locally and nationally.

early years teacher, professional experience, creative research methods, mediated interviews, Scottish education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The Meaning of Life of Early Childhood Teacher as Professional through A Teacher's Life History

Presenters:

Uijae Kwon, Affiliated Research Institute for Early Childhood Education to Korea National University of Education, South Korea

Co-authors

Bookyung Cho, Korea National University of Education, South Korea

The purpose of this study is to explore the meaning and appearance of living as a professional through the life of an early childhood teacher. The quality of education cannot exceed the quality of teachers. Accordingly, there is a need to focus more on 'people' who, as agents, demonstrate professionalism in the context of their own life, engage in profession, and become professionalized (So & Choi, 2018). The main point of study is teacher agency. This concept is the key what improve the quality of education, and it is also connected to the question of becoming a teacher (Son, 2021). Since humans are holistic for each individual, and the group has meaning beyond the simple sum of individuals (Durkheim, 1919), in order to properly look into the life of a teacher as a professional. Under the perspective of qualitative research, this study explore an individual life of korean early childhood teacher, Teacher Park. The analysis was conducted through a content analysis within a life history research. This research contains sensitive information such as the individual's personality, growth process, etc. So, participant is given the opportunity to cover the sensitive information and withdraw from the study at any time. Self-reflective experiences

promotes positive self-realization in the educational field at various levels, including oneself, one's job, the society and era one belongs to, and through this, teachers can better explore and develop their own qualities with research stance. These findings suggest implications for how significant to know a process of becoming teacher as professional.

professional, early childhood teacher, teacher as professional, meaning of life, life history research

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B19, Room 304, third floor, Edward Street building

WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN FOR CO-CREATIVE RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

Alicja Sadownik, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

1. Success of and barriers to workshop methodology: Experiences from Exploration and Pedagogical Innovation Laboratories (EX-PED-LAB)
2. Co-Creating with Families and Children through Workshops: A Pedagogical Innovation in Early Childhood Education Towards Sustainable Futures
3. Leading transformational learning - workshop methodology in a sustainable ECEC
4. Understanding sustainability through co-creation of a collaboration frame between ECEC and academia in a CRT-study

Success of and barriers to workshop methodology: Experiences from Exploration and Pedagogical Innovation Laboratories (EX-PED-LAB)

Presenters:

Hege Fimreite, Western Norway University College, Norway

Elin Erikssen Ødegaard, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

This study aims to generate scholarly knowledge about success and barriers to workshops as a methodology for delivering sustainable program innovations characterized by stakeholder collaboration. As stated by the United Nations (UN's) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and as endorsed by scholars, social development will only be sustainable if sectors collaborate to handle complex issues more adequately and deepen empowerment-oriented and competence development participation. Drawing on emerging body of research, practice-development research must learn on co-creation between stakeholders to be sustainable (Wallerstedt et al, 2023) and must consider the often ignored local context (Coenen et al., 2012). The study draws on transdisciplinary epistemologies as modes of design (Dewey, 1938; Ejsing-Dunn & Skovbjerg, 2018), performative and narrative inquiry (Schei & Ødegaard, 2018) to investigate how workshop methodology can enrich practices and facilitate collaborative research and teaching (Ødegaard, et al., 2023). Workshops are designed to facilitate and lead to pedagogical innovation and practice-developing research. Multiple research tools, photo, audio, video, field notes, and narratives, are tailored to the exploration and testing. In addition to getting approval from the national ethical review organisation, we have experienced stakeholders wanting their names on outcomes. This shows deep project ownership and has been acknowledged when appropriate according to integrated ethical considerations. We find a range of success criteria and barriers, and will emphasize some surprising elements of change. The emergent impact has already been proven, as workshop methodology for the ECEC context seems highly relevant, and new body of research is growing out of this effort.

collaborative exploration, modes of design, narrative inquiry, co-creation, transformative learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Understanding sustainability through co-creation of a collaboration frame between ECEC and academia in a CRT-study

Presenters:

Alicja Sadownik, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Co-authors:

Hege Eikeland Tjomsland, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Eivind Aadland, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Co-creation of knowledge have become a new sustainability-related imperative in research and development of public services, including early childhood education and care (ECEC). Collaboration across academia and the ECEC sector is described as mending the gap of power relations and the gap between theory and practice. While existing knowledge focuses on co-developed ideas and pedagogical practices, this presentation sheds light on the co-creation of organizational frame and logistics of collaboration within an interventional randomised controlled trial (RCT)-study. The cultural-historical wholeness approach is employed as theoretical frame, as it highlights the importance of relating to diverse demands (of an RCT method and ECEC sector) when developing institutional practices (of research/intervention) in particular activity settings (which in this case were workshops). The reported co-creation was inspired by design thinking and the explorative workshop methodologies. Between January-March 2023, three, 3-hour-long workshops were conducted with practitioners working in three different ECEC chains, in Norway. The participation in the workshops was voluntary and the process of data gathering took place according to the international and national guidelines of research ethics. The findings outline the organisational economy of the ECEC sector's participation in research and the process of negotiating these needs with demands of an intervention RCT. Support from the university, meeting schedules and possibility for formal professional development under the project duration were the crucial aspects. The findings highlight the importance of negotiating organisational aspects of participation in collaborative research partnerships; under-articulation of which may function as an unintended exercise of academia's power.

co-creation, RCT, workshops, sustainability, research partnership

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Educational workshops and transformative leadership in a sustainable ECEC teacher education

Presenters:

Hege Fimreite, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Co-authors

Anne Grethe Sønsthagen, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Øyvind Glosvik, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Lillian Pedersen, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

The aim of this study is to investigate how leadership of workshops can support transformative learning in a sustainable ECEC-education. Educational workshops facilitate co-creation between students, subject teachers and teachers from ECEC. This can promote students transformative learning, but be demanding and involve a reflective and transformational leadership. Transformative learning is a form of metacognitive reasoning (Mezirow, 2003; 2009), and transformational leadership occur in social relations and promote motivation and moral (Burns, 1978) The framework is educational workshops with subject teachers, students, practice teachers and artists, as a variant of action research. The data material consists of conversations with subject teachers and the leadership team before and after the workshops, in a focused discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2000, p. 10). In the action research process, the researchers have both been a part of the development and implementation of the educational workshops. This can cause blind spots in the analysis of the data material. We have prevented this by including a non-participating researcher as member of the research team, and involved the students, subject teachers and practice teachers in the analysis. The expected results is that workshops increase awareness of how students, subject and practice teachers co-create knowledge, and that the leadership team develops its role in the uncertainty of these co-creation

processes. Clear information, structure and clarification of expectation is probably important leadership actions. Knowledge about educational workshops can increase the sustainability and quality of the ECEC-education.

ECEC-education, workshops, leadership, transformative learning, sustainability

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B20, Room 305, third floor, Edward Street building

SUSTAINABILITY FROM THE START

Adrijana Visnjic-Jevtic, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Teacher Education, Croatia

This symposium responds to the imperative of integrating sustainable development into Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) by presenting an innovative approach to e-learning for ECEC teachers and students. Grounded in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, it recognizes the urgency of shifting values and practices towards sustainability. The symposium will bring forward research and practices in five European countries (Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Ireland and Sweden), focusing on possibilities recognized as possible solutions to bridge gaps in current educational practices by fostering competences among ECEC teachers and university students. This symposium will contribute to the understanding of competences and practices required for sustainable education.

Learning for Change: Sustainability at the Palm of Your Hand

Presenters:

Klara Bahtić, Kindergarten Prečko, Croatia

Co-authors:

Muireann Ranta, OMEP Ireland President and South East Technological University, Ireland

The research aims to find benefits for preschool teachers, ECEC students, primary school teachers and a wider group of educators of using the ECE Academy application and the Sustainability from the Start course. Ferreira et al. (2015) argue that ECE educator training has historically been rooted in hierarchal and authoritarian cultures expressed through top-down decision-making and policy processes. There is now a call for a transformative bottom-up network leadership approach (Feriver et al, 2016) where the opportunity is given to all those involved in an organisation to contribute to learning meaningful to them (Moody & Darbellay, 2019). Using a transformative theoretical paradigm, this study positions itself at an intersection of research on education for sustainable development, early childhood pedagogy and children's rights (Ranta, 2023) to further examine how such a collaborative learning experience for educators may promote ESD for young children. The study has a qualitative approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) based on firsthand perspectives, observation, and interviews with practitioners, ECEC professors and students working with the course. The researchers approached the research following the EECERA Ethical Code. Participants were able to withdraw at any point in the study. The results show that the online course has been seen and used as a unique and all-encompassing tool which widens the understanding of ESD and enriches the practice with children.

Users' engagement in the Sustainability from the Start course should lead to their professional development and a better understanding of sustainability and its place in early childhood education.

education for sustainable development, transformative learning, child participation, child rights, online learning resources

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Sustainability from the start

Presenters:

Carita Sjöberg Larsson, Kristianstad University (KU), Sweden

The aim of this study is to share reflections learning about "ECE Academy" – Sustainability from the start App (edChild, OMEP & KU, 2023) in preschool teacher education. Elaborating didactic designs on the subject social sustainability and the Global Goals (SDG Agenda 2030, SFS 2021/22:247) through activity-based education in preschool class (LGR – 22, National Education Agency, NEA Sweden, 2022) the app may have the potential of being an educational devise and inspirational tool. Global sustainability issues (UNICEF Childrens Rights, SFS 2018:1197) 2014; Engdahl, 2010); Sommer, Pramling Samuelsson & Hundeide, 2013). Developing teacher's didactic competence enhancing childrens perspectives (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence,2014;) and learning content (Siraj-Blatchford, Smith & Pramling S.amuelsson 2010; Pramling Samuelsson & Asplund Carlsson, 2014) for global, social sustainability. In qualitative research the approach, through sharing perspectives on various levels of knowledge (Vygotskij, 2001). Students' and supervisors' met in focus group discussions (Kreuger & Casey, 2015), reflections were shared and documented. During vocational training meet-up at Kristianstad University, students and supervisors tried out and evaluated aspects of the app, planning a minor project (Bryman, 2022). Information on ethical considerations, voluntary participation on the ongoing reseach process were given (The Swedish Research Council, 2017) presenting the app. In following work-shop, participants handed in discussed templates as data. Results, Step one: acquaintance with the app advocates availability, efficacy, affordable education, collegial learning and useful, practical examples. Project is a work in progress, it indicates a widespread use of the app, due to availability and meaningful contents in teacher eucation.

social sustainability, ECE academy, virtual efficacy, global education, collegial learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Empowering Education for Sustainability Through Collaborative Learning

Presenters:

Adrijana Visnjic-Jevtic, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Teacher Education, Croatia

Ingrid Engdahl, Stockholm University, OMEP Sweden

Co-authors

Petra Vystrčilová, Masaryk University, Czech Republic

The aim of the research is to explore how collaborative teachers' learning by using ECE Academy App influence their perception of sustainability and current practices in education for sustainability (Efs). The study is placed within the research field ECEfs (Elliot et al., 2020), the Whole School Approach (Mathie & Wals, 2022), and children's rights (Višnjić -Jevtić et al., 2021). The study is framed within a critical theoretical paradigm (Davis & Elliot, 2024; Wals, 2017). Research involves critical analysis of societal structures, power dynamics, and underlying assumptions, aiming to uncover and challenge existing beliefs on Efs. Qualitative methodology was used. The data was collected using the group interview technique. In total, 10 teachers (from Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Ireland and Sweden) participated in the study. Participants participated in the research voluntarily and were informed that they could withdraw from participation at any moment. The researchers approached the research in accordance with the EECERA Ethical Code. Teachers recognize sustainability as a pervasive theme, recognizing its relevance across disciplines and topics. The ECE Academy application is recognized as a multifaceted tool for inspiration, evaluation and reflection within the educational context. However, they believe its greatest potential lies in fostering learning communities through user networking, anticipating collaborative growth and knowledge sharing. The course Sustainability from the Start is a means for educators in organizing transformative learning with children.

children as rights holders, e-learning, focus groups, tools for sustainability, transformative actions

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B21, Room 307, third floor, Edward Street building

PERPSECTIVES ON TRANSITIONING

Amelia Ruscoe, Edith Cowan University, Australia

Children's perspectives on the experience of transitioning to school: A collective case study

Presenters:

Yudan He, Beijing Normal University, China

Co-authors:

Yifei Chu, Beijing Normal University, China

Danyan Chen, Beijing Normal University, China

Weicheng Guo, The Montessori School, United Kingdom

This study aims to help both school and family levels understand children's real experiences during the transition process, and to build a gentle ladder for children to achieve a smoother transition. Previous studies indicated that the transition between kindergarten and primary school is a process that has an important impact on children's physical and mental health (O'Farrelly et al., 2020). Relying on the theoretical basis of children's perspective, education-related practitioners can better provide children with an environment to promote their wellbeing and early development by listening to children's voices (OECD, 2021). This collective case study used the Mosaic Approach (Clark & Moss, 2001), doing participatory and playful activities with children including preschool tour, drawing, photo-taking, puppet play, story-telling, backpack for primary school during the transition period in schools in Beijing, their teachers and parents. Based on the Panofsky's theory of iconology, the images were encoded and analyzed. All participants voluntarily signed informed consent forms and had the data anonymized by the researchers. The results found that: (1) after experiencing the transition from kindergarten to primary school, children placed more importance on discipline norms and academic-related matters; (2) Teachers, peers and good home-school partnership played an important role in influencing the children's smooth transition; (3) The consistency in pedagogy and affiliated system between kindergartens and primary schools helped children adapt to primary school life; The study suggests that teachers and parents should reach a consensus and empower children to participate in and construct the transition.

children's perspectives, school readiness, school adjustment, collective case study, transition to primary school

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The perspective of executives of kindergarten and elementary school on cooperation during transition

Presenters:

Melanie Schoening, Hochschule Koblenz/ Institut für Bildung, Erziehung und Betreuung in der Kindheit Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany

We implemented a study about cooperation of pedagogical professionals, teachers, children and parents during the transition from kindergarten to elementary school. Other studies aimed at the implementation and intensity of diverse cooperation measures (DJI 2012, Hanke et al. 2013) or impact on children (Kluczniok & Roßbach 2014). We focused on issues concerning the urbanity, the application of a quality development system and the involvement of children and parents during transition. We discussed theories of transition from kindergarten to elementary school (Griebel & Niesel 2011) and cooperation of pedagogical professionals and teachers (Gräsel et al. 2006) in the light of our data about quality of cooperation. Questionnaires were filled out online at two different survey points in time by 292 pedagogical executives from kindergarten and elementary school in four districts in Rhineland-Palatinate. The analyses consisted of descriptive and inferential statistics. The online-survey followed the university's ethical guidelines and was anonymous. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the survey at any time. The results show that there is no difference in the evaluation of internal and external cooperation in educational institutions that apply a quality development process compared to those that do not, or between educational institutions in rural areas and those in urban areas. However, it could be shown that in educational institutions with a quality development approach, cooperation measures with children are more frequent and regular. These findings

implicate how the application of a common quality development system affects organisation of transitions from kindergarten to elementary school.

early childhood education, transition, cooperation, elementary school, executives

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Educators as part of the ‘cognoscenti’: researching together to change school policy decisions about children’s transition to school.

Presenters:

Amelia Ruscoe, Edith Cowan University, Australia

Fiona Boylan, Edith Cowan University, Australia

Lennie Barblett, Edith Cowan University, Australia

This research sought to empower educators to change school policy on children’s transition to school. Transitions to school have lasting effects on children’s learning, development and wellbeing (Dockett & Perry, 2022). A participatory framework where knowledge is co-constructed through interactions with the phenomenon and participants was used (Schwandt, 2000). Design based research using qualitative methods involved gathering diverse perspectives using: observations; interviews with educators, parents, children and school principals; educator video diaries; analysis of school and planning documents; and an educator focus group at the conclusion of the 18 month study. NVivo and thematic analysis were used. Participants provided informed consent and assent was negotiated with children with parental permission. Pseudonyms were used, and all given opportunity to withdraw at any time. This study found educators and researchers using a funds of knowledge and identity lens transformed transitions to be culturally and contextually responsive. Using evidence, educators became avid advocates for changes in school policy and re-created transition practices that formed socially sustainable family, child/school partnerships. Educators who gather information and listen to the voices of children and families must be seen as part of the cognoscenti and as shown in this study can influence school policy decisions.

transition to school, funds of knowledge, policy decisions, partnerships, children’s voices

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B22, Room 308, third floor, Edward Street building

SEX EDUCATION AND EMOTIONAL SAFETY IN ECEC

Mary Skillington, Atlantic Technological University, Ireland

Nurturing Emotional Safety & Security (NEStS): Responding to behaviours which challenge in early education contexts.

Presenters:

Fay Gowers, University of Wollongong, Australia

Co-authors:

Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett, University of Wollongong, Australia

Rachel Jones, University of Wollongong, Australia

Marc de Rosnay, University of Wollongong, Australia

Within early childhood education contexts, behaviours that challenge interfere with children’s safety, wellbeing and learning and impact educator wellbeing, with behavioural challenges cited as a major cause of educator burnout (Bartlett et al., 2017; Jeon & Ardeleanu, 2020). This study responds to the call for support of early years professionals in responding to young children’s behaviours through a comprehensive pedagogical intervention underpinned by the principles of trauma-informed practice, and designed to enhance educators’ knowledge and practice, improving child outcomes. It draws upon core principles of ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2005), Bowlby’s attachment

theory (1968), and conceptual frameworks informed by neuroscience (Perry 2003-2022; Seigel, 1999). The study adopted a mixed-method randomised control trial to explore the effectiveness of a professional learning program in shifting educator practice and improving children's self-regulatory capacities. Sixteen educators and 55 children across four ECE sites consented to participate. Impact was measured in terms of: (1) shifts in classroom quality (Siraj et al., 2015); (2) quality of child interactions (Downer et al., 2012); (3) child self-regulation (Howard et al., 2016); (4) behavioural frequency; and (5) educator perceptions of program effectiveness. Consent was obtained from families and educators. Researchers were cognizant of children's states to ensure consent throughout research process. Focus group data spoke to improved educator wellbeing with participants feeling better placed to respond to children's behavioural challenges. Findings speak to ways educators can best support and respond to children, while exploring key strategies, practices needed to enable the sector to respond to this increasing demand.

self-regulation, challenging behaviours, pedagogical intervention, educator wellbeing, trauma informed practice

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

The Role of Teachers in Sex Education in Playgroups: Their Opinions and Experiences

Presenters:

Mutiara Magta, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

Co-authors:

Noviana Mustapa, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

Muktia Pramitasari, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

Erna Risnawati, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

Etty Kartikawati, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

The present study is designed to examine the role of teachers in the implementation of sex education within playgroups. Additionally, it will explore methods to educate students about body parts, including genitalia and reproductive organs. Furthermore, it will delineate strategies for promoting individual and collective health and wellbeing. The results of previous research revealed that the impact of sexual violence on children significantly affects the child's psychology; anxiety and trauma can interfere with their welfare until adulthood. This condition requires child protection efforts in the form of sex education. In schools, teachers are the ones responsible for this. (Nafilatul Ain et al., 2022) (Oktavianingsih & Ayriza, 2018). Referring to Freud's stages of sex, playgroup-age children need sex education so that children can go through the stages well. Children need help to develop sexually correctly (Supriyati, 2018). This qualitative research was conducted by interviewing 13 teachers from different playgroups in Ciputat, Indonesia. Analysis according to Colaizzi. The respondents gave us their consent to interview them. All their data was kept confidential. They answered the questions themselves on the enquiry forms. The results showed two themes. One was teachers' opinions; most agreed that sex education should be applied to children from an early age. On the second theme, teachers' experiences, most have implemented sex education in their schools using various methods and media. This study could be used to create a model for sex education in playgroups.

sex education, playgroup, teacher's role, teacher experiences, teacher's opinion

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Towards a Comprehensive Sex Education from Early Childhood: Knowledge and Beliefs in the Chilean Context

Presenters:

Ximena Poblete, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Chile

Mery Rodriguez, Universidad de las Américas, Chile

Daniela Figueroa, Universidad Finis Terrae, Chile

Co-authors

Paula Guerra, Universidad Catolica Silva Henriquez, Chile

This study analyses early childhood education (ECE) teachers and assistants' representations about comprehensive sex education (CSE) in Chile. This issue has been little studied in the country, despite its relevance in a conservative society with no public policy on this topic. In CSE, teachers should not only possess the knowledge and skills but also they act as role models (Dessel et al., 2017). ECE is a crucial level to address this issue, due to the influence of adults on children' ideas. However the implementation of CSE remains a contentious issue especially in ECE (Shibuya et al., 2023). CSE broadens the focus only on sexuality to encompass aspects like affection, health, sexual and reproductive rights, values, and skills about human relationships, addressing dimensions like respect and diversity (Keogh et al., 2020). From a qualitative perspective (Taylor & Bogdan, 1987), this study includes 30 ECE teachers and assistants. Data were collected by semi-structure interview about CSE, particularly in ECE, and their ideas about sexuality, gender and diversity. Data were analysed by Nvivo 12.2, following a grounded theory approach. Participants signed an informed consent considering participants' confidentiality and protection of information and it was authorised by the University Ethics Committee. Participants show a confusion regarding what CSE is, its components and importance. They associate CSE with only biological aspects and there is also a lack of knowledge, prejudices, and fears about this approach. However, there is an agreement on the relevance of this issue, especially with families. Results suggest that ECE workers should reflect about CSE to implement this approach in their practices.

comprehensive sex education, diversity, human relationship, sexuality, prejudices

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B23, Room 309, third floor, Edward Street building

IDENTIFYING THE BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN SWEDEN, TURKEY AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

John Siraj-Blatchford, OMEP, United Kingdom

The aim of the symposium is to support the development of tools and frameworks to support children in education settings, and in the development of future research studies. Presentations:

1. The Voice and Agency of the Child in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability: Can we Afford it?

Prof. John Siraj-Blatchford, Green Early Years Choices Champion Organisation (GECCO), and Jayde Davis, The International Montessori Institute, Leeds Beckett University

2. Education for Sustainability with 3-5 Year Old Children: Good Practices from Turkey

Prof. Tülin Güler Yıldız, Hacettepe University Faculty of Education Department of Early Childhood Education and Yekta Koşan, Atatürk University Faculty of Education Department of Early Childhood Education

3. Toddlers are the heart of the sustainability: Educators' perceptions and practices from Sweden and Turkey

Prof. Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson, Department of Education Communication and Learning, University of Gothenburg and Assoc. Prof. Deniz Kahrman-Pamuk, Department of Early Childhood Education, Mersin University

Toddlers are the heart of sustainability: Educators' Perceptions and Practices from Sweden and Türkiye

Presenters:

Deniz Kahrman Pamuk, University of Gothenburg/ Mersin University, Sweden

This study seeks to delve deeper into early years educators' perceptions of education for sustainability and identify the practices they adopt to promote sustainability in toddler groups in Turkey and Sweden. While studies suggest that young children can learn and think about sustainability (Pramling Samuelsson & Kaga, 2008; Siraj-Blatchford, 2009) there is currently a lack of knowledge on how to engage toddlers in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability (ECEfS). The study uses an integrated approach to sustainability where social, cultural, economic,

political and natural dimensions are interdependent and interconnected (UNESCO, 2021). This study utilized qualitative research methods and employed a cross-cultural case study design. The data collection techniques included interviews with early years educators, classroom observations and analysis of documents. Ethical considerations in this research include obtaining informed consent and maintaining confidentiality of data collected through interviews, observation, and document analysis. The preliminary findings of the study suggested that early years educators from both countries view sustainability primarily through its natural dimension. However, the practices observed in the Swedish toddler group emphasized the importance of incorporating sustainability into daily routines to promote early childhood education for sustainability (ECEfS). It is critical to update sustainability knowledge with a holistic perspective and present ways of integrating ECEfS practices into daily routines at preschools. By doing so, we can ensure that ECEfS practices are not perceived as an additional burden but as an integral part of early childhood education practices.

toddlers, early years' educators' perspectives, early childhood education for sustainability practices, cross-cultural qualitative case study, daily routines at preschool

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Education for Sustainability with 3-5 Year Old Children: Good Practices from Turkey

Presenters:

Tülin Güler Yıldız, Hacettepe University, Turkey

Yekta Koşan, Atatürk University, Turkey

This research aims to investigate the experiences of teachers who have engaged in professional development programs focused on education for sustainability (EfS), scrutinizing their current EfS practices, identifying challenges in implementing effective EfS, and gathering their perspectives on enhancing collaboration between schools, families, and communities to bolster sustainability. Various research conducted with preschool teachers to reveal teachers' EfS practices (Engdahl et al., 2023), teachers' perspectives towards barriers to EfS implementations (Davis & Davis, 2021), and collaboration of stakeholders for SD (Davis, 2010) are related to the current study. This research was based on the idea of EfS as a complex and interrelated concept that involves teacher experiences, EfS practices, and stakeholder collaboration (Arlemalm-Hagser et al., 2022) have been highlighted as core elements and on the notion of critical pedagogy which integrates reflexivity, critique, and social engagement to transform learning for sustainable practices (Kellner, 2023). Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the qualitative research method in order to reveal the best EfS practices and to obtain the opinions of preschool teachers. Before the interviews, researchers are going to share the aim of the study with participants and informed consent forms will be obtained from the participants. It is assumed that sustainability-oriented trainee preschool teachers' good EfS practices that reflect each pillar of sustainability with a holistic approach and multifaceted factors affecting the quality of EfS practices will be revealed. The anticipated outcomes of this research are expected to influence the formulation of educational policies that address community needs and enhance EfS implementations.

education for sustainability (EfS), teachers' perceptions on EfS, teachers' practices on EfS, professional development on EfS, best practice for ECEfS.

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The Voice and Agency of the Child in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability: Can we Afford it?

Presenters:

John Siraj-Blatchford, OMEP, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Jayde Davis, Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom

To investigate the means by which adults in preschools, and in outdoor and home learning contexts support children's voice and agency. The study cites: Borg, F. and Samuelsson, I.P., 2022. Preschool children's agency in education for sustainability: The case of Sweden. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal* Årlemalm-Hagsér, E., Larsson, J. and Gustavsson, L., 2021. New teacher strategies to support children's active participation in early childhood education for sustainability (ECEFS). In 30th EECERA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, Applies a model of early childhood education for sustainable citizenship consistent with recent accounts of ecological, embodied and extended cognition and the ecological model of perception and the concept of 'affordance' provided by Gibson (1969). This is an empirical study applying mixed methodology. The data utilized in this study has been anonymized and thereby entirely de-identified at source, and as such it does not constitute personal data. In addition, all users have been informed of the purposes of data collection through the provision of a Thinkific Privacy Statement that clearly identifies their voluntarily informed and ongoing consent, along with the means by which this may be withdrawn. The study provides evidence and analysis of adult roles in facilitating children's voices and agency in the context of the OMEP UK (World Organisation for Early Childhood Education) Early Childhood Education for Sustainable Citizenship Award (ESC). Contributes towards the development of tools and frameworks to support children in education settings, and in the development of future research studies.

affordance, voice, agency, sustainability, ecology

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B24, Room 201, second floor, Dorset Place building

HOME-PRESCHOOL PARTNERSHIP AND PLAY

Theresia Gabriele Hummel, University of Bamberg, Germany

Repetitive structures in children's play dramas

Presenters:

Guro Strømsøe, Queen Maud University College, Norway

Drawing from an ongoing Ph.D-project, this paper aims to analyse and discuss how repetitive structures appear in children's play dramas. The paper will focus on analysis of transcript from one video observation of children's dramatic play. Research has shown how children's play dramas don't fit into typical Aristotelian dramaturgy. Nevertheless, Aristotelian terminology is still used to describe the dramaturgy of children's play dramas (Gjervan, 2013; Gladsø et al., 2015; Guss, 2000; Trageton, 1995). In this paper alternative concepts are suggested to analyse and describe play drama dramaturgy, by emphasizing repetitive structures. The theoretical framework contains theories of the aesthetic dimension in children's play culture (Gopnik, 2016; Guss, 2000; Sutton-Smith, 1979, 2009) and dramaturgical concepts (Berg, 2007; Gladsø et al., 2015; Szatkowski, 2019). The study is conducted within a qualitative paradigm, with a hermeneutic and performative approach (Gadamer, 2008; Haseman, 2006), using dramaturgical analysis (Gladsø et al., 2015). The video observation was carried out within a Norwegian kindergarten, with children aged 2-3. Participants consent was collected from staff, parents/guardians, and children. The data material is anonymised, and the project is approved by the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. Preliminary findings show how repetitive structures occur as multiple magnetic points connected across different fictional levels, challenging current understandings of play drama dramaturgy. The complexity of repetitive structures gives new understandings of how the aesthetic dimension is of significance in children's play culture.

play culture, dramatic play, dramaturgical analysis, aesthetics, dramaturgy of play

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Mother-child and older-younger sibling writing play interactions in Arabic

Presenters:

Khouloud Zabaneh Tannas, AL-Qasimi College of Education, Israel

Co-authors:

Dorit Aram, tau.ac.il, Tel- Aviv University, Israel

Margalit Ziv, Kaye College of Education, Israel

This study examined the nature of Arabic-speaking mothers' and older siblings' writing and play interactions with preschoolers. Studies identified similarities between the support parents and siblings provide in teaching situations. They focused on giving meaning and encouragement (Klein, 2003; 1996). According to the bio-ecological approach, the family is the primary environment in which children grow and develop (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The sample included 80 children aged 5-6, their mothers, and older siblings (aged 7-9). The mothers and older siblings were filmed while interacting with the young siblings with bowling game which include writing words. The interactions were analyzed from three aspects: (1) literacy - grapho-phonemic mediation and letter-production support; (2) dyadic behavior - positivity vs. negativity of the mother/older sibling; (3) playfulness of the parent or older siblings. The study was approved by the ethics committee at Tel Aviv University. The parents signed a consent form. The information is kept only by the principal investigator. In all data forms, the participants are anonymous. Significant correlations were found between the dyadic and literacy characteristics, as well as between the playfulness and dyadic characteristics among both mothers and siblings. Yet, significant correlations between the playfulness and literacy characteristic were found only among the siblings. All interactions characteristics were related to the mother's educational attainments. It stresses the role of the family (mothers and older siblings) in preschoolers' early literacy development. This knowledge can contribute to creating intervention programs among Arab families designed to promote emergent literacy through play.

literacy play, mothers & siblings interaction, literacy mediation, playfulness, dyadic behaviors

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

The Power of Parent-Preschool Partnership in Supporting Home Literacy Environment

Presenters:

Theresia Gabriele Hummel, University of Bamberg, Germany

Co-authors

Sabine Blaurock, University of Bamberg, Germany

Yvonne Anders, University of Bamberg, Germany

This study investigates whether language-related parent-preschool partnership activities improve the quality of parent-child interaction during shared book reading. Parent-child book reading is an everyday practice in home literacy environment regarded as beneficial for children's early literacy and language skills (Xie, et al., 2018; Dong et al., 2020). A key component of shared book reading is the interaction between the adult and child (Flack et al., 2018). International research mentions that some parents (e.g., less educated) need support in carrying out interactive and stimulating book reading (Sloat et al., 2015). Implementing parent-preschool partnerships is seen as beneficial for helping parents to provide a sensitive home environment (e.g., Owen et al., 2000). The sample consisted of 65 parent-child dyads. Video data on shared book reading was used to code different aspects of global (6 items) and language-related (7 items) interaction quality from 'inadequate quality' (1) to 'excellent quality' (7). Information about partnership activities was collected via parent questionnaires. Research questions were answered using regression analyses. Informed consent was obtained from all parents. The results showed that the frequency of language-related exchange between teachers and parents ($\beta = .26^*$) as well as the number of teachers' tips to support child language development at home ($\beta = .35^*$) predict the global quality of parent-child interactions during shared book reading; with regard to language-related interaction quality, no significant relations were found. Professional development efforts may focus on helping preschool teachers to recognize the potential of parent-preschool partnerships for home-based literacy activities, such as shared book reading.

home literacy environment, shared book reading, parent-preschool partnership, interaction quality, child language development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set B25, Room 401, fourth floor, Dorset Place building

FOSTERING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ECE CENTRES AND MIGRANT FAMILIES

Maria Fredriksson, University of Stavanger, Norway

Is Being Together Good Enough: Latent Profile Analysis of Parental Involvement and Their Associations with School Readiness of Migrant Children

Presenters:

Li Yuexin, Beijing Normal University, China

Co-Authors:

Li Minyi, Beijing Normal University, China

Gao Jie, University College London, United Kingdom

This study aims to identify different types of parental involvement in Chinese rural-to-urban migrant families, supports migrant children's school readiness and mitigate the inter-generational transmission of disadvantaged human capital. Few studies have integrated the inconsistency between parental beliefs and behaviors (Chan, Manzon&Hong 2021;Slicker, Barbieri&Collier, 2021), failing to precisely capture the heterogeneous characteristics of parental involvement.(Epstein,2011;Ho,1995) The theoretical framework for this study draws upon "Overlapping Spheres of Influence".(Epstein, 1996)This theory suggests the development of children rely on the family, school, and community. The study was conducted within a quantitative interpretive research paradigm, employed a questionnaire survey method.Applying a stratified proportional sampling method, this study obtained a sample of 3319 participants.The main analysis was conducted through the LPA. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants.Informed consent was negotiated with the children and parents involved and re-negotiated during the time the research was carried out. The findings demonstrate four profiles of parental involvement: low self-efficacy and low involvement (C1);high self-efficacy but low involvement (C2);low self-efficacy but high involvement (C3);high self-efficacy and high involvement (C4).The children of C1 parents showed the lowest outcomes of school readiness.The children of C4 parents showed the best performance.The children of C2 parents and the C3 parents showed no significant difference.This study has shed light on the complex mechanism of the potential alignment. It's important to effectively identify the alignment and misalignment between parental beliefs and behaviors in order to provide targeted social support for parents experiencing misalignment and enhance the synergy between schools and families with a focus on the most disadvantaged migrant families.

migrant children, parental involvement , parental beliefs and behaviors, school readiness, latent profile analysis

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Relationship between migrant families and early education centers: a systematic review of the literature.

Presenters:

Carla Vargas, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Chile

Co-authors:

Alejandra Falabella, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Chile

The purpose of this study is to examine the findings of empirical studies that have explored the relationship between migrant families and early education centers. Extensive studies have shown the benefits of family-school partnership (Epstein, 1992), especially in varied cultural contexts (White et al., 2022), however, this relationship becomes more complex when cultural differences, language and discrimination exist (Norheim & Moser, 2020) Due to worldwide migration, schools face the multicultural diversity of students and families. Particularly in early childhood education,

work and connection with families is essential as it's their first educational space (OMEP, 2016). Literature mentions the importance of an inclusive and intercultural education, in turn challenging educators (Talis, 2018). A positive school-family relationship translates in academic success and comprehensive experience of children (Epstein, 1992; Simón et al., 2016; Weiss et al, 2009). The systematic review of the literature includes research articles from the last ten years (2013-2023), indexed in Scielo, Wos and Scopus, with a total sample of 51 articles. Although this study corresponds to a review of the literature (secondary data), the sources were extracted from three databases that are characterized by meeting scientific quality standards. The results are presented in three emerging categories that include the characteristics of the participation of migrant families in initial education; cultural agreements and disagreements between migrant families and initial education centers; and finally positive experiences for intercultural education. It is expected that the results will contribute to decision-making at the level of national and institutional policies towards intercultural education.

family, migration, early childhood education, cultural diversity, school-family relationship

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Positive factors facilitating collaboration between early childhood education and care institutions, and migrant parents

Presenters:

Maria Fredriksson, University of Stavanger, Norway

Co-authors

Margrethe Jernes, University of Stavanger, Norway

Trude Hoel, University of Stavanger, Norway

Thomas Moser, University of Stavanger, Norway

The aim is to contribute with a scientifically based overview of knowledge related to following research question: What factors are identified as positive for facilitating collaboration between ECEC institutions and migrant parents, and for whom? Collaboration between ECEC institutions and parents is a vital factor for children's learning and especially for children with foreign background (Khalfaoui, Garcia-Carrion & Villardon-Gallego, 2020). Even so, research shows barriers for collaboration and identifies a gap regarding research on the positive factors facilitating collaboration between ECEC institutions and migrant parents (Norheim & Moser, 2018). The study is grounded in Bronfenbrenners (1979) mesosystem's of multisetting participation and follows theories and systematics developed for SR (Descombe, 2021). Paradigm and methodology are in line with SR (Booth & Grant, 2009). The search is presented in PRISMA flow chart, extracted data is presented in line with PerSPEcTiF and the result draws on thematic synthesis, described by Thomas and Harden (2008), Ethical concerns working with a SR are mainly the risk of bias, non-transparency and lack of systematic. We followed the PRISMA 2020 guidelines for transparency and systematic and used ROBIS to minimize the risk of bias. Primary results from the perspectives of parents and teachers indicate both different and similar factors as positive. An including attitude, openness to the other and a willingness to communicate seems to be vital factors. Access to external language support and organisation for reflection are also highlighted as positive. Updated synthesized knowledge is important for researcher, educators, practitioners and policy makers.

collaboration, migrant parents, systematic review, positive factors, ECEC institutions

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set B26, Room 501, fifth floor, Dorset Place building

PROMOTING DIVERSITY REFLEXIVITY AMONG STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXTS

Katja Zehbe, University of Applied Sciences Neubrandenburg, Germany

In order to establish sustainable education systems that fulfil the professional and social requirements of inclusion, diversity, equity and equality, early childhood education professionals need to have reflective skills (e.g.

Vandenbroeck, 2024). The development of these competences is of great importance in professionalisation theories and models for early childhood educators (e.g. Cloos/Faas, 2022). It remains largely unknown how pedagogical reflexivity can be developed, applied, and promoted in the degree programme. The symposium will address didactic questions of (diversity-)reflexive competence development, discuss power- and domination-critical questions about differences and highlight potentials for the professionalisation of pedagogical specialists. It will discuss how diversity reflexivity can be promoted in higher education teaching with and among students and how they can sustainably change childhood education practice. The aim is to highlight the challenges and potentials in didactics and to establish an innovative connection between reflexivity in teaching and the profession (Zehbe/Kaul 2024, in preparation).

Reflexivity in teaching and the profession. Reflections on interactions

Presenters:

Ina Kaul, University of Applied Sciences and Arts Hildesheim, Germany

Katja Zehbe, University of Applied Sciences Neubrandenburg, Germany

The article shows the extent to which reflection is to be understood as knowledge work and how reflexivity and professionalisation can interact via teaching. The training and development of reflective competences is essential for educational professionals (Vandenbroeck 2024). Although progressive professionalisation and academisation go hand in hand with in-depth debates about the importance of pedagogical reflexivity, questions about the didactic design for teaching itself remain unanswered. Pedagogical reflexivity is dependent on individual, collective and organisationally framed debate (Cloos 2024, n.d.). As indispensable for pedagogical professions, it is aimed at the intensive and multi-perspective examination of one's own biographical development, as well as seeking to reflexively penetrate the logics and demarcation tendencies of the fields of action, social and organisational frameworks such as values and norms (Kaul 2019). The article is based on a well-founded literature research and document analysis (Kaul/Zehbe 2024, n.d.), which critically questions the disciplinary contexts of pedagogical reflexivity. Ethical considerations included respect for persons, justice and scientific integrity. The results show that pedagogical reflexivity must be considered as a desired competence for practice, as didactic modelling in teaching and as a function of the reflexive competences of the teachers themselves. Reflection as knowledge work in higher education teaching-learning arrangements can only implement the required professionalisation if the interactions are taken into account. A collective didactic space must be provided within the university for targeted support and development, which at the same time allows for a critical examination of and with teaching-learning contexts that seek to enable reflexivity.

reflexivity, professionalisation, college/university teaching, qualification, educational specialists

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Reflections considering Diversity and Education for sustainable Development (ESD) in ECEC

Presenters:

Melanie Kubandt, University of Osnabrueck, Germany

The contribution focusses on the relationship between sustainability and social difference and inequality in ECEC. Here, essentialising references to difference in current discourses on ESD and Diversity are reconstructed and critically reflected. Despite of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the specific view of ESD in ECEC shows clear gaps. Boldermo and Ødegaard speak of "the unexplored field of education for social sustainability" when it comes to sustainability, ESD and social inequality in ECEC (Boldermo/Ødegaard 2019: 3). With reference to constructivist discourses on difference (Garfinkel 1967, West/Fenstermaker 1995), differences are not understood as given facts, but rather as social and discursive production processes. This study is based on a literature review and a document analysis (cf. Meyer 2018). A representative sample of international literature and secondary data from various sources (scientific studies, practice, policy) was analyzed. Although not working directly with humans, in line with EECERA's Ethical Code (2015), cultural contexts and historical backgrounds of the data were acknowledged. It can be shown, that social differences in ECEC have so far hardly been taken into account with regard to ESD in a difference-

critical manner. Particularly in professionalisation contexts, reflexive skills are required in order to realise social justice in pedagogical fields as well as one's own shares in inequality. With a focus on higher education teaching, it is not enough to integrate the social pillar of sustainability by referring to Diversity; it is also necessary to take into account the theoretical and empirical findings of critical difference and inequality research.

ESD, social differences, professionalization, difference-critical, higher education teaching

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Teaching diversity reflexivity through research-based learning about play materials

Presenters:

Peter Cloos, Stiftung Universität Hildesheim, Germany

Svenja Garbade, Universität Hildesheim, Germany

The presentation discusses how the combination of different higher education didactic methods, including research-based learning and the use of diversity-reflective play materials in teaching, can support diversity-reflective professionalisation. Studies have shown a discrepancy between the professionalism expectations placed in professional discourse and the diversity-reflective competences that can be found (Blaschke-Nacak & Bilgi, 2017). The confrontation with diversity-reflective play material enables reflection on one's own assumptions about diversity, children and personal professionalism (Cloos/Garbade 2024, n.d.). Research-based learning has a high potential for developing reflective competences (Lochner et al. 2021). In the "DivSpace" project, a teaching concept was developed and implemented with students. It formed the basis for a qualitative, guideline-based survey (Helfferich 2011) of 20 students on the issue of diversity-reflective professionalisation. The interviews were analysed using constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz 2014). The project was approved by the university ethics committee. All participants signed a declaration of informed consent. It can be seen that all students have more or less clearly dealt with existing paradoxes of professional behaviour in relation to diversity during the seminar. Differences can be identified along four types that differ in terms of the students' fit with the higher education learning culture and with the topic of diversity. The types show that the students were able to develop diversity reflexivity in different ways. The findings can be used for the further development of teaching with the aim of professionalising diversity-reflective skills.

Professionalisation, diversity-reflective toys, higher education didactics, diversity education, students' perspectives

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Symposium Set C

16:15 – 17:30, Wednesday 4th September

Set C1, Sallis Benney Theatre, ground floor, Grand Parade building

FACING GENDER GAPS IN EDUCATION: STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE GENDER EQUALITY

Tim Rohrmann, University of Applied Sciences and Arts Hildesheim, Germany

This symposium sheds light on different aspects of and obstacles to gender equality. Tim Rohrmann points out the relevance of gender differences around school entry in language development and skills. Rosario Merida discusses the gender gap in science and introduces an interinstitutional project which promotes the inclusion of gender perspectives in teacher training. Finally, Hörður Svavarsson sheds light on the effects of preschool fees on the distribution of work and household chores between men and women in families. Together, the papers contribute to a multi-faceted understanding of the relevance of gender aspects for the further development of ECE provision.

gender_balance

Gender perspectives on language development and support in ECEC

Presenters:

Tim Rohrmann, University of Applied Sciences and Arts Hildesheim, Germany

Research on language development and school success shows advantages of girls, and a higher proportion of boys in problem groups. Our research analyzes if such gender differences are relevant already in early childhood. It connects perspectives from the health system and the educational system, and includes the views of practitioners.

Research shows systematic advantages of girls in comparison to boys in reading at school (McElvany 2023). Data from the German National education panel (NEPS) document gender differences in language development already in early childhood. However, there is limited research on the topic available from ECEC contexts. The research combines educational and medical approaches to language development and disorders, by integrating perspectives, and analyzing statistical data, from both sides. In a mixed-methods design, statistical data from language assessments in ECEC, at school entry, and health/medical data, were analysed and related to results of group discussions with expert practitioners. The study follows EECERA Ethical Guidelines. Anonymity of all data was strictly secured. Results were shared with all participating stakeholders. Boys show more deficits in school entry assessments and higher proportions of language development disorders. However, gender aspects are not taken into consideration in qualification for language development support in ECEC. The results clearly show that gender aspects are relevant for understanding language development delay and disorders, pointing to the need to develop gender-conscious strategies in ECEC as well as in speech therapy. By including the views of ECEC professionals and speech therapists, the project opens up new ways for collaboration and research.

gender, language development, language support, speech therapy, school readiness

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Science with gender perspective to develop coeducative skills in Early Childhood Education's teachers in Spain

Presenters:

Rosario Merida Serrano, University of Córdoba, Spain

M^a Elena González, University of Córdoba, Spain

Co-authors:

INFACIENCIA is a coeducative programme, which is focused on reducing gender gap in science with children from two to six years. It is an interinstitutional programme which involves three educational institutions: early childhood education schools, teachers involved in service training center and universities. The aim of this work is to analyse teachers' perceptions about their development in terms of professional skills while they are involved in this project. Different authors have studied and researched on gender gap in science (Bian et al., 2017; Mérida et al, 2023). Nowadays there is an inequality situation between women and men in science. This gender gap is visible in indicators such as: Shortage of women in STEAM, science leadership positions and academy's high level rol as professors (only 24%). This inequality in science between men and women has been shown in several reports edited by United Nations (2021-2022) and European Commission (She Figures, 2021). The theoretical framework of this research is the gender cultural learning through sociocultural theory, as well as Brofenbrenner's ecological theory. This study belongs to a cualitative and interpretative paradigm, based on semistructured interviews, which are analysed by discourse analyses technique. Ethical considerations, such as anonymity of data and report consensus with participants, are respected. Teachers' perceptions about their development skills are: (1) Increased competence in developing a coeducational science curriculum in ECE; (2) Improvement of critic thought to identify and reduce stereotypes and bias gender in science. INFACIENCIA provides evidence to include science with gender perspective in teacher training.

science with gender perspective, gender stereotypes, teacher training, gender gap in science, coeducative curriculum

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

An Impact of Fee Adjustments in Icelandic Preschools on Gender Equality: A Preliminary Investigation

Presenters:

Hörður Svavarsson, Adalthing / Kenning, Iceland

This study aims to explore the effects of recent fee adjustments for preschoolers in Kopavogur, municipalityM on gender equality. Decision was made to offer free six hours of daily preschool and increase fees for the last hours. Icelandic studies have shown that men tend to participate more in household chores after changes in employment, which is contrary to foreign studies (Gislason, 2017). This is believed to be due to the long-standing policy of paternity leave that encourages fathers to take on more household responsibilities. Icelandic parents have among the longest working hours in OCED. The theoretical foundation for the study is Pierre Bourdieu's Social Capital and Michel Foucault's Theories on Power. Quantitative (McMillan, 2008), the study collected data by observing 13 preschools, which parents brought and picked up their children. One preschool was closely scrutinized to analyse socioeconomic standing. The author's attitudes and knowledge of the field have undoubtedly influenced the selection of this research topic, but the same attitudes could also influence his research work. It is important to consider that particularly. The research will be reported to the Icelandic Research Ethics Committee. The study is still in early stages, and more data needed. However, our results challenge the one-sided opposition to the changes in political discourse and the media. This study provides a foundation for further research on the impact of fee changes on gender equality in other municipalities. This study provides a foundation for further research on the impact of gender equality in other municipalities.

gender equality, preschool policy, social sustainability, preschool, Iceland

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C2, Room G4, ground floor, Grand Parade building

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY IN ECE

Beckee Everitt, University of Northampton, United Kingdom

Research on educational leadership in Australian early childhood education.

Presenters:

Marcela Huerta Villalobos, La Trobe University, Australia

This paper presents a thematic and chronological analysis of Australian literature on educational leadership in early childhood education from 2017 to 2023, with a specific focus on the role of the educational leader, their practices, perceptions, and the professionalization of the role. Educational leadership in Australian ECE settings has evolved significantly during the review period and Leadership in early childhood education has been the topic of discussion among several studies (Aubrey et al., 2013; Dunlop, 2008; Muijs et al., 2004). There are three 'waves' of research in this area focused on the traits, behaviours and qualities of the leader as an individual. The discourse of leadership to consider the context where it was being practiced, and the most recent, focuses on a range of leadership approaches, including models of distributed leadership (Waniganayake et al., 2017) This literature review can be considered as an "Overview" where the process is defined as a summary which attempts to survey the literature and describes its characteristics. Relational ethics (Ellis 2007) identified issues beforehand, and ongoing critical reflection and consultation with participants addressed emergent matters. The research underscores the importance of effective educational leadership in early childhood education settings for improving outcomes for children and promoting quality in the sector. This paper contributes to the broader understanding of educational leadership in Australian early childhood education, providing insights into the evolving role of educational leaders, the diverse practices and perceptions within this role, and the ongoing efforts to professionalize the position.

educational leader, educational leadership in early childhood education, professionalization in early childhood education, effective leadership, thematic analysis

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Optimizing Transfer Management – The Role of Early Childhood Education Leadership in Transfer Processes

Presenters:

Valerie Bergmann, TU Dortmund, Germany

Prof. Dr. Nina Högbe, TU Dortmund, Germany

Prof. Dr. Daniela Ulber, HAW Hamburg, Germany

To achieve organizational development in early childhood education (ECE) knowledge transfer is crucial. In order to identify facilitating and hindering factors of leadership, our study aims to explore the role of ECE leaders in transfer processes. While existing studies examine the relationship between transfer and leadership in other fields (Bates & Holton III, 2004; Kauffeld et al., 2012; Massenberg & Kauffeld, 2015), respective research in ECE is limited. In Germany, where this study is based, the few existing studies focus on the benefits of transferring research results, the organization of knowledge acquisition and influencing factors and general leadership tasks like organizing trainings (Bader et al., 2021; Gessler & Gruber, 2022; Lattner & Rupprecht, 2023). Our study is using a theoretical framework based on transfer models by Baldwin and Ford (1988) and Rank and Wakenhut (1998). To adopt different perspectives on leadership in transfer processes, we investigated the involvement of ECE leaders through 22 expert interviews (Liebold & Trinczek, 2009) with various actors of the system (professionals, leaders and providers). Analyzation was conducted through a qualitative content analysis (Kuckartz, 2018). Ethical regulations of the German Research Association are obeyed. Participants volunteered and consented to data protection measures. Personal data was anonymized. The ECE leaders themselves see their responsibility for providing resources and appreciating transfer efforts. However, staff descriptions highlight insufficient leader support hindering transfer in pedagogical practice, emphasizing the need for clearer leadership roles. Further research is needed to understand the importance of transfer support through leadership for ECE development.

transfer, leadership, management, professional development, organizational development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Applying a shadowing methodology to leadership in Early Childhood

Presenters:

Beckee Everitt, University of Northampton, United Kingdom

This PhD research aims to propose, and implement, a leadership model for the Early Childhood sector, challenging the top-down, hierarchical approaches to leadership (Waniganayake et al., 2012; Hughes et al., 2023), through shadowing methodology. Research identified that leadership in Early Childhood combines compassion, empathy, and collaboration between practitioners and stakeholders (Tomkins, 2020; Wilson, 2020). Practitioners who draw on their experiences, form and deploy intellectual and emotional responses to support others (James et al., 2021). The proposed model focuses on collaboration and autonomy, allowing everyone within the setting to have elements of leadership and influence over policies, practices, and provision, as a participatory model (Nuttall and Thomas, 2015) whilst aiming to improve outcomes for children', by professionalizing practitioners in society (Sheridan et al., 2022; Penn, 2019) within my position as an Operations Director. Next phase of this research will apply a shadowing methodology (Bøe et al., 2017; Hughes et al., 2023), a new approach in Early Childhood, working with practitioners, holding different positions, qualifications to support a leadership model and reflecting on decisions made. Ethical approval will be obtained from the university. Guidelines will be followed (BERA 2018; EECERA, 2015), including protection of participants and consent. Literature explored demonstrates a need for collaborative, participatory approaches to leadership to provide the best outcomes for children (Hughes et al., 2023). Research is at an early stage but aims to provide insight into leadership occurring on various levels within PVI settings, supporting the development of practitioners and enhance provision, influencing leadership in Early Childhood.

early years leadership model, collaborative leadership in the early years, practitioners autonomy, child-centered leadership approach, early childhood leadership

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C3, Room G62, ground floor, Grand Parade building

LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF CHILDREN WHO REQUIRE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Jackie Brien, the university of melbourne, Australia

Developing and implementing sustainable ECE systems that enable choice, control, voice and agency for young children with disabilities

Presenters:

Jackie Brien, the university of melbourne, Australia

This research aimed to comprehensively examine policy and practices of Australian early childhood systems to determine how enactment of the right to be heard for children with disability may best be supported. It was underpinned by principles embedded in Australian policies, legislation and ethical codes (DDA, 1992; ECA, 2016; ECIA, 2009; UN, 1998, 2006.). The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989), and the associated General Comments formed the foundations for research directions. Undertaken within an ecological systems framework (Bronfenbrenner (2004), exploring the intersecting influences and impacts of international convention, policy and professional practice. The conceptual framework reflects the rationale of investigated concepts being 'appropriate' and 'useful' (Lester, 2005) with implications for policy and practice. The literature review was a methodology for identifying and synthesising existing policy and research. Qualitative methods included search and synthesis of key themes; within an interpretivist research paradigm (Cohen et al., 2007). Research literature explored included publicly available policy and research. The researcher worked in policy development and implementation and was therefore mindful of implications for future policy and practice. Effective support for children to experience choice, voice, control and agency, requires early childhood educators and intervention professionals to listen carefully in multiple ways to children's voice. The UNCRC and UNCRPD are foundational in Australian policy in relation to children's voice and agency. The challenge is to enact this fully in professional practice for the benefit of young children with disabilities.

children's rights, policy, children with disability, ECEC systems, professional practice

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Perspective Taking in Early Childhood Education: Narratives of Children in Need of Social-Emotional Support

Presenters:

Marianna Heinonen, University of Turku, Finland

Co-authors:

Riitta Viitala, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Päivi Pihlaja, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

This study explores the efforts of early childhood education and care (ECEC) professionals to articulate children's perceptions of themselves, their motives, and emotional experiences in relation to challenging behavior. Children needing social and emotional support can be perceived as challenging from the perspective of upbringing and teaching (Pihlaja 2008; Heinonen 2022). The theoretical framework of this research is based on the social psychological understanding of social perspective taking in educational relationships (Gehlbach et al. 2012; Swan & Riley 2015). When the focus is directed towards the child's inner world, one can attempt to comprehend the reasons

behind the child's behavior and the child's experiences from within, instead of solely perceiving the observable behavior. The study was conducted as an interview study with 12 ECEC professionals. Thematic analysis and a narrative research approach were applied in analyzing the interview material. The professionals and their organizations gave permission for this study, and the anonymity of the subjects is ensured. The results of the study are preliminary. Three themes were identified from the perspectives taken by early childhood education professionals: (1) the child's experience of themselves and their skills, (2) explaining the child's behavior from the child's perspective, and (3) the child's emotional experiences. The professionals' efforts to understand the child's thoughts, behavior, and feelings are important in meeting the child's needs (Swan & Riley 2012). Understanding the motives and emotional experiences of a child behaving in a challenging manner can contribute to a supportive encounter with the child (Wink et al. 2021).

need for socio-emotional support, perspective taking, perceptions of children, early childhood education and care (ECEC) professionals, challenging behavior

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Hearing of parents presented in documents regarding the support for the children in ECEC

Presenters:

Jenna Niemi, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Co-authors

Marja Syrjämäki, Itä-Suomen yliopisto, Finland

Jaana Viljaranta, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Noora Heiskanen, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

This study aims to examine how hearing of parents is presented in documents regarding the support for the children. Increasing parental participation is needed as parents' views are usually not included in support-related written documents (Heiskanen et al. 2021). The theoretical framework is based on to broader concept of participation, which see parent's role and involvement as more than just promoting children's academic success (Devlieghere, Li & Vandenbroeck, 2020). The key theories are Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation and Epstein's (2019, 16) framework of six types of involvement. The research data consists of support-related documents (n=532), collected in 2023 from 33 municipalities in Finland. Data includes (1) children's ECEC plans, (2) children's administrative documents, (3) other documents related to children's support, and (4) process descriptions and instructions for preparing administrative documents or individual plans from municipalities. The data is analysed using the methods of positioning theory. The data collection was executed as a request for information in accordance with the Act on the Publicity of Official Documents (§27). In this kind of research data collection, there was an exception to confirm consents of guardians. For this reason, a data protection impact assessment (Office of the Data Protection Ombudsman 2024) was carried out in regarding the collection of documents. The not yet published findings demonstrate how parent's positions in documents vary in degrees of participation. The research contributes to the discussion on parental participation and being heard.

parent's right to be heard, support in ECEC, support documents, parental participation, positioning theory

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C4, Room G63, ground floor, Grand Parade building

EXPLORING CONNECTIONS: ARTISTIC LANGUAGES FOR NURTURING PEDAGOGICAL DOCUMENTATION

Lucia Carriera, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

This symposium presents three intertwined contributions that delve into the realm of artistic languages in pedagogical documentation. The first presentation introduces a theoretical framework on practitioner's training, elucidating how artistic languages transcend traditional written or verbal expressions in pedagogical documentation in viewing art as a method of research. The second presentation explores the relationship between artistic

languages, innovation, digital tools, and community building among practitioners. Drawing on discourses of a/r/tography and ABR, the ongoing study employs qualitative methods to investigate the impact of digital tools on the understanding of children and multiple perspectives. The third contribution focus on potential of photovoice as a multimodal documentation tool for preschoolers, emphasizing children's active participation in representation and re-signification processes through visual and narrative expressions. The symposium will highlight the transformative role of artistic languages in pedagogical documentation, calling for proper training to broaden accessibility and challenging adult-centric perspectives.

Artistic languages for pedagogical documentation: Relationship with innovation and use of digital tool and community building among practitioners

Presenters:

Hisanobu Fujita, Tokyo Seitoku University, Japan

Mari Mori, Kobe Shinwa University, Japan

Co-authors:

Tomohiro Uemura, Tama Art University, Japan

Akiko Gunji, Gunma University, Japan

The study explores the role of artistic languages in pedagogical documentation focusing on the relationship between digital tool and community building among professionals. The study builds on earlier studies of pedagogical documentation that examined the relationship with time in ECEC and pedagogical documentation (Clark, Carlsen, & Mori, 2023), and philosophy and practice of Reggio Emilia with the notion of learning visible (Malaguzzi, 1996; Vecchi, 2010). The theoretical and conceptual framework draws on discourses about a/r/tography and ABR (Art Based Research) (Ingold, 2012). The study is formed within a social constructivist paradigm with qualitative in nature. The study is empirical nature with case studies of three nursery/preschools in Japan from school year of 2023. The data are constructed through participatory observation with/without digital tools, individual interviews, and group discussions. We followed the ethical guidelines of EECERA and the Japanese-research-society on ECCE. The Consent forms provided to participants and discussed to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The participants have the right to withdraw at any time. The study is ongoing, and emerging findings so far are the artistic languages for pedagogical documentation, with digital tool help the teachers to expand their views on understanding the children and multiple perspectives among the professionals. The study opens up discussion about the use of artistic languages in documentation with digital tool processes, which would offer new horizon of pedagogical documentation with artistic languages of the children. This raises challenges and discussions for carrying out professional development with understanding of pro/con of digital tools and artistic languages.

pedagogical documentation, artistic languages, professional development, community building, digital tool

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Photovoice as a multimodal documentation tool for preschoolers: reflections and insights from the field

Presenters:

Lucia Carriera, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

Co-authors:

Letizia Luini, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

Monica Guerra, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

The contribution explores photovoice potentialities as a multimodal documentation tool for preschoolers, making experiences visible from their perspective through photographs and narratives. The expectations on documentation processes are changing in accordance with renewed curriculum and childhood visions. Children's voices are often missing from documentation processes (Magnusson, 2018), posing issues from ethical/democratic perspectives, and raising questions about children's agency and expression possibilities. Photo-based methods can promote child-led

documentations, making children's perspectives visible through different languages (Biffi, Palaiologou, Zuccoli, 2021). Between these, photovoice (Wang, Burris, 1997) enables contexts' representation through photo-production, their discussion and dissemination with transformative aims (Luini, Guerra, 2023). In accordance with the UN (1989), emphasizing participation and freedom of expression, and the sociology of childhood (Corsaro, 1977), this research is conducted within a participatory paradigm (Creswell, 2013). The study implemented qualitative methods following photovoice methodology, accompanied by reflective diary on methodological process, analyzed through thematic analysis (Braun, Clarke, 2022). The research started after receiving Ethics Committee approval and informed consent/assent of parents and children, anonymized with pseudonyms. Through photovoice children can be documentation drivers and active agents in documenting experiences, allowing their active participation in representation/re-signification processes through multimodal channels, transcending verbal skills and emphasizing expressions that respect different languages. Photovoice could be a promising documentation tool for preschoolers, capable of encountering their interests and competencies through child-friendly experiences that allow them to share narratives, including visual ones, in order to represent and transform realities. Strengths and limitations about photovoice implementation as a documentation tool in ECEC will be further discussed.

photovoice, multimodal languages, documentation tool, participatory research, preschoolers

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Artistic languages for pedagogical documentation: the role of practitioner's training

Presenters:

Lucia Carriera, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

Elisabetta Biffi, University of Milano Bicocca, Italy

Samantha Tedesco, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

Co-authors

Ioanna Palaiologou, University of Bristol, United Kingdom

The contribution introduces a theoretical framework on teacher's training on pedagogical documentation using artistic languages. Pedagogical documentation is rooted in the ideology of Reggio Emilia (Malaguzzi, 1996) philosophical approach to early childhood education. It can be defined as the narration of lived educational experience (Van Manen, 1990) to make learning visible (Edwards et Al., 2012) or the evaluation of pedagogical practices. Even if words represent the primary channel for pedagogical documentation, art becomes a set of languages that allow expression by overcoming written or verbal words. Art is not conceived as a mere strategy to collect artifacts or images, but rather a method of research (Barone and Eisner, 2012) that can support pedagogical documentation in connecting meanings to actions. The responsibility to capture and make visible everyday-life in educational services, taking care of its inhabitants and their perspectives, calls for an ethical dimension that cannot be underestimated. In this perspective, the contribution adhered with EECERA (2015) code of ethics. This has resulted in the sharing of informed consents (including child-friendly versions), and in the anonymization of artifacts. With this premise in mind, arts can support practitioners in defining new strategies for sharing educational experiences (Biffi, Zuccoli and Carriera, 2020). The use of artistic languages in documentation processes offers a wider accessibility to children in ECEC, challenging the adult-centric perspective based on the written word. For this reason, the contribution will discuss the importance of proper training to support practitioners in approaching artistic languages.

practitioners, training, artistic languages, pedagogical documentation, art based research

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set C5, Room M2, Mezzanine, Grand Parade building

SUSTAINABLE PRESCHOOL: KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES FROM A SWEDISH LARGE-SCALE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Eva Ärlemalm-Hagsér, Mälardalen University, Sweden

This symposium presents findings from a Swedish three-year large-scale development and research programme (2021-2024) with focus on education for sustainability. This programme using mixed-methods and positioned within a critical and transformative perspective aims to identify effective development methods to work with sustainability and to investigate what effects this can have in the preschool context. The studies are built on previous ECEfS research (Davis, 2014; Elliott et al., 2020), and responds to the call for more research about leadership and how to implement education for sustainability in ECE. In the programme 200 preschool teachers and approximately 100 principals from nine different Swedish municipal or private providers took part. In the first presentation sustainable leadership is in focus. The second presentation problematise communication and children's perspectives in relation to education for sustainability. In the third presentation aspects of to becoming a Sustainable Preschool, to mainstream sustainability in the organisation, are discussed.

sustainability_early_childhood_education

Becoming a Sustainable Preschool

Presenters:

Ingrid Engdahl, Mälardalen University, Sweden

The purpose of the programme Sustainable Preschool was to explore what education for sustainable development means in a preschool context, and how you can work to ensure that sustainability permeates the whole preschool. The study is placed within the research field ECEfS (Elliot, et al., 2020; and Whole School Approach (Mathie & Wals, 2022). Within a critical theoretical paradigm (Davis & Elliot, 2024; Wals, 2017), different actions were taken to facilitate the transformation. The teachers collected data and transcripts of a) Informal Child talks, b) focus groups and c) Book readings. The teachers used the OMEP ESD Rating Scale for evaluating the quality of their ECEfS (OMEP, 2020). All data was uploaded anonymously to a locked i-cloud. Written consent was collected from all. Ethical guidelines from the Swedish Research Council (2017) and EECERA (2014) were considered, The results show an initial focus mainly on environmental aspects of sustainability, including being in Nature and Caring for Nature. The most common actions were linked to reuse, recycle and reduce. Later, fundamental values and children's rights, and budgeting and consumerism were addressed, including a circular resource system. Children's ideas and actions were crucial especially in the dissemination to a wider context, both local and global. Teachers described having adopted a sustainability perspective, always present in their planning. Several motives were given to why a transformation is necessary, from following steering documents to equipping children for the future. This project brings new knowledge about methods and content in early education for sustainability.

transformation, action research, child participation, OMEP ESD Rating Scale, implementation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Communication and children's perspectives, two important aspects of sustainability in Early Childhood Education

Presenters:

Ingrid Samuelsson, Department of education, communication and learning, Sweden

This part of the symposium presents a study which aims to identify how teachers communicate with children, and around what content, in relation to sustainability. The study is placed in communication theory (Vygotskij, 1989). Communication and children's perspectives were central key notions as most theories used in EC pedagogy relate to communication. It is in the negotiation of meaning between the children and the teachers that learning primarily takes place (Pramling, et al., 2019). Methodologically, the researchers created tasks for teachers to practice communication in various ways with children aged 1-5 years (Engdahl, et al., 2023). The teachers chose books, communicated with children about sustainability related to the book, recorded and transcribed it into text. A consent form and information sheet were provided to all participants. The names were anonymised and participants could withdraw at any time. The teachers documented Book talks with children. 157 transcribed talks were analysed with focus on content, teachers' actions, and children's reactions. Relationships was a common theme during the

Book talks; 1) relationships between humans, 2) relationships between human and nature, and 3) relationships between human and society. In another task, the teachers made 3 systematic child-teacher talks about a sustainability-related content from their recent practice. Another 399 child-talks were analysed on how it was carried out, in three different ways. This data shows how teachers organize for children to experience sustainability. This study has implication for practice and teacher education.

sustainability, teachers competence, development & research program, communication, children

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Leadership in Anthropocene: An ambiguous and challenging task in early childhood education

Presenters:

Eva Ärlemalm-Hagsér, Mälardalen University, Sweden

The purpose of this study within a Research and Development programme Sustainable Preschool, was to develop knowledge around preschool principals' and preschool teachers' leadership in education for sustainability in Sweden. This research builds on previous research on ECEfS (Davis, 2014) and it answers to the need for more research about leadership in early childhood education for sustainability (Elliott et al, 2020). The study is positioned within a critical and transformative theoretical perspective (Jickling & Sterling, 2017), encompassing children's active participation (Davis, 2014). This study presents interviews about the most important aspects of leadership in education for sustainability in ECE. The respondents were nine preschool principals and eighteen preschool teachers within the research programme. Ethical guidelines from the Swedish Research Council (2017) and EECERA (2014) were considered during the research design and process. The participants received information about the aim, method, and process and consent was collected from all participants. The preliminary findings show a wide range of aspects regarding leadership in education for sustainability. The principals are striving to manage the organisation and to lead educators in the process of deepening their understandings of how to handle education for sustainability. The teachers' challenges were to lead their co-workers and to develop new methods and activities to enhance the possibilities for children to broaden their meaning-making towards being active agents towards a more sustainable world. This study has implication for both practice and policy and contributes with new knowledge about changing everyday policies and traditions in education for sustainability.

early childhood education for sustainability, leadership, interviews, critical theory, transformation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C6, NEW ROOM: Room 306, third floor, Edward Street building

DIGITAL ENCOUNTERS IN THREE COUNTRIES

Mai Abdulkareem, KAU, Saudi Arabia

Designing technology for embodied learning in Early Childhood Education

Presenters:

Nadezda Lebedeva, Dalarna University, Sweden

The purpose of this inquiry is to gather knowledge on the processes of pre-school children embodied learning through play framed by digital technology. A specific goal is to design a dynamic system model (DSM) of embodied learning through digital play. Such a DSM considers children's perspectives to be an important element of its design. Based on the results of the previous research study (Lebedeva, 2021), the point of departure for this inquiry is the idea of learning through digital play being an embodied, flexible and self-organizing phenomena, functioning in response to multiple contexts, including individual, social and material elements. The project resides within child-computer interaction (CCI) research and interaction design (IxD), framed by variations of dynamic systems theory (Thelen and Smith (2006), van Geert and Steenbeek (2005)). Data from video observations of children's learning

through digital play together with data from session with their participation in designing of playing and learning prototypes are analyzed and serve as a basis for modelling. The research project aims to seek the ethical vetting due to the participants' age and requirements for publications. Before the start of data collection, the letters of consent are prepared for parents and teachers at preschools due to the stipulations in the Personal Data Act (SFS 1998:204) on information and consent apply to the project. Emerging findings indicate the importance of children's participation in digital play design. The results contribute to the development of prototypes of digital technologies for children's learning or can be used as didactic tools for practitioners.

ECE, digital play, child computer interactions, dynamic systems modelling, interaction design

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Emerging Digital Horizons and Childhoods: Investigating the Effects of Apple Glasses 'Vision Pro' on Children's Development in the Light of Virtual Reality Studies

Presenters:

Mai Abdulkareem, KAU, Saudi Arabia

In an era shaped by advancing technology, wearable devices such as Apple Glasses 'Vision Pro' hold the promise of transforming children's digital experiences. This study endeavours to explore the potential impact of Apple Glasses on children's physiological, cognitive, socioemotional, and behavioural development, juxtaposed against existing research on virtual reality (VR) devices. Theoretical frameworks drawn from socio-cultural theories of learning and development, alongside theories of media effects and digital literacy tailored to early childhood, inform the study design. This study employs qualitative analysis techniques, to thoroughly examine the qualitative data collected from in-depth interviews with children, parents, educators, and experts, aiming to uncover recurring themes, patterns, and the potential impact of children's development in the context of using Apple Glasses. Additionally, the qualitative findings from the interviews are subjected to a rigorous comparative analysis, juxtaposing them with existing research and literature on virtual reality (VR) devices and other technologies utilized by children. This comparative approach facilitates the identification of similarities, differences, and unique aspects in the potential impact of Apple Glasses in contrast to VR devices or other technological interventions on various dimensions of children's development. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, privacy protection, and the preservation of children's agency, are meticulously addressed throughout the research process. Ultimately, this study offers crucial insights into how Apple Glasses may influence children's development, providing valuable considerations for educators, parents, policymakers, and technology developers. Through a combination of qualitative research and comparative analysis, it contributes to the ongoing conversation about technology's role in shaping childhood experiences.

childhood development, Apple Glasses 'Vision Pro', Virtual Reality (VR), qualitative research, comparative analysis

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Bridging the Digital Divide in Peru: How Collaboration was Key for Early Childhood Educators and Parents During the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Presenters:

Thomas Chambers, University of Greenwich, United Kingdom

This study aims to identify challenges encountered by early childhood educators and parents in Peru during the COVID-19 pandemic. Internationally conducted research reveals that teachers report difficulty in engaging children in age-appropriate learning via screens (Hu et al., 2021; Jin, 2023), a lack of parental support (Dong & Mertala, 2021), feelings of isolation (Steed & Leech, 2021), and unfamiliarity with technology (Ford et al., 2021). Parents were faced with limited access to ECE (Levickis et al., 2022) and uncertainty in how they could support children's learning (Dong et al., 2020). The study draws on an adapted version of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1977) emphasising the significance of social and environmental factors. Conducted within an interpretive research

paradigm, semi-structured interviews with two early child educators, their leader, and three parents from a state funded school, in an urban context in Peru captured rich qualitative research. A thematic analysis following guiding principals from Braun and Clarke (2006, 2019) was then conducted within a phenomenological approach. BERA's (2018) ethical guidelines, underpinned by the sentiment to do participants no harm, were followed ensuring informed consent was obtained, participants had the right to withdraw, data was securely stored, and pseudonyms maintained confidentiality. Main findings reveal that economic difficulties, access to technology and emotional wellbeing were prevalent challenges. In overcoming these barriers, collaboration, parent involvement and teacher adaptability were identified as key factors. Findings have implications for parenting programmes, pre- and in-service teacher training and education policy implementation.

collaboration, challenges, inequality, access, COVID-19

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C7, Room 144, first floor, Grand Parade building

PEDAGOGY AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Norbert Szabó, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Hungary

Entry points for integrating media, popular culture, and digital technologies into early childhood pedagogies

Presenters:

Susan Grieshaber, La Trobe University, Australia

Co-authors:

Jane Caughey, Australian Catholic University, Australia

Aim: investigate how educators might counteract challenges to integrating media, popular culture and digital technologies in curricula. Objectives: explore how three core tenets of EC curriculum frameworks are conceptualised as 'entry points' for integrating media, popular culture, and digital technologies into everyday practice. Children's play has changed because digital technologies, media and popular culture now assume a greater part in their lives and provide a contemporary context for play (Grieshaber et al., 2021). However educators have been slow to integrate digital technologies, media, and children's interests in popular culture into everyday practices (Edwards et al., 2020). The larger project integrates practice theory (Nicolini, 2012) and critical theory of technology (Feenberg, 2002). Practices are shared actions and interactions amongst people that over time create the society they inhabit. Technologies are invented and used according to human values, which shape the enactment and sharing of practices amongst people in digital society (Feenberg, 2002). Case study (Stake, 1995) data from semi-structured interviews, video observations, and workshops led to investigating entry points in the literature to integrate digital technologies. Relational ethics identified potential issues; consultation addressed emergent matters. Three core tenets of: emergent curricula, intentional teaching, and child agency provide entry points for educators to integrate digital technologies into everyday practices. Embracing viable entry points for integrating media, popular culture, and digital technologies into early childhood pedagogies has the potential to transform existing pedagogical practices rather than replacing them, and enrich the play and learning of the current generation of children within ECEC settings.

entry points, curriculum frameworks, digital technologies, learning, professional learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

INNOVATIONS IN MUSIC EDUCATION: DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF A DIGITAL SINGING ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

Presenters:

Norbert Szabó, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Hungary

Co-authors:

Márta Janurik, University of Szeged MTA-MATE Early Childhood Research Group, Hungary

Katalin Kovács, Eötvös Loránd University huMTA-MATE Early Childhood Research Group, Hungary

Krisztián Józsa, University of Szeged Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Hungary

Oo Tun Zaw, Institute of Education Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences MTA-MATE Early Childhood Research Group, Hungary

This study aimed to develop and validate the digital signing assessment tool for early childhood. Over the past four decades, the use of digital tools has become a significant role in formal, informal, and non-formal frameworks. Digital tools revolutionize scientific research, particularly in the realms of measurement and evaluation (Almén et al., 2020). The study established the recognition of vocal reproduction as a key component of musical abilities (van de Woerd, 2019). The Sing & Clap It(em) Back (SCIB) complex digital evaluation tool was employed as a conceptual framework to simplify the examination of this aspect, comprising modular elements; a cloud-based system, an Android test recording app, and Windows audio analysis software. With the paradigm of vocal reproduction assessment, the current experimental research evaluates a key component of students' musical abilities. 157 Hungarian male students (6 -12 years) participated in using the SCIB tool. The study obtained ethical clearance from the Institutional Review Board and ensured that all participants provided informed consent for participation. The SCIB tool demonstrates high reliability ($r > 0.96$) across the entire test and its subtests, for interval singing, and voice reproduction. The results also indicated the validity of SCIB that it had a high degree of similarity with the widely used Praat software (SCIB, $M = 344.55$, Praat, $M = 344.45$, $p = 0.78$, and $r = 1.00$, $p < 0.001$). The SCIB contributes as a reliable source for scientific research and pedagogical feedback, emphasizing its innovation in advancing early childhood music education.

Sing & Clap It(em) Back, early childhood, singing ability, digital measuring device, measurement and evaluation for pedagogical purposes

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Swedish preschool educators' pedagogical work and learning regarding digital technology in practice

Presenters:

Marianne Gallardo, Department of Education, Stockholm University, Sweden

Co-authors

Eva Svärdemo Åberg, Department of Education, Stockholm University, Sweden

Janne Kontio, Department of Education, Stockholm University, Sweden

This study explores how preschool educators' pedagogical work and learning on digital technology are constituted in everyday interactions with children and colleagues in preschool. Questions are: How can communitive, embodied and material resources afford and constrain educators' pedagogical work and learning? How is agency realized and negotiated in the interaction? The surge in digitalization has formed new ECEC policies emphasizing "digital competence" (UNESCO, 2022; Swedish National Agency for Education, 2019), urging continuing professional development for educators (Nikolopoulou & Gialamas, 2015; Otterborn et al., 2019). However, workplace learning is often overlooked (Fotakopoulou et al., 2023; Imants & van Veen, 2010). This study is rooted in socio-cultural and socio-cognitive epistemologies, utilizing Billet's (2011) workplace learning theory, underlining individual agency and workplace affordances. Within a qualitative research paradigm and case study design (Yin, 2018), three Swedish work teams' pedagogical activities were video-recorded and followed up through reflective dialogues to understand their perspectives on their practice and learning. Each team had educator(s) assigned to support colleagues through an "information and communication technology (ICT) educator" role. Employing multimodal interaction analysis inspired by ethnomethodology and conversational analysis (Garfinkel, 1967), interactions (speech, gestures, gaze) are examined, crucial for understanding practices with young children. Educators', guardians', and children's informed consent was obtained. Participants were pseudonymized and informed of the withdrawal option. Children's consent was continuously negotiated. Preliminary findings reveal educators' in-situ learning during

technology trials with children. Results may inform policymakers, principals and (ICT) educators on sustainable ECEC system enhancement, emphasizing workplace learning in policy interpretation and decision-making.

preschool educators, workplace learning, digital technology, professional development, interaction analysis

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C8, Room 202, second floor, Grand Parade building

SUPPORTING SELF-REGULATION IN ECEC

Rebecca Bartram, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom

Assessing Turkish Preschool Children's Behavioral Self-Regulation Skills: Validation of the Head-Toes-Knees-Shoulders- Revised Task (HTKS-R)

Presenters:

Gozde Erturk Kara, Kocaeli University, Turkey

Tulin Guler Yıldız, Hacettepe University, Turkey

Co-authors:

Nursel BEKTAŞ, Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Turkey

Burcu ATAR, hacettepe university, Turkey

It aims to reveal the validity and reliability of The HTKS Task revised and strengthened version for measuring the behavioral self-regulation (BSR) skills of Turkish children. HTKS was developed by Cameron Ponitz et al. (2009). Sezgin & Demiriz (2015) adapted it in Turkish. It has gained an important place in studies on the assessment of self-regulation in the national literature. HTKS's limitations were eliminated in the studies in which HTKS-R was used. HTKS-R was developed by McClelland et al. (2021). The theoretical framework of the task is based on the studies of Miyake et al. (2000) and Garon et al. (2008) on executive function skills. 308 preschool children were attended in this survey model study. After translation-and-back translation procedures, Turkish HTKS-R was evaluated by field experts, and the task items were found to be consistent. Confirmatory factor, descriptive, reliability and criterion validity analyses were conducted on the data. After obtaining permission from the developers for the scale adaptation process, the research protocol was approved by the authors' university Human Sciences Ethics Committee. The ethical rules of confidentiality, information, autonomy and voluntary participation were followed. Turkish HTKS-R was valid and reliable for assessing children's BSR skills. The adaptation of an up-to-date measurement tool to the national literature will contribute to both studies conducted in Turkish culture and intercultural studies. Further research can be carried out to find out factors associated with the BSR skills of children. Turkish HTKS-R data can serve to design early intervention programs which support children's BSR skills.

early childhood, behavioral self-regulation, assessment, Head-Toes-Knees-Shoulders-Revised Task, Turkish HTKS-R Task

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Self-regulation in the reception classroom – an exploration of how self-regulation develops, is supported, and understood in UK reception classrooms.

Presenters:

Rebecca Bartram, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom

This PhD study explores definitions of self-regulation in the literature, the statutory curriculum requirements, and teachers working in reception (four-five years). Self-regulation is linked to positive outcomes academically and

wellbeing (Hofmann et al., 2012), further research in this area (EEF, 2018) builds on established understanding (Mischel et al., 1989, Fox and Riconscente, 2008) and its inclusion in the revised 2021 early years statutory framework (DFE, 2021). Bronfenbrenner's ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1996) adapted as a framework is used, together with material feminism. Material feminism demands how the material is viewed is reframed, reconsidering the environmental politics of situations, located in homes and schools (Alaimo and Hekman, 2008). Case studies over the academic year 2021/2022 collected data through, interviews, observations, parent questionnaires, and children's map. For analysis the constant comparison method and triangulated in an interpretive approach was used. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and information sheets were provided explaining their right to withdraw at any time. Children's ongoing assent to take part was negotiated. All children, staff and schools have been anonymised. Findings show the early years work force is well attuned to supporting children emotionally to develop self-regulation, however understanding of the breadth of factors self-regulation incorporates is less well understood. The curriculum supports practitioners' ability to respond to children's needs, however, understanding self-regulation development would enable purposeful, target pedagogy to be planned and incorporated into daily classroom routines.

self-regulation, emotional regulation, child development, early years, responsive pedagogy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Regulating Emotions in the Classroom to Improve the Quality of Teaching and Learning in the Early Years

Presenters:

Dr Erika Galea, Educational Neuroscience Hub Europe, Malta

Co-authors

Prof Andy Tolmie, University College London, United Kingdom

Dr Matthew Somerville, University College London, United Kingdom

Children's mental health has emerged as a global concern. The principal objective of the study, post-teacher training, was to evaluate an intervention programme designed to teach and support emotion regulation (ER) strategies for students, enabling a transition from explicit, deliberate, and controlled ER to an implicit and unconscious manner, resulting in self-regulation. Previous research has established a negative correlation between limited access to ER strategies and academic underachievement (De Neve et al., 2021), while emotional awareness has been positively linked with engagement in emotional, academic, and behavioural aspects (Kurki, 2017). Hence, the study's theoretical framework is constructed on co-regulatory activities that are developmentally relevant and contextually sensitive, promoting self-regulation and emotional stability, which in turn leads to academic and social success (Jones et al, 2014). Conducted within an exploratory (pragmatic) mixed-methods paradigm (Morgan, 2014), the intervention programme was evaluated in terms of evidence of ER and quality of classroom environment relative to a control sample through video-recorded systematic classroom observations and semi-structured interviews at baseline and implementation stage. A consent and information sheet was provided to all participating teachers, students and their parents, all of whom consented to the research. Pseudonyms were used for confidentiality. Results demonstrate that the Intervention Group applied antecedent-focused ER strategies through co-regulation, particularly situation modification and cognitive change, leading to peer or self-regulation. In contrast, the Control Group adopted response-focused strategies. These findings suggest including ER skills in school curricula to assist in children's emotional management, underscoring the growing relevance of affective research in education.

emotion regulation strategies, intervention programme, co-/self-regulation, effective learning, positive behaviour

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set C9, Room 204, second floor, Grand Parade building

INFANT MENTAL HEALTH, COLLECTIVE PLAY AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

Liang Li, Monash University, Australia

Raising Infant Mental Health Awareness in the west of Ireland

Presenters:

Mary Skillington, Atlantic Technological University, Ireland

The aims were to raise awareness of infant mental health in the west of Ireland and set up a dedicated Network of professionals from different disciplines. Grounded in the seminal work of Selma Freiberg (1975), Arietta Slade's work on Attachment and Reflective parenting (2023), the work of the Brazelton Institute and the work of the Center on the Developing Child The Science of Early Childhood Development (2007). Irrefutable evidence indicates that brain growth makes the first years of life qualitatively and quantitatively different than any other time of life (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child 2005/2014). Early experience and shapes the brain, affecting lifelong health, behaviour and learning. Adverse Childhood Experiences (Felitti et Al 1998) Paradigm shift in how front line staff understand the baby and parent dyad and the key role of early relationships. Upskilling of professionals at monthly IMH network meetings in order to impact daily practice, organising Mayo Baby week, a week of events for infants and parents/caregivers. Commitment to children's wellbeing, doing no harm, a commitment to children's rights, listening to children at events on Mayo Baby week. Consent forms for parents/infants who attended Arts/Drama events in Mayo Baby Week. Ongoing raising of awareness of IMH in west of Ireland. There is a move locally, towards relational parenting models eg Circle of Security, Preparing for Life. Work offers IMH lens in working with parents and infants. Change in parenting programmes offered. Supports First 5 (2018).

infant mental health, early relationships, brain development, attachment, reflective parenting

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

'Silent' participation: Embodied social interactions in the toddler peer group

Presenters:

Bryndis Gunnarsdottir, University of Iceland, Iceland

This research aims to examine the embodied strategies toddlers use to participate in play and interactions with their peers in order to investigate the social world of toddlers within ECEC. Examining toddler participation in play through studying embodied interactions in the toddler peer group can give us insights into the competent ways toddlers engage with each other, showing us that they are 'mature' enough to be listened to and have their voice heard (Bae, 2010; Gunnarsdottir & Bateman, 2022; Pálmadóttir, 2017; UNCRC, 1989) This study is an ethnomethodological (EM) (Garfinkel, 1967) study using conversation analysis (CA) (Sacks et al., 1974) to examine interactions in the toddler peer group. Through an inductive EM paradigm, video data was collected over a nine-month period in an ECEC setting in Iceland, transcribed, and analysed using a CA approach. Ethical approval was gained through the University of Waikato, New Zealand, and the University of Iceland, including informed consent from relevant gatekeepers and assent/dissent from participating toddlers. The findings suggest that toddlers use embodied strategies and imitation to participate and access social play with their peers, often from afar and in a delayed manner. These strategies indicate that toddlers are competent in navigating the complex social world of ECEC. The findings have important implications for ECEC practice as it offers knowledge about what is happening in the toddler peer group and stresses the importance of teachers who understand when and how to intervene and assist toddlers as they co-construct their peer culture within the settings.

toddlers, embodied interactions, participation, play, early childhood education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The agentic imagination in collective play: Children's perspective

Presenters:

Liang Li, Monash University, Australia

This paper investigates how teachers can support toddlers' perspectives and bring their agency in joint play to their personally meaningful learning. Most models of interaction between teachers and toddlers highlight the teachers' involvement in play or other learning (Quinones, et al., 2021) or were designed in relation to practice that highlights the impact of caring and modelling pedagogy (Shin, 2015). Little attention has been directed to toddlers' agency and their perspectives in the joint play. This paper draws upon cultural-historical concepts of play and imagination (Vygotsky, 1966) to analyse toddlers' play agency and perspectives and the dynamic interactions between them and their teacher in collective play in which their agentic imagination is sustained. A cultural-historical research methodology has been applied in analysing toddlers' interaction with peers and teachers in play. Hedegaard's (2008) wholeness approach has been used to take multiple perspectives including toddlers' perspective and teachers' demands, institutional practices and societal demands through the video analysis of six toddlers' collective play with teachers. Ethical approval was received. Full informed consent was obtained from the participants. The child's assent as an ongoing process was achieved. Pseudonyms were assigned to the participants and personal information was deidentified. We argued that to achieve high quality of interaction with toddlers, teacher's affective play engagement needs to align with toddlers' agency, thus supporting toddlers' deeper learning through their agentic imagination. We found out that teachers need to make pedagogical decisions on their intentional and responsive interactions to acknowledge and afford toddlers' agency.

agentic imagination, toddlers play, teachers' involvement, agency, quality interaction

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set C10, Room 207, second floor, Grand Parade building

SUPPORTING EARLY MATHEMATICS DEVELOPMENT

Lynne Zhang, Happy Future Connections Children&Family Academy, China

How mathematical attention is practiced in Danish kindergarten

Presenters:

Søren Krogh, Southern Denmark University SDU - IMADA/FNUG, Denmark

This PhD explores how "mathematical attention" in everyday life in two Danish kindergartens (children 2-6 years) is practiced. The term "Mathematical attention" has been a part of the curriculum theme for daycare in Denmark since 2018. Yet the theoretical origin is vague and little empirical research is done in Denmark on this subject. The project relates to Nordic nature- and outdoor pedagogical traditions (Madsen, 1999; Tordsson, 2014), and to perspectives of Pedagogy in the Anthropocene (Paulsen et al (ed), 2022), with relation to the international field of research in Early Childhood Mathematics (Breive et al 2021; Björklund and Palmér, 2023; Clements and Sarama, 2021; Thiel, Severina, Perry (Ed.), 2021). The theoretical framework draws upon perspectives that aim to identify bodily-material relations between human and non-human actors and describe a spatial mathematical practice in kindergarten everyday life (De Freitas and Sinclair, 2014; van Manen, 2023; Verbeek, 2005, Svabo, 2014, 2021). The methodological framework is based on ethnographical methods taking a sensory approach using fieldnotes, sketches, photos, video, sound, and interviews (Tracy, 2013; Brinkmann and Tanggaard (Ed.), 2020; Vannini (ed.), 2024). Informed consent is given by participants including parents. Childrens ongoing assent is confirmed in situations by the researcher. Findings are anonymized. Preliminary findings indicate that mathematical potential is present in kindergarten practice in a bodily-material perspective. Increased awareness from the social educators is essential to identify and creatively design caring mathematical atmospheres in play- and learning environments regarding children's mathematical experience (Dupont and Liberg, 2008; Skriver, 2022; Jørgensen et al, 2023).

mathematical attention, kindergarten, play and learning environments, Anthropocene, ethnography

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Rhythm, Play and Early Mathematics Learning in China

Presenters:

Lynne Zhang, Happy Future Connections Children&Family Academy, China

Our study aims to find the relations among the rhythm, play and early mathematics learning in Chinese culture context, to develop an innovative approach based on neuroscience research findings and culture resources for sustainable early childhood education. The study builds on the findings of previous researches: Chinese rhythm, poem and ECEC (2020), Chinese early ancient mathematics (2019), Chinese characters and cognitive development and the outcomes of Happy Future program "Playful Mathematics" and "I come" approach for teachers and parents 'better understanding children's agency and development in children's perspective. This research draws on multi-disciplinary theoretical perspectives including Davood Gozli's human agency, Vygotsky's social-cultural theory, Piaget's theory on schema and cognitive development, Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological Theory, Bishop, A.J.'s cultural perspective on mathematics education, Hassler & Birbaumer's spatial intelligence, neuroscience on music and Chinese traditional classics on education, etc. The methodology includes observation of two kindergartens and twenty families in Beijing, interviews, documentary qualitative analysis. The participants signed the consent documents voluntarily and could withdraw from the study at any time. Anonymity was preserved. The study shows that play with rhythm-based cultural materials can arouse children's curiosity and agency and support early mathematics' senses, concepts 'development and learning in a children loved form. This study has drawn more professionals and practitioners 'attention to rethink the importance of the cultural materials in ECEC today.

neuroscience on music and rhythm, early mathematics, play-based curriculum, children agency and curiosity, HFC "I come" approach and children's voice

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Using participatory action research to change the landscape of mathematics word problem solving instruction

Presenters:

Nadia Swanepoel, University of Pretoria, South Africa

This paper highlights the importance of play in the implementation of critical instructional practices to elicit joy and fun in mathematics word problem solving. By means of using alternative approaches to mathematics word problem-solving instruction, mathematics word problem-solving was made accessible to teachers and learners. This study offered insights into renewed importance of creativity and critical thinking in mathematics word problem-solving practices. Comparisons are drawn between traditional and creative mathematics word problem-solving practices. The study is informed by the Collaborative Process of Professional Development, which recognises the work of Shulman (1987), Fuller (1969) and Tambychik and Meerah (2010). This qualitative study was conducted by means of participatory action research and was informed by the constructivist paradigm. Thirteen Grade 3 teachers were included in the study. Data generation was done by means of virtual collaborative workshops. Data was analysed through a hybrid inductive and deductive approach. Ethical clearance was obtained (Sem 2-2019-030). Participants voluntarily participated in the research after providing consent. Anonymity, confidentiality, participants' rights and non-discriminatory and inclusive participation were upheld throughout the study. Member checking was done following the completion of the study. "Play" as an umbrella term allowed for peer and group teaching, the use of humour and the implementation of the multiple intelligence theory. A new way of teaching mathematics word problems emanated from this research. As agents of change, teachers are now able to make mathematics word problem solving accessible to all and eliminate the fear of mathematics word problem-solving.

mathematics teaching and learning, participatory action research, mathematics word problem solving instruction, learning through play, creative teaching innovations

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set C11, NEW ROOM, Room 209, second floor, Edward Street Building

ISSUES OF ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY: SMALL SETTINGS NOMADIC COMMUNITIES AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

Kimon Krenz, The Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL, United Kingdom

Unveiling Spatial Inequalities in Early Childhood Education and Care Accessibility in Tower Hamlets

Presenters:

Kimon Krenz, The Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Deniz Arzuk, UCL Social Research Institute, United Kingdom

Natalia Concha, Queen Mary University of London, United Kingdom

Dea Nielsen, Department of Health Sciences University of York, United Kingdom

Laura Vaughan, The Bartlett School of Architecture UCL, United Kingdom

Claire Cameron, UCL Social Research Institute, United Kingdom

This study addresses disparities in access to early childhood education and care (ECEC) services in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, a region where uneven distribution exacerbates societal inequalities. Previous research (Baranyai 2023, Pennerstorfer 2021) highlighted that geographic and socio-economic factors influence ECEC access. We introduce an innovative methodology for mapping and quantifying access, incorporating spatial analysis and demographic data from the 2021 Census. The theoretical framework draws on spatial inequality, spatial inequity and equitable access theories (Fainstein 2010), supported by conceptual underpinnings of urban planning, spatial justice, and principles of human movement behaviour. The work extends existing two-step floating catchment area approaches (Fransen 2016) both in spatial precision and incorporation of additional factors. A mixed-methods approach enables a comprehensive spatial analysis of factors affecting ECEC service accessibility at the residential address level, including secondary information on affordability, availability, and proximity, alongside the socio-economic and demographic family characteristics and service needs profiles. All data were anonymised and aggregated to protect privacy, adhering to strict data protection and ethical guidelines. The study's findings reveal significant spatial inequalities in ECEC access across Tower Hamlets, influenced by affordability, availability, and socio-economic status, highlighting the critical role of high-quality data and strategic planning in mitigating these disparities. This research offers valuable insights for local authorities and urban planners to enhance ECEC service distribution. By identifying and addressing areas of need, this study contributes to the development of more equitable and inclusive ECEC services, promoting equal opportunities for early childhood development and mitigating societal inequalities.

spatial inequalities, geographic information science, accessibility, inner-city, ethnicity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Small kindergartens in Norway: On the brink of extinction?

Presenters:

Lisa Annika Brandt, University of Agder, Norway

Co-authors

Renate Severinsen, University of Agder, Norway

Our research aims to explore which values and practices small kindergartens in Norway entail. Kindergartens with fewer than 30 children seem to be declining. This is in spite of the fact that big kindergartens possibly yield negative effects on especially the youngest children (Bjørnstad & Os, 2018; Løkken et al., 2018). The main argument against smaller kindergartens seems to be less opportunities for professional development amongst the staff (Abrahamsen et al., 2012). This is contested to be only a slight tendency (Guldbrandsen & Os, 2022). We see the existence of small kindergartens in line with certain aims, core values and morals (Dewey, 2007), which may lead to certain pedagogical approaches. To understand these practices, we mobilise an exploration of pace and rhythm (Clark, 2023), as well as reflections relating to Dewey's (2005) view on democracy as a way of living. Our research is placed within a social constructivist paradigm. Data are collected through qualitative research interviews with practitioners and parents, as well as participating observation. Data is processed through a thematic analysis. Our study is carried out in accordance with national research guidelines. All participants have given their voluntary consent. Childrens

temporary passive consent (Menning & Kampmann, 2021) has especially been taken into account. All participants are anonymised. Our main discussion relates to what pedagogical practices and ways of childhood might be let go of, if small kindergartens keep getting de-prioritized. Our research can thereby contribute by encapsulating otherwise overseen practices, perspectives, and possible alternatives within ECEC.

small kindergartens, time, democracy, minor practices, alternative practices

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C12, Room 225, second floor, Grand Parade building

RESEARCH AND PRACTICE IN TRANSITION TO SCHOOL: NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES FROM THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Bob Perry, Charles Sturt University and Peridot Education Pty Ltd, Australia

This symposium, organised through the EECERA Transitions SIG introduces a new study investigating national and international perspectives of transition to school research, policy, and practice across the first quarter of the 21st century. The symposium will begin with a brief introduction, from the Chair, to the study: Research and Practice in Transition to School: National and International Perspectives from the First Quarter of the 21st Century which is being undertaken by more than 95 authors from 42 countries and will result in a major publication in 2025. In the symposium, three examples of critical national reviews that form part of this study will be presented from countries which have not been well represented in mainstream English language transition to school research – China, Malta, and Finland. Ample time will be provided for synthesis of ideas from the presentations, questions, and discussion.

Transitions SIG

Transitioning to School: Children's Voices amidst China's Recent National Policy and Guidance on Transition

Presenters:

Jie Gao, UCL Institute of Education, United Kingdom

Minyi Li, Beijing Normal University, China

This longitudinal research aims to understand Chinese young children's experiences of transition from kindergarten to primary school amidst the publication of 'Guidelines on Vigorously Promoting the Science-based Transition from Preschool to Primary School' by the Chinese Ministry of Education (MoE) in 2021. Whilst the 'Guidelines' emphasise school readiness, we consider it as a contestable concept (Dockett & Perry, 2002) which aligns with policy makers' agenda rather than children's interests (Bingham & Whitebread, 2012). Drawing on socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1987) and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1992), we regard transition as a continuous process instead of an event (Boyle et al., 2018), during which young children agentically negotiate with the changing environments. Taking the social constructivist and interactionist perspectives, we adopted the Mosaic approach in a longitudinal design to follow a cohort of young Chinese children from different backgrounds during their transitions from kindergartens to primary schools. This paper focuses on the data collected in the primary schools. In addition to gatekeepers' approval and parental consents, we obtained children's assents through child-friendly information leaflet and assent form before engaging them in the research activities. Children freely chose from a variety of activities to participate. Pseudonyms were used to protect children's identity. Children from different backgrounds had distinct transition experiences, which manifested in a number of aspects. This paper mainly focuses on the diverse experiences between children with different Socioeconomic Status. By foregrounding children's voices, this research sheds light on the policy impacts on children's transition to school, thereby informing the policy-makers.

transition, children's voice, school readiness, class inequality, diverse childhoods

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Transitions to primary school: practitioners' practices and perspectives

Presenters:

Valerie Sollars, University of Malta, Malta

Co-authors:

Rosienne Camilleri, University of Malta, Malta

This research study focused on stakeholders' perspectives and practices related to transitions from kindergarten to compulsory school in the Maltese context. Schools play a critical role in supporting families and children to adjust during this crucial transition (Hirst et al., 2011). However, despite its importance and significance, national policies and close collaboration among stakeholders are lacking (O'Kane, 2016). Practices which bring families, children and educators together are necessary for successful transitions (Boylan et al., 2023). Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) provided the theoretical framework as a way of analysing the influences of the micro and meso-systems on young children's experiences of this transition. Accessing insights into school practices and policies, implies taking cognizance of the different realities which practitioners experience on the basis of their contexts and sociocultural experiences. Heads of early years schools, kindergarten educators and teachers working with children in their first year of compulsory education were invited to complete a short questionnaire allowing for an interpretivist paradigm. Following ethical clearance, permission from schools was obtained. Heads of school distributed google links to participants for voluntary, anonymous and online completion of questionnaires. Results are expected to reveal the extent to which individual practitioners and their collective practices contribute to welcoming, supporting and accommodating children as they embark on compulsory education. Acknowledging the impact which transition strategies have on children and families will reinforce the need for professional development about transitions and emphasise the need for commitment at national level.

transitions, kindergarten, primary school, professionals' perspectives, transition policies

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Review of research and policy on transitions to school from 2000–2024 in Finland

Presenters:

Laura Rantavuori, University of Jyväskylä, Kokkola University Consortium Chydenius, Finland

Niina Rutanen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Mari Vuorisalo, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

This paper provides a concise overview and analysis of Finland's transition research, policies, and practices from the perspectives of institutional, professional, and pedagogical continuity, as well as children's holistic experiences during transitions. We offer a review of research and policy on transitions to school from 2000-2024 in Finland. This presentation is based on review of Finnish transition research, which examines, for example, school readiness (Linnilä, 2006), multi-professional cooperation and relational expertise (Rantavuori, 2019), pedagogical continuity (Karila et al., 2015), and children's perspectives (see Harju et al. 2023; Can et al., 2023; Eskelä-Haapanen et al., 2017; Sairanen & Kumpulainen, 2014) and diverse other transition research. We have used scoping studies as our methodological framework (see Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). A significant advantage of a scoping study lies in its ability to offer a transparent method to mapping research areas. This analysis enables the identification of evidence gaps and facilitates the summarization and dissemination of research findings in an accessible format. Even though this study is a review of existing literature, efforts have been made to ethically present a diverse range of sources to ensure fair representation in the research. In conclusion, this review introduces the implementation of a two-year pre-primary education program and flexible pre-primary and school transition programs as strategic measures deployed to overcome national challenges concerning transitions. Presently, there is a continued division between early childhood education and care, pre-primary education, and primary school. This institutional split remains in place, and it has garnered political attention.

transition to school, literature review, pre-primary education, research and policy, primary school

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C13, Room 229, second floor, Grand Parade building

THE PEDAGOGY OF SCIENCE IN ECEC

Stine Mariegaard, UCL Pædagoguddannelsen Svendborg, Denmark

Becoming with the moon: Rethink science pedagogy to the Anthropocene

Presenters:

Stine Mariegaard, UCL pædagoguddannelsen Svendborg, Denmark

Liv Kondrup Hardahl, Centre of Social Education, University College Absalon, Denmark

Co-authors:

Rikke Klith Jensen, Centre of Social Education University College Absalon, Denmark

Mikkel Snorre Wilms Boysen, Centre of Social Education University College Absalon, Denmark

Pernille Welent Sørensen, Centre of Social Education, University College Absalon, Denmark

Through the lens of posthumane methodologies, we aim to rethink science-pedagogy by considering the research project "Becoming with the moon" - a research project where adults, children and scientists together create different kinds of universes in which they investigate the moon. In the concept of ethico-onto-epistemology (Haraway, 2016; Barad, 2003, 2007) we argue that planetary problems are a response to dualistic thinking; human/non humans, culture/nature, children/adults, arts/science. We explore the notion of pedagogical science practice through diffractive methodology inspired by Barad (2007). Working with diffraction as methodology means exploring the effects of differences, which emerges from intra-actions between research technologies, pedagogical practices, the non-human and human, as a way to overcome dualism. We conducted qualitative observations and interviews, and through the lense of the post human paradigm we did three distinct diffractive readings utilizing data from the research project "Becoming with the Moon" 1) Science practice 2) Science pedagogical ways of relating 3) Worlding (Haraway, 2016). We adhere to Barads ethics as a matter of justice in knowledge production and emergent listening (Davies, 2014) to engage in childrens perspectives, and participants could withdraw at any time during the project. The diffractive readings invite us to think in alternative ways of entanglement of facts and fiction in science pedagogy: We move focus from foregrounding learning facts to open-ended ways of becoming. In the sustainable agenda the findings have the potential to disturb well-known ways of producing knowledge by including bodies, emotions, materials, and social dynamics.

worlding, science-pedagogy, posthumane methodologies, diffractive readings, science enviroments

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Early childhood science education in the Anthropocene

Presenters:

Sanne Björklund, Malmö Universitet, Sweden

This paper presents preliminary results from a PhD project that focuses on early childhood science education (ECSE) in Swedish preschools. The project aims to explore how power is produced as a network effect by attending to childhood-natures in ECSE practices. Gilbert (2016) stresses the importance of rethinking science education in the Anthropocene. In Sweden SE is a part of the preschool curricula, here approached as taking part in childhood-natures (Hadfield-Hill & Zara, 2019). The project builds on actor-network theory (ANT) as developed by Latour (2005), Mol (2002), Singleton and Law (2013). With an ANT inspired ethnographic methodology this research project aims to understand how ECSE is made to work as sociomaterial assemblages. The data is based on observations, photographs, documents and interviews. The concepts "devices" and "rituals" are put to work to trace childhood-natures in ECSE. The project is approved by the Swedish Ethical Review Authority. Consent was collected from staff, children, and their guardians, but ethical considerations are also brought up throughout the research process.

Preliminary results indicate that some actors in practice becomes more powerful than could be expected, when assembled in everyday preschool rituals. There is a risk that these assemblages might limit the potential for both children and educators to shape ECSE. Nonetheless, through repetition, new possibilities arise as different assemblages coexist, disrupt, and replace one another, revealing a multitude of ECSE in the Anthropocene. The study aims to contribute to a better understanding of how ECSE can be rethought and adapted to address contemporary challenges.

ECE, science education, actor-network theory, practice, Anthropocene

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C14, Room 318b, third floor, Grand Parade building

GAMES AND GYMS FOR CRITICAL THINKING AND SELF DETERMINATION

Annette Furnes, Western Norway University of Applied Science, Norway

Correlation between self-determination and safety of children playing on Japanese playground equipment "jungle gyms"

Presenters:

Hiroko Inokuma, Komazawa Women's College, Japan

The aim of this study was to investigate the correlation between self-determination and injuries among children playing on the Japanese-specific playground equipment 'jungle gym'. Jungle gym, invented by an American lawyer in 1920 and introduced to Japan in 1927 as playground equipment to promote children's physical development, is still a popular in Japanese Kindergarten, while many children are injured on this equipment (Inokuma 2023). Children's level of choice in play must adapt to changes in the structural, functional and social elements of the play space (King & Howard 2016), but the correlation between children's play self-determination and injuries is unclear. Based on Sandseter's (2007) theory, the hazards of children's play on jungle gyms are classified into six types. The study was conducted under social constructionism. The subjects were approximately 350 Japanese university students, and a questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews were conducted about their childhood play on a jungle gym. Data were analysed using a grounded theory approach. Participants were informed about the study beforehand. The questionnaire was administered anonymously and only those who allowed cooperation were interviewed. Survey data will be stored for 10 years. These were approved by the university's ethics review committee. Children were self-determining in using this playground equipment as a maze, playing tag and playing leave, which was different from the original goal of promoting physical development. It was found that children who self-determined their play were less likely to be injured. These results suggest that children playing freely based on self-determination rather reduces injuries.

self-determination , jungle gym, children's play, injuries, playground

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring the use of traditional games to stimulate critical thinking in the context of early life skills

Presenters:

Sri Tatminingsih, Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

To enrich and improve the use of traditional games in the stimulation of Critical Thinking Skills (CTS) in the context of life skills in the early childhood years. Traditional games can enhance self-esteem, cognitive, social and practical life skills (Min-Seok Kim&Choi Jin-Ah,2015; Tatminingsih,2019; Yekple et al,2021). CTS and learning to live can be encouraged from an early age (Granone,et al,2023; Pollarolo et al.,2023) CTS is 1) one of the skills required in the 21st century (Fernández.S & Feliu-Torruella, 2020), 2) an active process of analysing options, combining ideas and taking mental risks in real life (Cottrell,2017; Florea & Hurjui,2015; McPeck,2016; Paul & Elder,2019). Traditional

games represent the actual pattern of life in society (Alizadeh, et al, 2014). A paradigm is a research & development by Borg & Gall (Walter Dick, et al, 2005). This article is the first (identification) stage of 9 stages. Data were collected and analysed using descriptive analysis & simple quantification through questionnaires (100 respondents) and interviews (20 respondents) with ECE teachers in 10 provinces in Indonesia. All subjects were treated without bias, regardless of cultural identity, race/religion. They gave informed consent before completing the questionnaire and, if randomly selected, agreed to in-depth interviews. CTS can be stimulated & trained through traditional games because they contain realistic values and life concepts. These findings form the basis for searching and finding learning strategies and materials for the implementation in ECE. The role of the teacher and adult cannot be replaced by the equipment. Planning must be in line with the curriculum and the local social culture.

critical thinking skills, life skills, playing and learning, research and development, traditional games

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Playful learning design in early childhood teacher education: A case of assessing a re-designed Snakes and Ladders board game in terms of game design principles.

Presenters:

Annette Furnes, Western Norway University of Applied Science, Norway

The topic of this study is playful teaching and learning and pedagogic innovation, and the aim is to present an example of how to design an educational game for early childhood teacher students. An overview of playful learning designs in teacher education and early childhood teacher education is given by Boysen et al. (2022). There is a need for educational changes from traditional towards student-centered playful approaches. Nørgård (2021) discusses philosophy for the playful university towards a theoretical foundation for playful higher education. Theoretical and conceptual framework is Laine & Lindberg's (2020) systematic literature review on game design principles. The paradigmatic position constructivism and the methodological approach is grounded in socio cultural theory of learning. Data material is documentation of the process of production of the board game as a learning activity. The analytical framework consists of game design principles (Laine & Lindberg, 2020), in which the re-designed board game will be analyzed according to. This study did only include an artefact and no humans or personal information, so ethical considerations are not prominent. Preliminary findings suggest that this educational game serves several purposes, like provide pedagogically grounded learning content, means for social communication and opportunities for both competition and collaboration. Small-scale pedagogic innovation like this is relevant for all ages and subject matters, due to its easy adaptability to various topics and levels.

didactics of mathematics, educational board game, game design principles, pedagogic innovation, playful learning in early childhood teacher education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C15, Room 103, first floor, Edward Street building

DEVELOPING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF PLAY

Diarmuid Creedon, Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), Ireland

Conceptualizing patterns in children's dramatic play

Presenters:

Ellen Karoline Gjervan, Dronning Mauds Minne Høgskole/ Queen Maud University College, Norway

This paper aims to increase knowledge regarding how our use of concepts shapes and limits our understanding of patterns in children's dramatic play. (Same research project as Strømsøe). Previous research has pointed out how dramaturgical concepts can be useful in order to understand and describe patterns in dramatic play (Gjervan 2013; Guss 2000), and that patterns in children's dramatic play do not fit into an Aristotelian dramaturgy (Trageton 1995). The theoretical framework for this study draws upon theories on the structure of children's play (see Buytendijk

1989). The study relies on concepts of children's dramatic play derived from, among others Guss 2000, and dramaturgical concepts and understandings rooted in Gladsø et al. 2015. The study is conducted within a qualitative interpretive paradigm. It uses a hermeneutic philosophical understanding of play, embedded in a Scandinavian discourse regarding dramaturgy. The research is a literature study, and thus based on secondary data. Ethical consideration has been given to ensure fair representation of the literature consulted, with identification of funding sources where possible to avoid possibility of bias. Although the patterns occurring in dramatic play do not fit into an Aristotelian dramaturgy, this pattern, as well as its accompanying concepts, are still used to describe the phenomenon. I point to how this is potentially detrimental to our understanding of, and pedagogical work with, the phenomenon in ECECI. My findings will help to increase the understanding of this type of play in ECECI's.

children's dramatic play, dramaturgical patterns and concepts, Aristotelian dramaturgy, ECECI play competence, dramaturgy of play

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Playful Pedagogy Awareness: INTO Survey Report

Presenters:

Diarmuid Creedon, Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), Ireland

Máirín Ní Chéileachair, Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), Ireland

This study set out to ascertain teachers' awareness of playful pedagogy and the factors influencing the implementation of playful learning in Ireland. The INTO research report on teacher workload (2022) highlighted the challenge of implementing play based learning. This study builds on that report. Primary teaching often relies on direct instruction, neglecting playful methodologies. Pedagogical discussions on the effectiveness of play across class levels are often considered less important, with the focus revolving around the transmission of learning from teacher to pupil (Walsh et al., 2010). In early education, play-based learning is valued for its developmental appropriateness, with its use declining as students move to senior primary classes. Limited research exists on teachers' awareness of the benefits of play for all learners across all primary classes. This may be leading to a less inclusive educational experience. A mixed-methods approach was used to investigate playful pedagogy awareness among Irish teachers. Using a concurrent triangulation design, quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously using a structured survey which facilitated pattern identification. Insights were obtained through content analysis using grounded theory principles. Practical recommendations were formulated to promote supportive school cultures conducive to playful learning. Participants were fully informed and express consent was sought. It was found that play as a pedagogy is not uniformly understood among primary teachers across Ireland. The INTO will encourage education authorities to address teacher awareness and confidence through targeted training to create more inclusive educational environments which leverage the advantages of playful learning for all pupils.

playful pedagogy awareness, playful learning, teacher training, implementation challenges, inclusiveness

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

The State of Play-Based Learning in Schools

Presenters:

Sue Walker, Southern Cross University, Australia

Co-authors

Belinda Whitlock, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

Areana Eivers, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

This study investigated teachers' beliefs, practices, knowledge, confidence levels and perceptions related to provision of play-based learning (PBL) in Australian primary schools and barriers and enablers to providing PBL. PBL is a developmentally appropriate teaching practice positioning children as active participants in their own learning

(Nolan & Kilderry, 2010). PBL requires a teacher to enable play and participate actively in play experiences with children (Weisberg et al., 2013). While the Australian Curriculum supports play-based pedagogy, there have been few Australian studies investigating teacher beliefs and practices regarding play as a context for learning in primary schools. Vygotsky (1978) discussed the teacher's role as a 'facilitator' of children's learning by guiding exploration to extend learning and helping children to acquire new understandings. This theoretical perspective positions learning in a social constructivist framework, which underpins the teaching approach of PBL. The study used a mixed method design and survey approach to collect data from 334 teachers. Participation in the survey was anonymous, informed and voluntary. The study received University Human Research Ethics approval Results highlighted teachers with knowledge in ECE were more confident in PBL, provided more PBL, and rated the importance of PBL more highly than teachers without this knowledge. Teachers identified the following barriers to PBL: lack of support from leadership; curriculum demands; organisational issues; and a lack of knowledge in EC developmental processes. Findings highlighted the need for more PBL in Australian schools, and the variable quantity of PBL currently available. Teachers need support and PD to implement PBL.

play-based-learning, primary school, teacher knowledge, teacher practice, social constructivism

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set C16, Room 104, first floor, Edward Street building

POLITICS AND ACTIVISM IN ECEC

Andrea Delaune, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

12 hours without using the bathroom- rhetorical resources in preschool teachers' online activism

Presenters:

Maria Lennartsdotter, Karlstad University, Sweden

This research project explores Swedish preschool teachers' stories in an online protest initiative; #pressatläge (Pressed situation), that aims to improve the working conditions in Swedish preschools. This kind of protest named hashtag activism (Clark, 2016). Previous research about hashtag campaigns like #metoo, and #Fridaysforfuture focus how actors use language and rhetorical resources (Clark, 2016; Fernandez Zubieta et, 2023). Research about preschool teachers' online protests focuses difficult working conditions (Alvinus & Svensén, 2021). Using theories of small stories (Bamberg, 2006) and discursive psychology (Potter, 1996), this study explores the rhetorical organization of text and rhetorical resources used in preschool teachers' texts from #pressatläge, a hashtag used to post small stories about the current working situation in Swedish preschools. The empirical data consists of 600 stories, collected from #pressatläge. Only stories written by preschool teachers were selected. The study is qualitative and the data was analyzed through qualitative content analysis combined with concepts from discursive psychology. The study received approval from the national ethics committee. Data were handled in accordance with GDPR. No sensitive personal data were collected and I lacked opportunity to get consent from the preschool teachers because the text were written anonymous. The findings show how preschool teachers highlight extreme situations and stretch their narratives in order to show why their working conditions should be improved. In addition, the frequent use of extreme formulations might decrease the trustworthiness of the stories. These findings may enhance understanding for how social media affect preschool teachers' opportunities to improve their working conditions.

preschool teachers, rhetorical resources, working conditions, online protest, extreme formulations

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Investment in early childhood education and care: Transforming funding approaches to improve quality

Presenters:

Oonagh Fleming, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Ireland

Co-authors:

Anne-Marie Brooks, DCEDIY, Ireland
 Ailbhe Booth, DCEDIY, Ireland
 Jessica Ray, DCEDIY, Ireland
 John O'Donovan, DCEDIY, Ireland

This research assesses quality indicators following the introduction of Core Funding, a new supply side funding scheme for early learning and childcare in Ireland. Core Funding is a supply side funding scheme primarily based on capacity, providing a stable income source to early learning and childcare providers. Emerging from First 5: A Whole-of-Government-Strategy, Core Funding was developed to promote key components of quality early childhood education and care systems (ECEC; European Union, 2019) including access, affordability, appropriate working conditions, governance and funding. Core Funding was a key recommendation in Partnership for the Public Good, 2021 report of an Expert Group for a new funding model. The work of the Expert Group was informed by an extensive programme of stakeholder engagement with a programme of research on international best practice and current practice in Ireland. This research used anonymised secondary datasets. This data is gathered from early learning and childcare providers and used for the administration of State funded schemes. This research followed GDPR and ethical guidelines outlined in the privacy statement completed by providers. No personal information was processed. Anonymised information on service characteristics, capacity, fees and staff was analysed. Findings indicate high uptake, improvements in staff pay and an increase in services offering schemes to reduce out of pocket payments from parents. This presentation will explore how increased state investment is contributing to quality development in the sector. The findings will help inform how ongoing supply-side funding can be used to support access, affordability and quality of state-funded ECEC.

funding, collaboration, sustainability, quality, education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring Natalities**Presenters:**

Andrew Azzopardi, University of Malta, Malta

The aim is to reflect on role and voice of children in society. Society is organic and our ability to conceptualise the subtle nuances that govern the changes occurring continuously is of the essence. We are currently witnessing significant socio-political changes within our communities, as well as geo-political conflicts that affect us all. In this context, it is up to the younger generation to provide us with hope for the future. Children are often at the bottom of our social hierarchy.. This paper, influenced by the work of Arendt and Foucault, will delve into the multifaceted aspects of natalities, examining their determinants and how they are re-defining our communities. The paper will attempt to navigate around the complexities of being a child in today's world by providing reflections on children's narratives focusing on the work done by the Children's Rights Observatory Malta which documented work they did (Children's Manifesto) prior to the general election. This will serve as a case study. I will attempt to navigate around the lack of opportunities that exist for their voices to be heard by drawing on this document. This paper does not include empirical data therefore ethical considerations were minimal. Finally, this paper underscores and will epitomise the socio-economic dynamics that encapsulate children and how institutions, like schools, media and politics are discouraging the active participation of children. I strongly believe that this paper has the potential to inspire transformative policy changes by shedding light on critical issues and presenting feasible solutions.

children, natalities, activism, voice, politics

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set C17, Room 105, first floor, Edward Street building

IMPROVING EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Aurelia Elena Bot, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Digital Collaboration and Problem-Based Learning: Sustainable Approach to Quality in Early Childhood Teacher Education

Presenters:

Svitlana Holovchuk, NLA University College, Norway

The study explores the use of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) by Early Childhood Teacher Education students in digital collaboration. The project is based on the previous research related to online PBL from the last four years (Kristianto & Gandajaya, 2023; Williams, 2022; Seibert, 2021; Rahmawati, et al., 2021; Kassymova, et. al., 2020). The essential components of the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study are: a social constructivist theory (Bruner; Barrows), PBL as a learning method (Pettersen; Hung; Thorndahl & Stentoft; Savin-Baden & Major; Newman; Desai, et. al.; Murray-Harvey, et. al., Hmelo-Silver) and PBL in Early Childhood Teacher Education context (Meyer, Reigstad & Serikova). The suggested research paradigm for the study is a phenomenological approach, based on student's knowledge and experiences. The data collection is focused on a digital qualitative survey with the third-year Early Childhood Teacher Education students. The study is planned to be carried out in line with Norwegian National Research Ethics (SIKT). Participation is voluntary and anonymous; participants will be asked to give informed consent. Based on previous conversations with the students and tutors, the findings are intended to be structured into two categories: possibilities (communication across different locations; saving time for traveling to campus; several digital tools can foster forward-thinking teamwork and flexibility) and challenges («face-to-face» communication; social interaction; responsibility of group members; students engagement; lack of digital competencies of both students and tutors; ethical dilemmas). The study can enhance the quality of Early Childhood Teacher Education practice and contribute to the student's professional development.

early childhood teacher education, problem-based learning (PBL), digital collaboration, digital competences, flexibility

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Investigating the Learning Science Types of Taiwanese Pre-Service Teachers Using a Drama-Based Approach

Presenters:

Chiu-Hsia Huang, National Pingtung University, Taiwan

Co-authors:

Chen, Ya-Ling, National Pingtung University, Taiwan

Wedekind Harmut, Alice Salomon Hochschule, Germany

This study explored the learning science types of 103 participants who had participated in a drama-based workshop. Drama-based pedagogy can help educators and practitioners to address these aims (Chen and Huang, 2022, Lin, 2017). Theoretical and conceptual framework was based on drama-based theory of Heathcote (1967, 1991, 2002), the learning science definition of Fischer et al. (2018), Swayer (2005a, 2023), Tokuhama-Espinosa (2019), learning science types of Wedekind (2023). Participants completed an anonymous online questionnaire after workshop. Data analysis employed a mixed-methods approach, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative data. Participants were recruited from diverse academic undergraduate to postgraduate backgrounds and signed informed consent before workshop. 78.6% strongly agreed with the satisfaction of this practical science teaching approach. Of the remainder, 19.4% agreed, 2% neither agreed nor disagreed, and none strongly disagreed with this statement. This approach also can improve their understanding of related teaching fields, 81.6% strongly agreed and 18.4% agreed. If providing opportunities, they would be willing to apply the professional skills what they learned into their future teaching, 77.7% strongly agreed, 21.4% agreed and disagreed (0.9%), they were overly highly satisfied with this approach. Before receiving this approach, 16.5% of participants belonged to the buffet learning type, with 18.4% in the configuration and 65% in the planning learning types. Afterwards, these frequencies had changed to 63.1%, 27.2%, and 9.7%, respectively. The findings provide valuable insights, the study offers a set of important recommendations for future pedagogical policy making and further research by practical science practitioners.

drama-based approach, practical science, learning science type, Taiwan, pre-service teacher

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Enhancing Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Outcomes: Investigating the Professional Needs of ECEC Professionals within the Education Community for Effective Continuous Professional Development

Presenters:

Aurelia Elena Bot, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Ilaria Folci, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Co-authors

Silvia Maggiolini, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Elena Zanfroni, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

The research aims to uncover ways of sustaining the professionalization of staff in the Italian ECEC system, which is gradually shifting from a split to a unified structure, through a survey of their professional needs. This work builds on the evidence of previous research on continuous professional development (CPD), considered as a dynamic process where knowledge is co-constructed integrating theory and practice (European Commission 2020). This study aligns with the theoretical framework of the development of a competent system, considering competencies at the individual, institutional, inter-institutional, and governance levels (Urban, 2012). It draws on the idea that ECEC communities must have a common framework (Siraj, 2019), supporting professionals' learning via critical reflection (CR) (Mezirow, 2003). After the first year of training and pedagogical mentoring for more than 100 professionals working in ECEC services in the city of Monza, a questionnaire was administered, to explore: educational needs, perceived criticalities, and strengths of their work. Each participant was provided and signed an informed consent, outlining data processing procedures in full compliance with current regulations. Using the gathered data, the program's topics and structure have been revised. Professionals now have theme options, with trainings in smaller groups for enhanced discussions and CR. Each institution's pedagogical coaching focuses on staff-selected aspects for critical examination. A final questionnaire will gather feedback for future improvements. In this process, practitioners have the opportunity to enhance their role through customised training consolidating skills, through a process of continuous education with effects on daily practices and professional motivation.

continuous professional development (CPD), ECEC professionals, professional needs, education community, critical reflection (CR)

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C18, Room 211, second floor, Edward Street building

TEACHING, PRACTICAL TRAINING AND RESEARCH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER EDUCATION

Heidi Østland Vala, University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

The purpose of this theme-based and self-organized symposium is to discuss students' professional development through exploring, challenging and using their professional knowledge in practical training and classroom teaching in EC teacher education. The presentations explore the educators' role in facilitating students' ability to apply their professional knowledge in professionally oriented reflection and professional practice. We discuss the relationship between educational approaches and connections to the professional field and students' deeper learning. The first presentation deals with how students' general pedagogical knowledge can be activated, and the second presentation addresses how educators' experiences from collaboration with the EC field can be implemented for work-relevance in the education. Main theme for the third presentation is how students' self-leadership can be strengthened in order to promote their professional development. Case-based learning, autoethnography and theme-based mentoring in focus groups are methodological approaches framing this session.

Full potential of the general pedagogical knowledge in ECEC education

Presenters:

Henriette Oseth-Andersen, University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

Co-authors:

Anne Torill Kimerud, University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

We aim to explore our own teaching, regarding the topic ‘children with special needs’, in ECEC.

A study which research critical thinking in higher education (Lorencová et al., 2019) shows critical thinking is ‘sine qua non’ prerequisite for knowledge creation (p. 845). Therefore they recommend all higher education programs facilitate this knowledge. Lack of critical thinking is also the focus in Grue’s (2021) research on discursive views in society concerning people with disabilities. Franck’s (2014; 2021) kindergarten research on children and diagnostic tools, is also relevant in this context. Lack of critical thinking is also the focus in Grue’s (2021) research on discursive views in society concerning people with disabilities. Franck’s (2014, 2021) kindergarten research on children and diagnostic tools, is also relevant in this context. Theoretical and central concepts are analytical skills, critical thinking and discourses (Palla, 2021; Hammer, 2017) concerning children with special needs. The study draws on reflexive practice research (Lindseth, 2020; Finlay, 2008) which aims to develop practical knowledge through reflection on one’s own professional practice. The data comes from discussions between researchers, and the narratives that emerges, shows discrepancies between intention and result. The narratives were analyzed using narrative analysis (Johannessen et al., 2018). Important ethical considerations is to analyze and interact with your own experience in a critical way. It is also necessary to consider confidentiality, bias, preconceived ideas, and power (Finlay, 2002). Our main findings are strengthening our own teaching method and choice of curriculum related to sensitive topics, such as children with special needs. Implications for ECEC education may be a changed curriculum where focus on philosophy of science is emphasized to activate in-depth reflection. We argue that this is a prominent knowledge which is necessary in ECEC education in general, for the students to become professional practitioners.

general educational knowledge, post structural theories, discourses, children with special needs, quality in ECEC teacher education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Students’ self-leadership in practical training in EC teacher education

Presenters:

Ingunn Sell, University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

Heidi Østland Vala, University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

This study aims for strengthening leadership training in EC teacher education and explores students’ experiences of self-leadership in practical training. The ECEC field is an arena for students’ professional development (Eik et al., 2016) and self-leadership is a central part of the EC teachers’ professional competence. Research indicates that pedagogical authority and professional knowledge is challenged in Norwegian kindergartens (Ministry of Education and Research, 2018; Vala & Sell, 2020). Theory of educational professionalism (Biesta, 2015) and self-leadership (Busch, 2012; Tholin, 2022; Wadel, 2011) frames the study. Central concepts are self-influence, self-regulation and intrinsic motivation (Manz, 1986), leadership as engagement, collaboration and communityship (Mintzberg, 2009) and identity in practice (Wenger, 1998; 2004). The study draws on multiple methods with EC teacher students’ assignments, evaluation of their practical training and focus groups. The approach is phenomenological hermeneutical (Creswell, 2013). Data was abductively analyzed and concepts and theoretical ideas were tested against the analysis (Tjora, 2021). The participants were anonymized. We have been conscious of ethical justifiability in how third parts are presented. Being two researchers has brought wider perspectives into the ethical reflections. Preliminary findings indicate that self-leadership is a key competence in students’ leadership development. The students’ interaction with coworkers in partner kindergartens is important for students’ professional development and students need support to “step forward” as professionals. Implications are that the self-leadership aspect needs to be more prominent in the EC teacher education. We argue for strengthening the students ability to ask questions, discuss, negotiate and act as pedagogical leaders.

self-leadership, pedagogical authority, practical training, professional development, quality in EC teacher education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Work relevant learning in early childhood teacher education

Presenters:

Monica Karlsen, Universitetet Sørøst-Norge, Norway

Co-authors

Lisbeth Dahl, Universitetet Sørøst- Norge, Norway

The question that we ask is: How can leadership areas, identified in narratives from higher education teachers' partnership collaboration with early childhood teachers, promote work-relevant learning about leadership in early childhood education teacher (ECTE) training? Work life relevance is a central aspect of the concept of quality in higher education, to prepare students for using their skills in work, as these arenas are today, and may become in the future (Meld. St. 16(2016–2017)). This study identifies work-relevant leadership inn narratives form partnership collaboration to promote leadership learning in ECTE training. Previous research shows that there is little attention paid to how experiences from partnership collaboration can be implemented in education (Reinertsen et al, 2020). The theoretical framework is Biesta's theories about education (Biesta,2014), and Damsa et al 's perspectives on work-relevant learning (Damsa et al.2015). The dialogical autoethnography (Karlsson et. al, 2023) is based on two higher education ECteachers personal written narratives, written during a year. The narratives were shared, discussed and analyzed. Ethical aspects in autoethnography are central. The authors narratives also involve others who cannot represent themselves and their experience of the situation (Ellis et.al., 2011) The thematic analyses contribute to an insight into ECEC, to lead in change, to lead in the tension between practice and overall governance documents and leadership that contributes common understanding and motivation. Implications of this study relates to how student-centred learning methods increases the students' portfolio of competencies: - they learn to collaborate, and they increase their motivation by using realistic examples (Damsa et al., 2015)

work relevance, student-centred learning, leadership learning, partnership collaboration, dialogic autoethnography

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C19, Room 304, third floor, Edward Street building

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE

Annica Löfdahl Hultman, Department of Educational Studies, Karlstad University, Sweden

Doing Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research with Young Children: Practices for Ethics, Integrity and Rich Data

Presenters:

Zeynep Isik-Ercan, Rowan University, United States

The goal of this presentation is to offer a methodological framework for working with young children (ages 4-8) when doing qualitative and mixed-methods research that includes direct participation and interaction with children. As suggested by the Education Research Centre by University of Brighton (2014) and researchers (Hatch, 2002; Ackhoff, 2019 and others), conducting research with children (ages 4-8) requires specific philosophies, dispositions, knowledge and skills. However, there are not many frameworks available that are based on direct experience with research with young children. I approach research with children using Smith's framework of decolonizing methodologies (2012). As traditional research often colonizes children's voices, bodies, and minds, decolonizing our research then includes not only the data collection activities we engage in, but our relationships and interactions with children as participants and honorable partners in the research process. Drawing from constructivist and critical paradigms, I analyze the methods involved in four research studies I conducted with young children in a secondary content review. I present a conceptual framework for ethics in doing qualitative and mixed methods research with

young children. I acknowledge bias/subjectivity in using studies I was involved in and utilized extant literature, reflective journaling and peer debrief as measures to ensure integrity. Qualitative and mixed methods research with young children need to include ethics, integrity in utilizing developmentally appropriate practices for treating children as partners in data collection and research engagement process. This framework will support other researchers by providing a clear guideline and examples in doing research with young children.

qualitative and mixed methods research, decolonizing research, constructivist practices with young children, ethics and integrity in research, children as partners in learning

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Ethical Sensemaking in Early Years: Applying Care Ethics to UK Policy and Practice

Presenters:

Zoe Raven, Acorn Early Years Foundation, United Kingdom

This research aimed to identify factors which facilitate ethical, sustainable practice in early years provision, by combining an ethics of care perspective with practice theory. Feminist ethics of care theorists (eg Noddings, 1984; Tronto, 1993) have provided insights into the relevance of care ethics to early years care and education, and the need to recognise care as a moral value to be applied at a political and societal level as well as at an organisational and individual level. Ethical sensemaking, as a theoretical framework, draws on practice theory (Nicolini, 2011; Schatzki, 2018) and organisational sensemaking (Weick, 1995) and can be linked to the concept of tacit knowledge (Tsoukas, 2005) and embodied care (Hamington, 2004). The research used qualitative methods within a social constructionist approach and relational methodology. The research data comprise interviews, autoethnography, and a range of publicly available documents and media which were analysed thematically. Consent forms and information sheets were provided to all participants, and all data was anonymised. The research findings identified triggers for ethical sensemaking and sensegiving within policymaking at national and organisational levels, and by individual early years managers and practitioners. A model of embodied ethical sensemaking is presented, which combines an ethic of care with sensemaking to demonstrate how ethical practice can be facilitated. The model offers new insights into how an ethic of care can influence sensemaking, both at a granular practice level and at a political level, each of which can help to develop ethical and sustainable early childhood education systems.

ethic of care, ethical sensemaking, practice theory, ethical childcare, embodied care

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Complex ethical and juridical dilemmas when moderating a Preschool rebellion group on Facebook

Presenters:

Annica Löfdahl Hultman, Department of Educational Studies, Karlstad University, Sweden

This presentation reports a study on ECE-teachers' activities in a Swedish Preschool Rebellion group on Facebook aiming to discuss the administrators moderation of post made by others. It is clear from earlier studies that both the digital format as well as other conditions sets the limits for what can be said and how in teachers' various Facebook groups (Selvi, 2020, Blurring boundaries: Facebook groups as digital teachers' lounges for ELT professionals. *Anadolu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 21(1), 251–272) In line with previous research, a narrative approach enables analyzes of how a content is produced and how identity appearances can be linked to ECE teachers' curriculum making and enables a deeper understanding of the administrators moderating. (Georgalou, M. 2018, Discourse and identity on Facebook. Bloomsbury Academic; Hillman, et al. 2021. Moderating professional learning on social media - A balance between monitoring, facilitation and expert membership. *Computers & Education*, 168, Article 104191). Qualitative narrative interviews have been conducted with responsible administrators, with a view to provide knowledge on when and why administrators chooses to moderate post made by others. All participants gave their informed consent. To protect them, no personal/other data that could reveal the identity of the informants are presented. Potentially this study can thus give access to many teachers' voices and discussions on issues that they

want to share in a wider professional community. The study can inform policy about current important issues in ECE-teachers working conditions, what might be troublesome and in need of change.

teacher profession, online teacher communities, narrative approach, curriculum theory, teachers' voices

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C20, Room 305, third floor, Edward Street building

DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE SKILLS IN (ACADEMIC) TRAINING: THE IMPORTANCE OF VIDEO REFLECTION & EMOTIONAL REGULATION WITH REGARD TO INTERACTION SKILLS WHILE TAKING ETHICAL CHALLENGES INTO ACCOUNT

Carolin Machens, RH Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany

The symposium illuminates the synergistic dimensions of cultivating sustainable skills within the (academic) training of early childhood educators, particularly through the lens of daily interactive processes in ECE settings. The presented research underscores the imperative to combine reflective capacities, emotional (co-)regulation and ethical deliberations within the training framework. It demonstrates how employing diverse methodologies (including video feedback, internship-programms), alongside innovative theoretical models can enrich our comprehension of daily pedagogical activities. By amalgamating these strategies, the symposium offers a multidimensional perspective on sustainable training and practice in early childhood settings, prioritizing interactive competencies and ethical considerations.

ECE Worker-Child Interactions: Emotional Self-Regulation and Co-Regulation in Early Childhood Education Workers' Emotional Labor

Presenters:

Julia Mai, Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Corinna Titze, Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Co-authors:

Wögen N. Tadsen, Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Hannah K. Lennarz, Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences, Germany

We propose a new conceptual model of emotional labor that integrates both the regulation of one's own emotions (intrapersonal emotion regulation) and the emotions of interaction partners (interpersonal emotion regulation). This model aims to elucidate the emotion regulation processes occurring in the workplace interactions of early childhood education (ECE) workers. Caregivers play a crucial role in fostering children's emotion regulation skills through emotional coaching and co-regulation (Silkenbeumer et al., 2016). Current models of emotional labor inadequately capture the emotional work demands faced by ECE workers. Prior studies have investigated emotional labor strategies beyond the traditional dichotomy of deep and surface acting (Alabak et al., 2023; Diefendorf et al., 2005), yet strategies involving regulating interaction partners' emotions, particularly children's, remain underexplored in emotional labor research. The proposed model's theoretical framework draws upon contemporary findings in emotion regulation research, encompassing intrapersonal (Gross, 1998, 2015), interpersonal emotion regulation (Niven, 2017; Zaki & Williams, 2013), and emotional flexibility (Aldao et al., 2015; Bonanno & Burton, 2013). The model is informed by insights from previous qualitative interviews conducted by the authors and a literature review. While this paper is theoretical in nature, ethical considerations such as individual autonomy, prevention of harm, care, and justice have been addressed to the extent feasible within the scope of the literature review. New ways to conceptualize emotional labor processes, especially for ECE workers, are discussed. The insights into emotion regulation processes provided by this model may have important implications for improving ECE workers' and subsequently children's emotion regulation skills.

ECE worker - child interaction, emotional labor, emotion regulation, co-regulation/interpersonal emotion regulation, intrapersonal emotion regulation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The influence of video feedback in the KLEX learning workshop on the interaction skills of early-childhood-education students: An exploratory study along the course of study

Presenters:

Carolin Machens, RH Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Co-authors:

Marjan Alemzadeh, University Rhein-Waal, Germany

The present study examines the influence of video feedback on the interactive behavior of education students in the context of the so called KLEX learning workshop (a place where students and children can learn actively, exploratory and openly, Alemzadeh, 2022). Educational quality in ECEC settings is internationally associated with high-quality interactions (Egert et al., 2020; Perlman et al., 2016; Suchodoletz et al., 2023). Theraby a variety of individual learning opportunities (i.e. workshop, course, on-site support and self-reflection) may enhance the childhood educators instructional support effectively (Egert et al., 2020). In the present study, it is assumed that the course of study offers such a variety, especially through the KLEX units. The Future Skills model (Ehlers, 2020) served as a superordinate guide. In addition, competence was comprehended in accordance with the general competence model of Fröhlich-Gildhoff et al. (2011). Using an online survey that contained components of validated questionnaires (Machens, 2021; Weltzien & Viernickel, 2012), students in the 1st, 3rd and 5th semesters were asked to estimate their interaction skills against the background of their KLEX experiences. The study adheres to the ethical code regulations of good scientific practice by the German Educational Research Association (GERA/DGfE, 2010). Participation in the survey was voluntary and the collected data was anonymized. The results focus on the differences between the semesters. Influencing factors (study commitment, professional activities outside of studies and other personal attributes) are also taken into account. The findings shed light on how to effectively design workshops and modules for students.

professionalism in early childhood education, interaction skills, video feedback, learning environment, online survey

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Imagine - using simulation and dialogue in preparing ECE-students for their internship and profession.

Presenters:

Heike Helen Weinbach, University Rhine-Waal, Germany

Identifying the most common and challenging ethical considerations for students in internships and how they solve them after having been prepared in their ethics classes. This contribution is part of a studies book for Bachelor and Master students of early education and social pedagogy. Bakhtin's and Castoriadis' theory of imagination, dialogue philosophy (Arendt, Muth, Bohm, Ouaknin) and studies on the effects of simulations are the framework. Discourse analyses of student's reports, philosophical texts and group discussions are the methodological framework. Anonymity of the students and institutions is guaranteed however ethical questions remain: should student's assignments as documents be used for research? Important and main ethical questions are less individual than we might think. There are repeated challenges. This means the tools to address those situations can be developed. Imagining and simulating situations in a safe context can be useful tools to build self-confidence for future professionals. The research is a contribution to how to teach ethics in ECE-studies programs.

ethics, dilemmas, simulation, dialogue, discourse analysis

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C21, Room 307, third floor, Edward Street building

TEACHERS' CAPACITY AND VIEWS ON SUSTAINABILITY

Dr Angela Scollan, Middlesex University, United Kingdom

Early Childhood Education for Sustainability (ECEfS): a necessary review of the training needs of early childhood educators.

Presenters:

Daniela Figueroa, Universidad Finis Terrae, Chile

Co-authors:

Marlene Fermín González, Universidad Finis Terrae, Chile

This research seeks to analyze the training needs of early childhood educators in ECEfS, to contribute to the design of a relevant training strategy to promote it in the country. Changes are considered urgent and necessary in the training of early childhood educators in ESD. There is evidence of a lack of training for teachers, with weak competencies in sustainability, as well as weak implementation of holistic and transformative practices. In view of this, they suggest making efforts in teacher training to increase their ESD competencies (García-Esteban & Murga-Menoyo, 2015; Park et al., 2016; Davis & Davis, 2021). To address the objectives, the research follows the interpretive paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) with a mixed design. In this initial phase, the result of the consultation with 40 educators is presented. A cross-cultural adaptation (Beaton et al., 2000) of an instrument was used. This instrument (Inoue et al., 2016), allowed identifying the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that they consider essential to promote ECEfS in their practice. This study was approved by the University's Ethics Committee, in which ethical protocols were guaranteed to safeguard the confidentiality and voluntary participation of the teachers, for which they were provided with a consent form. From the piloting, it can be concluded that the participants' conception of ESD is influenced by an environmentalist approach. Furthermore, it is observed that their practices are incipient and far from being transformative and holistic. By exploring the other aspects pending research, we intend to design a training path at the national level. This approach aims to implement the current public policy and to promote the development of teaching competencies.

education for sustainable development, early childhood education for sustainability, teacher training, teaching skills in sustainability, training needs

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Education for Sustainability in the Turkish National Preschool Curriculum: A Case Study of Teachers' Views and Practices

Presenters:

Yekta Koşan, Atatürk University, Turkey

Merve Rabia Gül Ulukan, Hacettepe University, Turkey

Co-authors:

Tulin Guler-Yildiz, Hacettepe University, Turkey

Naciye Ozturk, Independent Researcher, Turkey

Merve Rabia Gül Ulukan, Hacettepe University, Turkey

Gelengul Haktanir, Ankara University, Turkey

Deniz Kahrman-Pamuk, Mersin University, Turkey

The aim was to investigate the changes related to Education for Sustainability (EfS) in the revised Turkish National Preschool Curriculum (MONE, 2024) and preschool teachers' views regarding the revised curriculum. Previous studies on national curriculums and EfS have shown a need for greater representation of social and economic dimensions (Ohlsson et al., 2021; Borg & Pramling-Samuelsson, 2022; Kahrman-Pamuk & Borg, 2023). After program revisions, teachers changed their educational environments, increased their self-efficacy and self-confidence in implementation, and realized that many activities they were already doing were related to sustainability (Dyment et

al., 2014; Engdahl, et al., 2021; Vikane & Høydalsvik, 2023). This research was based on the idea of sustainability as a complex and interrelated concept that involves social, cultural, economic, political, and natural dimensions (UNESCO, 2021), and on the notion of critical pedagogy as a flexible and value-driven approach (Kincheloe, 2005; McLaren, 2015). In this case study, interviews were conducted with preschool teachers, and MONE, 2024 was analyzed. Qualitative analyses were done through the MAXQDA program. Before the interviews, researchers shared the aim of the study with participants and informed consent forms were obtained. Sustainable living, recycling, and reusing have been included as specific objectives in MONE, 2024. The interviews showed that EfS-trained teachers reported good practices and goals for sustainability. Untrained teachers said the curriculum lacked EfS content. The findings suggest that EfS in the curriculum does not guarantee its implementation. Including all EfS dimensions and educating teachers are vital.

education for sustainability (EfS), preschool teachers, critical pedagogy, preschool curriculum, teachers' views on sustainability

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring and Translating SDG Policy into Practice: Introducing Sustainable Pedagogy

Presenters:

Dr Angela Scollan, Middlesex University, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Kerrie Lee, University of Hull, United Kingdom

Diane Boyd, University of Hull, United Kingdom

The research aims to explore how sustainable pedagogy and the SDGs are engaged with and understood in ECE practice in the 21st Century in England. Introduction of the SDGs (UN 2015) and the subsequent Education for sustainable development: a roadmap (UNESCO,2020) is seen to present challenges for EC education (Chapman & Gorman 2022). Following the development of 'An Early Childhood Education for Sustainability' (Boyd et al 2021) the use of SDGs can lead to the creation of Sustainable Pedagogy supporting UNESCOs (2020) call for 'Education for Sustainable Development' (ESD). Sustainable Pedagogy is underpinned by Froebel's principles and Freire's critical pedagogy to identify and untangle invisible sustainability praxis connections. This research takes place within, and for, the discipline of Early Childhood Studies and practice resting in the interpretative paradigm with a relativist ontology through the use of qualitative and ethnographic comparative study. Focus group interviews and reflective logs provide insightful diverse data opportunity (Phelps 2005) with participants, geographically positioned in the North and South socio- economic areas of England. Ethical consideration included the use of consent forms, pseudonyms and withdrawal in line with Universities, BERA(2018) and EECERA(2015) guidelines. A discourse has been found between the theoretical understanding of the SDG framework, ESD and real-world engagement. ESD advocates for the sustainability principle to be reflected in education policy, curricula, training and practice (UNESCO 2020), thus investigation into how and why SDGs are being engaged with, or not, requires exploration. Policy and practice need to feed into and from one another.

sustainable pedagogy, SDGs, the discipline of early childhood studies, 21st Century ECE Practice, discourse

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C22, Room 308, third floor, Edward Street building

SUSTAINABILITY AND WELLBEING: EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULA, WORKFORCE AND PARENTS

Zoi Nikiforidou, University of Ioannina, Greece

Wellbeing as concept in ECE in Estonia, Germany, and Russia

Presenters:

Christa Kieferle, Staatsinstitut für Frühpädagogik und Medienkompetenz, Germany

Maire Tuul, Tallinn University, Estonia

Igor Shiyana, Moscow City University, Russia

Co-authors:

Anja Seifert, Justus Liebig Universität Giessen, Germany

Aino Ugaste, Tallinn University, Estonia

Irina Vorobyova, Moscow City University, Russia

A fundamental aspect of sustainable development is children's rights within the context of promoting participation and wellbeing. This international comparative study aims to analyze the meaning of the concept of wellbeing in Estonia's, Germany's, and Russia's curriculum development. Building on prior research (e.g., Broström et al. 2014; Sandberg et al. 2015) within an international network focusing on participation and learning, this study now comparatively analyzes the significance of wellbeing. Even though the concept of wellbeing is gaining in importance internationally (e.g., Jennings et al. 2020; Laevers & Declercq 2018; Penttinen, et al. 2020), the question remains relevant for ECE (Rees et al. 2020). Relationships and bonding are very strongly associated with the concept of wellbeing (e.g., Diener et al. 2009; Keyes 2009; Seligman 2002). Curriculum analyses in Estonia, Germany, and Russia will explore how the concept of wellbeing is present and utilized in early childhood education (ECE) curricular publications and handouts in each country. The research group complies with all data protection standards set by individual countries and universities and does not infringe upon the rights of third parties. References to sustainability, wellbeing, and participation vary across national curricula and handouts. Participation and wellbeing are found to be interconnected, involving both children and teachers in educational settings. This comparative research explores diverse perspectives on the universal concept of wellbeing. In today's transforming society, children encounter crises like migration and climate change. Comparative research is crucial for advancing universal children's rights across diverse political systems, bridging theory, practice, and politics.

wellbeing, participation, curriculum, comparative study, policy

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Parental views on children's wellbeing: what is significant for 1-3 year olds in the greek context?

Presenters:

Zoi Nikiforidou, University of Ioannina, Greece

Co-authors:

Antoanneta Potsi, Bielefeld University, Germany

Maria Hatzigianni, University of West Attica, Greece

The aim of this study is to provide parents' insights on what they feel and believe is important in children's lives. The concept of children's wellbeing is gaining attention internationally (e.g. Jennings et al. 2020; Laevers & Declercq 2018; Penttinen, et al. 2020). Nevertheless, wellbeing is multi-dimensional and variant, making it difficult to set one definition. Thus, there is consensus that children's quality of life in early childhood is underpinned by their social, emotional, and physical wellbeing (Guérin 2012; Statham and Chase 2010). At the younger ages of 1-3, relationships and bonding are of paramount importance (e.g. Cadima et al, 2020). Parents vary in their parenting goals and values and enact the perspectives and practices of their cultural communities (Keller et al. 2006), in addition to how parental responsibility is defined as a right and obligation. The sample consisted of parents with children 1-3 years old from different parts of Greece. 250 questionnaires with 28 closed questions captured views on their children's practices and experiences at home and at the settings. Ethical approval was granted by Universities and local authorities guaranteeing anonymity, confidentiality and the right to withdraw. The anticipated findings will provide information as to what parents value, appreciate and target as crucial in their children's lives. Relationships, belongings, play, use of technology, leisure time, activities at home and satisfaction with the early years settings are recorded. Quantitative analysis is conducted and implications for policy and practice are underlined.

children's wellbeing, 1-3 year olds, parental views, home environment, early years settings

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Empowered, Strained, or Stable: Change in Teachers' Occupational Wellbeing during the Two-Year Pre-Primary Education Trial in Finland

Presenters:

Heli Muhonen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Co-authors

Mimmu Sulkanen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Maarit Alasuutari, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Marja-Kristiina Lerkkanen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

This study investigated ECEC teachers' experiences of change in their occupational wellbeing during a two-year pre-primary education trial in Finland. Typically, Finnish children enter compulsory one-year pre-primary education in the year they turn six. In 2021, the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (2021) launched the two-year pre-primary education trial to develop equality and the quality of Finnish pre-primary education. ECEC teachers play a central role in the implementation of the new trial curriculum. Research suggests that these types of work-related changes can support employees' work engagement (Bakker et al., 2012) but also reduce their wellbeing and performance (e.g. Bordia et al., 2004; Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). Hence, the ECEC teachers were asked to assess the extent to which the trial affected their occupational wellbeing. The survey data were analysed through latent profile analysis, one-way ANOVAs and pairwise comparisons. The Ethics Committee of the University of Jyväskylä concluded that the survey did not include ethical risks. The participants were briefed on the study's ethical principles and the confidential treatment of the data followed the GDPR guidelines. It was found that the experimental group teachers (n=376) experienced more change in their occupational wellbeing compared with the control group teachers (n=496). Among the experimental group teachers, three profiles of occupational wellbeing were identified: empowered (n=34), strained (n=138), and stable teachers (n=200). The profiles differed with respect to different ECEC classroom and teacher characteristics. The findings should be considered by educational policymakers when further developing, formulating, and implementing the Finnish pre-primary education.

occupational wellbeing, ECEC teachers, Finnish two-year pre-primary education trial, pre-primary education, Finland

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C23, Room 309, third floor, Edward Street building

PARENT PARTNERSHIPS TRUST AND VALUES

Ayşe Duran Yılmaz, Adiyaman University, Turkey

A Study of Sustainable Partnership between Parents and Practitioners

Presenters:

Miyoshi Shirota, Waseda University, Japan

Co-authors:

Sixin Deng, Waseda University, Japan

The aim is to focus on the relationship building process between parents and practitioners and to identify factors that contribute to the formation of sustainable partnerships. The importance of a mutually proactive relationship between parents and practitioners as partners in the early childhood education stages has been presented (Carol,2000; Mamta,2013; Lois A, Eva, Katherine, 2017). However, research on the structure of the partnership and the theoretical frameworks is far from sufficient. In relational development theory, not only children but also adults are transforming. Especially, this perspective contributes to capturing the process of mutual transformation, based

on the premise that adults also transform (Jesse,2015; Kujiraoka, 2016). An online survey was conducted among 320 men and women living in three Japanese 3 prefectures. The data was analyzed using two scales: PCTT (Parental Cognition of Trustworthiness of Teachers) and TICMS (Teamwork Inventory for Community-based School Management). A description of the handling of personal information and research ethics was presented on the survey form. Surveys were completed anonymously by those who agreed with the ethics. The data use only for writing the paper. The three possible hypotheses are as follows:

1. Parents' trust is correlated with the frequency with practitioners respond to their concerns
2. Parents with a high level of trust will proactively participate in childcare
3. Parents with low trust have a low sense of teamwork.

The results present important factors for the development of sustainable relationships between parents and practitioners and contribute to the practice of practitioners who struggle to build relationships with parents.

sustainability, partnership, teamwork, ECE, trust

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

THE VIEWS OF PARENTS ABOUT VALUES OF CHILDREN

Presenters:

Ayşe Duran Yılmaz, Adıyaman University, Turkey

The aim of this study is to examine the views of parents whose children receive preschool education about values. The most important values that should be taught to children are patience, according to teachers, and trust and commitment, according to parents (Ülavre & Veisson, 2015). Similarly, it was found that the values that teachers and parents attach importance to do not overlap and that there are differences in the most important values (Acun & others, 2013). Lack of consistency between the values given in schools and the values given by parents or lack of cooperation between teachers and parents may cause problems in the acquisition of values in early childhood. It is important that the school and the family work together for the values to be permanent in children (Lickona, 1999) The data for the study were obtained through a semi-structured interview form as part of qualitative research method. Twelve parents from different educational levels and professions participated in the study. . The data obtained in the study were analyzed according to content analysis. The parents were informed about the confidentiality and anonymity of the data. In this context, the themes of values according to the parents, the values they try to give to their children, the effect of the gender of the child on the values given, the appropriateness of the values given at school, and cooperation with the teacher in value acquisition were determined. Regarding the findings, they aim to provide a different perspective on values education.

parents, children, preschool education, values, school

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Development dialogue in Preschool – a study about how parental participation appears through preschool teachers' professionalism.

Presenters:

Charlotte Öhman, Jönköping University, Sweden

This study aims to explore how preschool teachers enables parental participation, as an aspect of democracy, at development dialogue. One aspect of democracy is societal participation. On a societal level, preschool is crucial since it enables participation in society addressing issues such as health in the population (Martin Korpi, 2017). Preschool teachers understand development dialogue as an essential tool where they can communicate professionally (Simonsson & Markström, 2013). The development dialogue is therefore important for preschool teachers to be able to communicate in a way that enables parental participation as an aspect of democracy

(Lindqvist, 2019; Markstrom, 2010; Sheridan et al., 2011; Vladavic, 2017). The theoretical framework draws upon current theories concerning democratic education and teaching in society (Biesta, 2020). The study is conducted with a qualitative interpretive research paradigm by triangulation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Methods for data collection are participant observation, individual interviews and document analysis. The analysis is conducted through a content analysis. All participants received a consent form and information sheet. Transcribed data is pseudonymized. The participants could withdraw from participation at any time. The empirical material is stored according to GDPR guidelines. Development dialogues can work as a powerful, still conditioned, tool for enabling parents participation. The study contributes with knowledge about participation as an aspect of democracy that can be shared among researchers, practitioners, and policy makers. These findings suggest implications for how preschool teachers enables parents participation through development dialogue.

democracy, development dialogue, guardian, participation, preschool teacher

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set C24, Room 201, second floor, Dorset Place building

CONDITIONS FOR PLAY AND THE ROLE OF THE ADULT

Igor Shiian, Moscow City University, Russia

Children as cognoscenti: examining and evaluating teachers' roles in kindergarten play activities from children's perspectives

Presenters:

Jialing Li, The University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

This paper takes selected data from a PhD study to explore teachers' roles in play from children's perspectives in a Chinese kindergarten. Play-based curriculum and pedagogy are central to Chinese ECE policies and practices (MOE, 2012). Many studies have sought to understand what educational forms of play mean to children (McInnes, 2019) but few studies examine children's perspectives on teachers' roles in play (Pálmadóttir and Einaradóttir, 2015). Grounded in Childhood Studies and drawing on sociocultural play and learning theories (Vygotsky, 1987), this paper views children as active constructors of their lives (Prout and James, 1997). Adopting a qualitative interpretive approach, the study used video-stimulated reflective dialogues to elicit children's views on teachers' roles and pedagogical practices in play. The researcher obtained informed consent from children, parents and teachers before fieldwork began. Children's assent to participate was an ongoing and flexible process. Pseudonyms and image pixelation were used to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of participants in this paper. The findings present seven roles of teachers which children identified in their play videos, and children's evaluations (positive/negative/combo) of teachers' pedagogical practices within these roles. From children's perspectives, the intersubjectivity between teachers' pedagogies and children's interests and needs in exercising agency is a crucial aspect of evaluating teachers' roles in play. The findings point to the value of engaging children as cognoscenti when examining the qualities of children's meaningful learning and teachers' pedagogies in play. This paper highlights the possibilities of education for sustainability by bringing children's voices to the front.

teachers' roles, pedagogical practices, children's perspectives, play, agency

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Conditions for play and creativity in early childhood education

Presenters:

Igor Shiian, Moscow City University, Russia

Olga Shiyan, Moscow City University, Russia

Anna Iakshina, Moscow City University, Russia

Co-authors:

Irina Vorobyeva, Moscow City University, Russia

Tatiana Le-van, Moscow City University, Russia

The aims are to study conditions for play and creativity in preschool classrooms and analyze if they are related to each other. Play and creativity deals with the situation of uncertainty, but play is about constructing imaginary situations (Kravtsov&Kravtsova, 2019), and creativity– about solving non-standard problems (Craft, 2007; Veraksa, 2019). Theoretical framework: cultural-historical approach to play and creativity (Vygotsky, 2001; Veraksa, 2019). An assessment in 39 preschool classrooms in Russia and Kazakhstan was carried out using ECERS-3 extensions: “Play Environment Rating Scale” and “Creativity Environment Rating Scale”. Both Scales are 7-point . According to EECERA ethical code, informed consent was gained from the participants. They could withdraw at any time. The results were anonymized. The average score for the conditions for supporting play is 2.62, minimum = 1.00, maximum = 4.43; for the development of creative abilities 2.33, minimum = 1.00, maximum = 5.50. Main deficiencies: the rare participation of the teacher in joint play with children, unavailability of unstructured materials, rare situations when an adult discusses with children problem situations that are important for children or imagination tasks. There are no correlations between conditions for play and creativity (the relationship is not significant at both the 0.01 and 0.05 levels). Kindergartens tend to focus on either one or another group of conditions, these efforts are not systematically coordinated. It's also possible to create conditions both for play and creativity. The study helps to clarify what skills are important to develop in preschool teachers to support both play and creativity.

play, creativity, ECEC quality, environment rating scale, educational conditions

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

ECEC-teachers and children’s free play: "The tactful defenders"

Presenters:

Jostein Paulgård Østmoen, University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

Co-authors

Lise Juritsen, University of South-Eastern Norway, Norway

The study focuses on ECEC-teachers' encounter with children's "free" and spontaneous play in kindergarten, by examining a selection of ECEC-teachers' perspectives on this topic. A central focal point of the study is play understood from a philosophical perspective, primarily grounded in Gadamer (2010), and contextualized within the Nordic childhood context by, among others, Øksnes (2019), Steinsholt (1998), and Wolf (2017). The concept "free play" is seen in the context with ECEC-teachers' understanding of their own practice as a form of pedagogical tact (Van Manen, 2021). The study is inspired by social constructivism, where the assumption is that people always construct their individual perceptions and understandings of reality through human encounters and communication (Gustavsson, 2001). Thematic analysis has been conducted on audio recordings of three focus group interviews, where 16 ECEC-teachers discuss their views on free play. The investigation was conducted in accordance with research ethical guidelines. Informed written consent was obtained, and the interviewees are anonymized through the use of coding in transcription and presentation. Our findings are elucidated through discussions of the following themes: ECEC-teachers see themselves as 1) defenders of play, describing a professional practice characterized by the ability to 2) "have an ear for" children's spontaneous and self-initiated play, and 3) to be able to deal tactfully with paradoxes and dilemmas that this concept of play brings forth. The study delves into the challenges and dilemmas of trying to control something that is spontaneous and self-initiated, and focuses on the importance of taking children's boundary-crossing play seriously.

ECEC-teachers, focus group interviews, children’s "free" play, pedagogical tact, defenders of play

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set C25, Room 401, fourth floor, Dorset Place building

PARENT'S PERSPECTIVES ON ECE EXPERIENCES

Caron Carter, Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

Rethinking Parental Engagement with Children's learning from a Froebelian Lens--Listening to what young children and parents say

Presenters:

Xunrou Shen, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

This study could be described as a desire to explore young children's learning experience with parents' engagement, examine how the Froebelian approach shape parental engagement with young children's learning, and the unprecedented impact of Covid-19 pandemic upon it. Previous research reveals the importance of effective parental engagement to raise children's learning and development (Koch, 2018; Sheridan et al., 2019), and alleviating achievement gaps (Goodall, 2017). This study draws upon the Froebelian pedagogy (Froebel Friedrich), Epstein's (2018) Overlapping Spheres of Influences, and Goodall's (2014; 2017) Parental Engagement Continuum. It is an interpretative multiple case study. Eight 3-to-5-year-old children, their parents and six Froebelian practitioners were recruited across two Froebelian underpinned nurseries in Scotland. Through semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and participatory and visual methods (i.e., photo elicitation, photovoice, magic wand drawing), data from young children, parents and practitioners were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2022). While doing research with young children, it is important to be aware of several key ethical considerations, such as the informed assent, confidentiality and anonymity (Alderson & Morrow, 2020). All participants' consent are sought, and a set of flags was designed to support the process of negotiating and acquiring ongoing assent from children during the research processes. The research findings suggest that young children play an active role in communicating and influencing their own learning experiences with parents' engagement. Froebelian underpinned principles and practices are identified to bring implications to future practices concerning the work of parental engagement during and beyond the crisis.

parental engagement, young children's voice, Froebelian approach, participatory methods with children, Covid-19 crisis

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

But somehow the vital connection is made: perceptions and experiences of mothers of young children regarding quality and expertise in early childhood education and child care

Presenters:

Radhika Viruru, Texas A&M University, United States

Co-authors:

Erica Ritter, Texas A&M University, United States

This study focused on how mothers of young children perceived quality in early childhood in one rural community in the United States where quality care is scarce. Families in the United States continue to experience barriers accessing high-quality child care ("Demanding Change," 2023). Neoliberalist policies promote free market capitalism instead of government spending and responsibility (Davies & Bansel, 2007). Families thus struggle to find quality care. This study explains a phenomena as well as generates theory through a grounded theory approach. Using symbolic interactionism as well as feminist theory allowed the researchers to gain intimate familiarity with the phenomena of how women define/seek quality child care. A symbolic interactionist approach framed by constructivist and feminist frameworks was used, with grounded theory being the method of choice. Grounded Theory resonates with feminist perspectives due to its capacity to capture marginalized experiences. Two focus groups were conducted with 10 mothers of young children. As per IRB approval, to ensure anonymity focus groups were conducted online and participants had the option to reveal limited parts of their identity. Mothers want their children to be nurtured by a teacher who is present and knowledgeable, to feel a connection to teachers and for children to have a strong foundation early in life. Additionally they would like to see the U.S. government strongly

support early childhood programs, This study shows how scarce quality child care is in the rural US and strengthens the case for a renewed investment in early childhood care.

grounded theory, rural early childhood, feminism, family perspectives, focus groups

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Navigating the school gates: parents' perspectives on supporting their children's friendships.

Presenters:

Caron Carter, Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Emily Moorlock, Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

Ruth Barley, Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

This three-year inquiry aims to explore how parents interpret and support their children's friendships in the United Kingdom. Research has demonstrated that friendships can be overlooked in preference for academic progress and attainment in school (Carter and Nutbrown, 2016). Parents report finding it a challenge to support their children's friendships (Carter, 2023). In addition, research has shown that interactions with friendships in and out of school helps to maintain friendships (Chan and Poulin, 2007; Rubin et al., 2005), and enhance wellbeing. Therefore, this research explores parents' perspectives on the affordances and challenges of supporting children's friendships from the 'school gates'. The theoretical framework for this study draws upon current theories of Positive Psychology, using Seligman's (2011) PERMA framework of wellbeing. The study was conducted within a qualitative, emerging and inductive research paradigm (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 25 parents of reception children (4–5-year-olds) using thematic analysis to analyse the data. An information sheet and consent form were provided to all participants. Pseudonyms have replaced the names of parents. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study and ethical issues were an ongoing part of the project. The initial findings report both the benefits and challenges of supporting friendships, including the use of the social media application WhatsApp to create parent groups, play dates and parent friendships. Finally, these findings have implications for how schools listen and support parents and children with friendships for wellbeing.

parents, primary caregiver, children's friendships, children's wellbeing, thematic analysis

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Symposium Set D

9:00 – 10:15, Thursday 5th September

Set D1, Sallis Benney Theatre, ground floor, Grand Parade building

MAINSTREAMING SUSTAINABILITY IN ECEC THROUGH COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE, CURRICULA AND RATING SCALES

Fabio Dovigo, Nortumbria University, United Kingdom

The symposium explores the implementation and challenges of mainstreaming ECEfS across different ECEC contexts. The first presentation investigates the building of a Community of Practice among ECEC teachers in England to foster sustainability-informed educators, highlighting the challenges of high staff turnover and limited development time. It emphasizes the CoP's role in cultivating a sense of belonging and continuous learning, driven by a participative praxeological paradigm and action research methodology. The second presentation examines the inclusion and emphasis on sustainability in Nordic national preschool curricula, revealing variability in addressing ecological, economic, and sociocultural sustainability dimensions. It underscores the need for more research on ECEfS policy to

support implementation and enhance teacher understanding. The third presentation assesses the use of the Environmental Rating Scale for Sustainable Development in Early Childhood in Italian kindergartens, finding that while the environmental dimension of sustainability is well recognized, the economic aspect is often neglected.

sustainability_early_childhood_education

Assessing the Use of the Environmental Rating Scale for Sustainable Development in Early Childhood (ERS-SDEC) to Support ECEfS in Italy

Presenters:

Fabio Dovigo, Nortumbria University, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

This study aimed to assess the use of the Environmental Rating Scale for Sustainable Development in Early Childhood (ERS-SDEC) to support ECEfS in Italy. The research question was: "How does the ERS-SDEC help analyze the sociocultural, economic, and environmental dimensions of ECEfS in Italian kindergartens?" The research builds on previous studies of the ERS-SDEC (OMEP, 2019; Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2016) developed within the framework of ECEfS studies (Ärlemalm-Hagsér & Elliott, 2020; Davis & Elliott, 2014). The ERS-SDEC is designed as a tool to foster a shared culture of sustainability among children and adults in the early years. It enables teachers and administrators to pinpoint areas that require focus to attain sustainability in kindergartens. The scale was forward and backward translated from English to Italian, administered in eight kindergartens, and subsequently analyzed. Staff feedback was collected through semi-structured interviews. The research was conducted in compliance with the ethical guidelines defined by EECERA in 2014. Ethics guidelines were followed in administering the scale, including the use of informational letters and consent forms. The scale analysis and interviews indicate that, while the sociocultural dimension of sustainability is moderately recognized by teachers and administrators, the economic dimension is generally overlooked. Conversely, the environmental dimension is highly considered. These findings align with previous research on the topic (Beleslin & Travar, 2022; Fermín-González & Echenique-Arginzones, 2022; Višnjić-Jevtić et al., 2022). The study highlights the need to focus policy and practice on fostering better awareness of the sociocultural and, especially, economic dimensions of ECEfS.

sustainable development, environmental rating scale, validation, kindergartens, mixed methods

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Can we use a Community of Practice to create sustainability-informed ECEC teachers/ educators and enrich the education cognocenti?

Presenters:

June O'Sullivan, London Early Years Foundation, United Kingdom

My study is exploring how we develop Sustainability Informed Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) teachers/educators by focusing on how to change their approach through coaching, conversations and Community of Practice in a time when recruiting and retaining staff is a challenge while the pressure to address practice through a sustainability lens is increasing. High staff turnover means less time for development and engaging in new learning or as Rinaldi (2006) says being in a state of living research. Yet, encouraging ECEC staff to drive sustainability through a change in practice is increasing (Elliot, 2019; Kemmis 2022). The research is designed using three element framework combining best practice in professional teaching (Sims, 2021) with practice architecture (Kemmis, 2022) and value-based emotional journey into a means of shifting adults perspectives of sustainability through their personal and professional practice (Bray et al. 2000). The research is framed within a participative praxeological paradigm (Pascal et al., 2012) with action research as methodology. Data were collected through questionnaires, semi structured interviews and focus groups with 23 participants. The challenge of being manager/researcher and inside /outside researcher was mitigated through consent forms and right to opt out (BERA 2018). Findings from my study suggests we capitalise on teachers/educators duty to act for the children's future and filter the approach to

change through a values based filter of coaching, conversations and communities of practice. This is key for those designing work-based training and development on sustainability.

sustainability, practice, change, duty to act, value-based

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The status and content of sustainability education in the Nordic national curricula guidelines for preschools

Presenters:

Kristín Norðdahl, University of Iceland, School of Education, Iceland

Hrönn Pálmadóttir, University of Iceland, School of Education

Christin Furu, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

This study aims to explore the status and content of Early Childhood Education for Sustainability (ECEfS) in Nordic national preschool curricula guides. Policy on sustainability education is crucial to provide support structures for such practices in schools (Carlsson & Lysgaard, 2020). Although research in this field is increasing (Weldemariam et al., 2017), it is still scarce (Grindheim et al., 2019). Therefore, exploring the policies and recommended education to support knowledge, skills, and a will to meet sustainability challenges is essential. The study's theoretical framework is based on theories that view ECEfS as a comprehensive approach, integrating ecological, economic, and socio-cultural sustainability. (Borg & Pramling-Samuelsson, 2022; Purvis et al., 2019; UNESCO, 2006). The study is an interpretive qualitative study, and the method is content analysis. The contexts of sustainability and education in the text were investigated, especially concerning sustainability pillars and the sustainability words counted. The analysis is based on official data and ethical consideration has been given to ensuring fair representation of documents. The Nordic research group, familiar with their national curricula, reviewed the analysis. Sustainability education is included in Nordic ECEC curricula guidelines, but the emphasis on ecological, economic, and socio-cultural sustainability varies by country. Some curricula do not address socio-cultural sustainability. We need more research on ECEfS policy to guide implementation and teacher's understanding. Examining national curricula guidelines is therefore crucial.

Early Childhood Education for Sustainability (ECEfS), Nordic national curricula guidelines, pillars of sustainability, Status of ECEfS, Content of ECEfS

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D2, Room G4, ground floor, Grand Parade building

SOCIAL-MUSIC AND MOVEMENT PRACTICE

Jools Page, The University of Brighton, United Kingdom

Impact of Music and Movement on Learning about Biology in Early Childhood

Presenters:

Marlena Plavšić, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Croatia

Zorica Durman Marijanović, Kindergarten Petar Pan Zagreb, Croatia

Co-authors:

Đeni Zuliani Blašković, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Croatia

Barbara Runjić, fabula movens, Croatia

Branka Bernard, fabula movens, Croatia

Ines Kovačić, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Croatia

Ivana Paula Gortan-Carlin, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Croatia

The research explored if a multimodal teaching approach involving music and movement could enhance children's biology knowledge about cell, adaptation and transformation processes and their motivation for kindergarten

activities. Previous findings show that music, exposing children to multi-sensory stimulation, can encourage learning processes (Dumont et al., 2017; Tervaniemi et al., 2018). The conceptual framework refers to early childhood science education needing an interdisciplinary approach, as the complexity of topics can benefit from the convergence of different perspectives (Ravanis, 2022). In the quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design (Price, Jhangiani & Chiang, 2015), children aged 5-6 years were divided for six months into: 1) experimental group that learned biology with music and movement (n=46), 2) experimental group that learned biology without music and movement (n=29), and 3) control group had the standard curriculum (n=27). Children's parents (n=92) followed the same groups' division. A consent was asked from parents. Children were invited to join activities and interviews but were free not to. During the interviews they were told they could finish at any time. The knowledge related questions were mixed with easy everyday questions. Parents answered voluntarily and anonymously. Children in both experimental groups increased biology knowledge, but active involvement with music and movement contributed even more. Children reported to be highly motivated regardless of the group and the assessment time, but parents in both experimental groups noticed children's higher motivation for the kindergarten activities. Findings imply that the multimodal approach can be a beneficial learning tool for children's acquisition of the new biological content.

biology knowledge, multimodal learning, multi-sensory stimulation, science, motivation

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Professional Love: the dance of reciprocity

Presenters:

Jools Page, The University of Brighton, United Kingdom

Liz Clark, Artistic Director of Turned On Its Head, United Kingdom

The project explored whether working through embodied form of dance, can create transformational change for children's wellbeing through the translation of Professional Love (Page, 2010) into practice. Narratives around love are subject to lack of value due to the formalisation of the Early Years Curriculum and the devaluing of love in policy (DfE, 2024). The Triangle of Professional Love (Page, 2018) invites deep reflection of interdependency, intimacy, and the value and nature of reciprocity in professional relationships. The study focussed on loving interactions between young children (0-5 years) and their key person in nursery through dance improvisation. Identified through convenience sampling, dances were co-created between the key person and key child in nursery. Video observations explored the nuances of reciprocal interaction through improvised movement, which were analysed and interpreted using ToPL (Page, 2018). Braun and Clarke's (2019) thematic analysis of reflective diaries and structured interviews evaluated the success of the project. Ethics forms carefully explained that the publicly available film may reveal 30 pseudonymised children and 12 adult's identities. Informed consent was given by the gatekeeper, key person participants and parents/carers of children (BERA, 2018). The Ethical Spaces Framework (Huser, 2018) checklist was used to ensure freedom of coercion of children. Findings showed that improvised dance is a realistic conduit for realising ToPL (Page, 2018) to ensure that nursery aged children can experience appropriate, loving reciprocal interactions with their key person. The collaboration has found new expressions of Professional Love through dance improvisation to reveal ways to further the framework.

children, creativity, improvised dance, professional love, reciprocity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set D3, Room G62, ground floor, Grand Parade building

BUILDING PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: FROM VISION TO ACTIONS

Lisandre Bergeron-Morin, VBJK, Belgium

ECEC experts agree upon the importance and the benefits of engaging with and reaching out to parents concerning their child's education and care (European Commission, 2020). This collaboration is even more essential for parents

of a child with special needs. Still, professionals and parents encounter challenges to transform this vision into actions, both at micro-level – e.g. on how to give parents a voice on a daily basis – and at macro-level – e.g. on how to negotiate with policies on inclusion at a local and national level (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2017, 2022). How to strengthen the competencies of ECEC educators in building partnership with parents, while talking into account contextual factors? This question is explored in this symposium through experiences from three countries - Portugal, Belgium and Iceland - who each conducted a three-years action research, as part of the Erasmus+ project Be-In.

Nurturing connections: A Journey of Inclusion and Parental Partnerships for two ECEC teams in Flanders

Presenters:

Elisabeth De Schauwer, Ghent University, Belgium

Lisandre Bergeron-Morin, VBJK, Belgium

Co-authors:

Veerle Vervaeke, VBJK, Belgium

Hilde Schockaert, City of Ghent, Belgium

Frike Lescauwae, ECEC De Blauwe Lelie, Brugge, Belgium

In the Flemish ECEC, fragmentation across various institutions has resulted in divergent practices and perspectives on inclusion and parent partnership. This study aims to address implementing a local action plan to support parent partnership in inclusive ECEC centers. Establishing effective partnerships with parents, involves navigating a complex landscape marked by ambivalence experienced by both parents and professionals (De Schauwer, Vandebussche & Van Hove, 2022). This study is firmly embedded within a shared vision concerning both inclusion and collaboration across the entire team of the center. This shared vision draws inspiration from the conceptual framework of a competent system (Urban et al., 2012). Two ECEC centres conducted a three-year action research around: how to reinforce the partnership with parents of children with special needs? Each step was documented. According to O'Leary (2008), action research offers the opportunity to address 'real-world problems' in a participatory and cyclical way to both produce knowledge and effect change. A thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was conducted to identify key mechanisms and challenges in a shared vision about inclusion and more embedded partnerships with parents within the centres. Informed consent was obtained for each interview. - Findings show that the use of professional development supported individual competences of ECEC professionals and enhanced the competence of the whole institution to support their inclusive practices. Both settings invested a lot in strengthening connections with parents in formal and informal ways. The importance of a systemic approach to support is underscored, emphasizing the interconnectedness within the ECEC settings.

parents, ECEC professionals, inclusion, parental partnership, action research

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Babies and Toddlers as Researchers (BaTaR)

Presenters:

Jane Murray, University of Northampton, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Jemima Harris, Independent Researcher, United Kingdom

BaTaR investigates if, and how, babies and toddlers 0-3 years (0-3YOs) build knowledge by engaging in research behaviours (RBs) in everyday activities at home and in early childhood education (ECE) settings. In BaTaR, primary carers (PCs) and ECE educators are researchers observing 0-3YOs' everyday activities, then applying 'Knowledge Building Blocks' (Murray, 2017a) to explore 0-3YOs using RBs to build knowledge. BaTaR extends 'Young Children are Researchers' (YCAR) (Murray, 2017a; 2017b) which conceptualised children 4-8 years (4-8YOs) as researchers. BaTaR's positioning of 0-3YOs, PCs and ECE educators as researchers draws on two theoretical frameworks: young

children as knowledge constructors (Fleer, 2009; Hedges, 2022; Murray, 2017a) and participatory emancipatory research (Habermas, 1987; Kemmis and McTaggart, 2005; Kovach, 2005). BaTaR revisits YCAR's conceptual framework highlighting epistemological factors children use to build knowledge as researchers (Murray, 2017a). BaTaR adopts constructionism and constructivism, and is a collective case study featuring observations and interviews. Potential adult participants (PAPs) receive full information about BaTaR's purpose and ethical conduct featuring no harm, withdrawal rights, no incentives, and data sharing, storage and use respecting privacy (BERA, 2018). Before participation, PAPs consent and PCs consent for children. PAPs' research training includes disclosure protocols and children's ongoing assent. Initial findings focus on home data. 0-3YOs' and YCAR 4-8YOs' everyday activities differ, yet both groups adopt similar RBs to build knowledge. Participant PCs observe and evaluate 0-3YOs' RBs effectively. PCs' knowledge of 0-3YOs at home offers important intelligence regarding 0-3YOs' knowledge constructions that may support their future learning.

babies and toddlers, babies and toddlers as researchers, primary carers as researchers, babies building knowledge, toddlers building knowledge

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Spotlight on teachers: Ethical behaviors on the eyes of children

Presenters:

Özlem Dönmez, Trakya University, Turkey

Co-authors:

Bahar Dağ, Trakya University, Turkey

It is aimed to examine teachers' ethical behaviors on the eyes of children. This study focuses on children's perceptions and experiences with the ethical behaviors of their teachers. Previous studies show that teachers have difficulties to deal with ethical dilemmas (Buchoiz, Keller & Brady, 2007). Early childhood education teachers are key models in children's lives. Interactions with children are directly related to teacher's ethical decision-making skills (Banks, 2003). Teachers should be aware of the impact of their ethical behaviors as well as their professional competencies (Sakin, 2007). Teachers are creators of future generations. The study depends on the Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory, Bandura's Social-Learning Theory and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory (Senemoğlu, 2015). According to these theories teachers are seen as role models in society and have professional responsibilities towards society (Pelit & Güçer, 2006). This study was designed in phenomenology design. The data was collected via the developed scenario-based scale. The scale includes 15 items and can be used both quantitatively and qualitatively. Ethics committee permission, Ministry of National Education and parental and child consent was obtained. The number of teachers who showed a permissive attitude towards hugging was high. Secondly, the number of teachers who tended to take children's photos was high. Teachers had a dilemma about whether they tended to answer the child who interrupted teacher while teacher was talking. In the literature, it has also been observed that preschool teachers experience dilemmas related to share children's photographs without permission (Duran, 2014) and classroom management (İflazoğlu & Bulut, 2005). This study is limited with the views of children on teachers' ethical behaviors. Upcoming studies might enhance the study via taking the views from children parents, and teachers.

early childhood, preschool, ethical dilemma, professional ethics, ethical behaviors

Set D4, Room G63, ground floor, Grand Parade building

CHILDREN AS RESEARCHERS - CONCEPTS OF KNOWLEDGE BUILDING, TIME AND ETHICAL PRACTICE

Jane Murray, University of Northampton, United Kingdom

Experiencing time in Early Childhood Education

Presenters:

Vanessa Neves, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil

Co-authors:

Virgínia Oliveira, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil

This research examines infants' ways of experiencing time in a Brazilian Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC). Previous research showed that (i) children have a different experience of time from adults and also from schools (Teixeira, 2022); (ii) that children's time can be seen and thought of in various ways (Hoyuelos, 2019), and (iii) that time can also be confused with the curriculum and school routines (Costa; Dentz; Amorim, 2022), especially in Early Childhood Education. Time, in the school context, must be analyzed as a unity that intertwines the distinct dimensions of social time: khronos, kairos, aion (García, 2007). Based on Cultural-historical Psychology and Ethnography in Education, we videotaped the daily life of a group of infants and toddlers. Through a microgenetic approach, we analyzed a set of events that demonstrate how three infants experienced time over three years. Informed consent was obtained and participants were allowed to withdraw from the project at any stage. When researchers felt that children or teachers were uncomfortable, they stopped videorecording, showed video extracts to participants, and talked about the research's goals. Infants' spatial and temporal experiences were singular and constituted by the dialectical pairs [individual/collective], [regularity/singularity], and [disclosure/concealment]. Infants both transform and are transformed by institutional time. We argue that children's ways of participating – listening, talking, observing, and recognizing each other's time – was constructed throughout the three years they spent together at the Brazilian ECEC. These findings highlight the importance of recognizing infants' and toddlers' ways of participating in ECE practices.

infants, time, cultural-historical psychology, ethnography in education, Peryzhivanie

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

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Jane Murray, University of Northampton, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Jemima Harris, Independent Researcher, United Kingdom

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babies and toddlers, babies and toddlers as researchers, primary carers as researchers, babies building knowledge, toddlers building knowledge

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Spotlight on teachers: Ethical behaviors on the eyes of children

Presenters:

Özlem Dönmez, Trakya University, Turkey

Co-authors:

Bahar Dağ, Trakya University, Turkey

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early childhood, preschool, ethical dilemma, professional ethics, ethical behaviors

Set D5, Room M2, Mezzanine, Grand Parade building

OUTDOOR PLAY AND LEARNING SIG: NORDIC NATURE KINDERGARTENS

Olav B. Lysklett, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway

Nature kindergartens are highly valued culturally in the Nordic countries, and their unique approach to early childhood education is increasingly recognized internationally. Despite a long-lasting tradition of nature kindergartens in the Nordic regions, research in this scope is relatively new and almost exclusively conducted on the national scale. Three workshops have been conducted in our Nordic Nature Kindergarten network during different seasons. Research has been explored and discussed regarding the content of children's outdoor play and learning. Visiting two nature kindergartens in each country has added a crucial, novel, and practical element to each workshop. This symposium presents an overview of the existing research literature, a presentation of the common characteristics of the six nature kindergartens visited, and an example of a tool that can be used to measure connectedness to nature in the nature kindergarten setting. We would also discuss a draft for a joint large-scale international grant application.

outdoor_play_and_learning

Nordic nature-based kindergartens: Gathering and comparing good practice examples from Denmark, Sweden, and Norway

Presenters:

Evi Petersen, OsloMET, Norway

Birgitte Madsen Theilmann, VIA University College, Denmark

Co-authors:

Henrik W. Berger, Queen Maud University College, Norway

Through gathering good practice examples from nature kindergartens we aim to identify commonalities and differences concerning the pedagogical and didactical approaches in nature kindergartens in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. Nature kindergartens are increasingly recognized as a typical Nordic phenomenon. Despite a long-standing tradition of nature kindergartens in the Nordic countries, research in this area is relatively new and primarily conducted on a national scale. A nuanced theoretical understanding of nature kindergartens practices is offered. The concept of potential affordances (Kyttä, 2002) is utilized for parts of the analysis. The project employs an empirical case study approach. Data were collected through a total of six visits to kindergartens in Norway, Denmark and Sweden, utilizing a multi-methods approach. This approach included in-depth interviews with ECEC professionals, unstructured observations, and visual methods (photographs and videos) to capture the potential affordances of the environments in the kindergartens. The European Commission's (2021) principles on Ethics in Social Science and Humanities were applied, and institutions were provided with information and consent-forms beforehand visits. The findings reveal a common underlying value for nature and the practice of *friluftsliv* (\approx outdoor life) in ECEC contexts across the countries. However, didactical work with these concepts was shaped by perceptions regarding the role of nature and variations in means-to-an-end rationales related to children's wellbeing and personal development. Interestingly, pedagogical underpinnings and the specific type of nature available seem to account for differences, rather than geographical boundaries. A nuanced theoretical understanding of nature kindergartens practices across Nordic countries is offered.

Nordic countries, nature environments, Friluftsliv, personal development, sustainability

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Title: Use of the Biophilia Interview to measure connectedness to nature in young children: A tool for nature kindergartens

Presenters:

Thomas Beery, Kristianstad University, Sweden

Co-authors:

Marie Fridberg, Kristianstad University, Sweden

This research aimed to explore the use of the Biophilia Interview (BI), a connectedness to nature measurement, in a Nordic early childhood educational context (ECE). Extensive previous research has explored the use of measures of nature connectedness with children and has inspired this work in a Nordic setting (Beery et al., 2024; Beery & Fridberg, 2022; Beery & Jørgensen, 2018). Numerous theories, such as biophilia, inclusion, and relatedness (Mayer & Frantz, 2004; Nisbet et al., 2009; Schultz, 2002; Wilson, 1984), express the concept of nature connectedness. These theories reference a state of perceiving oneself as a part of nature and highlight the affective, cognitive, and physical benefits of nature experience. Further, these theories indicate a pathway toward pro-environmental behavior (Chawla, 2021). Guided by a pragmatic paradigm, the BI scale with children in an ECE context was coupled with practitioner interviews using an embedded mixed-method design (Creswell & Clark, 2007). Ethical Considerations include awareness of child wellbeing in the BI process and parental consent. GDPR guidelines for the ethical conduct of research were followed. The scale results indicated that the children had high biophilia scores. Moreover, the measurement experience engages children in rich conversation, with the potential for qualitative results. The results are compared with other scale outcomes, and a broader question of when, why, and how connectedness to nature

measures should be used with young children is presented. This discussion opens the door for carefully considering applications in the nature kindergarten context and opportunities provided by the unique setting.

biophilia interview, connectedness to nature, psychometric scale, mixed methodology, nature kindergarten

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Nordic Nature Kindergartens, illuminating discourses and identifying gaps

Presenters:

Kari Anne Jørgensen-Vittersø, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

Thomas Beery, Kristianstad University, Sweden

Co-authors

Marie Fridberg, Kristianstad University, Sweden

Consolidate research on Nordic Nature Kindergartens to coordinate existing Nordic knowledge and perspectives. Identify discourses considering history and future research and practice directions. The project is based on a review of literature, books, and articles on nature kindergartens in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway 1950 – 2024. Theoretical and conceptual framework is critical discourse analyses-based inspired by Fairclough (2010). The concepts used as a framework are texts connected to social practices and dominating discourses. This includes individual and organisational orientation and reflections of the society at the time these texts were written. The scoping review study are aligned with world views of constructionist and interpretative paradigms and critical reading. Search engines were used to assemble relevant research published 1950-2024 with search terms in English, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish, all closely related to Nordic Nature Kindergartens;. Three researchers conducted searches and subsequent abstract reviews. No personal data involved; reviews of publications available for all. Findings indicate a dominance of professional publications for practitioners over peer-reviewed research articles year 1950 - 1990 ties. Research studies published in English peer-reviewed publications brings in Nordic practices with academic discourses on nature-child connection. These trends are connected to the Nordic model of education and changes in cultural and social contexts. Given trends citing childhood extinction of nature experience, a comprehensive knowledge about nature kindergartens is necessary as foundation for the future development of practice and research arenas. We argue for a stronger connection between practice and research.

nature preschool, Nordic model, scoping review, critical discourse analyses, nature-child connection

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D6, NEW ROOM: Room 306, third floor, Edward Street building

KINSHIP AND DEMOCRACY IN ECEC

Sigal Achituv, Oranim College of Education, Israel

Exploring democracy in ECE- a collaborative project

Presenters:

Magdalena Raivio, Karlstad university, Sweden

Katarina Ribaeus, Karlstad university, Sweden

Democratic education is an important way to work with social sustainability in Early Childhood Education (ECE). This ongoing collaborative project aims to connect research and practice by using different models of cooperation between a university and a local preschool. Research in the area is vast. The overarching challenge is how democracy can be made concrete and how it can be implemented (Thuresson & Quennerstedt, 2020). Preschool teachers express problems defining the concept, tending to discuss the obstacles, more than the possibilities. A theoretical model (Institutional events of democracy), focusing on the democratic actions of children and teachers (Ribaeus,

2014), is tested and further developed resulting in e.g an observation protocol. Documents were collected and focus group interviews were carried out with teachers at one preschool. The research design was inspired by Plowright's (2021) Frameworks for an Integrated Methodology within a qualitative paradigm. A democratic approach was used where the researchers catered for everyone's voices and created opportunities for participation. The project was initiated by the teachers themselves, to improve their ECE and to reduce the gap between research and ECE. Consent was obtained from the teachers before data was collected. The teachers have tried out new tools to discover expressions of democracy among the children. Preliminary results show that certain spaces as well as the youngest children in the ECE have to be focused to enhance the ECE's democratic education. This study contributes to new democratic models and tools to use in preschool, higher education as well as research.

early childhood education, democracy, value education, social sustainability, practice oriented research

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Belonging and local cultural explorations through intergenerational musical co-creations - a case study from Norway

Presenters:

Grete Storbæk Eriksen, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway

Czarecah Tuppil Oropilla, KINDknow Centre-Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

This book chapter explores the dynamic intersection of belonging and local cultural identity through intergenerational musical co-creations in a village in Norway. A unique case where researchers in cooperation with village elders engage in traditional weaving practices. The resultant woven patterns serve as inspiration for collaborative music-making with children. Contextual anchorings for the study which discusses importance of bringing generations together: Oropilla, C. T. (2021). Spaces for transitions in intergenerational childhood experiences. In *Childhood Cultures in Transformation 30 Years of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Action towards Sustainability*. The conceptual model is anchored on cultural-historical perspectives based on the work of Mariane Hedegaard, but also of Bronfenbrenner's PPCT model (the Bio-Ecological systems theory). Co-creative methods as: music-making, observing weaving alongside researcher field notes. Ødegaard, E. E., Oen, M., & Birkeland, J. (2023). Success of and Barriers to Workshop Methodology: Experiences from Exploration and Pedagogical Innovation Laboratories (EX-PED-LAB). Interviewees anonymized, can withdraw from the research. This study sheds light on the transformative potential of intergenerational collaboration, This case study serves as a compelling illustration of the profound impact that creative collaborations with old handcraft and music can have on fostering a deeper connection to one's roots and fostering a sense of belonging. This project bring valuable knowledge in the field of EECE by showing that co-creative process becomes a communal journey where the act of making music from the sounds of weaving becomes a metaphor for interconnectedness of community members.

intergenerational, collaborative co-creations, belonging, culture, explorations

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

EC Educators' conceptualizations of community in Israeli kibbutzim in the face of war

Presenters:

Sigal Achituv, Oranim College of Education, Israel

David Brody, Orot Israel Academic College, Israel

Co-authors

Orit Dror, Oranim College of Education, Israel

We aim to identify how Israeli kibbutz EC educators conceptualize community in their practice during the current Gaza war. Jones et al. (1994) found educators' backgrounds related to conceptions of community. Economic and social cooperation inherent in kibbutz life strengthen communal connections (Rifman,2016). Community resilience is

associated with individual resilience, national resilience, wellbeing, community size, and sense of coherence (Eshel and Kimhi, 2016). Many of these traits are found among kibbutz members. This qualitative study utilizes semi-structured interviews including 24 veteran educators. Transcripts were analyzed thematically using grounded theory. Anonymity was achieved and contextual identity was suppressed. Oranim College Ethics Committee granted approval. Kibbutz educators perceived the entire kibbutz community as part of themselves and compared it to extended family. Educators perceive their agentic role as coordinators between community members and children. Emotional aspects of their conceptualization included community as a continuing tradition. For them, community entails mutuality, a two-way path in which the kindergarten is involved in the community, and community contributes to the kindergarten, enhancing children's education and enabling their understanding of actual contribution to the kibbutz. The war that began on Oct. 7, 2023, many kibbutz communities were adversely affected. The unique conceptualization of community among kibbutz educators sheds light on their ability to enhance resilience among children and adults in those affected communities as well as suggesting the value of the communal model for helping young children traumatized by war throughout the country.

ECEC kibbutz educators, community, war, resilience, educators' conceptualizations

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set D7, Room 144, first floor, Grand Parade building

EDUCATOR AGENCY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM REFORM

Liz Chesworth, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

Theories of transformational curriculum reform highlight the pivotal role of educators as agents of change. However, policy reform has intensified in recent decades and has sparked concerns that educators feel disempowered and professionally marginalised by change processes (Ball, 2008). This raises questions about how early childhood educators can become agents of change within ecologies of practice in which policy agendas, historical legacies, institutional values and professional identities interact to both enable and constrain agency (Priestley et al., 2012). Furthermore, agency can both act against and in support of curriculum change. In this symposium we suggest that sustainable curriculum change needs to pay attention to how contextual factors interact to create the conditions in which educator agency might be harnessed. Drawing on research findings from Malta and England, we argue that curriculum change needs to shift from a discourse of 'implementation' towards an ongoing process of professional dialogue and critical reflection.

Exploring the Complexity of Educators' Agency in Curriculum Reform in Malta

Presenters:

Josephine Deguara, University of Malta, Malta

Shirley Ann Gauci, Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology

Liz Chesworth, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

Focusing on SDG4 which addresses quality education for all, this study investigates how early childhood educators understand their agency in curriculum practice. Referring to previous research (Hargreaves et al., 2010) this study interprets the perspectives of early childhood educators on curriculum knowledge, agency, and ecologies of practice that enable or constrain their autonomy, initiative, and openness to change. The theoretical framework draws upon an ecological model of teacher agency (Priestley et al., 2012; 2015) that focuses on how educators engage within specific contexts to enact agency in their mediation of curriculum. Located within a qualitative and interpretivist approach, nine kindergarten educators were interviewed using the Zoom online platform. Semi-structured, video-recorded interviews were conducted. To uphold confidentiality, ethical approval was obtained, and consent for video recording was sought where participants could withdraw at any time without justification. Video recordings were used for transcription purposes only and deleted once finalised. Pseudonyms will protect participant identity and ensure anonymity. Findings show that educators' agency is dependent upon opportunities to acquire a deep knowledge and understanding of the principles and values that underpin curriculum practice. This enables them to be flexible in their planning, be catalysts of change, and take an autonomous role in their practice. Contrastingly, merely, being 'in the know' can lead to dependency, passiveness, a sense of helplessness, and resistance to change.

Curriculum reform needs to prioritise educators' voice and offer them with time, space, and professional development to become knowledgeable and enable them to exercise their agency.

agency, curriculum, change, complexity, knowledge

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Dialogic approaches to curriculum change

Presenters:

Liz Chesworth, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

This paper reports findings from a collaborative action research (CAR) project that aimed to understand how early childhood educators can make changes to their curriculum decision making in order to respond to children's interests arising from diverse home practices and life contexts. Curriculum change focused upon the role of reflective dialogues (Chesworth et al., 2022) to deepen educators' professional knowledge and mobilise their agency as curriculum makers. The project understood curriculum as a dynamic and social practice (Priestley et al., 2021) that is enacted through pedagogical interactions and curriculum events. The sociocultural concepts of Funds of Knowledge (González, Moll and Amanti, 2005) and Funds of Identity (Esteban-Guitart and Moll, 2014) were used to facilitate deeper understandings of children's interests. Located within the interpretivist paradigm, the CAR methodology used reflective dialogues, classroom documentation and semi-structured interviews to analyse the process of curriculum change in five early years classrooms in an English school. Institutional ethical approval was granted before the study commenced. Participants gave their informed consent. In line with CAR principles, educators were invited to decide whether they wanted to be granted anonymity or to be credited for their contribution. Reflective dialogues enabled educators to build deeper understandings of children's interests and how they can inform pedagogical interactions and curriculum planning. Curriculum making was enhanced when educators had opportunities to critically reflect on the curriculum and make collective sense of their role in extending children's learning. Opportunities for reflective dialogue should be integral to educational change.

curriculum making, children's interests, professional development, reflective dialogues, knowledgeable educators

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Reculturing for Sustainable Educational Change in Early Childhood Education

Presenters:

Shirley Ann Gauci, MCAST, Malta

In the context of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education, this paper explores the intricacies of the reculturing process in educational change (Miller, 2005), exploring the dynamic interplay of contextual factors shaping educators' experiences of change. This paper builds on literature about educational change, which is erratic (Fullan, 2007) and influenced by macropolitics (Ball, 1987), educators' readiness to change (Peterson & Baker, 2011) and teacher identity (Lightfoot & Frost, 2015). Underpinned by the Theory of Change [TOC] (Schindler et al., 2017), this paper refers to the Transtheoretical model of change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983) that was adapted for the educators' TOC. As Deputy Headteacher, the researcher conducted a small-scale interpretivist (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) multiple-case study (Stake, 2006) as insider research involving seventy-eight 3 to 5-year-old children, four kindergarten educators and the Headteacher. Thematic analysis was implemented to evaluate interviews, focussed conversations and observations. Following institutional ethical approvals, adult participants provided informed consent, were assured of anonymity and withdrawal rights. Children confirmed initial witnessed consent through drawings. Assent was negotiated and reaffirmed before each observation, facilitating withdrawal at any time. Children's data was anonymised before analysis, enabling the removal of collected data if a child withdrew. The findings illuminate educational change complexity, underscored by macro and micro political factors and the educators' positioning along their change continuum determined by their commitment to change, progression, and

self-reflection. The implication is that reculturing for meaningful change necessitates time, as multifaceted aspects need to interact to enrich educators' agency and knowledge.

reculturing, change, continuum, context, identity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set D8, Room 202, second floor, Grand Parade building

PROFESSIONAL DIGITAL COMPETENCIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

Maria Dardanou, UiT The Arctic university of Norway, Norway

The need for 21st century skills and the increased debates concerning children's experiences with digital technology, highlight an ongoing discussion on how Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) professionals can address these needs in their pedagogical and everyday practices while working with children and families (Edwards et al. 2017; Kewalramani et al., 2023; Stephen & Edwards, 2018). We discuss educators' pedagogical practices with very young children and their wellbeing and policy making of digital technology in ECEC.

In this symposium we focus on:

1. Educators' technology beliefs and experiences strongly shape their technology adoption and utilization in educational practices.
2. Young children's use of iPads for the purpose of eliciting their sense of their own wellbeing.
3. Need for strengthening educators' professional digital competencies.

We conclude that we need to be alert to educators' digital competencies required to address the opportunities, skills, challenges and reflection related to digital practices with young children.

digital_childhoods

Professional development for digital competencies in early childhood education and care: A systematic review

Presenters:

Maria Dardanou, UiT The Arctic university of Norway, Norway

Sarika Kewalramani, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

Co-authors:

Maria Hatzigianni, University of West Attica, Greece

Ioanna Palaiologou, University of Bristol, United Kingdom

This literature review examines frameworks for digital competencies in education, with a focus on ECEC, the variation in digital competencies requirements for ECEC staff and explores strategies for a successful integration of digital competencies in ECEC workforce development programmes. Digitalisation places new demands on ECEC workforce to navigate the care and wellbeing of children in the digital age (Ilomäki et al., 2016; Kewalramani & Havu-Nuutinen, 2019). The study draws on different theoretical models for educators' development of digital competencies (Kelentrić et al., 2017; Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Redecker & Punie, 2017). This review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) approach for conducting transparent reports that are based on literature reviews (Page et al., 2021). The study draws upon studies in international peer-reviewed journals and reports published for the most part between 2010 and 2022. Ethical considerations such as subjectivity and reflexivity, evaluating and interpreting have been included (Harsh, 2020). The review shows that there has been limited research and policy support regarding the development of digital competence in ECEC and discusses the importance for the ECEC workforce to understand how digital technologies may be incorporated to their work, encompassing technical aspects, responsible use and the social and collaborative dimensions of professional development in this area. The review examines also how attitudes towards technology use with young children condition skills development in the sector. We conclude that effective training on digital competencies should provide proximal support and guidance for educators' digital practices in ECEC.

professional development, digital competencies, literature review, workforce, frameworks

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Chinese Early Childhood Educators' Beliefs and Experiences around Using Touchscreens with Children under Three Years of Age

Presenters:

Olga Fotakopoulou, Birmingham City University, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Chuanmei Dong, Macquarie University, Australia

This study explored Chinese very young children's educators' beliefs and experiences around the use of touchscreen technologies and factors influencing their beliefs, use, skills and confidence. Young children under three years are increasingly reported to spend time on touchscreen technologies in their daily lives (Luo et al., 2022). In EC settings, educators play a key role in influencing young children's access to and use of devices. Research shows that educators' technology beliefs and experiences strongly shape their technology adoption and utilization in educational practices. An adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory, the neo-ecological theory (Navarro & Tudge, 2023) was employed as a theoretical tool in our exploration. Pragmatism informed our research and a mixed-methods design was adopted to investigate educators' touchscreen use and their beliefs and experiences in China. Quantitative data were analysed statistically and the qualitative responses were analysed with the use of content analysis. The study gained ethical approval and upheld the principles of BPS and the International ERIC Charter. Despite their highly reported digital skills, educators' overall use of touchscreen technologies with very young children was low and there was a lack of confidence in using them with children. They were also concerned about the negative impact of technology on young children. It appears that confidence is more influential for Chinese educators in deciding to use technology with very young children than their digital skills. Implications for educational policies and designing effective professional learning and development for early childhood educators to enhance their digital competence are discussed.

early childhood, young children, early childhood educators, touchscreen technologies, professional training and development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Developing a digital game as a screening tool to elicit young children's own voices on their wellbeing

Presenters:

Khaiden Dow, University of Western Australia, Australia

Co-authors:

Fiona Mayne, University of Western Australia, Australia

This research reports the development of an age-appropriate digital game designed to elicit young children's voices on their emerging sense of wellbeing. Benefits include the generation of nuanced self-reported data to support early intervention. Digital technologies offer new ways to support children's "autonomy, engagement and decision-making" (Parsons, 2015, p. 56) and are effective meaning-making tools (Mayne & Howitt, 2021). However, touchscreen tablets are only beginning to be used to elicit information on young children's thoughts and feelings. The theoretical framework draws from SDG 3. Promote wellbeing and 4. Equitable quality education, and emphasises opportunities for children to exercise voice and agency as research participants (Mayne et al., 2018). The study employed a multiple case study design (Yin, 2017) and qualitative interpretive research paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The digital game was piloted with four groups of 4-5-year-old children in a range of early learning settings, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 parents and teachers, and then analysed using inductive

thematic analysis. Ethics permission was obtained from the University of Western Australia, the relevant schools and individuals, with children's meaningful informed consent emphasised throughout (Mayne & Howitt, 2022). The digital game was found to provide children with an accessible means to communicate how they perceived their own wellbeing strengths and vulnerabilities in areas such as relationships, life satisfaction, feeling worried, self-concept, and resilience. Findings highlight the importance of obtaining information from the children themselves as the first step to providing early intervention and informing early childhood social emotional education programs.

digital technologies, touch-screen tablets, wellbeing screening, children's voice and agency, early intervention

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D9, Room 204, second floor, Grand Parade building

GENDER EXPANSIVE TEACHING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: LEARNING FROM PARENTS AND CHILDREN TO GROW RESPONSIVE AND RESPECTFUL INSTITUTIONS FOR EVERY-BODY.

Alexandra C. Gunn, University of Otago, New Zealand

This mixed methods (survey and interview) research with parents and teachers foregrounds advocacy for gender diverse children's rights to express and understand gender in non-conforming and expansive ways. Paper one describes family compositions and characteristics of participant families, including their children's emerging gender identities and expressions. Paper two draws from parent interviews to illustrate how gender related conversations at home expand understandings of gender in response to children's questions and experiences. Our third paper begins to describe implications for policy and practice in the early years with a focus on how institutional change may reduce inequality, support health and wellbeing, and achieve gender equity across the spectrum of gender expression. To achieve sustainable and responsive early childhood education gender-wise, urgent attention must be paid to gender equity practices that recognise and respond to the proliferation of genders expressed and experienced by youngsters in the 21st century.

Genderqueer children are powerful: Parent advocates create healthy niches

Presenters:

Janice Kroeger, Kent State University, United States

Alexandra C. Gunn, University of Otago College of Education, New Zealand

Dana Oleskiewicz, Cultural Foundations, Kent State University

Co-authors:

Andrea Sanchez, Early Childhood Education Kent State University, United States

We examine gender-diverse emergent identities of young children as they shape family contexts from families in U.S. and N.Z.. The complex agency of children with varied protective niches of family advocacy are described.

Family psychology, suggests healthy family functioning prior to a child coming out as trans or gender non-binary makes a positive impact upon child adjustment (Heatherington & Lavner, 2008). Parental support of genderqueer children in which children can explore and navigate their own sense of self is theorized as positive for mental health (Heatherington & Lavner, 2008; Martin & Ruble, 2004). Bronffebrenner's work on chrono- and meso-system and Queer theory frames this study. Discursive parent-child conversations upstage the heterosexual matrix and gender-binary (Blaise, 2010; Butler, 2020; Depalma & Lameiras, 2012; Halberstam, 2018a). Allowing children a say in their own sexuality and gender development matters (Paecher, 2017). A critical (post-foundational) paradigm, with short answer survey (N=35) and in-depth interview data (N=21) gives depth of understanding, allowing us to shift the foci of advocacy for gender-diverse children in family and schooling (Authors, 2024). Constant-comparative methods, and a situated, subjective coding enhanced complexity in findings. Anonymity of subjects was a concern. Pseudonyms were used. Data showed adjustments, complex discussions about gender, creative social networking, while buffering social anxieties of early schooling (Ehrensaft, 2014; Turban & Ehrensaft, 2018). Parents with children in preschools and primary grades are keeping pace with their children's evolving and mutable gender development, creating safe spaces to explore and grow. Families with lgbtqi+ YC shape early schooling.

families of LGBTQI + young children, parental advocacy, mixed-method research, cross-national research, childhood studies

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Parent advocates of gender-diverse children encounter policy and ECED classrooms

Presenters:

Dana Oleskiewicz, Kent State University, United States

Alexandra Gunn, University of Otago, New Zealand

Janice Kroeger, Kent State University, United States

Co-authors:

Andrea Sanchez, Kent State University, United States

Research aim is to show how the advocacy of parents and teachers support gender-diverse students in early childhood education. Maintaining cis-heteronormative schools, even elementary and preschool, neglects the unique needs of the gender-diverse population (García & Slesaransky-Poe, 2010; deMayo et. al, 2022). Biological sex as binary is being codified in policy, to the exclusion of gender-diverse students (Medley, 2022; Wahlert & Gill, 2017). Queer and transgender theory provides a conceptual framework for understanding the gender-diverse population in ECED classrooms (Blaise, 2010; Barnett et al., 2018). In the United States, Title IX federal guidance restricts discrimination according to sexual orientation and gender identity (Sohaili, 2011; Richard & Smith, 2022). Retrospective policy developments in New Zealand, introduced in the first few days of the new Government's policy platform (late 2023) are disrupting the former progressive policy landscape for gender diversity. Mixed methods data was analyzed; Survey findings (n=28 parents; n=93 teachers) and interviews with parents (n=20) about gender-diverse children and teachers (n=3) showed us affirmative educational practices and adjustments in EC settings. Informants were assured that data were scrubbed of proper nouns (places, names) and password protected. Findings suggest the adaptability of teachers to adjust to gender-diversity creating 'safe' schools. However, teachers' work is shaped by policy contexts that constrain and support teacher practices. Concern with regressive policy development is raised and challenged. Implications of this work in policy development result in gender affirmative approaches to early childhood education that will create classrooms where all children can learn and thrive.

gender-diverse, parent advocates, parent-teacher partnership, health and wellbeing, school policy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Gender schema for genderqueer childhoods: Reinterpreting gender now

Presenters:

Christopher Konieczko, Kent State University, United States

Janice Kroeger, Kent State University, United States

Alexandra Gunn, University of Otago College of Education, New Zealand

Dana Oleskiewicz, Kent State University, United States

We describe the controversies surrounding lgbtqi+ children's presence in the classroom, upstaging many of Freudian, Piagetian & Kohlberg's ideas. Genderqueer children force a reinterpretation of gender identity, gender constancy, & teacher education. Supportive parenting included honest and complex conversations, open listening, unconditional love, an explicit avoidance of imposing gender expression upon children as they grew (Authors, in review; Katz-Wise, Gordon, Sharp, Penhale Johnson, & Hart, 2022). Parents changed their own notions of gender, shaping schema, and reinterpreted parenting as they adjusted to children. Rejecting Freudian ideals of compulsory heterosexuality and re-constructing Kohlberg's understandings of gender-permanence, we favor gender-mutability (Halberstam, 2018b; Authors, in press). Child-parent discussions allowed us to conclude that people may not be only male and female, but live in "mutable" gendered identities, including intersex, gender-fluid, trans-gender, or gender-

non binary categories (Jackson & Bussey, 2023, p. 8, Author, et al. 2024). Gender schema is wholly reconsidered. Thematic analysis and constant comparative methods of short answer surveys with in-depth interview data allowed us to understand the complex & explicit discussions parents had with their children often lead to reconsiderations for classrooms and developmental futures. Pseudonyms, protected data, anonymity and building relational rapport was prioritized throughout. Children asked questions about bodies, growing & becoming, often rejecting and imposing their own notions of self. Parents respond openly and honestly leading to [new] gender schema. Implications for professionals include: new ways of describing gender and sexuality; implications addressing lgbtqi+ in teaching; explicitly changing gender and sexuality development terminology within the workforce.

parent-child conversations, Family dynamics, LGBTQI+ gender schema, LGBTQI+ identity in the EC classroom, gender identity education for EC workforce

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D10, Room 207, second floor, Grand Parade building

WELLBEING INTERVENTIONS

Kyong-Ah Kwon, University of Oklahoma, United States

Embracing Mindfulness-Based Professional Development in Early Childhood Education

Presenters:

Drew Giles, Healing Minds Collective, United States

This research study addresses the pressing need for education organizations to support EC educators in managing work-related stress by utilizing mindfulness-based professional development. There is an increasing awareness that many early childhood educators face difficult working conditions. These conditions might lead to high daily stress levels, compromising educators' health, wellbeing, rest, and job performance. This study was guided by Tang et al.'s framework related to mindfulness and neuroscience theory, which hypothesizes that mindfulness practices develop specific skills that lead to beneficial outcomes. Mindfulness practices benefit through enhanced emotional regulation, improved attentional control, and altered self-awareness. The research study utilized video documentary and exploratory qualitative research methodology to understand better how early childhood educators experienced mindfulness-based professional development designed for EC educators. Ethical concerns centered on participant wellbeing, consent, and confidentiality. To address these, we obtained informed consent, prioritized participant safety, ensured confidentiality through anonymization, and provided resources for support. Additionally, continuous monitoring and debriefing were conducted to mitigate any potential adverse effects. The following themes emerged in the study: (1) ongoing coaching support is critical in participants' perceptions of effective professional development factors, (2) increased awareness of using one's breath as a self-regulation strategy for participants, and (3) MBPD opportunities should be integrated into job-embedded professional development opportunities. The findings of this study provide education leaders with recommendations for implementing and sustaining mindfulness-based interventions in ECE systems. This research supports the utilization of mindfulness-based PD as a strategy to positively support EC educators' mental health and wellbeing

mindfulness, early childhood educator wellbeing, healing-centered learning, professional development, mental health

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Happy Teacher Wellness Intervention: Supporting Whole Wellbeing of Early Childhood Educators

Presenters:

Kyong-Ah Kwon, University of Oklahoma, United States

Co-authors:

Carolyn Cheema, University of Oklahoma Health Science Center, United States

Mia Kile, University of Oklahoma, United States
 Hongwu Wang, University of Oklahoma, United States
 Tim Ford, University of Oklahoma, United States

The purpose of the present study is to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of the Happy Teacher Wellness Intervention, an innovative multi-tiered intervention, on the holistic wellbeing (physical, psychological, and professional wellbeing [P3]), intent to leave, and classroom quality of staff in Head Start (HS) Programs serving low-income populations. The 10-week-long tiered intervention consisted of four elements added by tier, which included a wearable fitness tracker, weekly online modules, wellness coaching, and environmental and center-level support. Early childhood teachers are widely documented to be underpaid and under-supported, resulting in the workforce vulnerable to burnout and turnover (Grant et al., 2019:305), especially for HS staff, given higher standards and job demands (Farewell et al., 2021:203). However, few interventions exist to improve their holistic wellbeing. We developed the intervention using the Prosocial Classroom Model (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009:494) and the Whole Teacher Wellbeing framework (Authors, 2020). We employed a parallel group cluster randomized control trial design (quantitative) to collect survey and direct assessments on wellbeing and observed classroom quality data. It was implemented after securing the Institutional Review Board's approval and obtaining informed consent from all participants. Data analysis from the 385 participants reveals that the intervention helped improve P3 wellbeing, particularly in teachers' psychological wellbeing. The physical wellbeing of teachers and leaders was also positively impacted. Teacher self-efficacy and classroom quality were also positively impacted across all tiers for teachers. Fewer leader impacts were observed. The findings offer implications for practice and policy to support and strengthen the early childhood workforce.

early childhood educators, teacher wellbeing, leader wellbeing, wellness intervention, classroom quality

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Wellbeing First: Innovative Strategies to Promote Early Childhood Educators' Wellbeing

Presenters:

Lieny Jeon, University of Virginia, United States

Co-authors

Amy Roberts, United States

Xiangyu Zhao, University of Virginia, United States

Sooyeon Byun, Yonsei University, South Korea

This study is designed to describe the collaborative group processing occurred in the Wellbeing First intervention, fostering staff to work together to discuss stressors specific to their workplace and bring organizational change to improve individual and organizational wellbeing. Previous studies indicate that Head Start educators face complicated challenges that undermine their wellbeing, including low wages, increased job demands, high levels of stress, depression, and burnout (Whitebook et al., 2014; Whitaker et al., 2015). Supporting the workforce wellbeing is critical in sustaining quality early childhood education systems. The Early Childhood Workforce Wellbeing Model (Gallagher & Roberts, 2022) suggests that teachers' wellbeing is dynamic, complex, and influenced by environmental factors. Therefore, efforts to improve teacher wellbeing must address changes in both individuals and organizations. Wellbeing First incorporates collaborative group processing to promote organizational changes. Using a case study approach, we qualitatively analyzed in-training group processing materials (e.g., activity sheets; session recordings) from 29 Head Start teachers and administrators in a rural county in a Mid-Atlantic state, United States. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. The data were analyzed in anonymous and aggregated forms. Preliminary analyses show that educators commonly identified communication between leadership and staff as a major stressor. Participants developed several strategies to overcome communication challenges, such as more effective and efficient use of meeting time. The findings demonstrate how researchers and practitioners could work together using collaborative group processing techniques to address workplace stressors and ultimately create conditions that will allow educators to be successful and more socially/emotionally competent.

educator wellbeing, wellbeing intervention, head start teachers, work environments, organizational wellbeing

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D11, NEW ROOM, Room 209, second floor, Edward Street Building

PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND LITERACY IN ECEC

Anne Holla Sivertsen, DMMH, Norway

Implementing Physical Education Professional Development Programs to Improve Children's Physical Fitness in New Taipei City

Presenters:

Chao-Ming Lee, National Chengchi University, Taiwan

The study aimed to implement a Cross-Preschool Professional Learning Community (CP-PLC) Program for preschool educators to improve the quality of children's gross motor activities. After the pandemic, a survey showed that children's physical fitness decreased in Taiwan. Relevant studies (Tam, 2023; Denee, 2024) found that the application of CP-PLC was highly effective in assisting with children's development and enhancing teacher professionalism. The program had been designed by the "Empowerment Model" (Short & Rinehart, 1992) in which educators could actively participate in and practice what they learned, and regularly return to the group to share their own and children's growth so that teachers could improve their teaching in gross motor activities.

The subjects were 15 New Taipei City preschool educators, also known as "seed teachers", who voluntarily participated in the program and served as leaders in facilitating the operation of the PLC in their preschools. The methodology of this research was conducted in three stages (theoretical learning, teaching tutoring, and preschool consulting) from 2022 to 2024. The researcher randomly selected 5 educators from all program applicants from each of the 3 preschool types (public, non-profit, private). The research results include: the subjects initially lacked PE professionalism; the subjects enhanced their PE professionalism obviously and actively adjusted their gross motor activities after the program; the subjects led colleagues in improving the gross motor activities-designing.

Suggestions: preschool educators should continue to improve the profession of gross motor activities; the government should increase PE relative courses in the ECEC pre-service training framework.

preschool educator, in-service training, physical education, gross motor activity, pandemic

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Early Childhood Educator Perceptions of Promoting Physical Literacy within a Canadian Context

Presenters:

Jaime Barratt, Brock University, Canada

Co-authors:

Natalie Houser, University of Saskatchewan, Canada

Gabriella Pucci, Brock University, Canada

This study presents preliminary findings from a two-phased co-design project, which aims to refine an interACTIVE storytelling resource to promote preschool children's physical literacy (PL). The current presentation describes Early Childhood Educators' (ECEs) experiences, knowledge, and practices surrounding physical literacy (PL) as a means to promote lifelong health and wellbeing in preschool children. PL is one of the World Health Organization's (WHO, 2018) strategic actions in creating active people and societies. Previous research suggests ECEs' knowledge and practices are important precursors to children's PL and adherence to movement behaviour guidelines (Belanger et al., 2018; Brown et al., 2020; Cairney et al., 2019a; Clark et al., 2022). This study is underpinned by Stokol's (1996) social ecological model, emphasizing that children's PL is influenced by factors at individual, social, physical, and institutional levels. This presentation highlights 'cognoscenti' at every level informs educators' operationalization of PL. Situated within a pragmatic paradigm, this study employed a case study approach (Leavy, 2011), and conducted

face-to-face focus group interviews with 7 preschool ECEs. Ongoing informed consent was maintained throughout the study, and pseudonyms replaced participant names to ensure confidentiality. During interviews, researchers used non-verbal cues to promote feelings of safety and trust. Preliminary findings indicate educators' current knowledge of PL and relevant practices are important to promoting children's PL, but are highly influenced by their access to resources, education (both pre- and in-service), and centre policies and curriculum. These findings suggest implications for analyzing ECEC policies and curricula to support sustained PL among children in childcare.

educator's role, centre-based childcare, physical literacy, health and wellbeing promotion, preschool children

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Professional development of the subject area of physical activity and health in Early Childhood Education and Care Children's (ECEC): Re-thinking knowledge about physical activity

Presenters:

Anne Holla Sivertsen, DMMH, Norway

Karin Kippe, DMMH, Norway

Kathrine Bjørgen, DMMH, Norway

The aim of this study is to explore Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) teachers' experiences with professional development in the context of physical activity and health within Norway. Reports from the World Health Organization (2023) and The Norwegian Directorate of Health (2019) express concern about societal changes negatively impacting children's physical activity and health. Kippe (2023) emphasizes the significance of establishing a professional learning community among ECEC teachers, fostering a shared value that places physical activity at the core of the educational environment. Senge's (2006) theory underscores the importance of personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, group learning, and systems thinking in creating a learning organization, particularly in the context of physical activity. Initiating health habits early in ECEC can prevent social differences in physical activity levels (Kippe & Lagestad, 2018), contributing to the prevention of social inequalities in health and lifestyle (WHO, 2023). This study includes semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis with ten ECEC teachers. This study is approved by the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. The findings reveals a deficiency in professional and academic knowledge post-completion of ECEC studies in the subject area. The culture and attitude among staff emerge as pivotal factors influencing children's involvement to physical activity. Competence development in attitude creation, fostering collective processes and a culture of physical activity, proves essential. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of sustainable Early Childhood Education and Care Institutions (ECECIs), informing policies and addressing issues related to professional knowledge.

early childhood education and care, health education, health sustainability, physical activity, professional development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D12, Room 225, second floor, Grand Parade building

PROFESSIONALISM FROM WITHIN: GROUND-UP APPROACHES TO EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALISM AS A RESPONSE TO POST-COVID WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Marianne Fenech, University of Sydney, Australia

In many countries, government responses to the Covid-19 pandemic accentuated the neoliberal positioning of early childhood educators as essential workers (Arndt et al., 2020; Sims et al, 2022). In turn, this positioning has undermined the professionalism of the early childhood education and care workforce, which globally is marked by significant teacher and educator shortages. Now in a post-pandemic world, this symposium invites delegates to revisit and extend on work undertaken at the 2023 Professionalism SIG on the reclaiming of early childhood professionalism. We are interested in exploring, what makes the early childhood profession "professional", and does this link to the degree of qualification? What are characteristics and knowledges that are crucial for professionals' identification? Focusing on 'professionalisation from within', what responses are needed to processes of

dequalification of the early childhood workforce that can be observed in government responses to the qualified staff shortage in many countries?

professionalism_in_early_childhood_education_and_care

Who's listening to whom: German Early Childhood professionals' collective perspectives on “good” practice and its relationship to exterior expectations

Presenters:

Antje Rothe, Catholic University of Applied Social Sciences Berlin, Germany

Since the OECD-report ‘Starting Strong’ (2006) 15 years ago, a multitude of partially controversial ideas of a 'good' professional practice has shaped the national and international ECEC landscape (Moloney et al., 2019). However, only few studies take into account how professional teams of early childhood centers define “good practice” themselves, how they deal with and how they relate to exterior expectations (e.g. Bohnsack et al. 2022; Lochner 2013, Viernickel et al., 2013). This presentation focuses on the collective visions of 'good practice' identified in the analysis. Central concepts - 'professionalism', 'professional organisations' - drawing on the Documentary Method (Bohnsack 2017, 2019) conceptualize professionalism as a implicit rationale of decision-making. Group discussions were conducted twice with German EC teams. In total, 20 group discussions are analysed by the documentary method, drawing on the praxeological sociology of knowledge (Bohnsack, 2020). The project was approved by the University ethics committee considering integrity, transparency, confidentiality and anonymity of the research process. Collective visions of 'good practice' emphasize the significance of play and imply a critical distance to dominant external political expectation tending to undertake a ‘schoolified’ perspective on learning and development in ECEC. Knowing that collective visions of 'good practice' mirror the pedagogical reality in German EC settings, the discrepancy to political expectations indicates a serious debate of a (re-)conceptualizing professionalism in ECEC including political stakeholders as well as practitioners. This paper is related to the Special Interest Group "Professionalism in ECEC".

professionalism and professionalization in ECEC, qualitative research study and group discussions, professionalism and organization, documentary method and praxeological sociology of knowledge, collective perspectives of professional ECEC teams

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Perspectives from the Field. Early Childhood Educators Attitudes Toward Establishing a Professional Body for the Early Childhood Profession in Ireland.

Presenters:

Mary Moloney, PEMI, Ireland

This paper explores attitudes and opinions toward the establishment of a professional body in Ireland. In Ireland, measures to professionalise ECEC include qualification requirements (Government of Ireland, 2016); Professional Award Criteria and Guidelines for ECEC degree programmes (DES, 2019), establishment of a Qualifications Advisory Board (QAB) (DE, 2019), Early Years Education Inspections (DES, 2016), and more recently, the establishment of career pathways (Gol, 2022). Yet, Ireland does not have a professional body, early childhood teacher registration or fitness to practice criteria. Using ecological systems theory, this paper examines the interplay between the Macro policy landscape and the Micro level experiences of Early Childhood Personnel. Combining the strengths of positivist and interpretivist approaches, this mixed-methods study utilises both qualitative (interviews) and quantitative methods (questionnaire) for data collection. The study received ethical approval from the presenter's University ethics committee considering informed consent, integrity, transparency, voluntary participation, right to withdraw, confidentiality and anonymity. Findings indicate that 99% of participants overall (n=1,247) support the establishment of a profession body for ECEC in Ireland. There is a shared belief among participants that a professional body would signal ECEC as a profession, Educators as professionals, and ultimately, professionalise the sector. Increase efforts to promote ECEC as a profession.

Provide seed funding to support the establishment of a professional body

Include professional body members at the negotiating table

professionalism, professionalization, mixed methods, collective perspectives, educators, managers and undergraduate students

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Quality early childhood education through internal or external professionalism drivers: Exploring the efficacy of professional registration for early childhood teachers in Australia

Presenters:

Marianne Fenech, University of Sydney, Australia

This study aimed to explore early childhood teachers' perceptions of the efficacy of teacher registration in Australia and as a driver of their professional practice. Globally, governments have positioned teacher quality as a policy problem that warrants increasing modes of governance (Green et al., 2017; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The auditing of teachers' work through teacher registration has emerged as one such governance mechanism (Call, 2018; Havnes, 2018; Toledo-Figueroa et al., 2017) and is indicative of a managerial approach that dictates professionalism from above (Havnes, 2018). To date, however, whether registration improves teaching quality has received limited empirical attention. From a constructionism paradigm, the study adopted a critical social policy theoretical approach (Ozga, 2021). Embracing Salomon's (1990) seminal invitation for researchers to complement a selected paradigm with epistemological approaches traditionally considered to belong outside of its parameters, we utilised a national quantitative survey to "cohabitate" (p. 16) the study's critical policy framing. To minimise coercion, participants were contacted indirectly via early childhood providers' and peak bodies' promotion of the study. Survey responses were anonymous and participants could withdraw any time, without consequence. Results showed that respondents' professional self, followed by their workplace (colleagues and employer) most influenced their professional practice. Findings problematised the need for, and benefits of, teacher registration. Implications for policy that supports teacher professionalism through an addressing of the contexts and conditions in which early childhood teachers work, and a ground-up, co-designed tool that redresses a diminution of teacher professionalism (Rothe et al., 2022), will be discussed.

teacher professionalism, teacher registration, early childhood governance, teacher quality, critical social policy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set D13, Room 229, second floor, Grand Parade building

NEW DIMENSIONS IN EARLY MATHEMATICS EDUCATION: PLAY, ASSESSMENT, AND CHILDREN'S VOICES

Anne Nakken, Queen Maud University College, Norway

In this symposium organised by the EECERA SIG 'Mathematics Birth to Eight Years' we present research that discuss different aspects of mathematics in early childhood education. The first presentation in this symposium investigates the role of intertextuality and the mathematical potentials of spontaneous pretend play. The study focuses on children's personal mathematical signs and symbols, considering how understanding of signs and their meanings are socially constructed. The second presentation discusses the potential of digital assessment, its implications for facilitating children's number sense experiences, and whether children are given equal opportunities to develop their number sense when they start school. The third presentation reports the design process for developing a survey instrument to capture the self-reported mathematics affect and experiences of 6,000 4- and 5-year-old children. The longitudinal research aims to better understand children's affect and experiences in mathematics in their first years of schooling in England.

mathematics_birth_to_eight_years

Investigating five-year-old children's number sense in early childhood education using digital tasks

Presenters:

Gunnhild Saksvik-Raanes, Queen Maud University College, Norway

This paper investigates what digital assessment tasks reveal about the number sense of 77 five-year-old children in Norwegian early childhood education (Saksvik-Raanes et al., 2023). Every day, young children make valuable mathematical experiences essential to their mathematical understanding, success in school, and quality of life (Bisanz et al., 2005; Clarke et al., 2006; Gerardi et al., 2013). However, the variation between children's mathematical experiences is large, and many teachers struggle to meet this variety when children start school (Litkowski et al., 2020). Number sense is a key area in children's mathematical experiences, operationalised here by applying the foundational number sense model (Andrews & Sayers, 2015). The current study utilises mixed methods within a pragmatic research paradigm and a design-based research methodology. Rasch analysis (Rasch, 1960) was applied to analyse children's responses on a custom digital tablet assessment. Qualitative observations of children's responses were also analysed. The study was approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research data and followed the National Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities. Results reveal that many children had higher number sense than expected by the national curriculum. Additionally, there were significant individual differences. These findings are surprising compared to previous research. Qualitative observations suggested that quantitative data alone did not capture children's interactions with tasks. The paper discusses the potential of digital assessment, its implications for facilitating children's number sense experiences in early childhood education, and whether children are given equal opportunities to develop their number sense when they start school.

number sense, assessment, mathematical experiences, mixed methods, equity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Intertextuality and the mathematical potentials of spontaneous pretend play

Presenters:

Maulfry Worthington, Vrije University, United Kingdom

This study investigates young children's personal mathematical signs and symbols, considering how understanding of signs and their meanings are socially constructed, "sign-using activity in children [...] neither simply invented nor passed down by adults" (Vygotsky, 1978, 46). This ethnographic study draws on doctoral research (Worthington, 2021), investigating the role of intertextuality in children's use and understandings of symbolic tools and mathematical thinking (Carruthers & Worthington, 2006; Worthington & van Oers, 2016; 2017; Worthington et al., 2023). It is underpinned by cultural-historical and social-semiotic theories (Vygotsky, 1978), and intertextuality (Bakhtin, 1981; Kristeva, 1980). Data were gathered in an inner-city nursery school in south-west of England, where social pretend play, graphicacy and children's mathematics are well understood. Research methods were qualitative, interrogating one case study in one nursery school, the focus on written observations of a 4-year-old and her Mathematical Graphics, the methodology interpretive. Guided by BERA's ethical research principles (2011) it includes openness and the right to withdraw. Participants were consulted and informed at every stage, all giving their voluntary informed consent. Children with an extensive graphical sign lexicons were at an advantage in communicating their mathematical thinking, and were also those who spontaneously wrote Arabic number symbols (SWANS), (Worthington, 2021). This revealed that children's sign-use develops intertextually through their interactions with more knowledgeable peers and adults. The findings underscore the need for early childhood curricula and policies to fully acknowledge the importance of graphical signs and symbols for young children's mathematical understanding, and the significance of spontaneous pretend play.

intertextuality, graphical sign lexicons, social pretend play, children's mathematical graphics, Arabic number symbols

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Researching affect and experience in early childhood mathematics: Developing a survey instrument for 4- and 5-year-olds in England

Presenters:

Catherine Gripton, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

The aim of this longitudinal research is to better understand children's affect and experiences in mathematics in their first years of schooling in England. Affect is important in mathematics learning (Hannula, 2018) and there are a range of self-report measures for beliefs, enjoyment, attitudes and anxiety in mathematics (Leder, 2019) but fewer for younger children where design is more challenging (Ganley & McGraw, 2016) and fewer connecting affect with contextual factors experienced (Goldin et al. 2016). A theoretical understanding of children being experts in childhood (Harcourt, 2011) recognises the potential of quantitative measures, that can be used at scale, to amplify young children's perspectives on early childhood mathematics. Following a critical quantitative research paradigm, this paper reports the design process for developing a survey instrument to capture the self-reported mathematics affect and experiences of 6,000 4- and 5-year-old children. Video and pictorial information sheets supported informed consent, which was negotiated with children who could withdraw at any time. The pilot with 100 children suggests it is possible to survey classes of 4- and 5-year-olds about their mathematics-related affect and experiences of learning mathematics in school. Some flexibility in question wording (to fit culture of the individual classroom) and survey administration (timing, breaks and completion window) were important in order to authentically capture children's responses. These findings suggest that the survey is ready to be used at scale with 6,000 children and that this type of quantitative large-scale study might potentially be utilised more widely in early childhood mathematics education research.

mathematics, affect, children's perspectives, research design, quantitative methods

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D14, Room 318b, third floor, Grand Parade building

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING EARLY MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT; CONSIDERATIONS FOR EDUCATORS AND PARENTS

Denise Kingston, Oxford University, United Kingdom

Early Numeracy and STEM Play & Learn for an inclusive and sustainable future

Presenters:

Ramona Mihalka, National College of Ireland, Ireland

This research presents an innovative approach to early childhood education aligned with the UN SDGs 1, 4, 10 and 11, aimed at enhancing educational outcomes in numeracy and STEM for children in disadvantaged communities. This project addresses the identified need for parental involvement and numeracy interventions (ELI 2005). Studies highlight the effects of breaks in education on children's learning (Cooper et al. (1996) and Alexander et al. (2007). Our STEM project seeks to mitigate summer learning loss. This project follows social learning and ecological systems theories (Vygotsky, 1978; Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and the action reflection cycle (McNiff and Whitehead, 2006; Bleach, 2016). Community action research focused on changing practice, understanding of practice and conditions of practice (Kemmis 2009; Bleach, 2013). Informed consent was sought prior to participation and opportunity to discuss any concerns were provided to participants. Participants were informed that they could opt out of the research at any point with no impact on programme participation. A debriefing sheet was also provided at research completion. Findings suggest that programs have been effective in improving children's developmental skills and parental confidence in supporting their children's learning. Merging early numeracy education with STEM-focused family engagement initiatives, ELI offers a comprehensive strategy to address educational disparities and promote holistic development in early childhood, thus contributing to the broader agenda of the UN SDGs. This research presents a promising model for educators and policymakers seeking evidence-based interventions to advance STEM in the early years, in line with the principles of sustainable development.

early numeracy, STEM, early child development, sustainability, inclusion

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

An exploration of lecturers' mathematical knowledge, confidence, and experience of teaching early mathematics on early childhood education and care (ECEC) degree programmes in the Republic of Ireland.

Presenters:

Sandra O'Neill, Dublin City University, Ireland

Co-authors:

Córa Gillic, Dublin City University, Ireland

Nicola O'Reilly, Dublin City University, Ireland

Margaret O'Donoghue, TU Dublin, Ireland

Julie Winget-Power, TU Dublin, Ireland

This project aimed to investigate the experiences of ECEC programme faculty delivering early mathematics on degree programmes in the Republic of Ireland (ROI). Research has shown the importance of early mathematics for later achievement (Duncan et al, 2007; Watts et al, 2014, 2018; Dunekacke et al., 2016) but mathematics content is often excluded from ECEC initial education in ROI (O'Neill, Gillic & O'Reilly, 2023). Little attention has been paid to the knowledge, confidence, and experience of ECEC lecturers pertaining to early mathematics education and the knowledge they require to 'meet the complex demands of preparing [early childhood] teachers for the 21st century' (Cochran-Smith, 2003, p.26). Using a qualitative interpretive research paradigm (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018), online questionnaires and a focus group were used to explore ECEC lecturers' knowledge, confidence, and experience in early mathematics. Consent and plain language forms were provided to all potential participants, and individual or organizational details withheld to safeguard confidentiality.

Analysis of questionnaire data indicates lecturers report high levels of confidence in their mathematical knowledge despite less than half of respondents identifying specific mathematical content included in modules. Focus group findings demonstrate that mathematics anxiety is common among lecturers and that the flexibility of curricular frameworks can inadvertently facilitate mathematics avoidance. Implications for educational policy and practice in ROI and beyond are detailed.

early mathematics, mathematics anxiety, mathematics avoidance, professional development, initial education

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Teaching Effective Early Mathematics and Understanding in Primary (TEEMUP) Schools: an EEF funded CPD intervention – what we learnt and how it was received.

Presenters:

Denise Kingston, Oxford University, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Iram Siraj, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Judith Barrett, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Edward Melhuish, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Stephanie Cottrill, N/A, United Kingdom

Stephanie Flower, Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom

1. What are the mentors' perceptions of the teachers' practice?
2. Do the teacher-participants report changes in their practice?
3. What do the teachers report as the strengths and limitations of the CPD?

CPD is the most cost-effective way to maximise workforce capacities (Charalambos & Praetorius, 2018). Most likely it is a collection of behaviours which leads to effective teaching and better mathematical performance and learning in

pupils (Muijs et al, 2018). This CPD is designed to uplift teachers' skills in maths content and pedagogy, and behaviour for learning, to improve children's outcomes, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. The CPD used the extant research literature on effective professional development techniques (Egert et al., 2018), and maths and child development knowledge, most relevant to effective understanding of how and what early mathematics is and how best to teach it (Muijs et al, 2018). Adopting a pragmatic worldview (Cresswell, 2014), the study includes mixed methods. We discuss an analysis of teachers' and mentors' perceptions of the content and delivery of the CPD, using an iterative approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006) [child level assessment data should also be available at the conference]. 61 teachers completed semi-structured questionnaires and 65 teachers joined focus groups. Consent forms were completed by all participants. Lessons were learnt about devising interventions, delivery methods and both adult and child learning. The findings may inform future CPD, and policies and practices that promote CPD. As practices included are effective with children living in disadvantage, they could support closing the gap.

continued professional development, intervention, early education, mathematics, behaviour for learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D15, Room 103, first floor, Edward Street building

APPROACHES AND PERSPECTIVES ON MULTICULTURALISM

Dan Zhu, The University of Sydney, Australia

Creating a Cultural Kaleidoscope in Turkish Preschools; Challenges and Opportunities

Presenters:

Nurper Ulkuer, Uskudar University, Turkey

Co-authors:

Elçin Babaoglu, Uskudar University, Turkey

Merve Yüksel, Uskudar University, Turkey

Seher Sav, Uskudar University, Turkey

This research aims to understand the "covered beliefs and approaches of preschool teachers" towards multiculturalism and conflict resolution. Pre-school teachers, if "sensitized" could play a facilitating role in creating such a cohesive environment (Kluczniok & Schmidt,2020) and manage conflicts of cultural diversity that affect children developmentally (Anderstaf et al.,2021). Türkiye, due to conflict in Syria, is one of the countries with the highest population of refugee children in the world (UNICEF,2016).This situation contributes to already existing multicultural characteristics of preschools, posing challenges along with opportunities to create a "kaleidoscopic" cohesive learning environment for young children (Lunn Brownlee & Ryan,2020). Based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner,1986), teacher's perspectives towards multiculturalism play a pivotal role in harmonizing children from different background and family settings (Amini,2011, Nwosu,2012). The study employes "critical incident techniques" and "focus group discussions" with the group of preschool teachers of multicultural classrooms in Istanbul. The content analysis is used to interpret the data. Ethics committee approval and informed consent are obtained, and the personally identifiable data was anonymized to ensure confidentiality. Participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. According to the "critical incident techniques", the preschool teachers have pointed to language barriers along with relative cultural differences in the classroom, and with parents. The focus group discussions will further elaborate the situation. The results of this research will be used to develop strategies and programs for enabling the education system and teachers towards creating harmonious learning and development environment for all children in Türkiye and globally.

migration, conflict resolution, cultural kaleidoscope, child development, preschool teachers

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring Preschool Teachers' Beliefs and Practices on Play in Multicultural Classrooms

Presenters:

Nazlı Berfin Yapar, Middle East Technical University, Turkey

This study aims to discover the beliefs and practices of preschool teachers for including children from diverse cultures in children's play within early childhood settings in Türkiye. Literature indicates that children from diverse backgrounds are at a higher risk of social exclusion and discrimination (Guo et al., 2019; Yanık-Özger & Akansel, 2019). However, with teachers' influence, children gradually engage in each other's games and form close friendships over time (Einardsfottir & Olafsdottir, 2023; Yanık-Özger & Kozandağı, 2021). In this regard, Vygotsky (1967) and Parten's (1932) theories emphasize play as a dynamic process integral to children's development, facilitating cognitive growth, social interaction, and cultural transmission across various stages and socio-cultural contexts. This multiple case study was conducted with three preschool teachers by collecting data through semi-structured interviews, observations, and field notes, and analyzed through thematic analysis. Ethical approval was obtained from a public university in Türkiye, and voluntary participants filled out consent forms. Pseudonyms were utilized to protect the identities. The findings reveal that preschool teachers acknowledge the significance of play in fostering children's development and demonstrate a willingness to incorporate play within multicultural classrooms through suitable strategies. Participants also emphasize play's crucial role in children's holistic development and culture's influence on their play. Moreover, they characterize multicultural classrooms as positive environments. However, they note that both positive and negative person- and context-related factors impact their multicultural play practices in children's play. These insights contribute to teacher education and professional development literature by shedding light on in-service teachers' perspectives and practices.

play, multicultural classroom, early childhood education, preschool teacher, teacher practices

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Supporting Education for All: The Role of Multicultural Creative Arts Curriculum in Addressing the Principles of Anti-bias Education

Presenters:

Dan Zhu, The University of Sydney, Australia

This qualitative, multiple-case study analyses how multicultural creative arts curriculum promotes social inclusion in EC settings. It examines how Australian ECEC teachers incorporate cultural identities and promote anti-bias education through this curriculum. It also evaluates children's perceptions of how the environment and curriculum foster diverse identities. Incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture into the ECEC creative arts curriculum underlines sociocultural influences and the need to recognise Indigenous cultures in Australian ECEC settings (Lampert et al., 2014). Bentley (2012), Guo (2017), and Nikawanti (2016) researched multicultural education to empower children with equal rights. These studies show how multicultural education applies to incorporating diverse cultural identities into the creative arts curriculum. This research uses social-ecological systems framework to investigate educational complexities, guided by a critical pedagogy framework that challenges oppressive power structures and advocates social justice (Giroux, 2020; Fielding & Moss, 2012). Sociocultural theory shows how culture affects learning, culturally responsive pedagogy promotes inclusivity, and anti-bias principles address educational biases. These frameworks inform the exploration of integrating diverse identities into the ECEC creative arts curriculum and children's perceptions of identity. This qualitative research uses ethnography and multiple-case-study methods. The research examines teachers' support for children's cultural identities in the creative arts curriculum through participant observations, focus group interviews, and pedagogical documentation review. Measures include obtaining ethical approval, informed consent, voluntary involvement, confidentiality, addressing ethical issues, permissions, and accurate data recording. Data gathering is continuing, and main findings and discussions have undetermined. The findings will help teachers celebrate children's identities, improve educational programmes, and promote an inclusive society.

early childhood teachers, multicultural creative arts curriculum, cultural identity, diversity, anti-bias education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D16, Room 104, first floor, Edward Street building

PEDAGOGIC APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES

Frances Giampapa, University of Bristol, School of Education, United Kingdom

Conceptualizing and analyzing adaptive learning support in (German) ECEC

Presenters:

Heike Wadepohl, Leibniz University Hannover, Germany

Co-authors:

Kathrin Hormann, Leibniz University Hannover/ University of Applied Sciences and Arts Hildesheim, Germany

The aim of the “Leik-adaptiv”-project is to contribute to a sharpening of the concept of early adaptive learning support and corresponding operationalizations. The talk presents an integrative theoretical and empirical based model of adaptive learning support as well as empirical results on the analysis of adaptivity in the field of science. Our work is based on studies showing that learning support in ECEC tends to be low and is associated with high demands on teachers’ skills (Egert et al., 2020). Adaptivity, i.e. the closely coordinated interplay between diagnostics and learning support in the triad of “child-teacher-subject”, is a central condition for success, but one that has hardly been investigated in ECEC, yet (Parsons et al., 2018; Hardy et al., 2019, Neuss, 2013). Based on this, model development was driven forward theoretically and in the sense of design-based research via group discussions with participating teachers. The qualitative sub-study uses video-recordings and corresponding Stimulated Recall Interviews from 15 teacher-child-interactions. Data privacy and consent forms were signed by participants; informed consent was obtained from children involved. Data is anonymised or pseudonymized. Participants can withdraw from the study at any time. The results of the sub-study show that teachers use everyday situations and analyze them spontaneously in order to plan situationally how they can proceed. There is also a "reflection in action", which is supplemented by new perspectives in the context of retrospective reflection/"action reflection". The results provide initial indications for the further development of teachers' professional skills (systematic and contingent reflection).

adaptivity, learning support, ECEC quality, teacher-child interactions, early science

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Problem-Based Learning as a method for philosophical discussion with children in kindergarten – perspectives from Norway.

Presenters:

Lill Krestin Ryland, NLA University College, Norway

The study aims to explore how Problem-Based Learning (PBL) as a method can be used in philosophical discussions with children in kindergarten. Previous research shows that PBL, as a method, has a positive impact on students (Pettersen, 2017; Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Davidson & Major, 2014; Saputra et. al 2019; Moust et, al., 2021; Bender, et. al., 2023, etc.) and children's (Diffily, 2002; Jerzembek, 2013; Gadzikowski, 2022, etc.) critical thinking and participation. This project highlights the importance of a sociocultural approach to learning situations (Vygotsky, 1987), critical thinking in education (Dewey, 1938) children's participation and involvement (Pramling, 1996; Johansson, 2003; Børresen& Malmhøst, 2008). The study is based on an ontological approach with a qualitative design. Observation and philosophical conversation with children will be used as data materials. The study will be based on the outline by the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (SIKT) I will inform and obtain informed consent from parents and inform them that they can withdraw at any time. The material will be anonymized and cannot be traced. The project will start in the autumn of 2024 and the findings are planned to be structured into 2 approaches: PBL as a method and philosophical conversations, both based on work with young children in kindergarten. The research will have an impact on the development of children's critical thinking and participation. In addition it will stimulate kindergarten staff to seek answers to questions together with the children.

early childhood education and care, problem-based learning (PBL), philosophical discussions, critical thinking, children's participation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Pedagogical strategies for the development of metacognitive monitoring and control in children aged 5 to 7 years: implicit vs explicit

Presenters:

Jelena Vildziuniene, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Ona Monkeviciene, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Birute Vityte, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

The study aims to demonstrate the impact of implicit and explicit preschool education strategies on the development of metacognitive monitoring and control in children aged 5–7 years. Research findings in this field are varied and call for further investigation and discussion. Some studies show the effectiveness of explicit strategies based on modelling, demonstration, and interpretation of monitoring and control (Muijs & Bokhove, 2020), while others demonstrate the benefits of implicit strategies based on experiential, creative construction of metacognitive skills (James et al., 2021). Our study, intending to obtain new data on these strategies, was based on the constructivist (Piaget, 1950) and sociocultural (Vygotsky, 1978) theories. A quantitative research approach was used. By recording videos of the educational process, we observed how children developed monitoring and control skills when teachers applied implicit or explicit pedagogical strategies. The study involved 31 educators and 383 children. The videos were transcribed, coded, and transformed into anonymised statistical data. Quantitative methods were used to analyse them: descriptive analysis, Student's t-test, Cohen's d method. The study was approved by the University's Ethics Commission. All parents were informed about the study and consented in writing. They could withdraw from the study at any time. The study revealed, with statistical significance, that implicit pedagogical strategies led to more cases of construction, co-construction, and shared construction of metacognitive monitoring and control in children. This shows that metacognitive self-regulation development requires teachers to model the educational context in a way that is open to children's initiative, ideas and interactions.

early childhood education, metacognitive monitoring and control, teaching, implicit strategy, explicit strategy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set D17, Room 105, first floor, Edward Street building

SUSTAINABILITY IN ECE – NATURE AND THE LOCAL OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT

Sue Elliott, University of New England, Australia

In this Sustainability SIG Symposium 4, we bring together perspectives from Norway, Australia and Portugal about the intersections between sustainability, nature and local outdoor environments. Research with teachers is a common thread among these papers, whether exploring teachers' awareness about air pollution impacts for children outdoors, investigating sustainability in nature play settings or potentially transforming teachers' relationships with the natural-cultural world. A range of quantitative and qualitative methods demonstrate the potential for engaging with teachers from more traditional questionnaires, surveys and focus groups to communities of practice, cartographies and narratives. In this symposium, we provoke deeper thinking and practice about early childhood education in outdoor environments alongside the dimensions of sustainability.

sustainability_early_childhood_education

Searching for sustainability in Australian nature play programs: A policy-practice gap

Presenters:

Sue Elliott, University of New England, Australia

Co-authors:

Fran Hughes, University of New England, Australia

Jo Bird, University of New England, Australia

The research aim was to examine early childhood immersive nature play programs (INPPs) in New South Wales, Australia inclusive of educator perceptions around sustainability. A nexus between nature play and education for sustainability has previously been described (Hughes et al., 2021). The Australian curriculum policy (AGDE, 2022) update now mandates a multi-dimensional sustainability principle be implemented across all early childhood services including INPPs. Contextually relevant research is needed to inform practice. The theoretical framework of social constructionism (Crotty, 1998) informed the chosen methodology. A mixed methods approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) draws upon the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research and considers several data types to inform the project. The intent was to employ an explanatory, sequential design where the quantitative survey data findings informed the qualitative focus group interviews and further analysis. Ethical protocols were followed including participant consent, an anonymous survey and self-nominated focus group participation. Participant Information Sheets outlined the research methods and data usage. Inclusion/exclusion criteria for focus group participants were followed and ethics approval granted by the University of New England. The data verified anecdotal evidence of increasing educator interest in INPPs across NSW with diverse programs offered. The participating educators offered limited, but varied insights about sustainability in INPPs demonstrating a policy-practice gap. A policy update requires the upskilling of educators, particularly when a new principle, such as sustainability is mandated. INPPs offer dynamic settings for engaging in sustainability with children, we argue for resourcing, training and support for educators.

sustainability, curriculum, nature play, Australia, mixed methods

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Becoming-with in the natural-cultural world: narratives of the Outgoing Community of practice

Presenters:

Maria Assunção Folque, Universidade de Évora, Portugal

Co-authors:

Ilhéu Maria, University of Évora - MED, Portugal

Almeida Tiago, ESELx, IPL-CIE & ISPA, IU, Portugal

This qualitative study aims to discuss how outdoor practices with children and ECE teachers may transform their relation with the natural-cultural world. This study is part of the OutGoing project (Rasteiro et. al. 2023), a Community of Practice (CoP) of academics, teachers, and children searching for new ways of thinking, feeling and acting through outdoor experiences in ECE contexts. The theoretical framework of this study is anchored in the critical pedagogy using concepts such as Worlding, Becoming-with and Response-ability (Harraway, 2016). In a qualitative paradigm, this study analyses the teachers' practices with children using cartography (Almeida & Costa, 2021) and delicate empiricism (Ilhéu & Valente, 2019) in outdoor 'selected' places; it uses teachers' narratives and mini-stories produced throughout the OutGoing CoP as a way of listening to children and teachers. Participants' initial informed consent was followed by negotiated participation during the research process, allowing withdrawing from the study without a sense of failure. Results suggest that: 1) the teachers' participation in the CoP contribute to a supportive way to introduce new practices; 2) Cartographies and delicate empiricism are two possible approaches to create time and space in ECE where children and adults reshape their interactions with the natural-cultural world; 3) mini-histories supported the emergence of children and teachers' narratives about the world. Results may inspire new practices and meanings in education for sustainability and impact policy recommendations that provide the conditions to strengthen children's and teachers in their relationship with the nature-cultural world. Project Funded by FCT UIDB/04312/2020

ECEfs, cartography, delicate empirism, teachers' practices, community of practice

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Urban kindergartens and air quality – how can awareness be used to develop children’s understanding of their urban environment

Presenters:

Barbara Maria Sageidet, University of Stavanger, Department of Early Childhood Education, Norway

Co-authors

Todor Milkov Kesarovski, University of Stavanger, Norway

Petar Zhivkov, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Department of Information Technology and Communication, Bulgaria

Globally, children increasingly grow up in urban environments. This chapter explores how to promote children’s initial understanding of their intertwined urban environment. International research report challenges for citizens to use urban outdoor areas for recreation, due to concerns about air quality and pollution (Rehwagen et al., 1999). This study builds on theory related to sustainability and global citizenship (Sageidet & Heggen, 2021) to further explore how to develop children’s experience, knowledge, and participation as citizens in their urban environment. Within a sociocultural paradigm, this qualitative study explores the literature in addition to some kindergarten teachers’ and leaders’ answers to a qualitative questionnaire (Beckett & Clegg, 2007), regarding their awareness of, and knowledge about the air quality in the vicinity of their kindergartens in Stavanger. The informants were also asked if daily air quality variations may have consequences for their outdoor activities with the children, and how they may communicate on air quality with the children. The answers were analyzed, considering local air quality measurement data, and literature on air quality, health, sustainability, and environmental citizenship. Ethics include the confidentiality of all answers, and no questions or relations to any specific health issues of any children or adults in the kindergartens. The study reveals untapped potentials in kindergarten teachers’ and leaders’ awareness of and knowledge about local air quality, and regarding their communication about this issue with the children. The study may increase both adult’s and children’s initial understandings of interrelationships between air quality, sustainability, health, and technology.

urban childhood, air quality, kindergarten, sustainability, Norway

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D18, Room 211, second floor, Edward Street building

LEARNING THROUGH OBJECT AND BLOCK PLAY

Takayo Sugimoto, Aichi University, Japan

SIG Rethinking Play: Development in object-oriented play

Presenters:

Annerieke Boland, University of Applied Sciences - iPabo Amsterdam, Netherlands

This study investigates children during object-oriented play, identifies fundamental characteristics of physical manipulation, explores the developmental trajectory of these behaviors, and provides practical insights for educators based on systematic observations and qualitative analyses. By conducting a detailed observational analysis, it extends existing research on object-oriented play (e.g. Fanning et al., 2021; Orr, 2020), contributing nuanced insights into the developmental progression of children's interactions with objects. Grounded in Piaget and Vygotsky's theories, highlighting the importance of object-oriented play in child development, the study also incorporates contemporary research by van Oers (2010) and Authors (2021), recognizing object-oriented play as a natural, universal phenomenon progressing through sensory motor exploration, physical manipulation, and mental manipulation phases. Adopting a developmental paradigm, we employed a cohort sequential design, systematically observing 96 children aged two to five years, during play sessions at daycare or school. The methods included parental questionnaires, non-verbal IQ tests, and video recordings, coded using ATLAS.ti. The analyses were

conducted using R. Informed consent was obtained from all parents, and children's comfort was monitored, with no imposed risks. Distinct developmental phases were identified, revealing children's progression from sensory motor exploration to physical manipulation and preliminary engagement in mental manipulation. Physical manipulation exhibited two categories, organizing objects based on characteristics and utilizing object according to their functionality. These findings offer practical implications for educators by enhancing their ability to observe and understand the nuances of children's object-oriented play, enabling more targeted guidance to support cognitive and social development during this critical developmental phase.

object-oriented play, observational study, child-development, sensory motor exploration, physical manipulation

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Child-Friendly Recycled Toy-Blocks and Young Children's Cognitive and Social Development

Presenters:

Takayo Sugimoto, Aichi University, Japan

Co-authors:

Ako Nakagawa, Wakei Nursery School and Aichi University, Japan

Yumi Higashi, Wakei Nursery School, Japan

Tomoko Hisada, Wakei Nursery School, Japan

Our study investigated how recycled toys enrich young children's play environment and their cognitive/ social development. Specifically, we introduce recycled toy-blocks(henceforth, RTBs) loved by children in Japanese ECEC centers. They are slab-like blocks that young children can enjoy playing with throughout their early years. We aimed to explore how young children's RTB play develop through everyday experiences; what the young children learn through their peer interactions using the toys. In Japanese ECEC settings, children encounter a huge variety of hand-made toys made of natural resources such as woods and bamboos while some are recycled from everyday domestic wastes. The ECEC professionals traditionally value the plasticity of children's toys (Nakagawa, 2015). Japanese ECEC teachers are skilled at creating toys through recycling wastes, which are of educational value (Tsujitani, 2022). Following the Mosaic Approach(Clark&Moss, 2013), we examined toddlers' plays and their play intents. We conducted 1) natural observations of toddlers' RTB plays for 12 months followed by 2) individual interviews at 2 year olds. We obtained a written consent from the parents of the children participated in the study. Toddlers, scaffolded by their teachers, first enjoy physical plays with RTBs. Then they start enjoying pretend plays and inventing their unique applications. They also used the RTBs to express and recover from their negative emotional states. When the toddlers play RTBs with 4-5 year olds, they enjoy collaborative plays creating a real-life-sized environment. We conclude that RTBs are responsive to children's play intent and enjoyable among children with different age groups and cultural backgrounds.

recycled toy-blocks, development of pretend plays, cross-sectional observation studies, interview, teachers' scaffolding

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Playing with Purpose: A Case Study on Integrating Block Play and Loose Parts Play to Enhance Kindergarten Learning.

Presenters:

Susanna Azzopardi, Institute for Education, Malta, Malta

This research attempts to investigate the impact of integrating block play and loose parts play in kindergarten classrooms, specifically targeting children aged 3 to 5 years old. It aims to contribute valuable insights into the effective use of block and loose parts play in Kindergarten education, incorporating the Froebelian principle of 'freedom with guidance'. Research has shown that the best way for practitioners to support children is by observing

their play from a distance and allowing them space to negotiate their experiences without intervention (Otsuka & Jay, 2016). The study is based on Froebelian principles (Tovey, 2017), with a focus on providing children with freedom and guidance. Adults play a crucial role in conceptualising these nuances (Casey & Robertson, 2019) by offering children opportunities to play and explore while guiding them sensitively and respectfully. Block play does not come naturally and requires an adult to act as a catalyst (Bruce, 1992). When loose parts are added to blocks, children become increasingly fascinated, and their imagination and symbolic thinking are stimulated (Campbell, 2019; Whinnett, 2020). Using a qualitative approach, the researcher will conduct a case study in collaboration with a single school through focus groups and observations to explore educators' knowledge and implementation strategies and their impact on children's learning. Ethical considerations have been considered by obtaining informed consent from all participants, including children who will be observed during play. The findings may inform educators about the benefits of incorporating such methods. These will ultimately promote enriched early childhood learning experiences.

block play, loose parts, freedom with guidance, learning through play, educator's role

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D19, Room 304, third floor, Edward Street building

UNDERSTANDING SYSTEMIC INFLUENCES ON ECEC

Helen Simmons, University of Northampton, United Kingdom

Making the Invisible Visible: Exploring the field of tensions between individual commitment and system requirements in Early Childhood Teacher Education (ECTE)

Presenters:

Dagmar Cejka, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL), Norway

Co-authors:

Annette Furnes, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL), Norway

The aim of this inquiry is to explore collective practices for teacher educators working for early childhood teacher education in Norway, regardless of their position. The Quality Reform in Higher Education in Norway, describes quality work as «a management responsibility» that «requires stronger management structures» (White Paper No. 27, 2000–2001, section 1.3.5). The teacher educator is no longer the hub of the students' learning, but the "institution", "organization" or "structure" is (Foss 2023). This study is part of the project Making the Invisible in Teacher Education Visible (MITED) (Snow et al., 2023). It builds on a systemic approach (activity theory) where daily work is seen as activities in an activity system (Engström, 1999). Our paradigmatic position stems from ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019), where human behaviour is understood through their practices in a social and cultural community. Methodologic approach is collaborative autoethnography (CAE) (Chang et al. 2012). Our material for analysis consists of qualitative data as Slice protocol, flip-grip videos, interviews, and other documents. As it comes to ethical considerations, all participants have been informed about the research and agreed to participate. All data have been anonymized. no private information has been collected. The national ethical review (SIKT) has approved the application. Educators' perceptions of quality work are compared to perceptions of quality expressed in policy documents. Preliminary findings suggest tensions in how different stakeholders conceptualize 'quality', for instance as formalized reporting. Greater clarity in the different parts of quality work, and opportunities to influence, may lead to more sustainable practices.

activity theory, collaborative autoethnography, quality in early childhood education, early childhood teacher educators, professional development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Early Intervention- blessing or curse? Kindergarten teachers perspectives on professionalism in EI settings

Presenters:

Stine Vik, University of Stavanger, Norway

This ongoing study aims to develop knowledge on how kindergarten teachers perceive their professional role working with Early Intervention strategies. Early Intervention programs and evaluation tools used to assess children's academic and social skills has increased over the last 20 years in Norwegian kindergartens. This trend is however being debated (Løvlie 2013; Vik 2018, 2022; Pettersvoll og Østrem 2012, 2019). A problematic consequence of this program-oriented focus is according to Pettersvold & Østrem (2019) that preschool teacher professionalism is deteriorated. The theoretical framework for this study draws upon Biestas' (2011,2013) comparative analysis of how the Continental Pädagogik-tradition and the Anglo-American Education-tradition have emerged in two distinctively different disciplines and that professionalism is regarded differently within the two traditions. The study will be conducted within a qualitative, discursive research paradigm (Kvale & Brinkman 2012), where 10 kindergarten teachers are being interviewed. The analysis will be conducted using discourse analytical concepts (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Fairclough 1992). A consent form and information sheet will be provided to all participants. Pseudonyms will replace the names of participants. Participants are given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The study will get approval from the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. As this is an ongoing study where the data is still under collection there are no preliminary findings yet. The findings of this study might give more in-depth understanding on kindergarten teachers professionalism that can inform both teacher educators and policy makers in the field.

early intervention in kindergarten, kindergarten teachers, discourses of early intervention, professionalism, qualitative interviews

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Advocating for Early Childhood Studies: A Participatory Action Research Project

Presenters:

Helen Simmons, University of Northampton, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Jennifer Robson, University of East London, United Kingdom

Emma Twigg, University of Derby, United Kingdom

Charlotte Jones, University of Warwick, United Kingdom

This project, from the ECSDN Policy, Lobbying, Advocacy Strategy Group, aims to showcase Early Childhood Studies (ECS) student and alumni professional journeys and celebrate the core values of ECS degrees. The research also aims to build alliances with organisations who share a commitment to improving the status of and workforce conditions for those working in ECEC. This research aligns with the strategy group aims, expertise and scholarly activity relating to multiple aspects of student identity and their experiences on ECS Degrees (Jones & Strisino, 2021; Tang, 2022; Owen & Simmons, 2023). The project is underpinned by the theoretical and conceptual framework of Robson and LeVoguer (2024) 'reflections on professionalism and voice'; in the application of their three strands 1. Political Voices, 2. Professional Voices, 3. Connecting Voices. This qualitative action research project (Yee, 2007) includes consultation, obtaining ethical approval, developing resources, data collection (using surveys and focus group interviews) and evaluation. Ethical approval will be obtained by associated Universities of the Principal Investigators. Ethical Codes of Conduct from those Universities and ethical guidelines (BERA 2018; EECERA 2015) regarding consent, right to withdraw and anonymity will be followed. Initial consultation findings show a shared commitment to advocating for an empowered early childhood graduate led workforce. To support the visibility and sustainability of degrees, a series of resources including podcasts, case studies, blogs and student activities have been developed. The research will be shared with HEIs, wider organisations and government bodies to inform the development of early childhood workforce policy and practice.

policy, lobbying, advocacy, graduate, student

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D20, Room 305, third floor, Edward Street building

THE EXPERIENCES OF CHILDMINDERS AND FAMILY DAY CARE PRACTITIONERS

Ester Catucci, UKK Mälardalens university, Sweden

Pedagogical leadership for sustainable early childhood education

Presenters:

Ester Catucci, UKK Mälardalens university, Sweden

Pernilla Kallberg, UKK Mälardalens university, Sweden

Anne Lillvist, UKK Mälardalens university, Sweden

The study aims to examine child minders' attitudes towards pedagogical leadership (PL) in the Swedish early childhood education (ECE) context. PL is crucial for high-quality sustainable educational practices (O'Sullivan & Sakr, 2022). However, Cervantes and Öqvist (2021) note a mismatch between the increased pedagogical responsibilities of preschool teachers and the lack of role redefinition, leading to child minders' resistance to teacher leadership and preference for non-hierarchical responsibility sharing. Similarly, Skånfors and Ungerberg (2023) highlight the challenge of altering the traditional division of pedagogical tasks. These results underscore the need for more research on the understanding of PL in ECE settings, particularly its co-construction, an aspect less explored (Brooker et al., 2021). The conceptual framework is constructionist, viewing PL as a product of relational interplay and individual beliefs and attitudes (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). The study uses a quantitative approach, employing online survey informed by previous research. Child minders and their attitudes towards PL will be analysed using descriptive and person-based analyses. Adhering to Swedish ethical guidelines (Swedish research council, 2017), participants will receive information for informed consent, including rights to withdraw and GDPR/privacy detail. Data will be pseudonymized and all results will be presented on an aggregated level. Profiles of co-construction leadership attitudes among childminders will be presented in relation to background factors such as years of experience and organisational dimensions within ECE. This research enriches understanding of PL as a collaborative process in teamwork and provides insights into the attitudes of key stakeholders of ECE workforce in Sweden.

child minders, attitudes, pedagogical leadership, sustainable education, online survey

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Learning from an EU-funded learning partnership: Enhancing Quality in Family Day Care

Presenters:

Liz Kerrins, Early Childhood Ireland, Ireland

Grethe Kragh-Müller, Aarhus University, Denmark

Co-authors:

Carmel Ward, early childhood ireland, Ireland

The aim of the Enhancing Quality in Family Day Care (QualFDC) project was to extend research, practice, and policy through peer learning and exchanging practices on family day care in Belgium (Flanders), Denmark and Ireland. The quality of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is dependent on the professionalism, competence and commitment of staff, and although family day care is incorporated into ECEC definitions (European Commission, 2021), it remains an invisible field in research and policy, with limited transnational cooperation. The QualFDC utilised the Critical Path Method (Leargas Handbook, 2020), which was adapted to suit the specific needs of this project. QualFDC was a qualitative peer learning project funded by Erasmus+. Methods included Learning, Teaching

and Training Activities (LTTAs) in Belgium, Denmark, and Ireland. LTTAs included visits to centres and childminding settings, and discussions with policymakers and stakeholders concerned with family day care. Country profile and reflection reports were developed from each LTTA, culminating in one overarching report. Exchanges between participants were underpinned by EECERAs ethics of respect for people and contextual differences; histories, cultures and laws (Bertram et al. 2015). The project learnings offer conditions for achieving high-quality family day care: the recognition of services, the importance of adult-child ratios, the need for a qualified and supported workforce, and a competent system, which demands political will. The broadened knowledge gained from this comparative project could help the cognoscenti (stakeholders and policy makers) enhance quality in family day care in Ireland, Denmark and Flanders, and within the EU more widely.

quality, comparative, transnational cooperation, peer learning, exchanging practice

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Mind the Childminders - exploring childminders' experiences with an evidence-based child language development programme

Presenters:

Iulia Moisi, National Literacy Trust, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Kirsty Cunnington, National Literacy Trust, United Kingdom

The aim of this presentation is to spotlight childminders' experiences with Early Words Together, an evidence-based language development programme for children. Childminders are key actors across England's early years provision (Otero & Melhuish, 2015). At the same time, evidence-based programmes aimed at supporting children's early language are usually targeted at practitioners working in the maintained sector or at parents and the home learning environment, with fewer programmes directed at non-familial carers working outside early years settings (Land, 2002; Papatheodorou & Luff, 2023). We aimed to expand existing knowledge on childminders' experiences with evidence-based professional development training in the area. The study is broadly underpinned by theories of learning in the early years, by Vygotsky's (1987) socio-cultural theory and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological system theory. This research was conducted within a qualitative interpretive paradigm supplemented by a positivist one (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Data was thematically analysed within a phenomenological hermeneutical approach, supplemented with quantitative survey data. All participants received an information sheet and a consent form, and they were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any point. Numerical identifiers replaced the names of participants. Childminders' experiences were varied but overwhelmingly positive. Key recurrent themes across their experiences include learning and discovery, and adaptability. These findings expand our knowledge about what works for childminders in terms of continued professional development to support children's language development. They also contribute to the evidence base around supporting and engaging with parents through childminders and can serve to inform future programme development.

childminders, early language development, evidence-based programme, childminder provision quality, gaps in ECEC professional development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set D21, Room 307, third floor, Edward Street building

EXPLORING FRAMEWORKS THAT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATOR EFFICACY, AND RETENTION WITHIN PRACTICE PLACEMENTS AND THE WORKPLACE

Laura Doan, Thompson Rivers University, Canada

These three papers discuss research that was conducted in three countries: Ireland, England, and Canada. We look at what conditions are necessary to enable and sustain the growth of professional identity development and educator efficacy, as well as the retention of early childhood educators. The first paper explores the factors that benefit and

constrain the placement experience in student educators. The second paper researches the impact of a CoP involving students, placements, and university placement staff. The third paper explores the impact of a province-wide CoP program for students and new and experienced educators, in the workforce. The three research studies utilize a variety of research methods, including online surveys, focus groups, and interviews. All three papers provide examples of frameworks for supporting students in placement, to post-graduation as they navigate complex work. There are implications for both policy and practice.

Facilitating Reflection and Dialogue Across Borders: Establishing a Community of Practice (CoP) to enhance early years placement experience in Ireland.

Presenters:

Alison Moore, University College Cork, Ireland

Catriona Rogers, Stranmillis University, United Kingdom

Paula Carlin, Stranmillis University, United Kingdom

The project aims to create CoPs between undergraduate Early Childhood Studies programmes in HEI institutions in the North and South of Ireland to consider: How might a Communities of Practice Model [CoPs] facilitate the creation of a shared vision, developing evidence-based professional practice placement, ensuring an enriched, engaged and positive experience for the students? Research exploring Placement [Holman and Richardson, 2020] and the fusion of theory and practice using a CoP model [Moore and Towler, 2022] identifies communication between students, placements and college staff is significant in the placement experience. Our research advocates for cross-border collaboration focused on relationships and respectful interactions, positioned within a theoretical framework of 'situated learning' (Laver and Wenger, 1991). We have applied a praxiological paradigm (Pascal and Bertram, 2012) built on mutual respect. Pre and post placement student questionnaires provide the basis for discussion at Cross-Border and local level CoPs. Ethical approval was granted by UCC and the EECERA Code of Ethics was applied (Bertram et al, 2015). Positionality and power were considered, ensuring students' participation in the research was voluntary, emphasizing the right to withdraw. A high-level of satisfaction of practice placement has been reported by students from across both institutions. Student, staff, and placement provider feedback will provide the basis for the discussion and will inform future practice. Findings address the dearth of research on placement experiences from across the two jurisdictions, influencing policy and practice to improve the provision of quality placement experience for students, placement providers and HEIs.

early childhood studies, placement, higher education, cross-border collaborations, communities of practice

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

“they’ve seen me” – Practice Architectures enabling and constraining the relational value in Early Childhood Studies students’ placement

Presenters:

Vina Patel, Birmingham City University, United Kingdom

Part of this study aims to explore factors benefiting and constraining placement experience in shaping student professional learning. It is being researched at a time when the sustainability of a strong workforce is fragile (Early Years Workforce Commission, 2020). This research builds on the investigation of professional identity (Murray 2013; Dickerson and Trodd 2020; and Lightfoot and Frost 2015). It extends on the inquiry of placement (Holman and Richardson 2020; Maynard et al 2014; and Richardson et al., 2022). The Theory of Practice Architecture (Kemmis 2022) provides a framework to establish ingredients helping and hindering arrangements in supporting placement. This study will adopt a qualitative paradigm and draw on interpretivism. A phenomenological case study methodology has been selected. An online survey, focus groups, semi-structured interviews and portraits will be employed. Social justice will be considered in my research. I will aim to gather a range of voices including those who are marginalised (Farrimond 2012). Pseudonyms will protect anonymity of participants and data will be stored on the institution OneDrive. Participants have the right to withdraw, and consent will be gained. This research will seek to gain perspectives from tutors, students and placement mentors. There will be a focus on the arrangements within

the Theory of Practice Architecture (Kemmis, 2022) and how connecting and relational factors enable and constrain placement. This research will be of interest to other institutions delivering courses where placement and the development of professional identity are pertinent.

placement, professional identity, practice architecture, connecting, students

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Supporting educator efficacy, wellbeing, and retention through a peer mentoring program

Presenters:

Laura Doan, Thompson Rivers University, Canada

This three-year inquiry aims to uncover effective strategies for increasing educator efficacy, professional identity development, and retention rates. This is an upscaling of a previous program and involves 300 early childhood educators and 42 facilitators in 32 communities of practice (CoP), in British Columbia, Canada. Research has shown that educators who took part in a peer mentoring CoP develop professional friendships, learn and reflect together, and have increased educator efficacy (Doan, 2022). The research draws upon adult learning theory (Knowles et. al, 2012), educator efficacy (Bandura, 1993), and learning within CoPs (Wenger, 1998). In this framework educators are positioned as knowing, having expertise and agency, which “shifts dominant narratives of early childhood educators” (ECEBC, 2022). The research was framed within a pragmatic paradigm (Biesta, 2010) and was conducted within a mixed methods methodology (Johnson et. al, 2007). Data included weekly reflections, focus groups, and an online survey. The analysis was conducted using NVivo, which helped to identify key themes. Descriptive statistics were also used. The Canadian Tri-Council Ethical Conduct (Government of Canada, 2014) was followed. A consent form and information letter were given to all participants. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study. The findings demonstrate that participation in a peer mentoring CoP enables educators to increase their professional identity, educator efficacy, sense of wellbeing, and their retention. These findings suggest implications for how peer mentoring within a CoP can be used to support educator efficacy and retention.

peer mentoring, communities of practice, educator efficacy, professional identity development, induction

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D22, Room 308, third floor, Edward Street building

INTERNATIONAL MEANS OF EVALUATING, ASSESSING AND MONITORING SYSTEMS

Eliana M Bhering, Fundação Carlos Chagas, Brazil

Defining, selecting, and using quality indicators for national ECEC evaluation in Italy, Korea, Mexico and New Zealand

Presenters:

Cristina Stringher, INVALSI, Italy

Sandra Collins, Educational Review Office, New Zealand

Co-authors:

Hugo Armando Brito Rivera, Autonomous University of Iztapalapa Mexico City, Mexico

Mugyeong Moon, Korea Institute of Child Care and Education (KICCE), South Korea

Our study aims to explore ways to identify, select and use quality indicators for national ECEC evaluation and highlights common and distinctive quality features in four countries. ECEC quality is multidimensional (Anders, 2015) and various components are to be monitored (EU Commission, 2022; 2023; OECD, 2015), yet scant literature exists on decisions needed to operationalize quality for optimal children’s outcomes. Quality dimensions include child

outcomes assessment, program monitoring and settings evaluation (McLean and colleagues, 2022). Pascal and Bertram (2016) conceived a participatory evaluation framework, with a three-dimensional approach to quality improvement, including pedagogic context, processes, and outcomes, useful for international comparisons. In this vein, our study used a qualitative peer learning activity (PLA) (Pisano & Berger, 2016) within a sociocultural approach (Rogoff, 2003) to share contents of four countries' national indicators for ECEC evaluation available in official documents, subject to content analysis within a phenomenological approach. This research is based on each country's public documents concerning ECEC evaluation, therefore ethical consideration has been given to ensuring fair representation of each country's evaluation policies and practices to avoid bias. Results show that common areas are process indicators and suggest selecting indicators that are context-specific and aligned to national curricula. Understanding ECEC effectiveness requires child outcomes measurement aligned to process quality, yet countries seem to be at different stages in including outcomes in their evaluations. Implications point to the need to balance quality definition and operationalization based upon the science of child development and upon contextual values shared among key country stakeholders.

quality indicators, internal and external evaluation, processes, national contexts, children's learning and developmental outcomes

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Assessing ECE context quality in Brazil: a study about daily routine and pedagogical processes

Presenters:

Eliana M Bhering, Fundação Carlos Chagas, Brazil

Marisa Vasconcelos Ferreira, Fundação Carlos Chagas, Brazil

Co-authors:

Rebelo Aline, UDESC, Brazil

Pucci Mariama, Secretaria Municipal de Educação de São Paulo, Brazil

This research aims to assess ECE classrooms daily routine focusing on teachers' practices and children's participation. Recently the Brazilian Ministry of Education (MEC) implemented a national monitoring strategy to gather information about ECE infrastructure and resources. Nevertheless, there still is a lack of data concerning ECE processes, since only few assessment research projects and articles were developed and published in the country. ECE quality studies have mainly focused on institutional self-assessment. Literature (Campos et al, 2021) indicates that assessing context quality (Brazil, 2009, 2017) may be insightful at this point; shows that ECE policy informs on what basis ECE centres should work from, suggesting that quality relates to how well policies are implemented. Further, it highlights its positive effects on young children's development and learning. The observational study involved 38 centres, 111 classrooms in three cities in São Paulo. The instrument was used by trained researchers in order to register the presence of resources for children, teachers and activities, children's level of participation, teachers-children interactions, adults' listening practices and group organization. All participants were informed about the research procedures and the anonymity aspect to it. The main findings indicate that ECE centres/classrooms are well equipped, children actively participate and interact with each other and with adults, but teachers' practices still seem to lean more towards care rather than to pedagogical processes. This may be showing an urgent need for more research and improvement through more effective pedagogical guidance and teachers continuing education so as to guarantee children's rights.

Brazilian ECE , ECE quality context, pedagogical practices, ECE quality assessment, effective pedagogical guidance

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D23, Room 309, third floor, Edward Street building

WELLBEING, LOVE AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRACTITIONER AND CHILD

Alannah Dore, Federation University, Australia

Young children's perspectives of social-emotional wellbeing: A co-designed methodology for interviewing preschoolers in Early Childhood Education settings

Presenters:

Penny Levickis, University of Melbourne, Australia

Co-authors:

Laura McFarland, University of Melbourne, Australia

Lisa Murray, University of Melbourne, Australia

Lynn Lee-Pang, University of Melbourne, Australia

This study aimed to investigate children's understandings of social-emotional wellbeing in early childhood education (ECE) settings. Child wellbeing is a complex construct with varying interpretations in different contexts (Minkinen, 2013). While the importance of child wellbeing is undisputed, less is known about child wellbeing from children's perspectives. To monitor and promote child wellbeing, understanding children's subjective experiences of wellbeing is essential. This study builds on research and policy underscoring children's rights to be heard (ECA, 2016) and the need for research methods that promote children's agency, including continuous assent-seeking (Sun et al., 2023). A social ecological model was employed to conceptualise children's social-emotional wellbeing, emphasizing the significance of surrounding networks in safeguarding their welfare, preserving their agency, and fostering optimal development (UN Children Fund, 2022). Using a child-centred, constructivist approach, we adopted a 'draw and tell' methodology to capture children's voices, refining the methodology via codesign focus groups with ECE professionals. Nineteen children aged 4-5 years took part in interviews at their ECE settings to explore their experiences of wellbeing. Ethics approval was obtained, including child initial and ongoing assent processes. Reflexive thematic analysis was used to generate key themes including: the role of agency and play, and contributions of peer and family relationships to children's understandings of wellbeing. Using research methods that empower children to share their perspectives can generate new insights into the support needs for children's social-emotional wellbeing in ECE settings, which may, in turn, guide the development and refinement of more nuanced self-report tools and measures.

social-emotional wellbeing, children's voice, qualitative research, codesign, child-centred

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

How do teachers show an infant they are 'worthy of love?': Identifying the key characteristics of love in teachers' practices in group care settings in Aotearoa New Zealand

Presenters:

Andrea Delaune, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

This 6-week study identifies key characteristics of love in practice by teachers of infants in group-care settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. As a contentious term in education (Aslanian, 2015), love is realising new possibilities through 'professional love' (Page, 2018) leading a resurgence in talking about love in ECE (Delaune & Surtees, 2023; Morris, 2020; Warren, 2020). The theoretical framework stems from Iris Murdoch's notion of askesis, or 'lived philosophy' (Murdoch, 1998), which posits that conceptualisations of moral concepts, such as love, are deepened by those involved in its practice. Aligned with Murdoch's assertion that moral concepts are extant, this research is situated within a post-positivist paradigm, and a grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 2017). 16 infant teachers' practices were video-recorded for 3-5 days, reviewed by the teachers who self-selected 5 video snippets, then shared at video-stimulated recall interviews with the researcher. Inductive thematic analysis of the interview data led to the identification of a set of key characteristics of love in infant practice. Only teachers and parents of infants, who were informed by information sheets and agreed by signing consent forms, are included in the video data shared in the presentation. Although given the option, no participants withdrew from the study. All key characteristics are identified in this presentation, but the main focus is on the dimension of time to enhance feelings

of love in practice for infants. The findings suggest implications for curricular and regulatory review to enhance environmental conditions for loving practices in infant group care settings.

love in teaching, infant pedagogies, visual data, teacher perspectives, Iris Murdoch

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Two halves of a whole: embracing the synergy of children's and practitioners' emotional wellbeing, promoting quality early learning

Presenters:

Alannah Dore, Federation University, Australia

Co-authors

Sue Emmett, Federation University, Australia

This scoping review investigated how early learning (EL) practitioners' emotional wellbeing affects children's emotional development; how adult attachment theory relates to practitioners' emotional wellbeing; and how tertiary institutions prepare practitioners for sustaining emotional wellbeing. EL practitioners are instructed to develop consistent, sensitive, and responsive relationships with children, however, legislation fails to acknowledge links between children's healthy emotional development and practitioners' emotional wellbeing (Corr et al., 2017; Cumming et al., 2021). Meanwhile, practitioners' emotional wellbeing remains significantly low (Cumming et al., 2021; Hall-Kenyon et al., 2014) threatening workforce sustainability (McCormick et al., 2022; Ng et al., 2023). This review's theoretical lens was adult attachment theory due to links to emotional wellbeing (Bowlby, 1988; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Schore & Schore, 2008). The Peters et al, (2015) scoping review methodology provided structure and rigor, while a qualitative, interpretive paradigm (Crotty, 1998) guided searches of literature and EL degree courses from eight OECD countries. Ethical considerations included potential publication bias and reporting transparency. Three significant gaps highlighted the following: Relevant research is not reflected in EL legislation (Corr et al., 2017; Logan et al., 2020); specificity on how practitioners could strengthen their emotional wellbeing and allocate time to do so is lacking; and practitioners emotional wellbeing preparation in tertiary degrees is not evident. Research is being conducted investigating content and pedagogical approaches that embed EL practitioners emotional wellbeing into tertiary courses.

practitioner emotional wellbeing, Scoping Review, tertiary education, adult attachment theory, children's emotional development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set D24, Room 201, second floor, Dorset Place building

LISTENING, WATCHING AND RESPONDING TO YOUNG CHILDREN'S EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Joanne Benford, Pen Green Research Base, United Kingdom

This Symposium features 3 individual studies focussing on young children's play and learning experiences within Early Years settings, and English Primary School classrooms. The studies capture the ways in which Early Years Practitioners listen to, observe and respond to the many ways young children learn. All 3 studies keep children at the heart of the research, considering ways the researchers are able to develop their own, and others practice in order to sustain high quality interactions during times of challenge and adversity across the sector.

An exploration of the educational experiences for children with hypermobility - a parental perspective.

Presenters:

Michelle Loake, Pen Green Reserach, Development and Training Base, United Kingdom

This research explored the parental perspective of educational experiences for children with hypermobility, within the United Kingdom. Hypermobility impacts development of physical skills (Skills for Action, 2023). Within education, this requires reasonable adjustments. Despite the high prevalence of hypermobility, there is no research specifically exploring the impact of hypermobility on educational experiences. The SEND code of practice (DfE and DoH, 2015), aspires for all children to 'achieve well' and stipulates that 'reasonable adjustments' are made; however, studies have identified significant weaknesses, resulting in the needs of children with SEND not always being met effectively (National Audit Office, 2019; Ofsted, 2021). This study considers Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory in relation to the educational experiences of hypermobile children. Situated within an interpretivist paradigm (Capper, 2019), my methodology utilised auto-ethnography and phenomenological accounts, with data collected through 'Storytelling'. Aligning to the EECERA ethical code (Bertram et al., 2016), I was open and honest throughout, respecting the stories of the families and maintaining a high standard of professional integrity. I adhered to the principles of BERA (2018) ensuring that no detrimental harm came to participants. The findings presented multi-faceted and complex accounts. Although some experiences were positive, others demonstrated concerns that children's individual needs were not being met. Two main themes identified were misunderstanding the impact of hypermobility; and child and parent voice and advocacy. Implications are to support practitioners to consider their responsibilities in supporting children with SEND. There is also scope for further research to understand multiple perspectives on providing effective support.

child voice, parent advocacy, SEND, collaboration, wellbeing

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Do you hear me? Are we listening to the child's voice to ensure learning is meaningful.

Presenters:

Holly Bowman, Pen Green Research, United Kingdom

Joanne Benford, Pen Green, United Kingdom

Michelle Loake, Pen Green, United Kingdom

To understand if as practitioners we value the child's voice within our daily practice and if listening makes learning more meaningful. Listening to children and engaging in respectful dialogue is important if we are to empower children, seeing them as active citizens in their educational settings. Listening is essential for all forms of communication. (Rinaldi 2001, Clark 2017, Malaguzzi (1920-1944), Murray 2019, Froebel (1782-1855), Trevarthen 2005). Positive experiences for children will be ones where children feel known and understood. Children want to be listened to in the same way adults do (Rinaldi, 2001) Children are capable of sharing rich insights if given the opportunity (Langsted 1994). This was Interpretive research, where practitioners reality was gathered through the use of focus groups to determine how they utilise opportunities in the classroom to listen to children's voices. Ethical considerations align to BERA (2018) Informed consent, assent, confidentiality and do no harm. Also, Power (French and Raven 1959) There were commonalities across the PVI and school sector, however schools were experiencing added pressure which impacted their ability to listen to children. This conflicted with many teachers values and they attributed this to external pressures and high accountability which in turn impacting their autonomy. How do we design the curriculum with children at the centre so it becomes more meaningful for children. In addition, how can we give teachers autonomy back, recognising them for the professional knowledge they bring.

child voice, making learning meaningful, teacher and practitioner autonomy, policy pressures and accountability, listening to empower children

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Developing Practitioner's Understanding of Schema Theory to inform planning for Mathematical Development.

Presenters:

Joanne Benford, Pen Green Research Base, United Kingdom

Flavia Ribeiro, Pen Green Centre, United Kingdom

This research develops an approach to enhance practitioner knowledge of schema theory to enable them to recognise, support and ultimately challenge children's emerging mathematical development. By offering children experiences and resources which interest them they are likely to be intrinsically motivated to explore and experiment and through their repeated patterns of action, develop partial concepts; a requirement for mathematical understanding (Piaget, 1965; Athey, 1990, 2007; Arnold, 1990, 2003; Mairs & The Pen Green Team, 2012, Laevers, 1997, Dweck, 2000, Krieglars, 2021). A schema is 'a pattern of repeatable behaviour...over time clusters of schemas become concepts (Athey, 2013). Understanding how children develop mathematical concepts links closely to the schema they use within their play. Key theory such as Assimilation & Accommodation (Piaget 1965), Gelman and Gallistel's counting principles (1986), Krieglars conceptual development (2021) and frameworks such as EYFS Mathematical Development (DfE, 2024) all influenced this research. This interpretivist study draws on the Practitioner Research methodology, case study and questionnaires. Practitioners engaged in a case study based on their observations of a child engaging in playful activity, completed pre, mid and post study questionnaires, and participated in regular dialogue and a semi structured interview. Ethical considerations included Informed consent, assent and applying the 'do no harm' rule (BERA, 2018). Permissions continued to be reviewed throughout the research process. Mathematical concepts develop through day to day playful activities. Observations have more meaning, and planning for children has been enhanced. Having time for reflection and dialogue considerably enhances understanding.

mathematics, schema, observation, reflection, dialogue

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set D25, Room 401, fourth floor, Dorset Place building

EXPERIENCES OF TRANSITIONS

Maja Olsson, NTNU, Norway

Unveiling Children's Perspectives on the Transition from Early Childhood Education and Care to School

Presenters:

Hanne Mette Vindvik, Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioral Research in Education, University of Stavenger, Norway

Anne-Lene Skog Dahl, Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioral Research in Education, University of Stavenger, Norway

Co-authors:

Tone Rove Nilsen, Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioral Research in Education, University of Stavenger, Norway

Guro Lien, Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioral Research in Education, University of Stavenger, Norway

This study explores children's perspectives on the transition between ECEC and school. This study is part of research project SELMA, a large intervention study developing and testing pedagogical practices in ECEC, funded by the Norwegian Research Council. SELMA addresses practices to strengthen social interactions, engagement, love and joy, mastery, and acknowledgment. Dewey's (2007) concepts of experience are used to understand how children's early experiences in ECEC affect the transition to school. Through sociocultural perspectives, children's transition is explored through a small-scale qualitative study. Twenty children aged five to six from two ECEC centers are interviewed in pairs in semi-structured interviews. Questions concern children's experiences leaving ECEC and starting school and the activities they do during this transition. Interviews are video-recorded. Thematic analysis of the textual transcriptions is performed (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Participation is voluntary, and the children can withdraw at any time without giving any reason. Parents provide written consent on behalf of the children. Information is treated confidentially and follows data protection regulations. The project is approved by SIKT, the

Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. The SELMA material was developed to help children in transition gain relevant experiences, such as reading books about school, visiting the school building, greeting teachers and the principal, and talking about common emotions related to school entry. The study is ongoing, and thus the findings are preliminary. The results may contribute to increased knowledge about how to create good transitional processes based on children's experiences, expectations, and perspectives.

transitions, ECEC, children's perspectives, children's experiences, school

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The School Body: Children's playful bodies in educational frames

Presenters:

Maja Olsson, NTNU, Norway

Co-authors:

Ida Pape-Pedersen, Nord University, Norway

The topic of this study and presentation is play and embodiment in Norwegian children's transition from kindergarten to school. Focusing on children's playful and bodily experiences connected to the transition. The transition to school is complex and multi-dimensional (Ackesjö, 2014). Children in first grade miss time to play and explore (Bjørnstad et al., 2023). Fewer opportunities for bodily expressions in school can be described as a "stoolification" (Becher, 2018). Body-phenomenological perspectives (Merleau-Ponty, 1945) and perspectives on play as a social, child-directed activity (Henricks, 2015, Sutton-Smith, 2008) provide the theoretical framework. The approach is within a qualitative research paradigm, applying a phenomenological-hermeneutical research design. The material consists of data from group interviews and conversations with 5-6-year-old children, interpreted through a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006). Consent form and information sheet were provided to all participants, and names are pseudonymized. Children and parents had the right to withdraw from participation at any time. Participants' opinions are presented and analyzed with respect for their personal integrity. The children express that they perceive both the opportunities for bodily expression and the perception of embodiment to have changed during the transition from kindergarten to school. Their perspectives are thematized in the study as control, marginalization and new opportunities of / for bodily expressions in school. The study raises awareness on the importance of emphasizing children's own expressions of bodily experience and knowledge, for their wellbeing and relations with peers in the transition process and generally in school.

transition to school, play, embodiment, children's perspectives, playfulness

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Symposium Set E

10:40 – 11:55, Thursday 5th September

Set E1, Sallis Benney Theatre, ground floor, Grand Parade building

REFLECTING AND TALKING ABOUT FEELINGS IN PEDAGOGY WITH BABIES AND UNDER THREES

Jools Page, The University of Brighton, United Kingdom

Relationships are at the heart of early years pedagogy. EECERA has been key in the theorisation, nurture, and debate of this fundamental principle. Critical questions include what these relationships are seeking to achieve, whether the goal is dependence through attachments or independence and peer relations, and the place of love and its boundaries in pedagogy (Page). This symposium will argue that more attention now needs to be paid to the

'emotional labour' (Hochschild) of pedagogic relationships. It then proposes that educators cannot be expected to be closely responsive to babies' and young children's feelings and intentions unless systems and practices are in place that are responsive to individual educators own feelings at work. Opportunities for critical professional reflection are integral to 'competent' early years systems (Urban). The symposium will then illustrate three different approaches to professional reflection that include attention to the emotional and personal aspects of professional work.

birth_to_three

Managing personal feelings in professional work: The contribution of Work Discussion as a model of professional reflection

Presenters:

Peter Elfer, University of Roehampton, United Kingdom

This presentation describes a Froebel Trust funded year-long evaluation of "Work Discussion", a model of professional reflection that includes sensitive attention to educators' feelings in their work. The research investigated whether "Work Discussion" deepened pedagogy and whether educators experienced it as supportive. The evaluation builds on literature documenting how educators may distance themselves from children, whom they find demanding, in the absence of support to manage those demands (Hopkins 1988; Datler et al 2010; Elfer, 2014; Page and Elfer 2013). Work Discussion draws on Wilfred Bion, a psychoanalyst and theorist of thinking in groups, to understand how groups may avoid issues experienced as too challenging to face. Work Discussion groups are NOT therapy groups to deal with personal problems. The evaluation involved two independent teams of researchers, one working with the educators, with a paradigm of valuing uncertainty, and one undertaking the evaluation. The evaluation was multi-method including video and semi-structured interviews (Elfer et al 2018). Using a hand-held camcorder, the progression of children's activities, except those regarded as private, were recorded. Parental consent was a prerequisite. The researcher was acutely sensitive to not videoing where a child showed discomfort or avoidance. The evaluation shows the value of Work Discussion to deepening pedagogy and offering a respectful response to educators and their 'emotional labour' and is fully reported (Elfer and Wilson 2023).

The evaluation builds on Urban et al (2012) to show how 'competent' policy systems should be more attentive to the uncertainties and emotional demands of pedagogy.

emotion, infants and toddlers, uncertainty, work discussion, professional reflection

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

The role of heuristic play in becoming an infant-toddler pedagogue: Master students' perceptions on professional learning and emotional demands

Presenters:

Sara Barros Araújo, inED, School of Education, Polytechnic of Porto, Portugal

Mônica Pinazza, University of S. Paulo, Brazil

Co-authors:

Susana Esteves, School of Education Polytechnic of Porto, Portugal

Margarida Marta, Centre for Research and Intervention in Education University of Porto, Portugal

The present study focuses on practicum experiences developed within a professional master programme in early childhood education. The study aims to capture master students' perceptions on the contributions of heuristic play on learning about their role as infant-toddler pedagogues. Following previous studies (e.g., Recchia et al., 2015; White et al., 2016), it departs from acknowledging the practicum as a site for prospective teachers to reflect and learn about the complexities of working with infants and toddlers. The study draws on the pedagogical proposal of heuristic play (Goldschmied, 2002; Goldschmied & Jackson, 1994) that brings to the forefront children's protagonism and the teacher as a facilitator of children's play. Written reflective narratives and practicum reports developed by twenty-one students were subjected to content analysis. All participants gave written informed consent, following

the European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) Ethical Code for Early Childhood Researchers (2015). Findings highlighted contributions of heuristic play in four core aspects: assuming a non-directive supportive role, organizing the learning environment, observing children's experiences, and supporting the reconstruction of the image of the child. Students' also acknowledged the struggles and emotional demands of (re)envisioning their role, especially the critical balance between non-intervening and facilitating children's play and autonomy. Implications are drawn on the need for initial professional education programmes to attentively consider infant-toddler pedagogy(ies) when designing learning opportunities that are responsive to the rights of children and professionals.

infant-toddler pedagogy, heuristic play, practicum, initial professional education, emotional work

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Using Work Discussion groups to facilitate Early Years Teacher trainees' professional reflection during their placement experience with babies.

Presenters:

Dilys Wilson, Middlesex University, United Kingdom

The research focused on Early Years Teacher trainees' journeys during their placements with babies. The research aimed to investigate how Work Discussion group reflection supported their professional awareness and sensitivity to babies' emotional needs. Research shows that Work Discussion as a model of group reflection impacts positively on professional learning about the emotional and relational aspects of practice with babies and young children in a range of contexts. (Elfer et al, 2012; 2018; Cardenal, 2011; Anagnostaki et al. 2021). The theoretical framework draws on psychoanalytic concepts that address the emotional factors that influence learning, thinking and behaviour in relationships and in groups (Saltzberger-Wittenberg et al., 1999; Bion 1962). Using practitioner enquiry and praxeological research principles, the introduction of Work Discussion group reflection and its impact on the trainees' professional development was investigated. Focus groups and interviews with trainees co-constructed an understanding of the benefits and challenges of this model of professional reflection. Trainees were informed about their involvement and rights as research participants and the research was approved through the university ethics process. The participants' practice knowledge and agency within the research was actively promoted and acknowledged. The research findings suggest that Work Discussion seminars offered a safe space for shared reflection that contributed to the training group's wellbeing and their capacity for reflexive practice. Trainee-initiated content arising from placement learning and experience can be used effectively to explore the nature of pedagogical practice and professional relationships with babies.

placement learning, work discussion, pedagogy with babies, reflexive practice, practitioner enquiry

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E2, Room G4, ground floor, Grand Parade building

WORKING IN LOW INCOME AND DISADVANTAGED CONTEXTS

Lesley Wood, North-West University, South Africa

The potential of Froebelian philosophy to support and engage low-income families in the early years

Presenters:

Kate Hoskins, Brunel University London, United Kingdom

Utsa Mukherjee, Brunel University London, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Asma Lebbakhar, Brunel University London, United Kingdom

Emma Wainwright, Brunel University London, United Kingdom
 Yuwei Xu, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

To build on and develop Froebelian ideas to consider how they could become more relevant and meaningful. Focus informed by Dr Hoskins' Froebel Trust funded project, which found most practitioners perceived that low-income families did not tend to value play (2019). Froebel believed children's self-directed play was an expression of their imagination, creativity and understanding. Symbolic activities, such as art, language, music and dance all nourish the child's inner life as well as providing a means to transform and express understanding (Bruce, 2012). Participants were invited over a four-week period, to reflect on and consider the possibility of enacting Froebel's ideas in relation to their involvement in play with their child/children. Families were interviewed to discuss experiences, perceptions and understandings of Froebelian play. The study received ethical approval from Brunel University London to undertake the research. Participants were approached through trusted gatekeepers to get informed consent. The interviews took place in person at a local charity's offices. The location was convenient for the participants as they were attending a playgroup session with their younger children. Parents engage with a Froebelian approach without naming and identify it explicitly. Froebelian principles need to be made more inclusive to low-income families. Relevant to practitioners through empirical evidence of a diverse group of parents' perspectives on play to reveal areas where they could learn from parents/carers to extend play opportunities in the home. Relevant to policy through summarizing policies needed to reduce the effects of socio-economic disadvantage to low income families with young children.

low income, families, Froebel, play, social justice

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Improving the quality of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) centres in low-income communities: A PALAR approach

Presenters:

Lesley Wood, North-West University, South Africa

ECCE centres in low-income communities in South Africa lack resources to provide quality education. This study aimed to improve the quality through involving practitioners in action learning for professional development. Research (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2022; Wood & Neethling, 2024; Zulu, Adebunmi, Aina, Bipath, 2022) indicates the need to upskill the ECCE workforce. The DBE aims to professionalise the sector, but the current approach is through standardised workshops that negate the value of practitioners as 'cognoscenti', best placed to know how to improve their own practice. Action learning theory (Trehan & Rigg, 2015) aligned with our participatory action learning and action research (PALAR) (Wood, 2020) approach that enables practitioners to evaluate the quality of their practice, identify ways to improve, implement new strategies and reflect on their learning, to foster sustainable and ongoing improvement in quality. Proceeding from a transformative paradigm, we facilitated a PALAR approach with 11 practitioners in one under-resourced ECCE centre. They generated data through arts-based methods, supplemented by transcriptions of the seven sessions, which were thematically analysed. Ethical approval was granted by the university; in addition an ethical agreement was drawn up with the 11 practitioners who volunteered and signed informed consent. Through action learning, practitioners created a strong professional learning community and developed a network of external partners. They were happier and had the confidence to address their future needs. Findings indicate the power of a PALAR process for sustained and low-cost improvement in practice.

communities of practice, community engagement, ECCE practitioner professional development, quality early childhood education, action learning for lifelong development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

I am a good parent: Bolstering parental confidence within a strength-based relationship-oriented approach

Presenters:

Sandina Begic, Boise State University, United States

Co-authors

Ashley Butterfield, University of Oregon, United States

Oluwatosin Egba, Boise State University, United States

This study examines first-person accounts of at-risk parents to explore the effectiveness of relationship-based early interventions. Early years are critical for healthy development (Shonkoff & Garner, 2012). The relationships we have with adults during formative years have lasting effects (Yogman et al., 2018). Parents, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, may not always recognize the significance of early years, partly due to intergenerational parenting cycles (Cheng, Johnson, & Goodman, 2016). Relationship-based early interventions can disrupt these cycles and improve relationships between parents and their children (Belsky et al., 2009; Skjesol, 2021). This study was conducted within the precision paradigm (Duggan et al., 2022). Exit surveys were completed by 670 parents receiving early intervention services. Quantitative data were analyzed to determine the degree of before-after services change. Qualitative data were analyzed using the framework method (Gale et al., 2013). Relying on secondary data, this study considers perspectives of parents receiving services within different evidence-based models. Confidentiality was ensured by removing children's and service providers' names from open-ended comments. Parents reported significant improvements in their ability to parent, engage in positive activities with their children, and advocate for their children's needs. They emphasized the compassionate, nonjudgmental, and open relationships with service providers as especially beneficial. Parents who started the program questioning their parenting abilities felt empowered, validated, and reassured in their ability to be good parents to their children. These findings validate recent efforts to integrate early intervention programs into a wider network of services to provide ongoing support to at-risk families.

strength-driven, relationship-based, parental confidence, at-risk families, early intervention

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E3, Room G62, ground floor, Grand Parade building

ANTI-BIAS APPROACHES

Rebecca Hand, ECMS Victoria, Australia

Teaching Fairness in Preschool: Evaluating the Ethics for the Very Young Approach**Presenters:**

Sharon Carnahan, Rollins College Hume House CDC, United States

Co-authors:

Courtney Trohn, Chestnut Hill University, United States

Cora Burkley, Rollins College, United States

We evaluated anti-bias lessons aimed at 3-5 year olds. We interviewed children before and after 8 lessons in fairness and equity to see what they learned about these ideas. Karadag & Demirtas (2018) demonstrated the effectiveness of a Philosophy for Kids approach on the development of thinking skills, while Ventosa's (2018) review expanded the evidence. This informed our program, Ethics for the Very Young (Kenyon, Doyle & Carnahan 2019). In social constructivism, children learn by doing. Preschoolers in Piaget's preoperational stage learn abstract ideas, if they are in play-based lessons, scaffolded by teachers or peers (Wertsch, 1985; Leong and Bodrova, 2016). We studied 19 children's understanding of fairness and equity (21 invited, 2 declined), and verbal skills as a covariate via pre-post interviews (by different researchers), who asked open-end questions like "What does it mean to be fair? Can you tell me about a time when something was NOT fair?" and coded each response for levels of knowledge. We obtained parental informed consent and ongoing child assent. All eligible children were White. In future research, we will recruit a more representative population and involve colleagues of color and different cultures in the research. Our data show that children can learn about ethical concepts like fairness and equity in a play and storybook-based

curriculum, and that children with better receptive verbal skills learned more. Embedding values into play-based lessons and daily routines shows promise as a cost effective methodology, when supported by adults who model critical thinking.

ethical reasoning, values education, constructivism, evaluation, social skills

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

THE INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFECTS OF ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION PROGRAM PREPARED FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS ON TEACHERS AND CHILDREN

Presenters:

Cagla Banko-Bal, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University, Turkey

Co-authors:

Berrin Akman, Hacettepe University, Turkey

This study aims to examine the effects of the Anti-Bias Education (ABE) Program on preschool teachers and children for diversities. ABE programs positively affect children's and teachers' attitudes, opinions, and beliefs toward diversity (Blackmon, 2018; Koehn, 2019; Simangan, 2012; Tift, 2017; Turnsek, 2013; Üner, 2011; Wu, 1999). Developmentally Appropriate Practices care to ensuring that applications are appropriate for each child in terms of cultural, linguistic and ability. ABE also aims to create an inclusive environment for all children and to develop a positive social identity by acknowledging the differences arising from children's commonalities and individual characteristics (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010). Interpretivism guided this research. The research design is determined as nested mixed research design. Data obtained from surveys and interviews were analyzed through quasi-experimental design and content analysis. 19 teachers and 185 children participated in this study voluntarily. Teachers', children's and their parents' permissions were taken by consent forms and information sheet. All participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. Pseudonyms were used for all participants. The attitudes and self-awareness of the experimental group teachers towards ABE increased after the program. Children's respect for diversity scores increased in the post-tests. Teachers also thought that ABE had some positive effects on both them and children. To ensure a fair and equal educational environment, it is recommended policymakers to include the goals of ABE in the outcomes and indicators of the national preschool curriculums. The national preschool curriculum should emphasize adaptations for all diversities.

anti-bias education, early years, preschoolers, respect for differences, preschool teachers

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Mattering and World Making

Presenters:

Rebecca Hand, ECMS Victoria, Australia
Dr Red Ruby Scarlet, Multiverse, Australia

Co-authors

Emma Forsyth, ECMS Victoria, Australia

ECMS is a large not for profit Kindergarten provider in Victoria, Australia, who have embarked on a whole organizational change project beginning 'with place' (Scarlet, 2020). Engagement with 'anti-bias approaches' has reconfigured how our organization has become 'critically inclusive' (Scarlett, 2020). Indigenous perspectives are critical to undertaking this work in Australia. Our work is deeply influenced by the ground (re)claiming research of early childhood Indigenous scholars – Aunty Dr Sue Atkinson (2020) and Dr Karen Martin (2008). The theoretical framework for this study engages with posthuman, postcolonial and ecological theories (Haraway, 2003, 2007, 2016) and expands the theoretical horizons (Taylor & Giugni [Scarlet], 2012; [AGDE], 2022) of what is possible in privileging

the sustainability of equity and social justice in practice. Our methodology engages with sustainable, inclusive approaches in organizational research, with sustainability as the key 'concept, context and content' (Scarlet, 2020) within which our thinking, doing and becoming is situated. Underpinned by the ethics within Australia's National Frameworks and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 29 (United Nations, 1989) we have undertaken an 'enquiry-based approach' (AEDG, 2022) to integrate both pedagogy and operations. Our ambitious desire to bring equity and social justice into place based is what we now call 'pederation', authentically bringing together pedagogy and operations. We will share our two-year chronology of deep relational work. We believe our work cited above is the urgent work for the present and future for children, families, educative and operational teams.

pedagogy, sustainability, place based, posthuman, equity

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E4, Room G63, ground floor, Grand Parade building

PERSPECTIVES ON CHILDREN ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

Zlatica Zacharová, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia

The Inclusion of a child on the autism spectrum into a mainstream classroom from the perspective of teachers and teaching assistants

Presenters:

Zlatica Zacharová, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia

The aim is to find out how teachers and teaching assistants evaluate the inclusion of autistic children in a mainstream classroom in Slovakia and it is part of VEGA 1/0694/24 research. In Slovakia, children with ASD were previously educated either in a special school, in a special class (depending on the degree of cognitive and speech impairment) or in mainstream classrooms, if it concerned pupils with a good verbal and cognitive profile (ŠPÚ, 2016). However, teachers often highlight behavioral problems (Blacher, Bakre, 2019) and social difficulties (APA, 2013). While in 1966 the prevalence of autistic children was 4.5 per 10,000 children, today the prevalence of autistic children increased to 5.4 per 1,000 children (Maenner et al., 2020). It is very likely that teachers will encounter a child on the autism spectrum in the classroom in the near future. In the qualitative research, teacher assistants helping in the classrooms of autistic children were interviewed. Were used the grounded theory to analyze the data. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Data were coded and anonymized and they had the right to terminate the interview. The following categories were identified: Pathway to assistance, Education process, Support team, ADS as a failure, Where are we heading? in the narratives of teaching assistants. The results of the research show that although children with autism spectrum disorder are supposed to be included in mainstream classrooms, in practice significant barriers persist that often prevent these children from receiving mainstream education at school.

autistic children, school education, inclusion, opinions of teaching assistants, inclusion problems of autistic children

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring the Impact of Pretend Play on Emotional Understanding Abilities in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Presenters:

Ya-Lun Tsao, National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan

I-Ju Lin, National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan

The study aims to understand the process of change in emotional understanding abilities in preschoolers with autism through direct observation of the intervention of pretend play. The progression of pretend play helps them integrate

concepts and ideas, providing opportunities to demonstrate cognitive strategies such as considering different perspectives, collaborating with peers to establish common plans and rules, negotiating, problem-solving, and pursuing goals (Lillard et al., 2013; Breathnach et al., 2018), bringing meaning to various aspects of children's development. Yet, when discussing a basic emotional difficulty in autism spectrum disorder, it pertains to obstacles that arise when individuals with autism need to connect emotions with perceptual thinking (Chaidi & Drigas, 2020). This study adopts a case study approach and utilizes observation and intervention in pretend play to understand the process of enhancing emotional understanding abilities in preschooler with autism. The parents of the child must sign a consent form to ensure they understand the purpose of the study and their willingness to participate in the investigation. The preschooler with autism showed notable improvement in emotional understanding after participating in role-playing games. Specifically, she enhanced her self-awareness, empathy towards peers, emotion regulation, and self-motivation. Additionally, apart from examining the changes in the individual child under study, positive transformational processes were observed in the attitudes of peers who participated in the pretend play. This includes their attitudes before, during, and after the pretend play, as well as their post-play perspectives on life and thoughts about encountering individuals with different characteristics in everyday life.

pretend play, autism spectrum disorder, emotional understanding, case study, individual differences

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Let's Play: Developing with autistic students an active play programme for autistic students.

Presenters:

Stella Gkegka, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

The aim of this research is to develop with autistic students an active play programme fostering their Physical Activity (PA) participation that is tailored to their needs and preferences. For autistic children, participating in PA can be challenging due to their motor and sensory differences (Fournier et al., 2010; Lamp et al., 2016), resulting in significantly lower PA levels and higher rates of sedentary behaviour and obesity compared to their typically developing peers (Healy et al., 2018; Srinivasan, Pescatello, and Bhat, 2014). Drawing on Lundy's (2007) framework for conceptualising article 12 of the UNCRC, this study aims to listen to autistic student's views and give them due weight. This research utilises a participatory approach including arts- and play-based methods to enable autistic children (n=20) attending a Language and Communication Resource (LCR) base in a mainstream primary school in Glasgow to share their views. For enabling all autistic learners to express their views, a multimodal approach was developed following the suggestions of an Advisory Group comprising of autistic individuals and parents of autistic children. Preliminary findings indicate that listening to autistic learner's voices is a multifaceted process that involves creating an environment (both social and physical) where the students feel safe and comfortable to form and express their views. Implications include developing an understanding into the elements required for the realisation of autistic children's right to express their views and be listened to in the school setting.

autistic children's voices, active play, arts- and play-based methods, co-development, school-based research

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E5, Room M2, Mezzanine, Grand Parade building

SLOW KNOWLEDGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE ECEC: EXPLORING THE THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL CONNECTIONS WITH TIME

Alison Clark, University of South-eastern Norway, Norway

This self-selected symposium will discuss the link between slow knowledge (Orr, 1996; Clark, 2023), sustainability and sustainable ECEC practice. The first paper discusses theoretical concepts about the relationship with time emerging from the Slow knowledge and the unhurried child (Clark, 2023), taking the longer view about young children, ECEC and the planet. The following presentations are based on two subsequent ongoing studies, exploring the relationship with time in ECEC. Stilla an Icelandic study, researching slow practices with four ECEC settings

explores the impact of slow practices on the sustainable wellbeing of children and teachers. Taking Time back, a Norwegian and Japanese cross-national study discusses how slow practices with clay and wood can support children and their teachers to construct slow knowledge.

‘What’s time got to do with it?’: exploring the connections between slow knowledge and sustainability

Presenters:

Alison Clark, University of South-eastern Norway, Norway

What’s time got to do with it? This presentation explores the links between theoretical concepts about the relationship with time and questions concerning sustainability with young children and maintaining a sustainable ECEC. This builds on the Slow knowledge and the unhurried child study (Clark, 2023) that explored the theme of acceleration in ECEC and investigated alternative approaches in the form of slow pedagogies and slow practices. The theoretical frame draws on Rosa’s concept of resonance (2019) together with pedagogical principles inspired by Froebel (Bruce, 2020) and the concept of slow knowledge as articulated by the environmentalist David Orr (1996). This qualitative interpretative study involved in depth interviews with twenty early childhood teacher educators, teachers and researchers participants from 11 countries and a focus group with ECEC teachers and students. The research was conducted in keeping with EECERA ethical codes and Norwegian ethical research guidelines. This paper discusses the concept of ‘timefulness’ in relation to the different facets of sustainability as applied to ECEC including opportunities for young children’s immersion in their local environment and the creation of slow knowledge. Taking the longer view has implications for day to day priorities and what is seen as a valuable use of children’s and teachers’ time. This can be countercultural and involve ‘micro resistance’ (Archer and Albin-Clark, 2022). The paper raises questions about who may benefit from making the relationship with time explicit in ECEC in preparing for an uncertain, sustainable future.

slow knowledge, slow pedagogy, sustainable practice, sustainability, time

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Encountering slowness: researching the connection between wellbeing and slow practices

Presenters:

Anna Magnea Hreinsdóttir, University of Iceland - School of Education, Iceland

Kristín Dýrfjörð, University of Akureyri, Iceland

This three-year research project delves into diverse encounters with slowness in four Icelandic ECEC settings, aiming to assess their impact on the sustainable wellbeing of children and educators. The underexplored nature of children's relationship with time in preschools (Dýrfjörð et al., 2023; Hreinsdóttir & Dýrfjörð, 2021; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2012) underscores the importance of understanding experiences of slowness for overall wellbeing and discussions on in-the-moment meaning-making and quality in preschools. The theoretical framework emphasizes the value of slow pedagogies and knowledge in exploring the relationship with time for young children and educators (Clark, 2023). The study recognizes the significance of employing pedagogical documentation for attentive listening (Carlsen & Clark, 2022). Qualitative interpretative research guides this study. Conducted collaboratively, project involves a network of four ECEC settings where regular meetings with participants facilitate discussions and feedback on developing slow practices (Chai & Ortega, 2023). Pedagogical documentation captures the process, offering insights into how children and educators experience slowness. All participants have provided informed consent and retain the option to withdraw. The anticipated findings aim to inform strategies for stress reduction, enhance sustainable wellbeing, and create an environment for both children and educators to appreciate the rhythms of daily routines. The study has practical implication for ECEC professionals who are aiming to find ways to improve the wellbeing of children as well as educators. This has implications for achieving stress reduction, enhancing sustainable wellbeing, and creating an environment for both children and educators to appreciate the rhythms of daily routines.

time, sustainable, wellbeing, narratives, action research

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Creating slow knowledge with natural materials towards a sustainable future

Presenters:

Mari Mori, Kobe Shinwa University, Japan

Kari Carlsen, University of South-eastern Norway, Norway

This presentation aims to explore and identify how slow practices with natural materials: clay, and wood, support young children and teachers in constructing slow knowledge and the contribution this can make towards a sustainable future. Cross-national study, *Taking time Back*, builds on earlier studies focusing on the relationship between pedagogical documentation and slow practices (Clark, Carlsen, and Mori, 2023). Research about time in ECEC (Clark, 2023; Carlsen and Clark, 2022) is embedded in this study. The theoretical framework draws on discourses about slow knowledge (Orr, 1996; Clark, 2023), pedagogy of listening (Rinaldi, 2021) and the importance of theory and practice of pedagogical documentation to support children's rights (Carlsen and Clark, 2022; Vecchi, 2010). Qualitative interpretative research guides this study. Case studies focus on three ECEC settings in Norway and Japan. Pedagogical documentation, video-taped participatory observations, and interviews are analyzed qualitatively to seek themes and characteristics about slow practices and sustainability. The study follows EECERA ethical code and those of Norwegian and Japanese universities involved, including receiving informed consent of participants. Emerging findings suggest time and engagement with natural materials are important factors in supporting young children's imagination and creativity and teachers' opportunities to reflect deeply about meanings. Pedagogical documentation opens a longer view of practice with sustainable materials for teachers and encourages children's active engagement in their learning. Valuing the creation of slow knowledge raises questions about how to increase teachers' confidence in engaging in this way in time-pressured contexts.

slow knowledge, pedagogical documentation, sustainability, time, natural materials

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E6, NEW ROOM: Room 306, third floor, Edward Street building

ARTS, FOUND MATERIALS AND SINGING AS PEDAGOGICAL STARTERS

Debi Keyte-Hartland, Debi Keyte-Hartland, United Kingdom

To sing or not to sing. About what which is needed for ECEC teachers and other employees in ECEC institutions want to sing

Presenters:

Hanne Bæverfjord, Queen Maud's University College for Early Childhood Education and Care, Norway

Co-authors:

Morten Sæther, DMMH, Norway

In this research project we have examined ECEC teachers' relationship to singing, and based on that we discuss how we can develop music pedagogical practices in ECEC teacher training that contribute to ECEC teachers singing more in ECEC institutions. Previous studies point to adults' negative perception of their own singing voice, view of themselves as not very musical, and lack of security and motivation to sing (Ehrlin & Wallerstvedt, 2014; Kulset & Halle, 2020; Torgersen & Sæther, 2021). That students in kindergarten teacher training seem to consider themselves not very musical, or not musical at all is a problem, since this self-perception according to Demorest et al. (2017) is central to further music work in the kindergarten. The analysis was conducted within a qualitative paradigm, and carried out with a thematic and abductive approach (Tjora, 2021). The analysis process identified consistent themes in dialogue with previous research and theory development (Eggebo, 2020, Braun & Clarke (2006). The participants are anonymized. Audio recordings were deleted after transcription. The project was affirmed by SIKT (Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research). More time to basic and further

education within music is needed. Students may contribute with personal repertoire. Work with informal situations close to practice may help for confidence and volume training of singing. In education we need to manage the ever decreasing time resource to help the students build confidence and joy with singing. Improvisation, playful activities and students' own repertoire may have positive impact on the learning situations.

Singing in ECEC institutions, musical competence, formal and informal situations, identification, expectations to one's own singing voice

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Developing professionally grounded Problem-based learning-tasks connected to arts & crafts, drama, and music in Early Childhood Teacher Education (ECTE)

Presenters:

Grete Skjeggstad Meyer, NLA University College, Norway

The aim is to develop new knowledge to provide academic sound and professionally grounded tasks in Problem-based learning (PBL) related to the art subjects. There is little research on teaching artistic subjects with PBL, and few connections to ECTE (Eilifsen & Meyer, 2017; Meyer, 2023). There is research on creativity and how creative processes can stimulate the work of PBL-groups (Hansen & Bertel, 2023; Lidvang & Beck, 2015; Gerhardt & Gerhardt, 2009), and Jespersen (2015) writes of how to define an art-and-technology problem. The study is based on previous international research on PBL in general (Barrows, 1986, 2000; Davidson & Major, 2014; Savin-Baden & Major, 2004) and in the context of creativity and artistic subjects (Jespersen, 2015; Sullivan, 2011; Tan, 2009). The study is within a qualitative interpretive paradigm. The data are PBL-tasks collected from 1999 – 2024 in an ECTE in Norway. They will be submitted to a content analysis. Ethical consideration has been given to ensure that the documents are anonymous, and no personal information will be handled. It follows the guidelines of the Norwegian National Committee for Research Ethics (SIKT). The findings will be centred around the analysis of the PBL-tasks, to find out how they developed and adapted to learning-outcomes over the years. The discussion will be on what it takes to formulate relevant, academic and professionally grounded PBL-tasks. An implication is the awareness of developing academic sound and professionally grounded PBL-tasks. This will hopefully have implications on future PBL-tasks within the arts in ECTE.

problem-based learning (PBL), arts & crafts, drama and music, early childhood teacher education (ECTE), PBL-tasks, interdisciplinarity

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E7, Room 144, first floor, Grand Parade building

NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR ECEC QUALITY & CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Edith Nicolas, The University of Melbourne, Australia

Developing quality early childhood education in Ireland: the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) universal preschool programme, then, now and future direction

Presenters:

Kathryn O'Riordan, Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Ireland

Co-authors:

Ailbhe Booth, Department of Children Disability, Equality, Integration and Youth, Ireland

Glenda Walsk, Stranmillis University College, United Kingdom

Franka Winter, Stranmillis University College, United Kingdom

Thérèse Farrell, Stranmillis University College, United Kingdom

This study sought to evaluate Ireland's national preschool programme, the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. A large body of international evidence supports public investment in quality early childhood education to improve children's cognitive and socio-emotional outcomes (OECD, 2018). Established in 2009, ECCE is a universal two-year pre-school programme available to all children in Ireland. The programme is delivered over 38 weeks per year from September to June, for 15 hours per week. It provides children with their first formal experience of early learning prior to commencing primary school (DCEDIY, 2019). ECCE is delivered in accordance with the principles of two practice frameworks for early learning and care: *Síolta*, the national quality framework for early years care and education (CECDE, 2006) and *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (NCCA, 2009). Conducted by Stranmillis University on behalf of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, this mixed methods study applied a children's rights informed approach. The study included surveys, interviews and focus groups with educators, parents, children and experts. Ethics approval was obtained from Stranmillis University College's Research and Ethics Committee. Participation in all aspects of the study was voluntary, informed consent/assent was sought from all participants and all data were anonymized. Overall, ECCE has been positively received with high rates of programme uptake. This presentation will discuss potential issues around accessibility and availability for some children. The findings support further development of this national preschool programme to support all children's access and participation.

early childhood care and education, quality, early childhood policy, pre-school, mixed methods

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

ECE quality in Brazil: discussing research methods from different sources

Presenters:

Marisa Vasconcelos Ferreira, Fundação Carlos Chagas, Brazil

Co-authors:

Eliana Bhering, Fundação Carlos Chagas, Brazil

In order to understand ECE quality better, this presentation aims to argue about the need to further assess it from different methods. The Brazilian department for educational assessment and monitoring (INEP) has presented ECE results covering aspects related to teachers' professional profile and participation on continuing education; pedagogical resources; environment etc. In addition, ECE assessment research has been developed focusing on contexts using observational strategies (Campos, et, 2012; FMCSV/Lepes, 2022; Bhering et al, 2023). The Sustainable Development Goals orientations, include the need for ensuring childrens development, care and access to quality ECE. There has been discussion around this in Brazil in the past decades, illuminated by scientific literature, legislation and guidelines aligned with SDG. The debate is multidimensional, complex, and social-historically situated. Thus, there are multiple ways to investigate it. Thereby, data from INEP and other Brazilian research are explored in search of information about ECE, most importantly, interactions and pedagogical processes. Data come from public domain reports, which, in turn, guarantee participants's anonymity and confidentiality. Furthermore rigor is applied in the processing and analysis of data, aiming to contribute to democratic ECE. Interactions and pedagogical practices have been identified as very sensitive aspects to be assessed. Despite the fact that questionnaires may provide important information, observational strategies may bring more light into what really matters as far as what and how children are exposed to in ECE institutions. ECE research using observational strategies may contribute to the development of more effective assessment policy and it may impact ECE daily practices positively.

educational system assessment, ECE context evaluation, observational strategies, interactions, pedagogical processes

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Reimagining the value of young children's voices for co-constructing a children's participatory rights framework for early childhood education in South Africa

Presenters:

Naseema Shaik, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa

This study explored how children's voices influenced the co-construction of a children's participation rights framework for early childhood education in South Africa. While listening to children's voices is critical, it is challenging in a democratic South Africa, (Shaik, 2021). Children must be actively received, valued, and recognized as valuable contributors to life-changing decisions (Murray, 2019). Lundy's Model of Participation (2007) was used to explore how children experience the elements of space, voice, audience, and influence to co-construct the children's participatory rights framework. A qualitative study with a participatory methodology including puppets and group discussions was deemed appropriate. Young children are considered high risk since their physical and mental wellbeing is paramount. The Cape Peninsula University of Technology's ethics committee, health and wellness cluster, and parents authorized consent for a study, which highlighted each child's right to confidentiality and anonymity allowing withdrawal if necessary. Once consent was obtained, children provided assent in the form of a smiley face showing their willingness to participate and a sad face if not. Findings demonstrated that some children had a strong intrinsic notion that only adults could make them smart, which has consequences for how they feel they have influence. There were boundaries for space and influence, revealing that teachers made all teaching decisions and had power over the curriculum, whereas children only had influence over their play activities. The study suggests that reassessing children's role as decision-makers and influencers for the co-construction of the children's participatory rights frameworks, curriculum, policy and practice is crucial in a democratic South Africa.

children's voices , early childhood education, children's participatory rights framework, South Africa

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E8, Room 202, second floor, Grand Parade building

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND THE HOME

Mustafa Ciftcioglu, The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Adult-Child Interactions when using Digital Play

Presenters:

Natalie Day, University of Wollongong, Australia

Lisa Kervin, University of Wollongong, Australia

Co-authors:

Kate Lewis, University of Wollongong, Australia

Steven Howard, University of Wollongong, Australia

This study investigates parent-preschooler interactions in digital play, emphasising adult-child-technology dynamics. Research explores how adults assist children in digital play (Ewin et al., 2021a), using cognitive, technical, physical, and emotional scaffolds (Ewin et al., 2021b). Diverse literature complicates defining ideal digital interactions. Pyle and Danniels (2017) emphasise adult-child dynamics, proposing a continuum on which adult roles shape play type. Gradual release of responsibility (GRR) models emphasise direction, collaboration, and independence. For play, we can adapt the GRR model to prioritise agency over independence. Agency is essential to early learning (Mashford-Scott & Church, 2011), children use it in play to initiate and collaborate on meaningful ideas (Adair et al., 2017). However, existing models overlook digital play, adding complexity to digital interactions. Sociocultural theories emphasise the vital role of social interaction in children's learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Despite children's increasingly digital lives (Edwards, 2022), their experiences with digital play vary. Investigating technology's role in interactions is crucial. Observational methods captured adult-child digital play interactions through video (360-degree camera) and audio recordings, presented as illustrative case studies. Visitors freely moved between the research space and the adjacent play museum. Informed consent was obtained to ensure voluntary participation. Participants received an information sheet, verbal explanation, and a consent form. Parents/caregivers were briefed on recording equipment, data use, storage, anonymity. Declining participants returned to the play museum.

Analysis uncovers a triadic adult-child-technology dynamic, shaped by three contextual themes: expertise, control, and pace. Leveraging GRR models, agency, and play-based learning can tailor digital play and learning interactions.

digital technology, play, interactions, agency, contextual influences

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

"I ask Alexa to play some nursery rhymes, so that was the first word my daughter learnt." Play, learning and wellbeing with smart speakers in the homes of children aged 0-36 months

Presenters:

Julia Gillen, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Sabina Savadova, University of Lancaster, United Kingdom

Rosie Flewitt, MMU, United Kingdom

Lorna Arnott, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

Karen Winter, Queens University Belfast, United Kingdom

Janet Goodall, University of Swansea, United Kingdom

Sandra El Gemayel, MMU, United Kingdom

Zinnia Mevawalla, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

Sarah Timmins, University of Swansea, United Kingdom

Andy Dalziell, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

This study explores how ubiquitous smart speakers are in homes of children aged 0-36 months in the UK and explores creative strategies with which parents use them to enhance their children's play, learning and wellbeing. Smart speakers, more technically Conversational Assistants, are fascinating manifestation of human-machine interaction, lending themselves to attributions of life-like qualities by very young children, as presaged by Suchman (2007). Andries and Robertson (2023) explored attitudes and experiences of 6-11 year-old children. The post-digital Home Literacy Environment (Flewitt & Clark, 2020) offers a frame for consideration of bodies, physical space, technologies and virtual interactions as inextricably entwined. Our mixed-method project comprises a survey of families with children aged 0-36 months across the UK (n>1200); surveys of parents and practitioners (n=60), and case studies (n=40). Here, we take a slice from survey and interview data with parents; so use descriptive and inferential statistics, and thematic analysis. Our detailed ethical framework is constantly interrogated to ensure that research is respectful of all participants (BERA 2018). We translated the survey into 13 languages and designed a bespoke methods palette for multilingual/seldom-heard communities. Our quantitative findings point to the high frequency of use of smart speakers in homes of very young children, and demonstrate correlations with certain sociodemographic characteristics. Our qualitative data analysis illustrates uses of smart speakers to enhance play, learning and wellbeing. We propose that ECE settings, as well as families, in considering whether or how to make use of smart speakers might benefit from these creative strategies.

very young children, smart speakers, Home Learning Environment, mixed methods, musicality

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Parental Guidance Strategies and Children's Media Habits: A Comparative Study in Scotland and Turkey

Presenters:

Mustafa Ciftcioglu, The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Kadriye Selin Budak, Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University, Turkey

Nesrin Işıkoglu, Pamukkale University, Turkey

The purpose of this research was to identify young children's media habits and their parents' guidance strategies across two countries: Scotland and Turkey. Children in contemporary societies frequently have access to digital tools

into their daily routines, treating screen time as a form of play (Arnott & Yelland, 2020; Edwards, 2019; Rideout & Robb, 2020). This digital play involves children using devices in playful ways, with parents serving a vital role in mediating access, purchasing devices, facilitating digital game use, and enforcing restrictions to prevent potential issues like addiction (Chaudron et al., 2018; Livingstone et al., 2015; Putnick et al., 2023). The bioecological model of development provides a theoretical framework to comprehend children's media habits and parental guidance strategies within the ecological techno-subsystem in the microsystem (Johnson & Ptoplampu, 2008). In this preliminary descriptive study, 100 parents (50 from Scotland and 50 from Turkey) with children aged 4-6 participated. Data was gathered using the Digital Play Parental Mediation Scale and a questionnaire designed to measure children's media habits. Informed consents and institutional review board examinations were guaranteed in each country at the local university. The findings reveal that children's daily screen time was approximately 72 minutes in Scotland and 98 minutes in Turkey. In Scotland, parents predominantly active strategies ($M=3.97$), while in Turkey, similarly active strategies ($M=4.03$) were more commonly used to guide children toward positive media habits. These findings suggest that parents employing active guidance can play a crucial role in helping children develop healthy media habits.

parental guidance, digital play, media habits, young children, screen time

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E9, Room 204, second floor, Grand Parade building

GENDER AND GENDER STEREOTYPES IN ECEC

Cathy Kilburn, University of Hull, United Kingdom

Pushing Against Gender Stereotype in Children's Play: Female Soldiers' Story

Presenters:

Ade Dwi Utami, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia

This study aims to investigate how children engage with and internalise diverse gendered roles within playworld, a play approach adopted as an activity setting. While a considerable body of literature examining gendered play in early childhood settings existed, the majority of studies have predominantly focused on teachers' gender beliefs and practices, as well as gendered representations evident in children's stories, toys, and play across varied contexts. Concurrently, ongoing discourse persists regarding the origins of observed gender differences, whether they stem from biological factors or are socially constructed. Despite this, there remains a paucity of research on gendered play within Indonesian early childhood settings. Drawing upon Vygotsky's (1966) theories of play and contradiction, alongside the concept of motive, this research seeks to elucidate the tensions and dramatic moments inherent in children's enactment of gendered roles within imaginary play scenarios. Employing a qualitative methodology, 11 hours of data were analysed for children-teacher interactions, involving nine teachers and 38 children during group-play activities. Consent was obtained from teachers and parents for their children to participate and be recorded in the research, with pseudonyms used. The findings reveal how imaginary play environments afford children opportunities to explore and challenge traditional gender roles, thereby contributing to their gender identity development. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of teachers' responsiveness to children's perspectives on gender role tensions encountered during play-based activities. In its facilitation of children's gender identity development through play, playworld emerges as a pedagogical approach that underscores the teachers' active role, supporting motive development while children negotiate gender tensions.

gender, play, early childhood education, teacher, pedagogy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

“Boy kittens play over there” Preschool children's role in reinforcing gender norms and stereotypes whilst playing with their peers

Presenters:

Cathy Kilburn, University of Hull, United Kingdom

This study aimed to identify the techniques that preschool children use to reinforce their peers' knowledge and adherence to gender stereotypes and norms. Early childhood settings have become increasingly aware of the negative impact that gender stereotypes can have on children's long-term outcomes, and future potential, over the last decade (OECD, 2019; Phair, 2021). However, despite early childhood practitioners working hard to ensure that their settings promote gender equity (Børve & Børve, 2017), preschool children are still exposed to gender stereotypes. The theoretical framework for this study draws on Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological model, as well as general theories of gender development. This research is situated within a social constructivist paradigm and utilises a qualitative methodology. The methods used include video-recorded observations, video-stimulated conversations with the children and a picture task. Ethical concerns identified included the use of video recording and digital voice recording. Children with parental consent took part in assent conversations where an information booklet was shared with them using appropriate language. Children's assent was negotiated daily, and pseudonyms have been used for all participants. The findings demonstrate that whilst early childhood settings work hard to reduce the stereotypes and inequalities that children are exposed to, preschool children use a range of techniques to reinforce gender stereotypes with their peers. This research identified that preschool children are actively involved in reinforcing gender inequality with their peers which raises challenges for practitioners whose attempts to provide gender-equitable education for the children in their care are being thwarted by the children themselves.

preschool children, gender stereotypes, children's agency, practitioner's role, gender-equitable

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Gender stereotyping in Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Urban area of China: A Case study

Presenters:

Shengnan Li, University of Bristol School of Education, United Kingdom

Ioanna Palaiologou, University of Bristol School of Education, United Kingdom

This research aims to investigate whether there are factors of gender stereotyping in teaching activities of ECE and if so, what these factors are and what the influencing factors are that lead to such phenomenon of gender stereotyping in China. This work builds on extensive research on gender and sexuality that argue that the concepts are not simply a binary construct, but rather a spectrum that includes a range of identities and experiences and influenced by factors such as culture (West and Zimmerman, 1987, Connell 1995, Lorber, 1994). Thus, the project takes a social learning theory lens that proposes that children learn gendered behaviors, attitudes, and values through observation, imitation, and reinforcement (Bandura & Walters, 1963). Qualitative methodology and case study approach were employed with non-participant observations of teacher-child interactions and semi structured interviews with the teachers in one large kindergarten in urban China over three months. The project adheres to the EECERA and University of Bristol, ethical codes and consent and assent were sought throughout the research project. Although children were not directly involved, parental consent was sought, and a system of sign cards was employed where the children could use to stop the observations. This work is in progress, but preliminary findings revealed that teachers encourage children to engage with activities depending on their gender. The outcomes of this project will offer evidence and recommended countermeasures in eliminating the gender stereotyping in ECE of urban China.

urban China, gender stereotypes, early childhood education, social learning theory, gender and sexuality

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E10, Room 207, second floor, Grand Parade building

DEVELOPING AND MONITORING CHILDREN'S WELLBEING

Chair: Sivi Harkoma, University of Helsinki, Finland

Impact of pedagogical intervention on children's involvement and wellbeing

Presenters:

Sivi Harkoma, University of Helsinki, Finland

Co-authors:

Nina Sajaniemi, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Mari Saha, University of Tampere, Finland

Eira Suhonen, University of Helsinki, Finland

The aim of this study was to investigate the extent to which a pedagogical intervention (PedaSens) can enhance children's involvement and wellbeing (LIS-YC) in ECEC. A previous study has shown that the intervention can increase emotional availability (EA) of ECEC staff in group interaction (Harkoma et al. 2022). Theoretically this study draws from Experiential Education (EXE) theory that is used to explain the importance of high-quality educational settings in group interactions (Laevers 2003). Attachment theory (Bowlby 1969) and the concept emotional availability (EA) are used to describe the features of adult-child interaction. (Biringen & Easterbrooks 2012). Participants were 74 ECEC professionals and 274 children from 24 groups in 16 ECEC centres in Finland. ECEC staff were randomized in intervention (n=172) and control (n=102) groups. Video recordings were conducted to observe adult-children interaction in the groups. The children's involvement and wellbeing, and staff's emotional availability assessment were conducted before the intervention and approximately nine months after the intervention. Statistical analyses (Linear Mixed Model) were used to test differences between intervention and control groups. The study was approved by the Ethics Committee on Human Studies (University of Helsinki) and consent forms were received from the children's parents and staff. Children's ongoing assent to participate in the study was ensured by observing their behaviour during the filming. The results of the study show whether the intervention has impacts on children involvement and wellbeing. The results can be used to develop in-service training and to support staff in their pedagogical knowledge and practices.

involvement, wellbeing, emotional availability, adult-child interaction, pedagogical intervention

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A Froebelian approach to nurturing young children's spiritual growth

Presenters:

Fengling Tang, University of Roehampton, United Kingdom

This presentation shares part of provisional findings of a Froebel Trust funded research project 'Spirituality in early childhood pedagogy: a Froebelian approach in Chinese and English contexts'. Spirituality is an important dimension of children's holistic development linking to autonomy, intra-personal relationships, mindfulness, self-awareness, resilience, responsibility and wellbeing (Bone, 2008; Mata-McMahon, Haslip & Schein, 2020). This research adopts a Froebelian lens framing spirituality via the concept of Unity, which connects the child with family, community, nature, divinity and world (Froebel, 1887; Bruce, 1987; Tovey, 2013). Spiritual education in Froebelian tradition is cultivation of the child's body, mind, feelings, aesthetic awareness, creativity and morality (Best, 2016). This qualitative study uses participant observations, focus group interviews, questionnaires and informal conversations at four early childhood settings in China and England. This presentation focuses on children's experiences at two nursery schools in England. The study adheres to ethical principles to protect participants' wellbeing, respect participants as human beings with rights to make informed decision and ensure authenticity of participants' perspectives (EECERA, 2015; BERA, 2018). The study witnesses children's spiritual growth as an ongoing learning journey linking to daily expressions and experience with care, compassion, happiness and sorrow, to their search for meaning of life, and to their making sense of who they are through relational engagements with key people, nature, the imaginary, and cultural, religious rituals. The study calls for the urgency of providing time and space in nurturing children's spiritual awareness, expressions and experiences as a key part of their holistic learning and wellbeing.

A Froebelian approach, spiritual awareness and experience, holistic learning and wellbeing, relational engagement, nature and play

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Setting children up to flourish: Development of a measure to identify and monitor wellbeing in children aged 3-8 years

Presenters:

Khaiden Dow, University of Western Australia, Australia

Co-authors:

Fiona Mayne, University of Western Australia, Australia

This presentation reports the development of a measure to screen subjective wellbeing in 3-8-year-old children. Research shows there is unprecedented need for mental health support of children (Bessell, 2021) and that early intervention is important for overall health and educational outcomes, and provides radiating benefits for family and societal wellbeing (OECD, 2020). This research emphasised hearing from the children themselves on their own emerging sense of wellbeing, and used a theoretical framework that prioritised children's rights, voice and agency (Mayne et al., 2018). Within an interpretivist paradigm, a mixed-methods approach comprising statistical analysis, literature review, and stakeholder consultations was employed to provide a robust foundation for the new wellbeing measure. Methods included focus groups and semi-structured interviews with parents, educators and children, content analysis of wellbeing frameworks and a scoping review of early childhood wellbeing literature. Formal institutional ethical permissions were obtained and child participants were included in a respectful research culture with a focus on meaningful participation (Mayne & Howitt, 2022a). Highlighting the critical role of social-emotional skills for children's wellbeing and future success, the project explored subjective wellbeing, providing new insights into the multifaceted and dynamic nature of wellbeing during early childhood. It reports the intersection of what is needed (from educator and parent consultations), what is reported (in empirical literature) and what is expected (in policy and framework documents). This research highlights gaps in early childhood wellbeing research, and offers transferable synergies, knowledge and insights into policy and practice decisions that will support young children to flourish.

subjective wellbeing, mental health, early intervention, children's voice and agency, self-report wellbeing screening

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E11, NEW ROOM, Room 209, second floor, Edward Street Building

EXPLORING DIVERSE HOME LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Kimberley Kong, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Malaysia

Bringing up Children: Inequalities of Access to Early Childhood Education and Care for urban and diverse families

Presenters:

Claire Cameron, University College London, United Kingdom

Deniz Arzuk, UCL, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Dea Neilsen, University of York, United Kingdom

Kimon Krenz, UCL, United Kingdom

Pratima Singh, QMUL, United Kingdom

Mathilda O'Donoghue, QMUL, United Kingdom

In diverse 21st century UK urban landscapes, our study uncovers how shifting dynamics of ECEC access apply in two inner-city areas with high levels of child poverty and ethnically diverse populations. Our project is part of ActEarly, a research-practice collaboration in London and Yorkshire aiming to enhance child health through interventions supporting life chances. Taking up ECEC places has long varied by social class and maternal education (OECD Family Database, Simon 2015), and previous work has suggested that 'personal preference' accounted for low take up of 'free childcare' (Johnes and Hutchinson 2016, Huskinson 2016, Albakri 2018, Owen 2020). The theoretical framework draws on concepts of spatial, structural, cultural and equitable access theories (Harvey 2010), supported by Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, and field to interpret discourses of access. This is a mixed methods, place-based, community study employing geo-spatial mapping, focus groups and interviews with parents and ECEC providers and co-design workshops with parents. We follow strict data protection and ethical guidelines. In east London, our initial maps show that structural barriers such as cost, lack of spaces, location and what's on offer not fitting with parents' needs limit access to ECEC (Outhwaite 2024) rather than personal preference. Our research unpacks how parents from diverse backgrounds conceptualise ECEC and navigate access barriers, revealing how this impacts their experiences of bringing up children in the inner city. Our findings are timely given the 2024 extension of 'free' hours but conclude that extended provision will need careful tailoring to accommodate diverse needs.

inner-city take-up, parenting cultures, inequalities, mapping, mixed methods

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Parental Beliefs, Cultural Identity, and Home Learning Environments: A Study on Refugee Caregivers in Malaysia

Presenters:

Kimberley Kong, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Malaysia

Katharina Ereky-Stevens, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Iram Siraj, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

This study assesses the association between parental beliefs, ethnic identity and home learning environment (HLE) of preschool-aged children in an ethnically diverse refugee context in Malaysia. Research has established HLE to be instrumental in shaping the formative years of children's development (Baker, 2013; Hindman & Morrison, 2012; Sénéchal et al., 2002). Cultural identity is a key determinant of parenting practices and educational engagement (Hughes et al., 2006; Yosso, 2005). This study extends Rogoff's work (2003) by exploring how cultural backgrounds shape educational engagement, demonstrating that parents' cultural beliefs and practices play a significant role in HLE. Drawing on Bronfenbrenner's theory that highlights culture's impact on development through relational systems, this research delves into how parental beliefs, ethnic identity, and HLE interact among 5 major Myanmar's ethnic minority refugee caregivers. The study adopted a quantitative positivist paradigm. The IDELA Caregiver Questionnaire was used to collect data from 912 caregivers of children aged 5-6 years across five states in Malaysia. Both variable and person-focused approaches were used to analyse the data. The study adhered to ethical protocols, ensuring participant consent, data confidentiality, and cultural sensitivity throughout the research process. Regression analysis found strong association between parental beliefs, ethnic identities and HLE, even after controlling for socioeconomic factors. Person-focused analysis revealed distinct variations in parenting practices, parental beliefs and educational values across different HLE profiles. The study highlights the necessity of adopting engagement strategies that are culturally sensitive and value the diverse cultural identities of families to ensure their effectiveness.

home learning environment, ethnic identity, parental beliefs, refugees, early childhood education

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Parental Educational Expectations and Approaches to Learning of Chinese Children: Socioeconomic Status as a Moderator

Presenters:

Lulu Wang, East China Normal University, China

Co-authors

Zhaocun Li, East China Normal University, China

Diyue Liu, Zhejiang University of Technology, China

This study examines how parental educational expectations influence children's approaches to learning (ATL) through the mediating effects of parental stress and parenting style. Considering different aspects of parental stress and parenting style, we explored whether, and how, parental socioeconomic status (SES) moderated the predictive relationships. The importance and understanding of ATL in young children are increasingly being discussed (Zhang, 2023). Parental expectations play a significant role in children's academic success and are linked to competence, motivation, and social resilience (Yamamoto & Holloway, 2010). However, parental attitudes, behaviors, and specific parenting styles may have a negative impact on ATL, which has rarely been fully examined (Esposito et al., 2016). According to the bioecological theory, social context of individual interactions, especially parent-child interaction determines the degree to which individuals can develop abilities and realize potentials (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Consistent with this theory, parental factors have important influences on children's ATL. The sample consisted of 756 families with the target children after deleting invalid sample, including 398 boys and 358 girls between 1 year and 7 years. We distribute the questionnaires online randomly, and no missing data was collected in this study. Written consent forms was collected from children's parents; information about the kindergarten, teachers, parents and children was kept confidential. The findings highlight the importance of including multiple aspects of parental stress and parenting style and considering SES differences to fully explore factors that influence children's ATL. Future efforts to guide parental support and enhance children's ATL are discussed.

parental educational expectations, socioeconomic status, parenting style, approaches to learning, socioeconomic status

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E12, Room 225, second floor, Grand Parade building

CHILDRENS WELLBEING, RESILIENCE, AND HOPE

Ann-Christin Furu, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

Against the backdrop of the accelerating sustainability crises, supporting children's wellbeing and resilience have become a key issue within ECEfS (Furu et al, 2023). Further, all children should, according to both the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN 1989) and Agenda 2030 (UN 2015), have the opportunity to actively contribute to a sustainable future. Strengthening hope and action competence are of uttermost importance within early childhood education and care (ECEC). This symposium addresses the concepts resilience and wellbeing as conceptual tools for promoting sustainability education in the field of ECEC. From the perspectives of children, parents, and teachers, they shed light on necessary future transformation of work within ECEC and the three presentations provide insights from Malta, Ireland, and Finland. The symposium aims to promote a critical and constructive discussion suggesting research-based possible directions for future education, policy-making and research.

sustainability_early_childhood_education

Nature connectedness and student teacher resilience as a foundation for ECEfS

Presenters:

Ann-Christin Furu, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

This paper aims to explore the nexus of resilience, connectedness to nature, and capacity to conduct sustainability education among student teachers within the ECEC teacher education context. Ensuring that children can build resilience to handle the current sustainability challenges and participate as active changemakers is a priority, given

they are among those most negatively affected by the situation (Furu & Heikkilä, in progress). This, in turn, requires that resilient teachers have the capacity to conduct transformative sustainability education. The research is founded in contemporary perspectives on ECEfS (Elliott, Årlemalm-Hagsér & Davis (2020) and a multisystemic perspective on resilience (Ungar, 2021) as a dynamic, contextual, and relational capacity which includes physical, psychological, and social dimensions. A postqualitative research paradigm is adopted (Åsberg, Hultman & Lee, 2012) including a narrative bricolage approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Odegaard, 2019; Clandinin, 2023); an online questionnaire was completed by 51 student teachers participating in a mandatory course on sustainability and natural sciences. In-depth interviews with staff (n=4) with a personal interest in working outdoors were also conducted. Informed consent was obtained from all participant and all data was anonymized. The study shows that student teachers perceive themselves as highly connected to nature and that their resilience is positively linked to this. Further, the nature connectedness is also an important basis for their motivation and capacity to conduct ECEfS. Building on empirical research materials, we point to the necessity of supporting teacher resilience both in pre- and in-service professional development courses highlighting the role of nature connectedness.

nature, resilience, education for sustainability, ECEC, teacher education

Children are paying the heaviest price: Parental concerns about climate change and children's emotional needs

Presenters:

Jane Spiteri, University of Malta, Malta

To explore parents' understanding of children's climate-related emotions, and the needs and challenges they face in supporting their children. Parents express worry regarding climate change, yet there is limited research exploring parenthood as a catalyst for young children's environmental engagement and its impact on their emotional wellbeing amidst the climate crisis (Godden et al., 2021; Ojala, 2022; Shrum et al., 2023). This is particularly crucial as direct and indirect impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly evident (IPCC, 2023). This study draws on theories of hope (Snyder, 2002; Snyder et al., 2017) and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997). This qualitative case study explored the perceptions of 14 Maltese parents concerning climate change and their children's climate-related emotions, via semi-structured interviews. Participant selection was based on voluntary participation. Ethical approval was sought from education authorities, Voluntary informed consent was sought at the start of the study. Participants were free to withdraw their consent anytime. Parents expressed significant concern about climate change and its potential impact on their children's health and wellbeing. They outlined obstacles that hinder their ability to address the issue with their children, whilst also noting some positive experiences in doing so. The findings suggest that parents would benefit from resources to help them support their children's understanding of climate change in a manner that nurtures their emotional wellbeing and resilience, and promote hopefulness. These results can help inform researchers, educators and policymakers to find ways to emphasise solutions, and encourage action in the context of a changing climate.

climate change, parental concerns, exo-anxiety, resilience, hope

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

'And it all just goes out the window' – Authentic child participation as a pillar for sustainability under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Presenters:

Muireann Ranta, South East Technological University, Ireland

The research aimed to explore with young children their own perspectives of Nature under Article 29 1 (e) of the UNCRC, which stipulates that children's education shall be directed to developing a respect for the natural environment. Despite a growth in child rights-based research with young children (Mayne et al 2018, Wall et al 2019) that which includes their own contributions to education for sustainable development remains scarce. A child rights theoretical framework was used. Using a child rights-based, participatory methodological paradigm (Lundy & McEvoy, 2011;2012) research methods were designed with the support of a children's research advisory group

(CRAG) (n=7) made up of 3-4 year olds. Methods developed were nature-based arts and storytelling workshops, implemented over nine months in 2019 at a local early childhood setting. They were subsequently used with a second group of participants (n=9), aged between 2-3 years. The main ethical consideration was establishing a rights-based assent/dissent process authentic to the participants. This was overcome through collaboration with the CRAG and through ongoing reflexivity (Collins et al., 2020; Huser et al., 2022). Children define their own relationship with Nature and make their own connections with it. Furthermore, through participating in research about matters that affect them, they also establish their own definitions of participation. Authentic child participation is of itself, a pillar for sustainability. These insights support Robson's (2016) and Lundy and Martinez Sainz's (2018) call for less 'top down', policy-to-practice approaches to children's rights and for greater attention to children's living realities.

child rights, rights-based research, authentic child participation, education for sustainable development, young children

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E13, Room 229, second floor, Grand Parade building

LEADERSHIP AND QUALITY PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT

Sophia Rudeberg, The department of education, Sweden

"Adjustment" in the culturally diverse early childcare institution: Dilemmas and leadership.

Presenters:

Lina Lillebø Bjunes, NLA University College, Norway

When children have their first transition to the Norwegian early childcare institution (ECI), they are met by a pedagogical practice called "adjustment" ("tilvenning"), based on attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969/1982, Ainsworth, 1989). The aim of my research was to identify what appears in research and academic literature about "adjustment" in the culturally diverse ECI. I discuss what the results can imply for leadership.

Literature searches were conducted in Norwegian and international databases. Only four articles concerning "adjustment" in the Norwegian culturally diverse ECI were found (Belseth, 2020; Birkeland, 2021; Kalkman, 2019; Sadownic, 2018). The articles provide supplementary perspectives to the recommended way of practicing "adjustment" (Brandtzæg, Torsteinson & Øiestad, 2013; Broberg, Hagström, Broberg, 2014, Drugli, 2017). Implications for leadership are discussed using inspiration from Møllers (1996) theory on loyalty dilemmas. Two categories are central: Organizing and competence. The literature searches were inspired by rapid review (Tricco, Langlois & Straus, 2017; Grant & Booth, 2009), but it was considered important to include both research articles and academic literature. Documenting the methodology and highlighting its limitations are measures made to ensure that ethical concerns are met. Leadership in "adjustment" in the culturally diverse ECI is complex. Several loyalty dilemmas may occur, and priorities must be made again and again in interaction with written regulations, traditions, coworkers, parents and children. Findings indicate that the standard way of practicing "adjustment" might not be enough in the culturally diverse ECI. The need for new knowledge and reflection is highlighted.

adjustment, transition, dilemmas, leadership, culturally diverse early childcare institution

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

And sometimes the systematic quality work align - Municipal and preschool principals responsibility in educational policy

Presenters:

Sophia Rudeberg, The department of education, Sweden

The aim is to understand how Swedish municipals and preschool principals systematic quality work relate to the Swedish National curriculum for preschool (2018). This study examines two interrelated, challenges that can create

dilemmas. First, a challenge related to the potential weaknesses in cooperation between the municipal organiser and the preschool principal (cf. Håkansson, 2016, 2019; Love, 2021). Second, a challenge related to the potential difficulty for the preschool principal to position him- or herself professionally, in alignment with the governing policies (cf. Boyland et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al, 2021). Curriculum alignment (alignment theory) is used to compare how and if the principal's responsibility for systematic quality work is interlinked between the municipalities and local preschools, and the Swedish National curriculum for preschool (cf. Pianta et al., 2009; Spjut, 2021). The study operates within a qualitative research paradigm and employing a document study as the chosen method. Data collection involves official documents that contains systematic quality work from twelve Swedish municipalities and twelve local preschools. The analytical approach used is a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (cf. Bingham et al, 2019). The following ethical aspects are considered: confidentiality, integrity of personal data and case numbers is used to prevent disclosure of personal information. Approved 2023 by the Swedish Ethical Review Authority. The study reveals contrasting interpretations of responsibility between the municipalities and preschool principals when evaluating the systematic quality work in preschools The findings are important for understanding how to improve policy implementation around systematic quality work on different levels.

Preschool principals, Systematic quality work, Curriculum alignment, Swedish municipals , Educational policy

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring the Competency of Supervisors of Public Child Care Centres in Taiwan.

Presenters:

Chien-Huei, Hsu, Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan

This research intricately examines supervisors' role definitions, execution strategies, and behaviors to propose role adaptation and enhancement strategies. The literature underscores supervisors' crucial role in enhancing child-staff dynamics and service quality, highlighting the necessity for adaptability in an evolving operational context. (Douglass , 2019; OECD, 2020; Grint,& Jones, 2022). Based on Spencer & Spencer's (1993) definition of function, this study conceptualised childcare leadership as a combination of essential knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours necessary for managerial effectiveness. This research employs a qualitative framework to scrutinize the leadership attributes and roles of supervisors in Taiwan's public childcare centers, specifically their influence on service quality. After interviewing 10 supervisors, content-specific coding and analyses were conducted to develop findings based on the Competency analysis framework This research complied with Fu Jen Catholic University's Ethics Review Board standards, ensuring participants' informed consent, privacy, and anonymity through both written and verbal explanations prior to interviews. The findings of the study indicated that the competencies of supervisors included strategic planning, operational implementation, child care guidance, human resource management, interpersonal communication, and team leadership. This study also found that child care center supervisors have a personality trait of "maternal leadership". This study provided actionable insights for child care centre management to address the needs of supervisors, establish a competency development framework, and plan educational activities aimed at improving service quality and efficiency. These contributions enrich the academic and practical discourse on childcare leadership, highlighting the critical role of effective supervision in optimising services.

child care competency, childcare leadership, quality of childcare, childcare supervisor, professional development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E14, Room 318b, third floor, Grand Parade building

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT EARLY LITERACY

Fufy Demissie, Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

Pilot of a Content and Language Integrated Learning approach for the early learning and care sector in Ireland

Presenters:

Jacqui de Paor, The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Ireland
 Eimear Carron, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Ireland

To explore a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach to implementing partial immersion in Irish, within English-medium Early Learning and Care settings and primary schools. The CLIL project was a three year pilot project initiated by DCEDIY and DE. The aim of the CLIL was to improve learner competence, confidence and disposition to Irish. CLIL also sought to promote bilingualism beyond Irish-medium settings. Villabona & Cenoz (2022) show that CLIL is understood and implemented in different ways. However, early learning and care can provide the ideal conditions for early additional language acquisition through CLIL (Otto & Cortina-Pérez, 2013). Complexity theory (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) discusses the non-linear, complex and heterogeneous nature of language systems. Constructivist paradigm and a participatory research methodology was used. Qualitative data from surveys with educators and focus groups/interviews with children aged 3-5 year was collated. The National Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making (Government of Ireland, 2015) informed consultation with children and informed parental consent and children's assent was sought. Engagement with settings and educators was through voluntary participation. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Opportunity to withdraw at any time was provided. The findings suggest the value of CLIL in supporting sustainability of a minority language. Findings have influenced the strategic actions of the Department to support and embed cultural and linguistic sustainability. Supports such as planning and practice resource materials are required by early years educators to support implementation of the Irish language within English-medium settings.

content and language Integrated learning, second language teaching, minority language, bilingualism, immersion education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Children's reflections after storytime

Presenters:

Kristin Aadland-Atkinson, NLA university college, Norway

This study aims to explore the possibilities of an after storytelling conversation as a tool for meaning making, oracy and literacy development. Literary conversations are used with young children to explore different aspects related to different versions of literacy (Tysvær & Ottesen, 2020). Storytelling is an interactive meeting with stories (Aadland, 2016, Lwin, 2016) and meaning making happens both through and after the situation (Aadland-Atkinson, in process). This study explores how such conversations can be used in early school years. The study builds on a socio cultural view on learning and knowledge, emphasizing the situational and collaborative sides of meaning making (Vygotsky 1978, Bruner, 1986). This is a qualitative phenomenological study, in an interpretive research paradigm. Video data was obtained from one storyteller situation, followed by a whole group conversation. The main focus is on the conversation, and the interaction between the teacher and the children. The participants are children age six to seven, in their first year in a Norwegian school. The study was reported to, and approved by the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (SIKT). All participants, and the children's parents gave written, informed consent, and they are all anonymized. Findings suggest that even a simple, nonsense, repetitive folktale, children can lead to construction of unexpected understandings which again can lead to oral or literary activity, when the story is scrutinized with a guiding teacher. The study suggests storytelling conversations in school as a tool for wondering, oracy and literacy work.

storytelling, story listening, orality, literacy, meaning making

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Talk with Tales for Children (TWITCH) : emerging evidence of its impact on practitioner interaction styles and children's language development.

Presenters:

Fufy Demissie, Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom
 Sally Pearse, Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

The Talk with Tales for Children (TWITCH) programme is a 3 year professional development programme for early years practitioners that is designed to enhance interaction styles that facilitate children's language development. Picture books (Haynes and Murriss, 2012), dialogic reading approach (Whitehurst & Vardy, 2022) and high quality facilitate interaction strategies and nurture language development (Purdon, 2016; Noble et al., 2019). Adopting more interactive interaction styles challenges established professional identities about storytime and interaction strategies. The COM-B model for behaviour change is used to analyse the effectiveness of TWITCH on practitioners' interaction styles. This is a qualitative study that uses an evaluation methodology to examine the scope, potential and limitations of the TWITCH intervention. A pre and post intervention questionnaire and focus group discussions will be used to gather data and content analysis used to categorise emerging themes. Participants received a project information sheet before completing a consent outlining arrangements for confidentiality, participation and anonymity and the options for withdrawing from the study. All the data was stored on secure university drives and relevant forms and documents were sent using Zendto. TWITCH transformed practitioners expectations of storytime, their interaction styles and children's language development. The findings demonstrate how a language immersive context that is structured and focussed on one storybook can improve practitioners' confidence and children's language development. The findings can influence training for early years teachers and continuous professional development.

dialogic reading, facilitative interaction, language development in 3-4 year olds, engagement and participation in stories, Picture books

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E15, Room 103, first floor, Edward Street building

ISSUES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING MULTILINGUAL CHILDREN

Jeanette Koskinen, Örebro university, Sweden

Supporting Estonian language teaching in Russian language of instruction kindergartens in Estonia

Presenters:

Maire Tuul, Tallinn University, Estonia

Kerstin Kööp, Tallinn University, Estonia

In April 2018, the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research initiated a pilot project titled "Professional Estonian-speaking Teacher in Russian-language Instruction Groups," with the goal of enhancing the quality of Estonian language education in Russian-speaking kindergarten groups. Our research seeks to assess the project's efficacy by gathering input from both Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking teachers and headmasters, and monitoring the progress of the children's Estonian language proficiency throughout the project. This research is related to previous studies on teaching Estonian as a second language (Gusjuk, Tuul, & Õun, 2022; Kukk, Õun, & Ugaste, 2014). The project activities were inspired by language immersion experiences, with a guiding principle that second language learning should occur in as natural a manner as possible (Morgan & Rinvolucri, 1983). The study employed a mixed-method design, starting with surveys to assess stakeholders' expectations and experiences. Group discussions followed with project teams, and annually, children's Estonian language proficiency was evaluated. Over five years, the study involved 250+ teachers (Estonian and Russian speakers), 50+ principals, and 500+ children. The Estonian researchers' ethical guidelines (Eesti..., 2002) were followed, ensuring anonymity, voluntary participation, and clear data usage explanations. The research revealed initial challenges for stakeholders in understanding their roles, but they later expressed high satisfaction with the project activities and children's development. Russian-speaking teachers also highlighted the project's benefit in improving their proficiency in Estonian language and culture. The study findings offer valuable insights for those seeking effective approaches to support children's second language learning.

second language learning, ECEC, cooperation, teachers, principals

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Exploring heterogeneity in developmental outcomes for young dual language learners in Western Canada

Presenters:

Rebecca Georgis, University of Exeter, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Rebecca Gokiert, University of Alberta, Canada

Anna Kirova, University of Alberta, Canada

Challenging deficit and homogenous perspectives of Dual Language (DL) learners, this study explored the heterogeneity in developmental outcomes for young DL learners in Alberta based on a secondary cluster analysis of a large dataset. DL learners are often positioned at an academic disadvantage compared to monolingual native peers (Kim et al., 2018). More recent studies show that they are heterogenous in terms of first and second language abilities (Choi et al., 2023) and more research is needed to understand developmental heterogeneity.

Acculturation theory (e.g., Berry, 2006; Suarez-Orozco et al. 2018), which views dual language and cultural development as an additive rather than a subtractive process, contributing to resilience, informed the research. Drawing on a realist paradigm, data were collected on 7906 DL children using the Early Development Instrument (EDI; Janus & Offord, 2007) and qualitative teacher observations. The EDI assesses five developmental domains: social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and communication. We used data with approval for secondary analysis and obtained institutional ethical approval to ensure our aims aligned with the intended secondary use. We identified 3 groups of DL learners. Approximately 34% of children were performing on par with peers on all five EDI domains. Majority of children (46%) were performing well on 4 domains but lower on communication as they were still learning English. The third group (20%) included children who were underperforming in all five EDI areas. Our findings suggest the need for informed policy and practice for DL learners, based on their diverse developmental needs.

dual language learners , immigrants , developmental outcomes , secondary analysis , acculturation

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Language teaching for multilingual children in Swedish-medium ECEC in Finland

Presenters:

Jeanette Koskinen, Örebro university, Sweden

This study examines ECEC teachers' beliefs about being linguistic role models and how these beliefs relate to their language teaching for multilingual children. Language and communication are considered the most significant challenges of early childhood education and care since language skills are vital for children's learning, and language diversity is growing (Åkerblom, 2017, pp. 47-49; Conner et al., 2014): 221). What language teaching should be – focusing on developing multilingual children or teaching children the majority language, is a complex issue (Åkerblom, 2017, pp. 47-49). Although there is much research on multilingualism, teachers still feel insecure about dealing with it in their classrooms (Fredriksson & Lindgren Eneflo, 2019, pp. 11-12). The theoretical framework relies on sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1987), German-Nordic Didaktik (Klafki, 1995), and language awareness (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017). This study used quantitative research methods, and an online questionnaire was answered by 42 Finnish ECEC teachers. Data was analyzed using the IBM SPSS statistical package using descriptive statistics and chi-square tests. Informed consent was requested, and information about handling personal data was received in writing. An approved research permit was obtained from all the included municipalities. Good research practice was followed. Findings reveal that teachers highly agree to be linguistic role models and find everyday activities fundamental for multilingual children's language development. However, despite their beliefs of being linguistic role

models, teachers need more knowledge on how these daily activities can become highly qualitative language teaching situations. Findings suggest implications for how language teaching can be further developed.

early childhood education and care, multilingualism, language teaching, Swedish-medium ECEC in Finland, ECEC teachers

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E16, Room 104, first floor, Edward Street building

DIALOGISING PEDAGOGIES ACROSS THE EARLY YEARS

Lynn McNair, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

This symposium will share data from a diverse pedagogies project. The project, transcultural in nature (England, New Zealand and Scotland), explored pedagogical practice across different sites. Of interest, was how teachers / practitioners articulate them in dialogues about practice. Capturing the nexus between rhetoric and reality.

Dialogising Pedagogies Across the Early Years

Presenters:

Caroline Guard, Kingston University, United Kingdom

Bridgette Redder, Te Rotorua-nui-a-Kahumatamomoe REC | Rotorua REC, New Zealand

Jayne White, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Co-authors:

Luke Addison, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Lynn McNair, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

The project sought to determine what happens when locally relevant pedagogies are dialogised across culturally diverse ECE sites. This research builds on earlier studies by the researchers who share an interest in dialogic methods for understanding pedagogies in ECE. The previous (2015) Routledge book and video companion, introduced dialogic pedagogy as a provocation for ECE. We have come to appreciate that dialogism as more than a pedagogy but an attitude towards pedagogy (White, 2015; www.age-responsive-pedagogies.com). Dialogic methodology was used to examine the tensions that exist as well as the opportunities that arise when pedagogies are visibilised for all to see. The project had three phases: 1 - 'day-in-the-life' videoing in centres across three sites; 2 - stimulated recall video interviews with two key practitioners per site x3: 3 stimulated video with two key practitioners per site x 3 based on video generated from other sites. We undertook filming that included children who were under five years and who may not have been able to grant consent. In those cases, we sought consent by proxy, with their families. We tuned into children's reactions to researcher presence, including children's right to assent throughout the research data collection process. Our insights tell us that practitioners who are attuned to dialogic principles seek out pedagogical acts that are relational, responsive to children and answerable to others. Meaning making through dialogising encounters are necessary in supporting practitioners to respond ethically and morally to the pedagogical task at hand.

early childhood, dialogising, pedagogies, philosophies, Froebel / Bakhtin

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Pedagogies at Play in an Aotearoa Context: Rhetoric and Reality

Presenters:

Bridgette Redder, Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand, New Zealand

Jayne White, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Co-authors:

Vanessa Paki, New Zealand

The aim of this research is to bring rhetoric about pedagogies into reality. Aotearoa ECE curriculum (MoE, 2017) gives impetus to certain pedagogical orientations in terms of theories and approaches. The underpinning theories and approaches primarily recognised in Te Whāriki include kaupapa Māori, sociocultural, bioecological, critical and Pasifika (MoE, 2017). Corresponding pedagogical documentation calls teachers - as kaiako - to select and then apply these to practices which can bring about positive outcomes for learners. A Bakhtinian dialogic approach (1981, 1984, 1986) provided an effective theoretical framework for this study. In Bakhtin's dialogic theory, the role of culture and context is central to the way people understand, use language and orient their seeing (1984, 1986). Dialogic methodology (Bakhtin, 1986) bridges interpretivism and post structuralism paradigmatically. Data collection methods were video-stimulated interviews. Consent forms by management and teachers, and video release forms by children and parents were signed. The visual nature of the research meant neither confidentiality nor anonymity of the ECE service, or individuals could be assured. A pseudonym could be nominated. Recording ceased if a child signalled to stop filming. Participants could withdraw up to the commencement of data analysis. In this presentation we explore the nexus between theory and practice in dialogues with teachers concerning the philosophical basis of their pedagogical orientations and applications in an ECE context. To do so we draw on video of practice and dialogues with teachers about pedagogy – thus bringing rhetoric and reality into dialogue with one another.

early childhood, dialogising, pedagogies, teacher, rhetoric and reality

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Navigating the moral and ethical nexus between research and reality: Creating spaces for dialogic connectedness in Early Childhood pedagogies in England.

Presenters:

Caroline Guard, Kingston University, United Kingdom

The project sought to examine pedagogies between teacher: child dialogues in England and sits within a broader study that explores how locally relevant pedagogies are dialogised in ECE spaces. This paper shares analysis of dialogic pedagogies and considers opportunities for, and tensions that arise 'in' and 'after' moments of interaction. This research builds on earlier studies developed by the researchers that examine dialogism with babies (Guard, 2023) and young children (White, 2015), advancing this work by creating a community of practice to cultivate knowledge exchange between culturally diverse ECE spaces and increase the visibility of dialogic pedagogies. The study is theoretically framed by concepts of dialogism that advocate for dialogic encounters to be visible, agentic, and relational. The dialogic methodology was designed in three phases: videoing a 'day in the life' (1), stimulated video interviews with teachers, locally (2) and cross culturally (3), with the intent to increase visibility of dialogues between teachers and children under five. Analysis from phases one and two generated in England are shared in this paper. Drawing explicitly from real life examples from the project, the paper considers how the researchers navigated the moral and ethical challenges associated with engaging visual methodologies, such as monitoring assent of children under five, to film authentic dialogues in ECE spaces. Shared moments of dialogue influences how local pedagogies are constructed and how moments of relational togetherness unfold in ECE spaces. Closely examining dialogue between teachers and children in ECE spaces is central to developing responsive and inclusive pedagogies.

early childhood, dialogising, pedagogies, ethics, Froebel/Bakhtin

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E17, Room 105, first floor, Edward Street building

PLAY IN INTER-CULTURAL CONTEXTS

María Desirée Fernández de Araújo, Lisbon School of Education, Spain

The role of play at the intercultural context of Early Childhood Education in Brazil and Portugal.

Presenters:

María Desirée Fernández de Araújo, Lisbon School of Education, Spain

Mônica Appezato Pinazza, University of São Paulo, Brazil

Co-authors:

Dalila Lino, Lisbon School of Education, Portugal

This study aims to analyze interculturality in the contexts of Portugal and Brazil in early childhood education, considering the educational practices of teachers and the experiences of play and toys of children. It is related to the studies of Martin-Jones, et al. (2012) and Walsh (2010), which show that pedagogies must respond to the complex heterogeneity of classrooms and multilingualism. Within the framework of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Degree Play, Education, Toys and Languages, a theoretical basis is built on the interface of play and interculturalism. Due to growing cultural diversity, belonging to a cultural community is essential for building personal identity (Martucelli, 2006). Pedagogies respond to classroom needs and help to adapt to cultural exchange contexts (Bruner, 2001). Guided by an interpretive paradigm, it focuses on qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews to understand the perceptions and practices of teachers and the observation records of children's play routines. This study followed the principles of the Code of Ethical Conduct and Research of the Interdisciplinary Education Centre of Higher School of Education, IPL. The findings suggest the presence of educational practices involving play and toys from different cultural contexts. The integration of education based on intercultural understanding fosters openness to diverse cultures. Play reveals its educational integrative role in culturally diverse cities. It appears necessary to consider the action of play as a structuring axis of flexible intercultural curricular proposals for early childhood education. It is therefore imperative to promote teacher training policies aimed at unifying the pedagogy of play.

interculturalism, cultural identity, role of play, pedagogical practices, integration

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Finding the Time: Integrating Playful Centers in Accountability-Driven Kindergarten

Presenters:

Laura Herold, University of Arkansas, United States

Shelley McNally, University of Arkansas, United States

This two-year study aimed to identify points during the day where U.S. public school teachers could integrate playful learning centers into their academic schedules, and determine if playful centers impacted social and academic outcomes. Free-play in kindergarten has decreased due to increased focus on test scores (Bassock et al, 2016). Accountability measures limit the time teachers allow children to play, despite the positive impact play has on children's learning and development (Zosh et al, 2017). This study draws upon a social constructivist framework in which children are actively involved in their own learning through engagement with ideas or materials. The child applies their understanding of existing experiences, generates and tests theories, and shares their work in an attempt to make meaning (Rannikmae, Holbrook, and Soobard, 2020). Vygotsky's understanding of learning as a collaborative, scaffolded process underpins this study (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018). Playful centers were integrated in two southern USA districts. Mixed methodologies were used; the Preschool-Kindergarten-Behavior-Scale-2 determined children's perceived social skills, while district test scores revealed academic outcomes. Teacher interviews were qualitatively analyzed to reveal perceptions about the impact of playful centers on social and academic outcomes. All teacher participants completed consent forms upon joining the study. Emergent findings suggest teachers observed improvement in social skills and engagement and increased academic outcomes. Implications include ways to evaluate classroom schedules to incorporate playful learning, how to design academically challenging but socially engaging centers, and how playful learning supports teacher longevity. Opportunities exist to transfer teacher insights and increase play in kindergarten, despite tensions between test-score-focused policies and best practices.

play, environment, accountability, kindergarten, learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Play-based pedagogy for decolonising reception-year learning and development in post-apartheid South Africa's schooling

Presenters:

Azwihangwisi Muthivhi, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Co-authors

Rose Brien, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa

The research provides an analysis of reception year, grade R pedagogy, and explores play-based and decolonising approach for promoting wellbeing, agency, identity, and creativity. Play is considered important for promoting the development of agency, identity, imagination, and creativity. Play also creates conditions for motivation and concept development (See, Stetsenko & Ho, IJEC, 47, 221–234 (2015) and Utami, Fler, Li, IJEC, 55 (4), 169-186 (2022)). Therefore, the research employs Vygotsky's framework, expanded in Stetsenko & Ho, (2015) and Utami, Fler, Li, (2022), to explore how play could be used to promote culturally relevant and decolonized pedagogy in early school learning and development (Muthivhi, 2021). The research employed interpretive paradigm and qualitative methodology. Data methods involved participant-observation of teaching and learning, and play activities. Interviews of teachers and children were aimed at deepening understanding of the observed activities. Informed consent was obtained from teachers and parents of the children, while confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy were assured to them in writing. Children were asked to give assent for their participation, and were informed about their right of withdrawal at any stage without consequences. Therefore, the research demonstrates the importance of play for reception-year class, while revealing how play can be used for promoting culturally relevant and, therefore, decolonizing pedagogy approach. As implications for policy, we recommend that more time for play-based pedagogy be made available, while practice should promote play as a method for culturally relevant, decolonizing pedagogy approach.

Vygotsky's cultural-historical research, play-based pedagogy, post-apartheid South Africa, decolonizing pedagogy, reception year

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E18, Room 211, second floor, Edward Street building

PLAY BASED STEM: IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRICULUM AND TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Chair: Alison Riley Miller, Bowdoin College, United States

Basing policy and practice on research and observations of child learning aims to centralise children in decision making. Adopting diverse methodologies, the research in this symposium examines young children's play based STEM learning and development to highlight implications for curriculum development and teacher professional learning. In understanding how children engage in play based STEM, and how STEM learning develops over time, research from Chile and the United States will be presented followed by a comparison of international perspectives of STEM curricula.

Exploring and Extending Children's Play-based Engagement with Science and Engineering Practices

Presenters:

Alison Riley Miller, Bowdoin College, United States

Co-authors:

Hildah Makori, Bowdoin College, United States

Lisa Kenyon, Maine Math and Science Alliance, United States

This research explores how and to what extent preschoolers (PreK) and kindergarteners (K) engage in science and engineering practices (SEPs) through play, and what spaces, materials, and pedagogies support those engagements. A parallel effort investigates how early childhood (EC) educators' participation in professional learning impacts children's opportunities to engage in SEPs through play. This research is premised on the understanding that children are natural scientists and engineers, exploring and manipulating their surroundings through play (French, 2004; Gopnik, 2012; Greenfield, 2017; Trundle, 2015). Grounded in social constructivist theory, this research demonstrates that children engage in a variety of SEPs during "free" play (Miller & Eshoo, 2023; Miller & Saenz, 2021); however, most curricula for PreK and K in the U.S. assume that STEM learning is not present and vibrant in children's spontaneous, exploratory play. This design-based, mixed methods research employed field observations, questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups to answer the research questions. Children are considered a "vulnerable population" in the U.S., so this project was reviewed by our institutional review board (IRB), and all researchers completed human subjects research training. Most EC educators are comfortable facilitating play, but U.S. programs are often focused on "school readiness", creating obstacles to play-based learning. Our initial findings indicate that teachers' participation in professional learning resulted in changes to classroom spaces and materials along with time allotted for free play. This work provides evidence for children's play-based engagement in SEPs and a model for teacher professional learning to support and extend these engagements.

Science and Engineering Practices, STEM, play-based learning, teacher professional learning, design-based research

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Learning Through Play for Sustainability in Early Childhood: A STEM-Approach Review

Presenters:

Mariana Rodriguez, Universidad de Chile, Chile

Co-authors

Jhon Alé, Universidad de Chile, Chile

The aim of this study was to conduct a systematic review on learning through play for sustainability in early childhood to explore a curriculum integration proposal with a STEM Approach. Learning through play and problem-solving with STEM/STEAM Education has generated growing interest in addressing sustainability curricularly (Davis, 2012; Ng et al., 2024). However, this has not occurred due to low levels of professional learning and confidence to teach it (Campbell & Speldewinde, 2022; Cohrsen & Garvis, 2021). Early Childhood Education for Sustainability serves as a starting point to address the socio-environmental and economic challenges of the climate crisis in an interdisciplinary manner (Davis & Elliott, 2024). In this regard, play provides an opportunity for children to learn meaningfully and adapt to changes in life on Earth (Spiteri, 2023; Ernst et al., 2021). In this study, a total of 439 records from WoS and Scopus were examined using eligibility criteria, resulting in 26 studies on sustainability plays in early childhood. The selected studies were coded and then analyzed using a STEM education framework. No individuals are involved in this review. EECERA ethical principles will be considered, particularly integrity, transparency, quality, and rigor. The main findings suggest that sustainability-plays are diverse and enable the support of STEM education implementation in early childhood through free experiences, guided experiences, and to address various environmental care-related issues. The implications of integrating sustainability plays into the Chilean early childhood curriculum through the STEM approach are discussed, as well as future research in this area.

learning through play, sustainability, STEM education, early childhood, curriculum

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E19, Room 304, third floor, Edward Street building

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Zeta Williams-Brown, University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom

The symposium details several collaborations on the international development of inclusive education, providing examples from differing countries and including two presentations on recent funded projects in Ukraine and Indonesia. Key findings will also be included from the recently published edited book entitled 'International issues in SEND and inclusion: perspectives across six continents' (Hodkinson and Williams-Brown, 2022).

International developments in inclusive education

Presenters:

Zeta Williams-Brown, University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom

Tony Bertram, Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC), United Kingdom

Chris Pascal, Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC), United Kingdom

The symposium begins with an introduction presentation that focuses on the international developments of inclusive education and how this relates to country context, including geographical, historical, cultural and social contexts of the country (Hodkinson and Williams-Brown, 2023). Nutbrown and Clough (2006) observed inclusion as a platform for social justice, dependant not only on structural changes in provision and support, but also on educating settings and professionals on inclusive practice in relation to equality, diversity and the rights of all children. Inclusive education in many countries has been influenced by numerous international conventions and declarations in the past 30 years. This has included a move away from focusing on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities to the inclusion of all children (Rustemier, 2002). The concept of inclusion in our work is considered in its broadest sense to include all learners with a focus on the experiences of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (Leijen, Arcidiacono, and Baucal, 2021). A participatory methodology was used in country specific projects and in the creation of the book entitled 'International issues in SEND and inclusion: perspectives across six continents' (Hodkinson and Williams-Brown, 2022). Ethical approval was not sought in the creation of the edited book, but projects detailed in the symposium including in Ukraine, Indonesia and England were granted ethical approval from the University of Wolverhampton ethics committee. Countries examples will be provided throughout, including critically considering policy and practice in England. Emerging findings and implications will be discussed, including the complexity of defining inclusion.

inclusion, education, international, special educational needs and disabilities, participatory

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Inclusive Education in Ukraine: exploring crisis possibilities, co-developing practice and supporting teachers.

Presenters:

Zeta Williams-Brown, University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom

Oleg Lisovets, Nizhyn Mykola Gogol State University, Ukraine

This presentation focuses on an inclusive education project in Ukraine that was carried out between March 2023-January 2024. This project was funded by Research England and Supported by Universities UK International. This research supported our international work exploring developments of inclusive education alongside considering country context and inclusion during times of crisis. This project investigated recent developments since education reform in 2018 that introduced inclusive education alongside child centred learning in schools (Matyushenko et al., 2021). Using a participatory approach, the project focused on working with international partners to learn collaboratively from practice. Data collection was carried out in 5 schools, which included interviewing 5 Headteachers, 7 teachers, 1 teaching assistant. Approvals were sought from the University of Wolverhampton School of Education ethics committee. Informed consent was sought from all participants. Key findings included a focus on the unique child, sense of belonging and a strength-based approach to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Challenges and barriers were also highlighted that compared to international struggles with practically implementing inclusion. These included the need for specialist teaching, training, funding and resources. Project

outputs included a distanced learning course for educators on inclusive education, pre-service teacher module content and inclusivity champion training.

inclusive, education, international, Ukraine, Indonesia

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Inclusive Education in Indonesia: Sharing Practices, Building Partnerships, and Supporting Pre-service Teachers

Presenters:

Chris Pascal, Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC), United Kingdom
 Tony Bertram, Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC), United Kingdom
 Zeta Williams-Brown, University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom
 Irfan Syaifuddin, UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Indonesia

Co-authors:

Megan Lawton, University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom

This presentation details key findings from the British Council's Going Global Partnerships inclusive education project in Indonesia in 2023-2024. The aim of this research was to upskill pre-service teachers and their trainers on inclusive education and training pre-service teachers and teachers as inclusivity champions to support enhancing student outcomes. Inclusive schools in Indonesia have experienced barriers that include lack of specialised teachers and the need for more training (Junaidi and Junaidi, 2019; Riowati, Hendriana and Paramita, 2022). Using a participatory approach, the project focuses on observations and sharing practice to support the growth of inclusive education in Indonesia. The team considered ethics as ongoing process and sought approvals from the University of Wolverhampton ethics committee throughout the project. Scheduled observations were recorded where written informed consent was achieved from the teacher, parent, and child. Key findings from the study included the importance placed on social inclusion, the aim for future independence and the want for children to experience the same activities as their peers. Project outputs included similar outputs to the project in Ukraine as well as shadow teacher training, and 'train the trainers' support.

inclusive, education, international, Ukraine, Indonesia

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E20, Room 305, third floor, Edward Street building

DEVELOPING THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATOR

Melissa Bonotto, ATU - Atlantic Technological University, Ireland

Developing professional ethical care through co-creation in ECEC in Norway – a qualitative study

Presenters:

Anne Synnøve Brenne, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

Co-authors:

Ingvild Åmot, Queen Maud University College, Norway

How do ECEC staff describe their experience of quality changes in their relationship with the children after working with the competence-raising package for mental health, and what kind of processes appeared during this work? Bjørnstad (2019) show that Norwegian ECEC staff score from moderate and adequate to good levels on basic interaction skills, which means that there is room for improvement in the relationship between ECEC staff and children (Veermer, 2016). The theoretical framework for this study draws upon professional development (Schøn,

2013) with focus on ethical care (Taggart, 2016, 2019) and co-creation (Benington, 2009, Nysveen 2012). The study was conducted within a qualitative interpretive paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2024). Qualitative data were collected in focus-group interview (Barbour, 2007) attended by 33 ECEC staff. Data have been analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun, Clarke, 2006, 2022) while the discussion is rooted in ethics of care and based on children's rights. All informant consent to the interview, they got written and oral information about the interview was to be transcribed, anonymize and deleted, they could any time withdraw from the study.

It's approved by the Regional Committee for Medical and Health Research. The findings show that the staff describe the development of compassionate pedagogy and a common language for children's needs for attachment. This facilitates a collective professional language through co-creating processes and affects the relational quality in ECEC. Our findings suggest ECEC staff professional development regarding ethical care and co-creation can have positive implication on the relationship between children and staff.

ethical care, professional development, interaction quality, co-creating collective competence, compassionate pedagogy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

The impact of child development knowledge on early childhood preservice teacher's caregiving and teaching practices.

Presenters:

Lynn Navin, University of Missouri St. Louis, United States

Susan Catapano, University of Central Florida, United States

This yearlong study aimed to evaluate, measure, and understand the application impact of child development knowledge on teaching practice decisions of preservice early childhood educators. Research on the relationship of child development knowledge and early childhood teacher preparation and success is sparse. Goffin (1996), Katz (1996), Lubek (1996) and Stott & Bowman (1996) explored the validity of child development knowledge and teacher preparation. Few studies exist on the impact of this knowledge on teacher practice. The theoretical framework for this study draws upon the classic child development theories of Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979), Arnold Gesell (1925), Lev Vygotsky (1962) and Jean Piaget (1936). This study was conducted within a qualitative interpretive research paradigm. Teaching practice questions based upon knowledge of child development were completed by three sections of early childhood teacher educators from two different universities. A content analysis (Mayring, 2019) was conducted of question responses. A consent form was provided to all participants enrolled in the college courses with the opportunity to withdraw from the study. Child development scenario cards used during course instruction allowed the measurement of application to practice and development of student responses. These findings give an understanding of how preservice early childhood teachers apply child development knowledge in classroom settings. More practice in authentic application of child development knowledge during teacher preparation coursework is a critical foundation to developing quality early childhood teachers.

child development knowledge, teaching practice decisions, early childhood teaching pedagogy, effective educational decisions, knowledge of practice

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Special teacher's pedagogical work in the social systems of Finnish early childhood education

Presenters:

Marja Syrjämäki, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Co-authors

Noora Heiskanen, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

The aim of this study was to examine the pedagogical work of early childhood special education teacher (ECSET) as part of the interaction between social systems of early childhood education and care (ECEC). Social systems are networks formed by two or more people. In ECEC, that means interaction among children, among adults and between adults and children (Hämäläinen et al. 2014). ECSETs work teaching children (Suhonen et al., 2020), coordinating child support and consulting ECEC staff (Staffans & Ström 2022). The ideas of systems thinking (Senge 1990) and systems intelligence (Saarinen & Hämäläinen 2004) built the theoretical frame of the study. In this qualitative study, we examined the experiences of ECSETs (N=14) about their pedagogical work. Our material was the written descriptions, through which we identified interactive pedagogical activities. We analyzed the material modifying thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006). We followed the ethical principles in the human sciences in Finland. The call for research was published in the professional journal for ECSETs. The privacy statement of the study was available on an electronic form through which anonymous material was collected. The ECSET's pedagogical work combines focused observation, pedagogical activity, and the creation of mutual understanding, all of which take place within the framework of expertise. The findings which present the dimensions of ECSET's work, provide an opportunity for professional reflection and work development as well as strengthening child support. This is important especially in the current times of uncertainty, also considering the legislative changes implemented in Finnish ECEC.

social systems, observation, consultation, teaching, expertise

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E21, Room 307, third floor, Edward Street building

DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING A HIGH QUALITY WORKFORCE

Sharon Ryan, Rutgers University, United States

Internships in kindergartens as a resource for development of practices with different quality levels

Presenters:

Anna Iakshina, Moscow City University, Russia

Olga Shiyan, Moscow City University, Russia

Igor Shiian, Moscow City University, Russia

Co-authors:

Anastasiya Belolutskaya, Moscow City University, Russia

Tatiana Le-van, Moscow City University, Russia

Research aim is to investigate internships in kindergartens with different education quality. Efficiency of investments into improvement of education quality and professional development of teacher are recognized worldwide (Siraj et al, 2019). Relationship between qualification improvement and development of quality conditions is sometimes inconsistent: in some works, it is traced (Slot, 2018), in other not (Vu et al, 2015). Program of professional development should be focused on reflection improving, mentoring, and supervision (Coffey, 2014; Peeters et al, 2015). Main methods of teachers' reflection development are group discussion, feedback, mentoring, self-assessment, analysis of video (Thornton, 2015). Preschool classrooms of 50 teachers were assessed with ECERS-3. Teachers were enrolled into program for enhancing skills for development and provision of internship trainings. The qualitative analysis of prospects of their trainings was obtained in clusters "higher" and "lower" quality of ECERS-3 scores. According to EECERA ethical code, informed consent was gained from the participants. They could withdraw at any time. Results of assessment revealed: old and new understanding of education quality exist simultaneously. Teachers with conservative vision focus on replication of their ways of teaching than ones with new vision. The last ones accept idea of peer mentoring and reflection capacity training. Common deficiency is competence for training adults, taking into account their zone of proximal development. Internship can become a "growth point" for practices with different quality levels:

- conservative - to change the norm;
- "newcomers" - to master reflection in choosing teaching tools;
- advanced – to enhance competence of teacher training.

preschool education, internship, good practice, professional development, preschool education quality

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

‘Early childhood studies is more than a degree; it is an experience’: undergraduate students’ motivations, professional aspirations and attributes

Presenters:

Eunice Lumsden, The University of Northampton, United Kingdom

Jackie Musgrave, The Open University, United Kingdom

The study investigated student motivations for undertaking a degree in Early Childhood Studies (ECS) and the implications of these for a quality early years workforce. There is a dearth of research about ECS students in England (Silberfeld and Mitchell 2018). However, research about 16-year-old childcare students highlighted that childhood adversity experiences were motivational factors (Manning-Morton 2006; Vincent and Braun 2010). The theoretical framework is based on the work of Fenech et al. (2022) and Bronfenbrenner (1979) and afforded an opportunity to explore the influences of the interplay of the personal, organisational and political. The study employed sequential mixed methods; questionnaires, completed by 128 students from three universities in England, and interviews with six students (Creswell and Clark 2011). Descriptive and statistical analysis of the survey data was undertaken. The qualitative comments and the interviews were coded into themes. Mindful of the ethical challenges of ‘insider research’ (Floyd and Linet, 2010), a statement reassured students about their anonymity and contact information was only given if they were willing to be interviewed. A research assistant undertook the interviews. Findings highlighted that the holistic study of early childhood is valued by students. Placements offered a space where they grew and flourished, as they made sense of where their personal intersected with wider theoretical, practice and political systems embedded in early childhood. This research informs discussions about the core purpose of the ECS degree and the importance of Graduate Competencies as an addition to ECS degrees that include placements.

early childhood studies degrees, student, graduate competencies, placements, attributes

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Sustaining a teaching workforce: A study of innovative approaches in teacher education

Presenters:

Sharon Ryan, Rutgers University, United States

Co-authors

Susan Grieshaber, LaTrobe University, Australia

This paper reports on a systematic review of the international teacher education literature to examine what knowledges and pedagogies are being employed to educate teachers about issues of justice and inequity? Studies (Souto-Manning, 2019) continue to demonstrate that many early childhood teachers hold implicit biases and deficit assumptions about children of color. Few studies exist about what teacher educators are doing to reconceptualize the curriculum to prepare teachers to question power and privilege. As the focus of this paper is on equity pedagogies, we draw on critical theories that assume knowledge and teaching are always operating in relation to power. The approach taken to source literature draws on the guidance of Alexander (2020) for systematic literature reviews. Multiple searches were conducted to identify studies of preservice teacher education. Analysis involved both authors coding the 23 papers for theoretical framework, methodology, content, pedagogy and findings to identify broader themes. As this was a literature review, there were no ethical concerns. Many of the approaches being employed engage preservice teachers with diversity and difference. Only a handful of studies (e.g., Perez et al., 2016) document how teacher educators are employing theories that engage students in understanding

power dynamics. Developing the intercultural sensitivity of preservice teachers is not enough to ensure a workforce who can enact just educational approaches.

preservice teacher education, systematic literature review, critical theories, equity, social justice

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E22, Room 308, third floor, Edward Street building

OBSERVATIONAL ASSESSMENTS OF CHILDREN AND EDUCATORS

Magdalena Hartmann, Universität Osnabrück, Germany

(Inclusive) perspectives on childhood in the Qualification of Pedagogical Professionals

Presenters:

Magdalena Hartmann, Universität Osnabrück, Germany

This presentation aims to uncover which (observation-)perspectives on childhood are transmitted through qualification measures, such as observation and documentation procedures. The research followed up on preceding ethnographic studies of observation and documentation procedures (esp. Cloos and Schulz, 2011; Kerle, 2022), which also investigated training events (Jergus & Thompson, 2017; Koch 2017). Based on Kelle (2017), the analysis took into account the form and construction logic of the observation and analysis forms used in the observation and documentation procedures, the implementation practice of the documents through ethnographic observation protocols and the expert knowledge of the participants through audio recordings. The one-year study took place in two kindergartens. It was guided by a (co-)constructivist (Charmaz, 2011, 2014) and postmodernist (Clarke, 2012) understanding of grounded theory and combined with the research style of ethnography (esp. Breidenstein et al., 2013; Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011). In terms of ethnography, multiple methods (participant observation, interviews, document analysis) were used. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. For the children, consent was first obtained from their parents and then negotiated with the children on an ongoing basis. The norm of value-neutral and resource-orientated observation is inscribed in the observation forms and is reproduced, as it were, when children's (play) activities are observed. In the analyses of the observed (play) activities, these are then transformed into positive educational moments. With reference to the conference theme, it can be asked whether the goal of inclusive and equitable quality education can be achieved through observation and documentation procedures.

early childhood, resource-oriented observation, inclusive perspectives, qualification measures, ethnography

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

ECEC teachers' reflections using systematic observation as a tool to assess process quality

Presenters:

Anne Grethe Baustad, Nord University, Norway

May Liss Tobiassen, Nord University, Norway

Co-authors:

Kristine Warhuus Smeby, Queen Maud University College, Norway

Laila Skjei Flormælen, Queen Maud University College, Norway

The aim of this study was to investigate ECEC teachers' experiences of using a systematic quality assessment tool. This study is a part of the study Developing a validated quality assessment system together with ECEC teachers in Norway and build also on previous research on quality in ECEC in Norway (Bjørnstad & Os, 2018; Bjørnstad et al., 2019, Bjørnstad et al., 2020). Theoretical perspectives are reflection on practice (Dewey, 1933, Schön, 1983, 1987), and theories related to pedagogical quality and assessment in ECEC (Sheridan, 2009; Valberg-Roth, 2012). The study

is placed within a pragmatic research approach. Data from 18 ECEC teachers (also co-researchers) were collected through semi-structured interviews with peers, and nine transcribed interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. Written consents were collected from all participants, and all data were treated in accordance with the ethical guidelines of The Norwegian Social Science Data Services. Preliminary findings indicate that ECEC teachers find the quality assessment tool feasible in the context of ECEC and that it helps ECEC teachers to become more aware of their own practice and raising their awareness of the framework plan in practice. They emphasise the importance of achieving a common view of quality and a common professional language. This study might have implications for practice since it indicates that it is possible to develop a common language and framework for understanding quality in ECEC, and how to assess it and enhance it.

process quality, quality assessment, systematic observation, reflection, ECEC teacher

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Observation in profession-based supervision

Presenters:

Margrethe Jernes, University of Stavanger, Norway

Inger Benny Espedal Tunglund, University of Stavanger, Norway

We are investigating what emerges as a significant theme when experienced kindergarten teachers make observations as modest guests in another kindergarten and what emerges in joint reflections in the community of practice. Previous research have identified the meaning of using observation to support the learning to become sensitive and to learn to take the child's perspective (Abrahamsen, 2002, 2004; Skrove, 2019). In working with observation-based supervision, focusing on observation to learn, it is a goal to activating empathic understanding, taking the perspective of others as in mentalisation and receptivity (Fonagy, 2006; Løgstrup, 2010; Løvlie Schibbye, 2009). It is important for BA students to have the opportunity to observe, to look back on this and to have the emotional and bodily experience. With socio-cultural perspectives on learning (Säljö, 2000; Vygotsky, 2001), the empirical basis is observation texts and notes from the observation seminars. Results is constructed through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) with a phenomenological approach to understand the results (van Manen, 1990). Participants in the study have given their informed consent, and the study is based on the Norwegian ethical guidelines (NESH, 2023). Preliminary analyses of the empirical data, point to how observations made as a modest guest reveal more depth in understanding of practice, give recognition of meaning of their own presence, makes discoveries of children wandering and cause concern at weak use of language with the youngest in kindergarten. The study is highlighting the importance of providing conditions for observation during the teacher students' internship.

emotional learning, children's perspective, interaction observation, situated learning, community of practice

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set E23, Room 309, third floor, Edward Street building

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARTICIPATORY PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

Enhancing Assent Processes for Children's Meaningful Participation in Research: A Children's Rights Perspective

Presenters:

Heathcliff Schembri, Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, Malta

This study aims to enhance the ethical practices of obtaining assent from children in research conducted in Malta, ensuring their meaningful participation and protection of their rights in accordance with the UNCRC. Building on existing literature (e.g., Cotrim et al., 2021; Grady et al., 2014), this research addresses the gap in knowledge concerning the optimization of assent processes for children, specifically within the cultural context of Malta. Grounded in children's rights perspective, this study draws from the principles outlined in the UNCRC, emphasizing the importance of children's participation in decisions affecting them. This qualitative study analyses Malta's child-based research. The technique included evaluating doctorate and master's research and government/non-government projects to analyse existing consent processes and their conformity with children's understanding and

rights. The research prioritises children's voluntary engagement, honest communication and autonomy. Assent forms are culturally, linguistically, and age-appropriate to provide informed consent. To make assent more accessible for children in Malta, the findings recommend using multilingual formats and culturally appropriate imagery. The study emphasises the need for different conversational styles in consent forms and suggests standards in the form of etiquette recommendations to improve the process. The findings contribute to a critical reflection on and improvement of research ethics involving children in Malta. The developed etiquette guidelines serve as a valuable resource for pre-service educators, emerging researchers, and doctoral candidates, enhancing the ethical standards of child-involved research. Furthermore, this research offers insights applicable to similar contexts in small-island and post-colonial countries, potentially guiding international best practices.

assent forms, children's rights, ethical considerations, Malta, research etiquette

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

'If we have a say then it's cool'. Exploring children's perspectives on the culture of participation in ECEC centres.

Presenters:

Alice Hildebrandt, University of Applied Sciences Potsdam, Germany

This study aims to explore the extent to which the implementation of an ECEC council promotes a change in adults' participation of children within ECEC centres. Children have the right to express their opinions and influence decisions that affect them. (UNCRC, 1989) Children need more than a voice (Lundy, 2007). Being heard must have noticeable consequences for children to do justice to the current interpretation of Article 12, UNCRC and society's demand for more education on democracy in ECEC centres (Eberlein et al., 2021). As an innovative, democratic body in Rhineland-Palatinate ECEC centres, the "Kita-Beirat" (ECEC council) unites the perspectives of all centre stakeholders in a discourse on the design of centre practice. The children's perspectives reach the council via a specialist. This creates the task for these centres to explore the perspectives of children and shape their participation culture. (Kita-Beirat, 2021) The study was conducted using the grounded theory approach of situational analysis (Clarke et al., 2017) including ethnographic observations, group discussions with children and educators and participation in an ECEC council meeting. All participants' caregivers gave consent, and this was negotiated with the children throughout the research. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The findings demonstrate how educators suppress and promote children's agency and participation in their daily practice. The educators' attitudes and understanding of children seem to significantly influence the participation culture within the ECEC centres. These findings suggest concrete implications for a more child-centred practice within the centres.

ECEC council, children's rights, participation culture, democracy, children's perspectives

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E24, Room 201, second floor, Dorset Place building

SCHOOL READINESS UNDERSTANDINGS

Tun Zaw Oo, Institute of Education, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Hungary

Gender-Based Measurement Invariance and Developmental Changes in a School Readiness Test

Presenters:

Tun Zaw Oo, Institute of Education, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Hungary

Krisztián Józsa, University of Szeged, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Hungary

Gabriella Józsa, MTA-MATE Early Childhood Research Group, Károli Gáspár University, Hungary

The study aims to investigate the measurement invariance of the school readiness test across genders and explore the developmental changes by age across genders. Recognizing the importance of school readiness in children's successful transition to formal schooling, researchers (e.g., Atkinson et al., 2022; Macy et al., 2022) assess children's

school readiness by evaluating different developmental skills. The DIFER (the Diagnostic System for Assessing Development) school readiness test, developed by Józsa et al. (2022) and Nagy et al (2004), serves as a widely used criterion-referenced test in Hungary. The study applied the DIFER as a framework for evaluating children's developmental skills; fine motor, social, phoneme perception, deductive reasoning, relational reasoning, and pre-mathematics skills. Employing the school readiness assessment paradigm, the DIFER test evaluated fundamental abilities in 3050 children aged 4-8 (boys = 1641, girls = 1409). These abilities are categorized into six factors and assessed by trained experimenters. The study followed the Declaration of Helsinki guidelines. The University's Institutional Review Board approved it, and all participants gave informed consent. Multi-group confirmatory factor analysis established measurement invariance across genders, indicating consistent performance in assessing school readiness. Girls are significantly more developed than boys in social skills and fine motor skills, but no significant differences in other school readiness skills. Older children outperformed the younger ones across genders in all DIFER skills. The study provides educators with a dependable tool to assess school readiness and valuable guidance for practitioners seeking to enhance early childhood education.

school readiness, DIFER, measurement invariance, gender, developmental changes

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Developing a shared understanding of school readiness and mitigating the impact of deprived environments: a reflective journey of collaborative working in Blackpool

Presenters:

Jessica Parr, Centre for Early Child Development, United Kingdom

Natasha Harrison, Centre for Early Child Development, United Kingdom

The Blackpool Better Start Partnership is committed to collaboratively tackling poverty and subsequent school readiness inequalities. This study considers the child's environmental context, bringing together schools, early years settings and parents to co-develop, test and shape school readiness resources and practice to support a shared ambition. Children's transition to school is influenced by, parent's capabilities, settings and opportunities in the home (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006). The school readiness gap is higher in areas of high socio-economic deprivation, with long-term implications for individuals and society (Purdam et. al., 2024). Inspired by UNICEF's (2012) three-dimensional framework, ready children, ready schools and ready families, research also applies Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), ensuring the child's embedded context is central to planning school readiness systems. Research tests the effectiveness of co-developed school readiness resources and practice. Learning utilises qualitative and quantitative methods including focused discussion, case studies and questionnaires to further test resource application, with consideration of child outcomes. Consent was sought covering aspects such as anonymity and right to withdraw without impeding access to resources. Pseudonyms are used in dissemination. Research finds locally co-designed school readiness strategies and resources acceptable and useful for practitioners and parents in promoting a joined-up approach. Findings are informing further collaborative work towards shared school readiness ambitions and additional focus on establishing impact outcomes for children. Learning demonstrates that working together to tackle social inequalities, aligning goals and joining up approaches, maximises limited resources and promotes new and sustainable ways of working, augmenting learning opportunities for all children.

school readiness, social inequalities, home learning environment, collaborative working, early years systems

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E25, Room 401, fourth floor, Dorset Place building

CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Petra Bueker, University of Paderborn, Germany

How do we know? Childrens participation in science, nature and sustainability education

Presenters:

Katrine Dahl Madsen, University College Copenhagen, Denmark
 Nanna Jordt Jørgensen, University College Copenhagen, Denmark
 Birgitte Damgaard, University College Copenhagen, Denmark

Co-authors:

Mia Husted, University College Copenhagen, Denmark

The aim of this study is to explore and develop early childhood (0-6 years) science, nature, and sustainability education through a focus on children's participation. The study explores and discusses social educators work to develop a science pedagogy with a focus on how we know, and children's engagements in these processes. International research suggests that social educators only hesitantly engage in science education, and little is known about the formative processes involved (Höltge et al, 2019). Theoretically, the study draws upon perspectives from Nature of Science studies (Hansson et al, 2021) and from critical psychology studies of children's participation and engagements (Munck, 2020). The empirical material analyzed stems from a research and development collaboration with 10 daycare centers, 60 social educators and about 300 children in urban and rural areas in Denmark (2023-2028). The methodological framework is design-based research (Amiel & Reeves, 2008) using qualitative and dialogue-based methods to empower children's verbal, embodied and silent voices. Pseudonyms ensure anonymity and information letters have been distributed to participants and parents. Childrens consent is confirmed before and during sessions. Early findings indicate that even minor shifts in pedagogical perspectives and practices may generate new kinds of engagement for children and adults. Exploring the world together with a focus on how we know challenge social educators to 'let go of control', hereby creating generative openings for listening to the voices of children as well as non-human others. The study contributes to strengthening children's world engagements and their emerging understanding of democracy and sustainability.

nature of science, sustainability, participation, engagement, design-based research

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Children's perspectives on the relevance of self-directed research for improving sustainability

Presenters:

Petra Büker, University of Paderborn, Germany

Co-authors:

Hannah Fernhomberg, University of Paderborn, Germany

After a learning project in primary school in which children were empowered to act as researchers in their own and common cause, eight children were interviewed. The aim of this study is to evaluate children's perspectives on their role as researchers and their ideas of "research" in general. The focus of this paper is on how children aged 7-8 reflect about the relevance of research for improving sustainability. The study is based on international approaches focussing children's participatory research (Kerawalla/Messer 2018; Mayne 2018), especially self-directed research by children (Shier 2019). There is a research desideratum concerning children's mental conception of "research", "being researcher" (Büker/Hüpping 2022) and the link of research and sustainability (Engdahl 2015). Rights-based models of research by children (Mayne 2018; Shier 2019) as well as the sustainability triangle (Pufé 2014) build a framework for analysing the results. The qualitative data from interviews with children were analysed using the documentary method (Nohl 2017; Bohnsack 2014). The study adheres to EECERA Ethical Code (Bertram et al. 2015). Children were given the opportunity to withdraw at any time. Results show that children take their role as researchers seriously and show differentiated concepts of research. They attach high relevance to research for improving sustainability, especially in the environmental and the social dimension. Children's perspectives indicate that research can be an appropriate approach to pursue their ideas and sense of responsibility to initiate change processes in daily life. As *cognoscenti*, children have to be involved in policy and practice of sustainability.

children's perspectives, research by children, mental conception, sustainability, cognoscenti

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Sustainable Beginnings: Project Approach in Creating the Culture of Sustainability

Presenters:

Klara Bahtić, Kindergarten Prečko, Croatia

Co-authors

Martina Funderburg, Kindergarten Prečko, Croatia

Nikolina Bevanda, Kindergarten Prečko, Croatia

This paper presents key parts of the 3-year Education for Sustainable Development project in a preschool in Croatia. We delve into the education of children regarding sustainable practices, as well as examine teachers' approaches in engaging with children on these topics. Research has shown that early childhood education continues to play a crucial role in embracing values essential for sustainability and that teachers have the capacity to enhance children's comprehension through engaging pedagogical activities (Bahtić & Višnjić Jevtić, 2020; Hedefalk et al., 2015). The theoretical framework for this paper draws upon general theories that a child's early years' experiences have significant implications for their later life (Melhuish, 2011; Bakken et al., 2017). Taking a child-centered approach, adults concentrate on understanding children's perceptions and actions by actively listening to them, gaining valuable insights into their unique understandings (Pramling Samuelsson 2011). This paper employs qualitative research methods, such as participant observation and data derived from planning documents, and it follows a dialogical approach (Sullivan & McCarthy, 2005), where findings were communicated and discussed throughout the project duration. Ethical standards were upheld through written informed consent obtained from parents, with oral consent from participating children. Children were provided the option to withdraw from the project at any point. The findings demonstrate that children can be capable of independent thinking and making well-thought-out decisions that arise from active involvement in discussions regarding change towards sustainable thinking. The results have the potential to enhance the practice of ESD in teaching, illustrating examples of good practice.

education for sustainable development, global citizenship, child participation, thematic teaching, nature based learning

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set E26, Room 501, fifth floor, Dorset Place building

SYSTEMIC APPROACHES TO SUPPORT FAMILY (PARENTAL) ENGAGEMENT

Daniela Foerch, Florida International University, United States

Innovate, elevate, embrace: Fostering emotional intelligence, cultural awareness, and inclusivity from the start with the WeFEEL Approach

Presenters:

Daniela Foerch, Florida International University, United States

Andrea Adelman, Florida International University, United States

This study examines the impact of an innovative emotional intelligence approach on development, school/family interactions embracing culture, and inclusivity from 0 to 5 years of age. The WeFEEL approach is related to the work of Mayer and Salovey's (1997) and Mark Bracket (2014), EI focus and designed to better fit young students of diverse backgrounds. The framework focuses on using an EI approach with a coaching model including: emotional awareness and identification within self and others, understanding the triggers of emotions, co-and self-regulation, conflict resolution, empathy, yoga/meditation. WeFEEL employs a coaching model to train teachers/parents in emotion games, literature, and yoga/meditation. This qualitative approach involves coaching and focus groups, which are analyzed using grounded theory. Ethical considerations, including signed consent forms, protection of participants, and confidentiality of data (de-identified and password-protected storage), were met in accordance with University

IRB regulations. Parents and teachers suggested the WeFEEL helped their emotional literacy, improved the emotional climate in the classroom/home through increasing emotional awareness, and positive emotion-based interactions in the classroom and at home in their personal lives. It also helped improve young children's development by embracing culture and inclusivity. The policy implications are significant and can be outlined as follows: incorporating emotional intelligence development as a key component of educational standards and guidelines, policymakers may consider strategies to implement the WeFEEL approach in schools or community programs serving diverse populations, policymakers may explore ways to integrate culturally sensitive and inclusive practices within educational frameworks to ensure a supportive learning environment for all children.

emotional intelligence, thinking games, emotional games, meditation, positive classroom climate

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Reconceptualising the mission of the Centers For Children and Families in Modena City: a training-research

Presenters:

Lucia Balduzzi, Università degli Studi di Bologna Alma Mater Studiorum, Italy

Emanuela Pettinari, University of Bologna, Italy

Centers for Children and Families (CCFs) are integrative services born in Italy at the end of the '80s to support newparents and their children at the presence of an educator. Our presentation aims to report the first results of an ongoing training-research project that focus on the accessibility of Modena city CCFs (Italy) with the aim to develop a new educational approach to better respond to fragile families and improve their participation. The recent Integrated System of Education and Instruction (Dlgs. 65/2017) overcomes the split system in early childhood education and emphasizes how integrated services – such as CCFs – can offer powerful and diversified opportunities for care and support for families who don't attend daycares (Pedagogical Lines, 2021). The theoretical framework is represented by the ecological multidimensional system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), capable of keeping together both the human being and the society with the lens of anti-bias education (Derman-Sparks, 2010). We decided to adopt a qualitative methodology such as the training-research that involves the practitioners of the centers through interviews, focus groups and follow-up trainings. According to ECCERA ethical code our priority has been to ensure the privacy of each participant through data anonymization. The analysis of first results illustrate the need of a reconceptualisation of the services' mission in the organization of the everyday offer (contact with families, outreaching activities) and to identify the priority users. The research is changing the perception about the Modena's CCFs also enanching the administration commitment to promote the development of these ECEC services.

integrated system, integrated services, centers for children and families, accessibility, families participation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Parents as partners in early years inclusion: A Scottish context

Presenters:

Elise Guthrie Stirling, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

The research and subsequent commentary highlight the importance of additional support needs (ASN) parents as partners within Individual Educational Planning (IEP). Despite government guidelines, eg Getting it Right for Every Child (Scottish Government, 2016), positive relationships in ASN planning might not be developing appropriately (Fish, 2006). An 'Us versus Them' culture exists (Ryan and Quinlan, 2018) and parents feel disconnected from planning (Enable Scotland, 2016). Based on a framework developed by Lovett, Dempster and Fluckiger (2015), I created a heuristic tool for inclusive professional learning. Using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems, I subsequently presented a framework of parental partnership to the ASN parent forum. The research pragmatically employed mixed methods to engage in action research with a group of parents with children with ASN, which became a case study of their experiences of Individual Educational Planning. Potential concerns about the roles I hold in each group as both a parent and as a professional may exist but as a teacher in Scotland, I am bound by and abide to the CoPAC set by the GTCS (2012). Four themes emerged: voice; conflict; leadership; and heurism, leading to the creation of the heuristic tool. Subsequent work with a local ASN parent group highlighted the need for not only partnership itself,

but to raise awareness of rights and responsibilities of parents as partners. This paper appeals to parents, practitioners and leaders alike, inspiring those involved in inclusive education and care to explore the rights and responsibilities of ASN parents as partners within their own contexts.

ASN, parent, partnership, inclusion, rights

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Symposium Set F

13:15 – 14:30, Thursday 5th September

Set F1, Sallis Benney Theatre, ground floor, Grand Parade building

BUILDING EDUCATORS' CAPACITY TO DELIVER HIGH QUALITY STEAM EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Lena Hollenstein, St.Gallen University of Teacher Education, Switzerland

In recent years, the importance of promoting quality in early childhood education has been increasingly recognised. The quality of early childhood education is crucial for children's future development and academic growth. Early childhood educators play a crucial role in providing quality learning opportunities (Pace et al., 2019; McClelland et al., 2013). This requires early childhood educators who are knowledgeable about child development, effective teaching practices and curriculum implementation (Hägglund & Samuelsson, 2009). Particularly for STEAM, early childhood educators still face challenges in developing and implementing effective, equitable and sustainable learning environments for young children. The present SOS addresses these challenges by examining professional development (PD) courses for sustainable learning environments in STEAM (papers one and two). Paper three explores the role of educators' high expectations in guided pretend play for adequate and equitable digital education in kindergartens and discuss the possibility and the need for an PD.

digital_childhoods

The Dynamic Process of Integrating and Navigating STEAM in Australian Early Childhood Education

Presenters:

Andrea Ng, Monash University, Australia

This study investigated the early childhood practitioners' understanding of STEAM integration and the related challenges. Early childhood practitioners continue to note the ongoing challenges to integrate STEAM into their existing curriculum and practices. Ng et al.'s (2022) integrative review study developed an integrating and navigating STEAM (inSTEAM) model to help guide and understand early childhood practitioners integrating STEAM practices, that is used to guide this research. This study is guided by the interpretivist and constructivist approach to understand early childhood practitioners STEAM integration practices. The data collection utilised a modified World Café qualitative methodology. This methodology begin with a general large group discussion of the research topic but later proceed with the participants facilitating their discussions in several smaller groups. Fifteen participants were selected based on those who had received their initial teacher preparation in Australia with diverse backgrounds and various levels of teaching experience, This project had university ethics approval, and received written informed consent from all participants. The findings of this study highlight the dynamic process of teachers integrating and navigating STEAM such as the role of physical integration STEAM, equity-based learning, challenges and supports for practitioners to integrate STEAM and promoting STEAM integration through arts. Early childhood practitioners are aware of the need to integrate STEAM but often challenged in practice. Early childhood policy

makers could benefit from continuing to listen to the voices of those who work directly with our children to provide the support, training, and resources are necessary to promote STEAM integration.

STEAM Education, integration, navigation, dynamic process, inSTEAM

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Exploring early childhood educators' play behaviours during guided pretend play on digital transformation for equitable digital education

Presenters:

Lena Hollenstein, St.Gallen University of Teacher Education, Switzerland

Co-authors:

Olivia Benz, St.Gallen University of Teacher Education, Switzerland

Franziska Vogt, St.Gallen University of Teacher Education, Switzerland

The present paper aims to investigate differences in educators' play behaviour during guided pretend play on digital technology towards boys and girls. Differences in interaction based on gender lead to different learning opportunities and thus to inequalities in education (Wang et al., 2018). Particularly in STEAM, the risk of different interactions between boys and girls is high. For example, the accuracy of teachers' judgments about technical skills is low, with gender bias and underestimation more common than overestimation (Wammes et al., 2022). These gender biases and low expectations (based on underestimation) may be mediated by teacher guidance. The question is whether differences in educator behaviour during guided pretend play on digital technology can be observed for boys and girls. Fifteen educators took part in the explorative intervention study "we play the future" and implemented pretend play impulses about digital technology in their kindergarten. The pretend play was videoed. 45 hours of video material are analysed using content analysis (Mayring, 2021). Written informed consent was obtained from educators and parents. Children are free to play in the play corner or elsewhere on the day of filming. The results show significant differences in educators' play behaviour towards boys and girls. For example, in guiding children to explain digital content independently. Such behaviour conveys high expectations and is more common with boys than with girls. The findings discuss implications for further research into high expectation play behaviours in guided pretend play so that all children can benefit from equitable STEAM education.

guided pretend play, digital education, pretend play, play behaviour, educators' expectation

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Developing the STEAM to Power Education for Sustainability in Early Childhood Education in the Irish Context

Presenters:

Paula Walshe, Dundalk Institute of Technology, Ireland

This paper presents findings from ongoing doctoral research which engaged ECEC educators in a STEAM training workshop aimed at facilitating them to incorporate STEAM into ECEC pedagogy. STEAM affords children opportunities to develop skills and dispositions relevant to the social, economic and environmental sustainability pillars, such as problem solving, critical thinking, creativity and collaboration, all vital to their active participation in society and sense of global citizenship (Wise Lindeman & McKendry Anderson, 2015). However, a 2020 report from the Department of Education Inspectorate highlighted a need for increased training and supports to facilitate ECEC educators' incorporation of STEAM into pedagogical practice. The Tashkent Declaration (UNESCO, 2022, p.7), commits "to transform (ECEC) curricula and pedagogy" to support "progress on sustainable development". This research utilises a constructivist interpretivist paradigmatic approach based upon constructivist grounded theory (Chamaz, 2006). Development and delivery of a STEAM workshop, pre- and post-training surveys and post-training focus groups to evaluate the impact on pedagogy. Ethical approval was obtained from DkIT. Participants provided with consent form

and information letter and informed of right to withdraw. No personal or identifying information was gathered, data aggregated and anonymised. Due to increased focus on STEAM within educational policy (Gol, 2023) and both primary (DE, 2023) and ECEC curriculum (French et al., 2022), it is vital ECEC educators receive opportunities for STEAM training. Training developed during this research will support educators to develop as 'cognoscenti', facilitators of children's engagement in playful STEAM, therefore providing opportunities to develop children's understanding of sustainability and sustainable development.

STEAM, STEM, Ireland early childhood education, educator training, CPD

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F2, Room G4, ground floor, Grand Parade building

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Marita Neitola, University of Turku, Finland

Education for Sustainable Development in Early Learning and Care Settings in Ireland

Presenters:

Maresa Duignan, Department of Education, Ireland

The objective of this research project was to establish a baseline for practice in support of Education for Sustainable Development across a sample of 25 preschools in Early Learning and Care (ELC) settings in Ireland. The research was one strand of a cross sectoral study of ESD in ELC settings, primary and post-primary schools. Ireland has established a range of initiatives to promote ESD in the education system. ESD to 2030: Second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development, published by the Government in 2022, is informed by the UN's Sustainable Development Goal for education. This project contributes to achieving the goals of this national strategy

A grounded theory approach was deployed to discover emergent themes. Core principles of respectful engagement, inspection for improvement and learner centred practice informed the project design A primarily qualitative approach was taken. Surveys, observation of practice and structured interviews with educators and leaders during evaluation visits were used to collect data. All research questions were referenced to the quality framework for early years education inspection Ethical concerns related to the gathering and management of data inspection are addressed through the provision of information in published guides available online

<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/inspectorate-publications-evaluation-reports-guidelines/> Findings indicate that whilst the language of ESD is not widely familiar to early education professionals, core principles and practices were evident during evaluation visits This research is closely linked to national policy development in relation to ESD and will contribute to the implementation of strategic objectives in both policy and practice domains.

education for sustainable development, evaluation, inspection for improvement, professional practice, curriculum

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Elaborating more holistic and systemic model of sustainable development for early childhood education

Presenters:

Marita Neitola, University of Turku, Finland

Co-authors:

Juhani Tähtinen, University of Turku, Finland

Johanna Kortosaloinen, University of Turku, Finland

The aim of this study is to renew the model of education for sustainable development in early childhood education. The philosophical-theoretical model we present is built on the foundations of sustainable development, eco-social and planetary civilisation theory and current pedagogical approaches to early childhood education. Sustainability

education seems to be understood and implemented not enough to build a strong foundation for sustainable development for children (Furu & Valkonen, 2022; Elliot & Young, 2016). Thus, we suggest our model the primary framework for ECE pedagogical culture. In the midst of a planetary eco-social crisis (Heikkinen & al. 2023), education plays a key role in strengthening environmentally, socially and culturally responsible behaviour. The greatest challenge in promoting sustainability thinking lies in how different ECE institutions take ownership of the transformative goals of the sustainability revolution and adopt cultures and pedagogical models that promote it (Wolff & al. 2020). We aim to renew theoretical model of sustainable education for ECE through the critique and development of other existing theories and models. Ethicality includes our exact identification, reading and use of the source literature, with careful argumentation and reflection on our interpretations. Our model incorporates a transformative learning approach in organisational re-learning -a particular emphasis on principles and goals of sustainable development and collaborative learning- that challenges our existing ways of working and thus drives reform at both individual and organizational levels. Our model of sustainable development education based on inclusive values strengthens the overall position of the sustainable education paradigm in ECE.

sustainable development, early childhood education, transformative learning, systemic approach, holistic approach

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Developing meaningful education for sustainability discourse with early years education and care students: reflections on students actively exploring the non-human world environment

Presenters:

Glenda Tinney, UWTSD, United Kingdom

The aim of this research is to consider how higher education early years students undertaking self-chosen practical experiences, exploring a local environment, engage with sustainability discourse.

The research stems from a degree module which incorporates an external environmental award.

Reflection on the student's experience has highlighted to the researchers the significance of a 'pedagogy of connection' (Barrable, 2019; Kahn, 2010) where learners connect with the non-human world in an active and meaningful way. It has also led the researcher to consider the implications of such an approach in terms of posthumanism and interactions with the non-human world (Bonnet, 2015; Alaimo, 2012) and the growing discourse linked to early childhood and education for sustainability (Elliott, Arlemalm-Hagser and Davis, 2020; Jickling and Sterling, 2017). The theoretical framework for this study draws upon posthumanist and ecocentric approaches (Nichols, 2020). The work is currently in the reflective phase where a post-qualitative approach (Ulmer, 2017) using student materials such as artefacts, photographs, art and other reflections will support the researchers discussion. An information email was provided to all participants outlining the research context and ethical research considerations. Students had to provide researchers with consent to use their materials for their research. Initial reflections suggest engaging with the environmental award provides opportunities to develop deeper understandings for students and researchers of the connections with the non-human world. The research provides an opportunity to consider alternative ways to engage sustainability discourse in higher education and in particular early years training.

education for sustainability, early years training, posthumanism, pedagogy of connection, ecocentric

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F3, Room G62, ground floor, Grand Parade building

INCLUSIVE ECE SYSTEMS

Jennifer Koutoulas, Early Years Intercultural Association, Australia

Organisational stakeholder perspectives on community engagement for socially disadvantaged children from refugee and migrant families in urban Australia: A scoping review

Presenters:

Jennifer Koutoulas, Early Years Intercultural Association, Australia

This scoping review aims to synthesise empirical evidence on the principles and practices of organisational stakeholders in participatory community-based interventions with socially disadvantaged children and their refugee and migrant families living in urban communities to inform a pilot study. Australian research identified that interprofessional teams, including community support organisations, can play a pivotal role in improving social wellbeing for refugee and migrant families in communities (Khatri & Assefa, 2022) and reducing mental health deficiencies for their children (Hall et al., 2023). This study adopts a conceptual framework of Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), examining research using wellbeing focused participatory methodologies that demonstrate improved social connections for children from refugee and migrant families in urban communities. The scoping review explores published empirical research and peer-reviewed articles highlighting common themes, processes, and gaps (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). The data on participatory community-based interventions for early childhood aged children and refugee and migrant families is sourced from Australia and globally. Ethical decisions are conducted with a positioned epistemology (Suri, 2020), searching for transparency, and understanding of what underpins researcher decisions (Lyndon, 2023). The EECERA Ethical Code for Early Childhood Researchers (Bertram et al., 2015) guides the research practice for the integrity, and the protection of children and vulnerable families. The findings demonstrate that involving organisational stakeholders can improve community engagement with careful planning, aligned values, and respect for children and their refugee and migrant families. The findings suggest scoping reviews can offer broad understandings and implications for a participatory community-based pilot study.

community engagement , organisational stakeholders , social wellbeing , refugee and migrant families, urban communities

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) and integration policies in Germany and Sweden: Tackling migration-induced inequalities by institutional coordination?

Presenters:

Antonia Scholz, German Youth Institute/Deutsches Jugendinstitut, Germany

Co-authors

Tabea Schlimbach, German Youth Institute/Deutsches Jugendinstitut, Germany

The paper aims at exploring institutional interfaces of early childhood education and care policies and integration policies in Germany and Sweden. By comparing multi-level arrangements in these two countries facing continuous immigration we study how ECEC and integration authorities interact to foster participation of newly arrived children. Previous research as the Equal Access Study (Menzel/Scholz 2022) points to locally persisting access barriers for migrant children even in universal ECEC systems. Theoretically, we draw on a multi-level governance perspective in our research to analyse patterns of institutional coordination as a prerequisite for 'competent ECEC systems' (Urban et al. 2014). Drawing on a two-step policy analysis, we conducted a qualitative text analysis of German and Swedish framework documents on both ECEC and integration. We also conducted stakeholder interviews to explore forms of collaboration at the interface of these policy areas and mutual perspectives. Interviewees received comprehensive information and were asked for consent. The data gathered were fully anonymised. With regards to promoting inclusiveness for migrant children, findings show that, in both countries, national and regional institutional arrangements at the "crossroads" of ECEC and integration policies create considerable discretion at the local level, with particular intranational variation in the German federal system. Policy approaches are shaped by the value that is attributed to diversity. Results underline that mutual collaboration at the interface ECEC/integration can contribute to informed decisionmaking and foster sustainable ECEC governance. Comparative analyses point to the need for context-sensitive approaches not only on national, but also at local level.

ECEC policies, integration, governance, Germany, Sweden

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Minority students in teacher education

Presenters:

Linnéa Jermstad, NLA University College, Norway

In a diverse educational landscape, ensuring minority language students' success in teacher education is crucial yet under-researched. This project aims to identify key factors for their success, emphasizing sustainability early on to foster inclusive and effective environments. I investigate: What supports minority language students' success in teacher education? Minority language students face language barriers (Andersen, 2014, p. 36), insufficient recognition of their linguistic and cultural heritage (Spernes, 2014, p. 23), feelings of marginalization, which highlighting the need for more inclusive practices (European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport, and Culture, Donlevy, V., Rajania, A., Meierkord, A., 2016). Several theories, including ecological systems theory, theory of competence and continuum, and salutogenetic theory, are relevant to the project of understanding the experiences and mastery of minority language students in teacher education, central are Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1986, 1994), Eraut (1994, 2000), and Antonovsky (1987). Adopting a constructivist paradigm, this research explores the diverse experiences of minority language students in teacher education, using a qualitative methodology to gain deep insights. Interviews serve as the primary method. In conducting interviews with minorities in teacher education, several ethical concerns were paramount, including the need to ensure confidentiality, avoid exploitation, and respect the dignity and autonomy of participants. The interviews emphasized the importance of sustainable educational strategies to promote inclusion, overcome language barriers, and enhance teacher-student relationships. By adopting such sustainable approaches, educational institutions can establish a resilient and supportive environment that embraces linguistic diversity and ensures the long-term success of every student.

minority students, teacher education, pre-service teachers, diversity, sustainable learning environment

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F4, Room G63, ground floor, Grand Parade building

DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Alma Fleet, Macquarie University, Australia

Cultivating Communities of Professional Practice (CoPP) for the Early Learning and Childcare sector in Ireland

Presenters:

Elaine Coffey O' Connor, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Ireland

Carron Eimear, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Ireland

The aim of this study was to explore CoPP facilitators perspectives of the CoPP approach. Developing a national continuing professional development (CPD) system, and as part of that the establishment and support of CoPP within ELC and SAC, was a key commitment in Nurturing Skills, the Workforce Plan (2022-2028). To initiate fulfilling this commitment the Department developed guidance on CoPP. Facilitators were drawn from City and County Childcare Committees (CCCs), local agents of the Department, who used this guidance to facilitate CoPP in their area. Research demonstrates that CoPP, (Wenger, 1998) can catalyse staff engagement with professional development opportunities (Lantz-Andersson, Lundin & Selwyn, 2018; Patton & Parker, 2017). CoPP can support engagement in self-reflection and collaborative inquiry which underpins and supports change in practice, quality development and improved outcomes for children and their families. Social Cognitive Theory and Situated Learning Theory were considered in meeting the needs of adult learners. Constructivist paradigm and a qualitative study methodology was used. Qualitative data from focus groups was collated using participatory research with CoPP facilitators and thematically analysed. The ethical issues included voluntary informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity of participants. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Opportunity to withdraw at any time was provided. The findings suggest that participating in CoPP provides a means to support sustainable continuous professional development and quality development within the sector. Participants highlighted the need for more support to effectively implement the CoPP approach.

communities of professional practice, early learning and care and school aged childcare, continuing professional development, quality development, collaborative enquiry and self reflection

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

The ones who care: the role of educators' assistants in Chilean ECE

Presenters:

Ximena Poblete, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Chile

Alejandra Falabella, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Chile

Co-authors:

Piedad Cabrera, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Chile

This study explores how ECE assistants construct and negotiate their professional identities within a highly marginalised position, to understand how they make sense of their role to continue -or leave- this occupation In Chile, ECE assistants are the main workforce in the field, doubling the number of qualified educators (Superintendencia Educación Parvularia, 2022). However, they are absent in the policy discussion, the pedagogical decision-making process and in the policy debate. The scarce literature show the precarious working conditions of this workforce highlighting the highly feminised and classed discourses (Peeters et al., 2018; Urban et al., 2011; Viviani & Rodríguez, 2020). Discourses and identities are analysed through a feminist poststructural framework as being permanently constituted and negotiated within relations of power within discourses (Butler, 2004; Foucault, 1982; St. Pierre & Pillow, 2002). This paper assumes an interpretative paradigm and a qualitative and exploratory methodology. Data was collected through observations and interviews with ECE actors (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Participants signed informed consents considering participants' confidentiality, anonymity, and data protection. The study was authorised by the University Ethics Committee The study shows the complexity of this role and the fragility in which it is constructed. It discusses tensions between a discourse of care, gender and class and the complexity and the relationships between the different actors in the field. Understanding assistants' role is relevant for developing a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of the ECE field the design of relevant policies that promote sustainable professionalisation and quality of ECE.

educator's assistants, gender perspective, professionalism, professional identity, discourses

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Adults learning together: Inclusive participation?

Presenters:

Alma Fleet, Macquarie University, Australia

Co-authors

Anthony Semann, Semann Slattery, Australia

Professional Learning (PL) programs often focus on qualified teachers. Unknown are the perceptions of all engaged in inclusive professional development. This small Australian qualitative study researches multiple perspectives in site-based PL. Successful initiatives include engagement, topics relevant to participants and participant-agency (Campbell & Groundwater-Smith, 2009). Trusting relationships in PL (Engelhardt & Brown, 2022) influenced site selection. Participating staff were engaged in practitioner enquiry PL (DeGioia et al., 2023) and pedagogical documentation (Fleet & Machado, 2022). This study foregrounds socio-constructivist perspectives on adult-learning, noting that inquiry-based PL flexibly accommodates differences in settings and staff (Engelhardt & Brown, 2022). Developing effective PL sequences is like "Building a plane while flying it" (Samaras et al., 2007), assemblage varying across situations, continuously re-evaluated. Focusing on educational change, this study asks: Within specified educational settings, is there a difference in the valuing of inclusive participation amongst those with different

roles/qualifications? Volunteers (two preschools, one state school) completed a questionnaire and were interviewed. Data were compiled anonymously and analysed thematically by groups/roles (eg. support-workers). Following LIMESurvey-analysis, individual perspectives were highlighted. Ethics permission was gained (university and 3 employers); protocols were followed (staff views might offend employers, influence PL participation). All data is for knowledge-generation. Attitudes towards inclusive participation were analysed within and across sites. Findings include summaries of tabulations, themes, narratives of perception, and issues arising. While valuing community-culture, some participants valued role-specific PL. This research assists PL structuring with further research potential. Contextualised findings broaden understanding of diverse staff perceptions in pedagogical PL.

professional learning, educational change, inclusive participation, staff perspectives, contexts

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set F5, Room M2, Mezzanine, Grand Parade building

MULTILINGUALISM – SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN ECEC SETTINGS: DISCUSSING SEMIOTIC LANDSCAPES, LANGUAGE IMMERSION, SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE, AND COLLEGIAL REFLECTIONS

Martina Norling, School of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences, Örebro University, Sweden

In early childhood education and care, many young children use different languages in their daily lives. Early childhood educators are facing challenges in their way of promoting educational language as well as children's multilingualism. This symposium brings together studies from a Nordic perspective in which ECEC teachers' practices of semiotic landscapes, literacy events, and collegial reflections are in focus for sustainable co-construct knowledge and development of ECEC setting in order to support multilingual children's language development.

multilingual_childhoods

Co-construction of knowledge for transformed language support practice in ECE

Presenters:

Annika Åkerblom, Department of Education, Communication and Learning, Sweden

The research is carried out in a large scale action research (PAR) project involving ECE from 11 Swedish municipalities. The aim is to co-construct knowledge and support educators to develop language support practices. One research question is: How do preschool staff develop their reflection and competence to create inclusive language practices for children through action research? Around 20% of children in Swedish ECE centres, speak a first language other than Swedish. But as educators feel that they lack knowledge and competence to support the children in their mother tongues, language work often focuses Swedish (Puskás and Björk Willén 2017; Björk Willén 2018; Åkerblom and Harju 2019; Rosén and Straszer 2020), limiting the educators to work in a language inclusive way. The project draws from PAR as theoretical framework and methodology (Kemmis et al. 2014) and translanguaging (Garcia and Wei, 2014). Translanguaging is used as a conceptual framework to connect theory and practice. The framework of PAR (Kemmis et al. 2014) works as paradigm and methodology. The approach uses methods to facilitate the participants' reflection and create common understanding and concepts. All participants have signed a confidentiality agreement and information of identification (place, ECE-center, names etc.) do not appear in any publication. No data about children is collected. The aim is to discuss the conditions for ECE-centers to participate in PAR-projects, and for co-construction of knowledge. The research aims to gain knowledge about how to create translanguaging spaces in multilingual ECE centres.

action research, practice development, language support, translanguaging, ECE

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Literacy events and translanguaging practices, sustainable model for read aloud in ECEC settings

Presenters:

Martina Norling, School of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences, Örebro University, Sweden

The purpose of this study was to develop a sustainable model in read aloud activities in which literacy events in ECEC settings are performed to support multilingual children's curiosity, engagement, and language development in read aloud activities. Previous research shows that goal-oriented processes of language teaching are needed in ECEC settings (Alstad & Kulbrandstad, 2017). In addition, research indicates (Hofslundsengen et al. 2023) that ECEC teachers tend to choose simpler books when reading to multilingual children. The theoretical framework is based on Bartons's (2007) ecological perspective of literacy and Garcia and Otheguy's, (2020) perspective on translanguaging. The study has a qualitative approach, and data constitute four ECEC staff's written descriptions of literacy events, when read-aloud for multilingual children. The descriptions have additionally served as the foundation for develop the read aloud model as well as the didactic strategies to engage multilingual children in read aloud activities. Ethical considerations of confidentiality and informed consent were considered according to (Swedish Research Council, 2017). The ECEC staff have given their consent for participation, and the documentation cannot be linked to any specific context or person. The result shows that read aloud events include a goal-oriented and translanguaging practice in which reading aloud and different genres of books, challenge the multilingual children's language development, their agency and engagement. The findings will contribute knowledge of ECEC staff's development of sustainable practices when supporting multilingual children's language development and engagement in read aloud activities.

ECEC settings, read-aloud, multilingual children, translanguaging, sustainable practices

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Teachers' and children's encounters with the linguistic and semiotic landscapes of language immersion preschools

Presenters:

Maria Kvist, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

Katri Hansell, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

We examine teachers' and children's reflections on linguistic and semiotic landscapes (LSLs) in language immersion preschool. The study builds on research in semiotic landscapes in Nordic ECEC (Pesch, 2021) and language immersion (Pakarinen, 2020) focusing on teachers' (Pakarinen et al., 2024) and children's (Fjeld & Giæver, 2024) reflections. LSL cover the visual learning environment, where language is used together with other modalities such as pictures (Pakarinen et al., 2024; Pesch, 2021). Early total immersion in the national languages in Finland is a multilingual programme starting in ECEC or preschool (Mård-Miettinen et al., 2022). The LSL plays an important role in supporting the children's bilingual development. The study is conducted as walking interviews (Fjeld & Giæver, 2024) where informants guide the researchers and reflect on the LSL. The interviews were video recorded and transcribed for thematical analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Informed consent to participate in the study was asked from the teachers and the children's guardians. Also the children were asked for permission to interview and film them. The data is pseudonymized to guarantee privacy. The immersion language, together with the children's first language, is expected to be predominant in the reflections, stressing especially the immersion language in relation to pedagogical activities. As the preschool children are still learning the immersion language and not expected to read, a variety of semiotic means is used to support language comprehension and learning. Increased understanding of the LSL can be utilized to create LSL that supports language use and learning in immersion.

linguistic and semiotic landscape, walking interview, language immersion, teacher perspective, child perspective

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F6, NEW ROOM: Room 306, third floor, Edward Street building

INCLUSION, DIVERGENT PERSPECTIVES AND TECHNOLOGY

Claudia Wirts, University of Leipzig, Germany

Inclusive research about technology in ECEC: a case study

Presenters:

Francesca Granone, University of Stavanger, Norway

The aim is to support ECEC teachers' in fostering inclusive play activities with technology, for developing a more sustainable ECE System. This is realised applying inclusive research. Norwegian policy guidelines (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017) prioritize an inclusive learning environment, to eliminate barriers to learning and enhance participation for all. To align with the 4th and 10th SDGs, developing an inclusive approach is crucial. The "Norwegian Report on Inclusive Communities" (Nordahl et al., 2018) underscores limitations in existing special education provisions, particularly concerning teachers' competence. Based on the theoretical framework of Feuerstein's MLE (Feuerstein et al., 1980), the activity was designed to support children's problem-solving process (Polya, 1971). This qualitative exploratory study followed a phenomenological approach. Using an inclusive research method, a play activity with a coding toy was prepared, involving a co-researcher with a disability in its definition and data analysis. Thirteen ECEC teachers, with four children each (aged 4-5 years) played with the activity. Field notes were analysed through content-based analysis. Informed consent was obtained from teachers and parents on behalf of the children. Ethical considerations were approved by the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. The results debate teachers' mediational approaches in supporting children's understanding of tasks, highlighting the importance of incorporating real-life references in activity design and emphasizing teachers' role in fostering children's cooperation. Involving individuals with disabilities as co-researchers enriches our understanding of the competencies teachers need to support all children in understanding problems/activities, emphasizing contextualized learning's importance. This will enrich inclusive education too.

ECEC, inclusive research, coding toys, technology, teachers' competence

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

From Attitudes to Action: Exploring Shared Knowledge and Divergent Perspectives on Child-Centered Approaches through Q Methodology

Presenters:

Siobhan Canavan, Dublin City University, Ireland

This study explored ECTs' attitudes towards inclusion and UDL-based pedagogical practices to assess their readiness for UDL implementation in Irish pre-primary schools. One key pedagogical approach employed to promote a fair and equitable education for all children is the Universal Design for Learning framework (Flood & Banks, 2021). UDL's pedagogical approach to inclusive education embraces the principles outlined in the Salamanca Statement and the core values of Aistear, Ireland's early childhood curriculum framework (UNESCO, 1994; NCCA, 2009). Most research has focused on UDL in higher education, with limited attention to ECT's attitudes toward implementing UDL in pre-primary schools. This study employs a Q methodology, a qualiquantilogical approach that combines qualitative and quantitative processes (Watts & Stenner, 2012; Ramlo, 2020). It takes a constructivist/interpretivist paradigm to explore and analyse ECT's subjective views and attitudes systematically and rigorously by identifying response patterns through psychometric and operational techniques unique to the Q method. Ethical considerations were considered throughout this study. Dublin City University's Ethical Guidelines were followed, whereby all participants were given an information sheet and a consent form, which clearly states that participation in this research is voluntary and participants can withdraw from the study without consequences. The findings will be discussed on two levels: the divergent views of ECTs on inclusion and inclusive practices and ECT's readiness to implement UDL as a suitable inclusive pedagogical tool for pre-primary schools. This study's findings will inform educational policies and support continuous professional learning and development on best inclusion practices in pre-primary schools.

inclusive pedagogy, universal design for learning, Irish pre-primary schools, early childhood teacher's attitudes, Q methodology

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Diginet Inclusion – a practice transfer project for inclusive networking

Presenters:

Claudia Wirts, University of Leipzig, Germany

Laura Schlechte, University of Leipzig, Germany

The project “DigiNet-Inclusion” aims to create a digital platform for educators in ECEC and parents, developed on the basis of research and in collaboration with practitioners. The platform will provide easy access to information on regional inclusive service systems. Studies show the need for networking in inclusive educational settings, but also a lack of knowledge (Wirts et. al., 2018; Maykus et al., 2016). In particular educationally disadvantaged parents and parents with a migration background have less knowledge about support systems, leading to lower uptake (Fullerton et al., 2018). The project concept is based on the ecosystemic approach (Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1983). Following a Design-Based-Research (DBR) approach, the development process consists of iterative cycles carried out in collaboration with a practice advisory board. A first prototype is currently being developed, which will be tested with different user groups and revised accordingly. The advisory board includes representatives from various population groups to address different needs and access barriers. Research data is processed GDPR-compliant. The application is in line with WCAG, no personal data is collected. The first DBR development cycle highlighted the importance of simplifying and translating information to reduce inequalities in access. It also identified the need for guidance on first points of contact for parents. The aim of the project is to provide teachers and parents with easy access to regional support systems and to make access as barrier-free as possible through the web application. The lecture will discuss the possibilities that the DBR approach offers for pedagogical contexts.

design-based-research, inclusion, support systems, cooperation with parents, digital infrastructure

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F7, Room 144, first floor, Grand Parade building

SUPPORTIVE PEDAGOGY FOR THE ARTS AND CREATIVITY

Rita Melia, Atlantic Technological University, Ireland

Wellbeing as the basis for life-long learners: Thinking through making musical instruments by the children.

Presenters:

Kei Kihara, Forest of Creativity OIKEASHITA Nursery School, Japan

The study explores the meaning of wellbeing of children through the process of making musical instruments by the children. It was emerged by children are surrounded by many toys from birth, as if they are part of an unsustainable consumer society. The study challenges to show the transformative images of the children from consumers to producers/agents to create a wellbeing. This builds on an earlier study done by R. Steiner (1924) which “HUMAN VALUES IN EDUCATION” I hope that children’s lives will be enriched by making Toys with their hands. The theoretical and conceptual framework draws on discourse about ‘Bio-psycho-social’ G.Engel(1977) This idea is a wellbeing model, the happiness of Biological part is fun to play after making it, Psychological part is for the children to make what they want, Social part is cooperation. Making musical instruments that harmonize these 3parts will lead to their future wellbeing. Conscious and Ethical consumerism paradigm is underpinning of case study, 5years-old children have spent six-month making instruments. The many graduated-children continues to cherish the instruments they made. The study followed the EECERA Ethical-code and it was always conducted democratically with the children's voice carefully heard. It was obtained consent and confirmation of parents and children at the beginning till end, and all data were anonymized. The findings indicate that the children are competent to create life-long toys rather than consuming ready-made toys. These ideas can be applied to a variety of situations in the future as ways to question common sense and create innovation. We do not want to train the children engineers to make musical instruments, rather we challenge them to develop Co-Agency and Resilience, it's the ability to innovate on their own and to bounce back from adversity.

decision-making, self realization, creativity for sustainable future, ethical consumerism, co-agency

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Creativity and The Arts in Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Childcare ; A National Pilot.

Presenters:

Rita Melia, Atlantic Technological University, Ireland

The aims of this pilot were to: Support professional artists & arts organisations to work collaboratively with a cluster of ELC & SAC settings. Explore the Draft Principles for Engaging with the Arts in Early Learning & Care (DCEDIY 2022). First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children & their Families (2018-2028) & the updated First 5 Implementation plan confirms to support & promote the Arts for young children & CPD for educators. Aistear (NCCA 2009) & Siolta (CECDE 2006) & the UNCRC (1989) confirm children's rights to play & freedom of expression. The Draft Principles for Engaging with the Arts in Early Learning and Care (DCEDIY 2023) underpin this study. Malaguzzi (1998) suggests that children have a hundred languages. Gardner (2011) speaks about children's multiple intelligences. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 3,4,5 consider health & wellbeing, quality education & gender equality all important when considering the arts in ELC & SAC. Eight artists worked with nine ELC including one SAC settings from May 2023- November 2023 with children from 15 months 8/9 years. The project engaged approx.160 children & 30 educators. Consent forms were developed parent / child consent, educator consent. Assent forms, & social stories provided to ensure informed continued assent. Pseudo names used for report purposes. Children engage with the arts in all its forms through play. Reciprocal collaborative learning empowers both artists & educators. Publication of the principals & guidelines. Continued funding for Arts in ELC SAC

early learning & care & school age childcare, creativity & the arts, 21st century skills, children's rights, Sustainable Development Goals

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Supporting Pedagogy in Arts and Creativity in Early Childhood settings in England (SPACE to Flourish)

Presenters:

Debi Keyte-Hartland, Debi Keyte-Hartland, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Cathy Gunning, Cathy Gunning, United Kingdom

This 4-year research project explores coaching as an approach to professional learning in creativity and the arts to enable the mutual flourishing of children, educators and ecology. Creative experiences of children are affected by educator's self-efficacy, knowledge and pedagogy in the arts (Dennee, Lindsay & Probine, 2023) and contextual coaching and pedagogic mediation are effective participatory professional development approaches (Hollweck & Lofthouse, 2021; Lyndon, 2019; Formosinho, 2016). Theoretical and conceptual frameworks draw upon participatory and situated approaches of professional learning (Formosinho, 2016; Lyndon, 2019); reciprocal formazione (Giamminuti, Cagliari, Guidici & Strozzi, 2024); Kline's (1999) thinking environment and artfulness (Giamminuti et al, 2024) which serve as resistance to prescriptive neoliberalist pedagogies (Archer, 2021). The study is postqualitative and performative (Østern, Jusslin, Knudsen, Maapalo & Bjørkøy, 2023) which thinks-with-theory and material in a methodology of worlding (Haraway, 2016; Osgood & Anderson, 2019) in which knowing and doing, theory and practice, ontology and epistemology are all entangled (Coleman & Osgood, 2019) thus recasting methods as research-creation (Manning, 2015). Ethico-onto-epistem-ological considerations of both the human and more-than-human included the sustainable and ethical use and agency of materials in which informed consent, anonymity and assent of human participants was agreed and re-negotiated throughout (Barad, 2007). Findings discuss the potential of artfulness and thinking environments in the intensities, flows, and agencies intra-acting in ways of experimenting and thinking-through-theory and materials within professional development contexts. When participation, relationships and context were held within an ethic of care including the more-than-human it directly challenged neoliberal policy and practice.

thinking environment, artfulness, pedagogical coaching, professional development, creative arts

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F8, Room 202, second floor, Grand Parade building

CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES ON COMPLEX CONCEPTS: ETHICS, JUSTICE, HOLOCAUST AND SAYING "SORRY"

Ulrike Beate Mueller, Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Germany

Children's Perspectives on Equity and Justice at Primary School Age in Germany

Presenters:

Ulrike Beate Mueller, Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Germany

To investigate children's perspectives on equity and justice, 11 group discussions were conducted with primary school-aged children. The 3rd World Vision Children Study in Germany showed that most of interviewed children (N=3000) think their school to be just. Being asked about their concept of justice, most children addressed definitions of justice in interactions and justice in treatment (Andresen et al., 2018). In 2015, all member states of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Goal 4, Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, is central to the education of children. Article 12 (UNCRC, 1989) addresses a child's right to express his or her own views freely. The term of equity can be defined as "the situation when everyone is treated fairly and equally" (Cambridge University Press). Following a qualitative research paradigm, German pupils at the age of 6 to 8 were interviewed in groups of 5 to 19 pupils at 11 different schools, supported by a semi-structured outline and analysed through content analysis. After being informed, pupils and guardians gave their consent for pupils' participation. All data were collected anonymously. First analyses show that children actually are willing to discuss concepts of equity and justice and that they are able to reflect on their perspectives. They can report competently and authentically, as Andresen et al. (2018) found out as well. Findings can be discussed in a way that children's perspectives should be more frequently considered in decision-making processes (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2022).

children's perspectives, equity and justice, Sustainable Development Goals, primary school, qualitative research

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Children's perspectives of Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom Hashoah): A Case Study

Presenters:

Shulamit Hoshen (Manzura), Oranim College of Education, Israel

The research aim is to understand children's perspectives of Yom Hashoah, to help policy makers and educators deliberate this complex issue. Yom Hashoah involves complex concepts. Alongside opposition to early childhood exposure to Holocaust issues (Tal, 2020), many state kindergartens actively mark this day by drip-feeding age-appropriate emotional content (Sacerdoti, 2015). The 'children's perspective' stems from the discourses of child rights, childhood sociology, power relations, and humanist democracy (Griffin, 2016). Discourse events were collected during 2016–2018 from 30 state kindergartens through open non-participatory observations of Yom Hashoah conversations with children. Data were analyzed qualitatively (Hoshen Manzura, 2023). Participants' anonymity was maintained. The database was used for research in accordance with the ethical codes of the Oranim College Research and Evaluation Authority. Analysis of conversations with the children revealed their varied emotions, perceptions, and questions, in four themes: focus on representations that create distancing from the historical event and project security and optimism; children's active involvement in discussing and designing the space; kindergarten as physically and socially safe, and "less equals more" in choosing content. Children of different ages, in different life situations and cultural contexts require a sensitive approach to authentic issues, to develop meaning and to grow from these encounters. Jewish-Israeli children are uniquely exposed to complex issues regarded as part of the national heritage. However, the case may be relevant to other sociocultural contexts as well.

child's perspective, Yom Hashoah, Israeli kindergarten, collective memory, drip-feeding method

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Children's conceptions of "I'm sorry" in school-age educare

Presenters:

Charlotte Tullgren, Kristianstad University, Sweden

Madeleine Arenhill Beckman, Kristianstad University, Sweden

The aim of the study is to illustrate children's conceptions of "I'm sorry" during various teaching activities in school-age educare. Informal learning settings, where play and social relations are the focus, form the backdrop for examining this concept (Pálsdóttir, 2012; Dahl, 2014; Lager, 2018). "I'm sorry" is linked to children's socio-emotional development and their ability to express feelings (Tuncdemir, Burroughs, & Moore, 2022). Some studies focus on children's awareness of the statement's meaning for both the sender and receiver, while others look at how understanding deepens over time (Smith, Andersson & Straussberger, 2018). This study contributes to understanding how students' comprehension of the concept can be expressed and developed in teaching. This qualitative study employs a hermeneutic interpretative approach. Conducted among children aged six to eight in school-age educare settings, it follows the Learning Study concept (Marton & Lo, 2017). Empirical data includes interviews, interactions, and recorded conversations, all analyzed to understand children's conceptions. Ethical guidelines were followed, with teachers and parents of participating children providing consent prior to interviews and interactions. Findings reveal how children grasp the abstract concept of "I'm sorry" and how their context influences the complexity of their expressions. The presentation also discusses using children's conceptions as a starting point for developing their social abilities.

school-age educare, social skills, children's learning, children's conceptions, variation theory

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F9, Room 204, second floor, Grand Parade building

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN THREE COUNTRIES

Marcela Huerta Villalobos, La Trobe University, Australia

Exploring early years curriculum in England: educator's beliefs, attitudes and practices

Presenters:

Mervegul Tarhan, University of Plymouth, United Kingdom

The main aim is to examine early years educators' understanding of what curriculum is. The second is to explore how educators' beliefs and attitudes toward curriculum affect their practices.

Curriculum and national frameworks are mostly seen as guiding documents for educators to support their work in planning and setting practices (Ang, 2013). However, the foundation stage in England contradicts itself in its purposes: guiding educators about what should be done to achieve defined outcomes, while expecting them to make curricular and pedagogical decisions according to needs and interests of children (Wood, 2020). My theoretical position in the research is socio-cultural perspective with the literature being viewed as the right of the individual to their own social reality (Woodhead, 2006). Qualitative case studies will be used. Data will be collected through interviews with early years practitioners and observations. I will use postmodernist paradigm as it appreciates diversity and multiple perspectives rather than finding an absolute knowledge (Dahlberg et al., 1999). All participants will be given Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form. They will be anonymised in all transcriptions. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study. Beliefs and attitudes are mental commitment that shapes a person's behavior (Phillip, 2007; Eagly, 1992). Thus, educators' beliefs and attitudes toward curriculum have a great impact on their classroom practices. Early years curriculum is under researched in England and my research will contribute to the wider knowledge on curriculum to gain holistic understanding of early years curriculum for policy and practice.

curriculum, classroom practices, educators' role, quality, beliefs and attitudes

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Navigating the Future: A Systematic Exploration of the Emergent Curriculum in 21st-Century Early Years Contexts for Sustainable Child-Centred Education

Presenters:

Charmaine Bonello, University of Malta, Malta

Natalie Lombardi Calleja, Malta, Malta

Co-authors:

Anna Baldacchino, University of Malta, Malta

Carmen Dalli, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, children are prioritised in important decisions that affect their lives, like curriculum development (United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner, 2020). The Emergent Curriculum involves all children and their educators in curriculum development. This paper presents the findings of a systematic literature review on how the Emergent Curriculum approach is used in 21st-century early years contexts. The study examined 20 years of English-medium global scientific literature review (2003–2023) on how the emergent curriculum in the early years (0–8 years) has evolved in diverse settings, identifying how educators, children, and the community co-constructed the emergent curriculum in their local contexts and adjusted it based on social and cultural aspects of their locality. The review adheres to the principles and methodology of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) approach to systematic reviews. The systematic literature review yielded 54 relevant papers for the study. Three key databases, Web of Science, Psycinfo, and SCOPUS, were searched, and patterns and themes were examined using thematic analysis. This paper utilises existing research and no new empirical data were collected from human subjects. The Ethics Committee application was solely for record-keeping purposes. The paper presents preliminary themes, such as (i) enabling children's agency, voice, and fascinations, (ii) adults and children as co-leaders in learning, (iii) pedagogical documentation for a stronger sense of identity and (iv) emergent curriculum in virtual mode. The review offers implications for child-centred, sustainable Early Childhood Curriculum policy, practice, and research.

emergent curriculum, early years contexts, sustainable curriculum, child-centred education, systematic literature review

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Lived experiences of making updates to preschool curriculums provoked by the national guidelines

Presenters:

Ona Monkevičienė, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Birute Vityte, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Jelena Vildziuniene, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

The study problem: What makes the lived experience of making updates to preschool curriculum provoked by the national guidelines a unique phenomenon? Many countries have two curriculum levels: national guidelines and local preschool curriculums prepared by teachers. Existing research focuses on the potential development, design, openness to diversity of curriculums (Karlsudd, 2021), the role of play in them (Fleer, 2021). However, the experiences of teachers when national guidelines provoke updates to their own curriculums are underresearched. Using phenomenological philosophy (Heidegger, 1962; Merleau-Ponty, 2006) the study seeks to reveal the existential, emotional, embodied, situational, external impact-induced lived experience of teachers who update their curriculums. Phenomenological approach (van Manen, 2014) was applied: Eidetic Reduction – Whatness; Ontological Reduction – Ways of Being; Radical Reduction – Self-Givenness, Originary Reduction – Originary Meaning. Data collection method: lived experience descriptions; tool: phenomenological interviews with 24 preschool teachers.

Interview recordings were transcribed to identify anecdotes, which were systematised based on structure of the experience. Ethical requirements of the University were followed. The teachers gave their informed consent and could withdraw at any time. The study revealed the lived experiences of teachers when they update their preschool curriculums not at their own initiative, but under the external pressure of changing national guidelines: in terms of body (exhausting workload, burden, suffering), time (frequent unwanted changes, postponing), relationships (whispers in groups, unvoiced resistance), space (escaping, sinking deeper, fluctuation). This shows the importance of allowing sufficient time for teachers to prepare for future changes when drafting national change-initiating documents.

early childhood education, national curriculum guidelines, preschool curriculums, lived experiences of teachers, phenomenological approach

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set F10, Room 207, second floor, Grand Parade building

GENDER ISSUES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Keshni Bipath, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Sexist Language in Early Childhood Education: Teachers' Use and Views

Presenters:

Nilgün Erzincan, Early Education Centre, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Feyza Tantekin Erden, Middle East Technical University, Turkey

This study aims to explore preschool teachers' sexist language use and their views on the use of sexist language in early childhood education. Research shows that teachers' sexist communication influences children's adoption of sexist language, gender stereotypes, and their socialization practices (Hilliard & Liben, 2010). Thus, teachers are critical in promoting gender-neutral language use and expanding awareness about gender issues (Núñez-Román et al., 2020). This study is based on the feminist stylistics approach, which underlines the gender-related sub-messages in texts (Mills, 1995). Gender schema theory also supports the research by addressing the social factors that shape children's gender schemas (Thomasson, 2019). A phenomenological study was conducted, and the data were gathered from 10 preschool teachers through creative writing activity and a semi-structured interview. Feminist stylistic analysis and content analysis were used. Permissions were obtained from the publisher for the book used in the creative writing, the Ethics Committee of a state university, and the Ministry of National Education. Additionally, teachers were asked to sign a consent form about their volunteering. According to the findings, participants stated the short and long-term effects of sexist language use on children. They indicated that children may have inner conflict, behavioral problems, persistent gender stereotypes, communication problems, and difficulty expressing their feelings. Furthermore, the participants used sexist language at the word, sentence, and discourse levels in their writings. This study aimed to contribute to preschool teachers becoming more self-aware and knowledgeable about sexist language and to support gender-neutral language use in the learning setting.

sexist language in early childhood, feminist stylistic approach, sexist communication, teacher education, effects of sexist language use

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Challenging South African Early Childhood Development teachers' perceptions and pedagogical practices regarding gender

Presenters:

Keshni Bipath, University of Pretoria, South Africa

The article explores challenging early childhood development (ECD) teachers' perceptions and pedagogical practices regarding gender in South Africa. ECD teachers' perceptions and pedagogical practices entrench children's stereotypical gender identities. To develop gender equality, teacher perception, and pedagogical practices need to be challenged. There is a shortage of research on gender pedagogical practices among ECD teachers. Post-structuralism (Blaise and Taylor, 2012) highlights the important role of discourses such as power, subjectivity, and agency in early childhood education and the importance that these discourses play in gender equality and ECD teachers' perceptions and practices. Using the participatory action research design, qualitative, interpretative research was conducted with 12 ECD teachers. Participants' confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed. They were informed about voluntary participation and the possibility of disengaging at any phase. Findings revealed that when teachers' perceptions and pedagogical practices are challenged, it elucidates that teachers become aware of the influence of their biased practices on gender identity. The innovative Renisha Singh Framework for Gender Awareness Pedagogy (RS-GAP) adds to the conceptual framework of childhood agency, gender discourses, and critical reflection. The RS-GAP framework makes recommendations for policy and practice in the early childhood sector.

gender, early childhood care and development, teacher pedagogy, teacher practices, South Africa

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set F11, NEW ROOM, Room 209, second floor, Edward Street Building

PROMOTING CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Jackie Musgrave, The Open University, United Kingdom

Transitional Objects: Health and Wellbeing during rest and sleep routines and rituals

Presenters:

Amanda Norman, University of Winchester, United Kingdom

To develop an understanding about Transitional Objects in early childhood and their relevance during rest and sleep in co-regulating children's emotions, good health and wellbeing. Rest and sleep, is an understudied area in day care (Thorpe, 2018) within the UK. Therefore this research includes and extends the topic of sleep hygiene. Child's agency of voice around rest and sleep (BM, 21) Winnicott's (1971) research on Transitional Objects (TO) Attachment theories (Bowlby, 1954; Elfer, 1993; Page, 2021) and caring for young children in educational and research contexts is explored. Within horizontal transitions, Winnicott (1971) and Object Relations (Winnicott, 1991; Lanyado, 2010) and Froebelian (1782-1852) perspective; the unique child and freedom with guidance with the value of Transitional Objects during rest and sleep routines and rituals is considered. This study is in the interpretative paradigm, and an autoethnographic approach in my dual role as a lead practitioner, and as a researcher. My methods include, reflective observations, personal accounts, vignettes, policy analysis and photo elicitation. Ethical approval from university has also been sought, with considerations regarding settings, families and child's position on rest and sleep. It contributes to wellbeing within caring environments that 'emotionally hold' the child to flourish and fulfil their potential. This is evaluated with a suggested model (in its initial phase) for practice. Contemporary issues and questions about Transitional Objects, evaluations are from a book publication (2024) within ECEC, families and UNICEF (Britain) call for a Baby and Toddler Guarantee (2023) and Baby Manifesto (2024).

wellbeing, transitional objects, routines and rituals, sleep, attunement

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Food and meals in early childhood education in Sweden, Norway and Italy: a comparison of national curricula and guidelines

Presenters:

Anna Maria Billing, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway
Kathrine Bjørger, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway

Co-authors:

Claudia Melis, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway
Per-Arvid Wold, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway

The aim of this study is to compare the curriculum and national guidelines for food and meals in ECECIs in Norway, Sweden and Italy. Previous literature has documented differences in the practise of food and meals in ECECIs between the countries. In Norway, it is normal to serve a lunch based on wholemeal bread with sandwich toppings (Ciren, 2021), while in Italy and Sweden, children are commonly served warm meals (Lucas et al., 2017). Choice of food is important since it can affect both our mental and physical health (Ward et al., 2021) as well as having an impact on the environment (Reisch et al., 2013). Still, cultural and climatic differences among countries influence which type of food is available and which is perceived as healthy (Miller et al., 2022). This study uses a qualitative research paradigm to conduct a critical content analysis (Cohen et al., 2018) and aim to answer the research question: What are the differences in goals and nutritional requirements listed in the national guidelines for food and meals in Norway, Sweden and Italy? This is a literature study and involves only secondary data, but ethical considerations have been made to analysis transparency and unbiased representation of literature in the field. Our preliminary results indicate some clear differences in the national guidelines between the countries, both regarding the main goals and nutritional requirements. This study can contribute to increase knowledge about sustainable ECECIs, policies and issues related to food and meals in Norway, Sweden and Italy.

comparative study, nutritional guidelines, food literacy, meals in early childhood, sustainability

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Promoting physical health and development in Early Childhood

Presenters:

Jackie Musgrave, The Open University, United Kingdom

This year long research conducted in 2 settings, a childminder and large nursery chain explored how a health promotion intervention helped to support physical development in young children. An ongoing body of work exploring ways that practitioners make valuable contributions in promoting and supporting the health of young children (Musgrave and Payler 2021). This presentation focuses on phase 2 findings. Bryk, Gomez and Grunow's work on networked improvement communities and of Arbour et al (2015) on continuous quality improvement guided thinking and action to develop a participatory approach to promoting children's health. The research links to SDG 3, Good health and wellbeing. Using the 5 step framework to guide thinking, an intervention to support children's physical development was identified. Interviews conducted at 3 points during the research, six in total. Ethical approval was given from the university's ethics committee. Participants gave written consent for participation and dissemination of the anonymised findings from the research. Images of children have been cropped to avoid including faces. the main findings:

- Improvements in children's core strength and their stamina and endurance
- 'Knock-on' effect in other aspects of children's life
- Children more confident and willing to take risks
- Children have greater speed, balance and coordination
- Children have improved fine motor skills
- Staff training has been implemented on core strength

The findings further demonstrate the ways that practitioners promote health, in this phase of the research improvements in children's physical development and increased activity were observed following the intervention.

child health, health promotion, physical development, practitioners, physical health

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set F12, Room 225, second floor, Grand Parade building

SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Sule Alici, Kirsehir Ahi Evran University, Turkey

This self-symposia -Sustainability and the Environment in Early Childhood Education- is organized by sustainability SIG members. Via this symposia, you can see various reflections on different countries' sustainability practices and perspectives. For instance, Broadfoot focuses on compassion in early childhood education (ECE) environments in the context of matters of care and sustainability. Further, Christenson et al. investigate how educators, with nature as a framework, can promote the development of sustainable learning environments in ECEC and children's connectedness to nature, locally and globally. On the other hand, Alici and Alan use a codebook to analyze the Turkish ECE teacher guidebook for sample activities based on the Education for Sustainability (EfS) approaches.

sustainability_early_childhood_education

Nature kindergartens' development of a sustainable ECEC-practice

Presenters:

Mandy Andrews, Plymouth University, United Kingdom

Lea Ann Christenson, Towson University, USA

Hanne Værum Sørensen, Via University College, Aarhus

Birgitte Madsen Theilmann, Via University College Aarhus, Denmark

This research examines how educators, with nature as a framework, can promote the development of sustainable learning environments in ECEC and children's connectedness to nature; locally and globally. Previous research (Siraj-Blatchford and Pramling-Samuelsson, 2016) has shown that a sustainable educational practice supports children's wellbeing and inclusive communities. The Brundtland report (1987) 'Our Common Futures' formulates three dimensions of sustainability: social, economic and environmental, and in 2013 UNESCO added the fourth dimension; good governance. Our point of departure is the social dimension, but we take a holistic perspective to include the ecological, economic and political. We choose a cultural-historical methodological approach, in which children are active agents, in dialectic relations with nature and culture. Empirical material is collected 2023-2024, beginning with workshops and reflections with the ECEC-staff, to gain insight into the pedagogical practice and values of nature kindergartens. During spring 2024 qualitative observations, interviews, and visual material will be conducted and analyzed for children's agency and belonging in outdoor contexts. Information sheets and consent forms were provided to all participants. Children were also informed each visit to ensure their assent. Ethics were treated according to relevant Danish, US and UK ethical standards. Preliminary findings reveal that new experiences and activities in nature, strengthen children's communities, their shared physical, motor and sensory actions, and increase immediate joy in being in nature. In the longer term, we expect to identify increased wellbeing, increased nature connectedness, and knowledge of the importance of nature for mankind.

nature-connectedness, sustainability, exploration, belonging, agency

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Due Diligence of Teacher Guidebook

Presenters:

Sule Alici, Kirsehir Ahi Evran University, Turkey

Co-authors:

Havva Ayca Alan, Middle East Technical University, Turkey

This study uses a codebook to analyze the Turkish Early Childhood Education (ECE) teacher guidebook for sample activities based on Education for Sustainability (EfS) approaches. This guidebook consists of sample activities as free resources/reserves declared by the Ministry of National Education. The codebook was used by Alici and Sahin (2023) to examine ECE teachers' activity plans regarding EfS approaches. Moreover, Alici and Alan (2022) investigated pre-service teachers' practicum activity plans regarding the four pillars of EfS. Researchers combine Alici's (2018) and Alici and Alan's (2022) codebooks for this study. The codebook was originally developed by Alici (2018) based on the literature review about the critical analysis of EfS approaches (e.g. Davis, 2014; Davis & Elliott, 2014; Elliott & Young, 2015). This study uses document analysis, one of the qualitative research methods within the interpretive paradigm. 339 activity plan examples offered in the guidebook are investigated through content analysis. This analysis uses a coding form to determine EfS integration based on four categories. Using publicly accessible pre-existing document and analyzing meticulously all offered activity plans we prevent bias and misrepresentation. Preliminary analysis demonstrated that half of the activities were not associated with any of the EfS approaches. The other half of the activities mostly place EfS weak approach. whereas few of them include medium very few are strong approaches. As analysis indicates, the guidebook could be revised based on EfS approaches since all Turkish ECE teachers can reach this activity book and conduct the activities in their classrooms with a few adaptations.

Turkish curriculum, EfS approaches, document analysis, teacher practices, guidebook

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

An Exploration of What Affords a Compassion Enabling Environment

Presenters:

Harriet Broadfoot, Durham University, United Kingdom

This study's focus is compassion in early childhood education (ECE) environments. In support of heightened recognition of the need for fostering values supporting sustainability (UNESCO, 2015; Wals, 2017) and wellbeing (Archer and Oppenheim, 2021; Moss and Cameron, 2020) in ECE, I applied the lenses of spaces, relations and time (Van Manen, 1997) to explore what opportunities ECE environments afford for experiencing compassion and what constitutes a compassion enabling environment. A multi-sited ethnographic methodology (Marcus, 1995) with an interpretivist orientation was adopted, involving participant observation, interviews and focus groups with children and staff in two ECE settings. Ethnographic analysis was used to analyse materials generated. My research practice was informed by an ethic of respect, with emerging ethical issues reflexively addressed in-situ. Permission of access and consent were sought prior to fieldwork. All participants were given pseudonyms and could withdraw anytime. Using stories generated during the fieldwork, the discussion will illustrate the interrelation between ECE environments and children's and adults' experiences of compassion, alongside what enables realising compassion and opportunities for this. In particular the role of time, spatial set-ups, gatherings, imagination, connection, living elements and books will be highlighted. The results contribute to a deeper and wider understanding of compassion in ECE, and what co-curates compassion enabling environments in ways that afford opportunity to experience, explore and extend it. Learnings from this offer potential transferability to similar settings for promoting care and sustainability – that is, educating for holistic being and living well together in our interconnected worlds.

compassion, holistic wellbeing, early learning environments, sustainability, ethnography

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set F13, Room 229, second floor, Grand Parade building

SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES

Marina Lundkvist, Early Childhood Education, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Helsinki, Finland

For now, for then and for others, The Potential of leadership in ECE procedures and structures.

Presenters:

Armin Schneider, Hochschule Koblenz, Germany

Implementation of structures and procedures to increase the social dimension of sustainability in the system of early childcare, with a focus on the role of leaders. 1. Transition from kindergarten to primary school. 2. Kita-Council with participants of provider, parents, professionals, leaders and one professional, who brings in the perspective of the children. Daycare centres in Rhineland-Palatinate use quality development in discourse: analyzing the circumstances and conditions of the system to improve the effects of leadership towards children and their participation inside the institutions and in transition to the primary schools (Lundy (2007), O'Sullivan (2009) Urban and Moss (2020)). The main question is the implementation of the childrens rights of participation combined with the sustainable development goals of the UN (SDG) in the governance system of early childhood as a competent system (Urban 2011). Social sustainability means a responsibility for (all) people now, in future and around the world. To increase sustainability in these dimension it is necessary to focus the role of leadership and its decisions and acting in structures and procedures. Mixed Methods design (surveys (n=235), qualitative interviews (pre-/post Meetings,n=20), observation meetings (3), network analysis (3). Using the experiences of participants of early childcare. In the qualitative study, written consent was obtained. All participants are well informed. View of the children is seldom point of consideration. To give children power has impacts on other stakeholders in the system of early childhood education.

Policy: improve legal framework. Practice: examples and guidelines of good practice for leaders.

leadership, competent system, sustainability in systems and procedures, Participation, Kita-Council

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Sustainable leadership in the early childhood context: The potential of a systemic approach to ameliorate the challenges in early childhood leadership process and practices.

Presenters:

Ian Alchin, Western Sydney University, Australia

The research investigated the potential of a holistic systemic approach to ameliorate leadership and management challenges experienced by director/managers and to manage leadership (Tate, 2009). Also of interest was the capacity of a systemic approach to deliver a common language and shared understanding of leadership across all levels of responsibility. In a 2019 online survey, Australian early childhood director/managers ranked aspects in the organisational domain of leadership and management as more challenging than pedagogical aspects. Managing staff was ranked the most challenging aspect with business planning, finance, and regulatory compliance also significant (Alchin et al., 2019). The research employed a nested theoretical framework centred around systems and activity theories. A multi-site case study methodology was conducted with five stand-alone centres. Director/educators engaged in action research and participated in communities of practice where experiences and data were shared. These methods enabled data triangulation and synthesis across cases. Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Engeström, 2001) provided a frame for data collection and analysis to record leadership engagements. The director/managers were positioned as co-researchers to minimise power imbalance, researcher subjectivity and harness director/educator experience and expertise. Potential areas for systemic improvements in leadership processes, tools and practices were identified from adopting an organisational standpoint. A leadership framework was also developed that can be used as a system tool to facilitate a shared understanding of leadership and to manage its enactment. A systemic and organisational approach can facilitate a shared understanding of leadership and its enactment and lessen challenges.

systemic leadership, holistic, organisational approach, leadership framework, shared understanding

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set F14, Room 318b, third floor, Grand Parade building

INTERACTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS AND APPROACHES THAT SUPPORT EARLY LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

Tanya Richardson, University of Northampton, United Kingdom

Advancing Equity: Storyboxes as Multimodal Pathways to Early Literacy

Presenters:

Sally Brown, Georgia Southern University, United States

This study investigated how a multisensory early literacy approach created equitable literacy learning spaces. Linguistic foundations are needed for children to develop vocabulary and narrative skills (Babayigit et al., 2021), and play supports this development with positive correlations to later reading comprehension (Rand & Morrow, 2021). Further, oral narrative competence leads to emergent writing (Kirby et al., 2021). Milner's (2012) opportunity gap explanatory framework provides a way to understand deficit ideologies using a critical lens, identifying ways minoritized students are constructed as intellectually inferior individuals. It enables inequitable systematic structures and school policies to be questioned and transformed. Play-Based Learning (McGeown, 2015) shows literacy exploration is enhanced through adult-child interactions using open-ended questions. Play supports the development of narrative competence (Suggate et al., 2018). The participants were 22 kindergarten children (ages 5-6) from one public-school classroom where a teacher volunteered to participate in research. Qualitative data were analyzed using a constructivist paradigm supported by a grounded theory method of coding (Charmaz, 2014) and multimodal analysis of student drawings and transcripts of weekly small group interactions with storyboxes (Baldry & Thibault, 2006). Ethical guidelines included parental consent and child assent. Before each interaction, the child was asked about participation. The findings show that changing a screen-based approach to non-screen one (i.e., storyboxes) increases listening comprehension and narrative development. Thus, supporting an ECE curriculum that values multiple ways of knowing and more equitable learning spaces for children who do not express their knowledge in traditional ways. Multimodality opens new possibilities.

literacy, multimodal, storyboxes, equity, play-based learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The interplay of science, play and language.

Presenters:

Helle Hovgaard Jørgensen, UCL professionshøjskole og erhvervsakademi, Denmark

Morten Rask Petersen, University College Lillebælt, Denmark

Linda Ahrenkiel, University College Lillebælt, Denmark

This study reports investigation of how interplay of science practices and play qualities encourage language about science. Science in early childhood education often appears as isolated activities (Larimore, 2020). In combining science with language and play, science becomes the resources for everyday activities. Fler (2019) suggests scientific play worlds as environments to combine science and play. However, such environments also carry risks of being isolated events and overlook science in children's everyday play. Science practices (Authors, 2022) was developed as tools for capturing actions possible of containing science. These practices interplay with play qualities (Author, 2024) and language strategies (Markussen-Brown, Clausen & Olesen, 2020) as a tool for practitioners to identify and qualify science in children's play. The overall theoretical framework was developed in combining experiential learning (Kolb, 2014) with socio-constructivism (Vygotsky, 2012). The interplay of play, science and language was tested through an action-research design (McNiff, 2013) and observed in practice through multiple cases (n>25). Ethical analysis was undertaken before commencement (BERA,2011). Professional's appreciative and guiding attitudes assured continually consents of the children, why close, respectful collaboration with participants was crucial. Results show that a focus on science practices in combination with play qualities and language strategies has the potential to set science on the everyday spontaneous repertoire among the ECE personnel. Science becomes visible in children's everyday activities and ECE personnel becomes more comfortable with encountering science with the children. The tool supports a reflective practice and lower the barriers of doing science in an ECE practice.

science practices, play qualities, language strategies, spontaneous science, participatory methods

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Relationships between the quality of young children's speech and language and home learning environments

Presenters:

Tanya Richardson, University of Northampton, United Kingdom

Jane Murray, University of Northampton, United Kingdom

The study aimed to investigate the association between home learning environments (HLE) factors and the quality of utterances in children aged 0-5 in the UK, with objectives including identifying specific HLE factors affecting utterance quality and suggesting HLE improvements. There is evidence of a widening speech and language (SL) gap among young children in the UK, exacerbated by the recent pandemic (RCSTL, 2020), with acknowledged long-term impacts (Law et al., 2010). Simultaneously it is reported that HLEs play a vital role in promoting children's speech and language development (SLD) (Son and Morrison, 2010). The interactionist approach was used to frame this study, recognising that interactions with both the environment and those within it are crucial for young children's SLD (Tomasello, 2003). The interactions with the environment were of particular importance and were the main foci of the study. Working in an interpretive paradigm, this case study used environmental observations/audits and child observations using body worn cameras for data collection. Asking parents to audit and record within the HLE came with specific ethical considerations. We made it clear that there was no pressure to take part and that it was not a judgmental exercise. The fundamental principle of "do no harm" was adopted and ethical protocols were followed throughout (EECERA, 2015). Findings indicated that HLE environments and interactions therein impact children's utterances, highlighting areas for enhancement. This study makes recommendations on the elements needed within the HLE and how to support speech and language within the home.

speech and language , home learning environments, communication, creative methods, body worn cameras

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set F15, Room 103, first floor, Edward Street building

SUPPORTIVE MECHANISMS WITHIN SOCIO DRAMATIC PLAY

Mosa Khasu, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

"Kuriosa Von Dings" - Exploring digital impulses in interactive theatre for children

Presenters:

Kirsti Aksnes, Western University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Vigdis Vangnes, Western University of Applied Sciences, Norway

This study research how interactive theatre for children is challenged when multisensory digital tools (MSDT) are made part of the performance. It analyses the performance Kuriosa Von Dings, which was performed with two groups of children aged 4-5 years. The research question is: How does the use of digital tools affect the room for play and exploration in interactive theatre performances for kindergarten children? Research concerning play and technology is mainly examined as something instrumental, or as digital play (Marsh & Bishop, 2014, Edwards et al. 2020, Undheim, 2022). There is little research on MSDT used in playful, creative ways (Lafton, 2019), and in arts (Patel, 2020). As interactive theatre requires children's participation ensuring room for dramatic play is vital (Guss, 2015). Through Athey's theory about play patterns (Patel et al., 2018) and metafictional dramaturgy (Szatkowski, 1989) we examine the performances' dramaturgic interactivity. The study is an empirical qualitative case study (Creswell, 2013). It is "arts-based-research" (Haseman, 2006, Rasmussen, 2012) and the data consist of video material examined through dramaturgical analysis (Kjølnner and Szatkowski, 1991). The data is approved by the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. All participants have consented, and names e.g., are anonymized. Multisensory digital tools shape new forms of interactive theatre, by creating surprising impulses that facilitate room for dramatic play and collective explorations. This study shows how MSDT can be used in aesthetic processes in a way that supports children's natural playful being.

Interactive theatre, multisensory digital tools, play, dramaturgy, creativity

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Teachers co-creating with children in play: Collaboration, creativity and communication

Presenters:

Sarah Young, University of Melbourne, Australia

This study provides insight into teacher's participation in children's play and how the environment enhances or detracts the effectiveness of their play pedagogy. Teachers facilitate children's socio-dramatic play, although less experienced at joining children as co-players (Devi et al., 2018; Grieshaber, 2016; Loizou, 2017). Adopting a co-playing approach can open opportunities to collaborate and co-create (Edmiston, 2017; Loizou, 2017). Teachers were invited to apply Kravtsov and Kravtsova's (2010) concept of 'double subjectivity' to mirror how children enact their dramatic play, as themselves and a character simultaneously (Vygotsky, 1930/2004). The study was qualitative with a case study approach (Denzin et al., 2023) using deductive and inductive analysis. Four kindergarten teachers with the 4-5-year-old children in their settings participated in the study, across Melbourne, Australia. The data collection included, semi-structured interviews and a drama-based method where the researcher, teacher and children took part in videoed shared improvised narratives in their kindergarten rooms. Consent forms and plain language statements were provided to all teachers and parents of the children. Participants involvement was voluntary and they could withdraw at anytime. Ongoing assent was negotiated with the children. Pseudonyms have replaced the names of participants. The findings identified how teachers interact with children using playful and improvised interactions that support collaborative narratives. However, when the teacher became a 'public performer' it hindered their double subjectivity creating a 'third affect' limiting the trajectory of the play. This study provides insight into how teacher's co-create with children in their play.

children's play, pedagogy, teachers, co-players, co-creating

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Playwriting as an emergent pedagogical tool for primary school student teachers

Presenters:

Mosa Khasu, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

Co-authors

Elizabeth Henning, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

The purpose of this study was to explore how student teachers engaged in a playwriting process, creating drama texts for early grades primary school learners about AI. Scripted plays can be useful for infusing targeted vocabulary in plays (Aram & Mor 2009; Gardiner, 2019). Plays can engage children in a theatrical experience when they are the classroom 'audience' as well as 'actors' (Chizhik 2009). In this study, we drew on Vygotsky's cultural-historical theory (Engeström 1987, 2015) also known as 'sociocultural theory' (Kozulin 1990, 2003), in which semiotic mediation happens through tools and signs. Scaffolding such tools and signs is the work of the 'human mediator' (Kozulin 2003:19). The qualitative study is situated in an interpretivist paradigm and participatory action research design. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with the student teachers, coupled with a dual analysis of their drama texts. Ethical clearance for this study was granted by the ethics and higher degrees committee in the Faculty of Education at the university where the study was conducted with the ethics number Sem 2-2020-118. Informed consent was requested and obtained from the participants who took part in this research. The findings contribute to the corpus of pedagogies for the teaching of vocabulary in African languages, which includes writing the texts and aiming to use these for reading experience and for dramatic activity in early grades classrooms. The contribution of this study is how playwriting can serve as a pedagogical tool for the teaching of reading and vocabulary in the primary school.

artificial intelligence, reading, remote learning, playwriting, vocabulary

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set F16, Room 104, first floor, Edward Street building

UNDERSTANDING COST DRIVEN POLICY AND SYSTEMS CHANGE

Jeanna Capito, Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, United States

Early care and education, child care, home visiting, early special education and family support services are all part of the non-functioning prenatal-to-five system. Services are uncoordinated, underfunded and complicated in their funding administration and eligibility thresholds, leaving many families without access or an understanding of the service they could use. Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies (P5FS) builds community-need and cost modeling tools which address the current policies and make system change to better invest funding and ensure family access. Research presented in this symposium encompasses how cost driven policy change has been used to improve the prenatal-to-five system, including child care and family support programs, and aligns with the strand Sustainability in ECE. The symposium shares research that directly impacts those who make decisions, how decisions are informed and what influence decisions have on policy and practice (Theme selection)

Using cost to inform family support systems

Presenters:

Jeanna Capito, Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, United States

Jessica Rodriguez Duggan, Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, United States

This study discusses the development of cost and community-need modeling tools to plan for family support programs in Michigan, USA. Research has shown that home visiting is an effective intervention for families yet it is underfunded and inaccessible (National Home Visiting Resource Center, 2018; Michalopoulos et al, 2019). The conceptual framework is based on work to map community need, to understand the services families need, and use cost information to implement programs that improve child and family outcomes. This study included qualitative data collection with programs, review of extant data, including wage studies, program contracts and expenditure and outcome reports, and development of cost models on program services and service needs and cost. All data was kept confidential to the study with results shared only in aggregate. The findings demonstrate that low workforce compensation is undermining the ability of programs to hire, to fill family caseloads, or to impact child and family outcomes through home visiting (Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, 2023). This research provided policymakers data on cost inclusive of a living wage and full compensation, which was adopted by the state agency as the compensation base for their federally funded home visiting programs. This research has implications for the home visiting field, as it addresses silos across the programs and underfunding that results from not using cost to inform contract values; the cost model established a workforce compensation base across all HV programs and funding streams, an approach that has applicability for all ECE services.

home visiting, finance, cost-modeling, prenatal-to-three, compensation

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Using cost to reform the prenatal-to-five system

Presenters:

Katie Kenyon, Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, United States

Jessica Rodriguez Duggan, Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, United States

Jeanna Capito, Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, United States

This presentation addresses the siloed, uncoordinated, and underfunded public sectors that exist to support the most vulnerable children and families in the USA. Research across the health, education, and social service sectors demonstrates that families are negatively impacted by dysfunctional prenatal-to-five state systems, including entrenched public bureaucracies that are siloed, duplicative, inefficient, and using outdated information to inform

policy (National Academies of Sciences, 2018; Kania and Kramer, 2011). The conceptual framework for this work draws on the integrated governance approach to early childhood systems and growing movement to streamline public administration of funding for children (Regenstein & Lipper, 2013; ECECD, 2020). Using the state of New Mexico as an example, this presentation will feature the revenue and cost study that informed the state's multi-year finance plan. The study used both quantitative and qualitative data collection to inform the development of service need and cost modeling tools to project program growth and revenue need projections. The presentation will highlight how the revenue and cost study helped the state to address longstanding inequities in children's access to services and the quality of those services, thereby ensuring that investments focused on those communities with the greatest needs and least resources. The study findings demonstrated the revenues needed to reform the prenatal to five system, support program growth, and better serve children. This innovative approach was instrumental in supporting dramatic state-wide systems improvements for young children in New Mexico, including an increase in public investment in early childhood by nearly 50 percent.

system-change, governance, finance, cost-modeling, legislation

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Using cost of care to inform child care policy

Presenters:

Simon Workman, Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, United States

Jeanna Capito, Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, United States

This presentation details how a cost of care approach to informing public rate setting has been used to address the broken child care market in the United States. Through cross-state research, the impact of this innovative approach on access, affordability, and quality of care will be demonstrated. The current broken market exacerbates lower-quality settings and insufficient wages across child care, disproportionately affecting low-income communities, minority groups, and communities of color (U.S. Treasury, 2021; Chaparro, Sojourner, and Huey, 2019). Using cost to set public subsidy rates (Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, 2021) can address many of the inequities in the current market; research has shown when using a cost-informed approach, both the rates paid to providers and workforce compensation has increased, and inequities in subsidy payment values have been addressed (Osborne, et.al., 2023; and Bose, et.al., 2023). The cost of care studies discussed involved both qualitative and quantitative data from child care programs as well as extant data on cost of living and federal/state regulations to inform the development of a fiscal model. All data was kept confidential to the study team with only aggregate results shared. Results across state studies have found a significant gap between current reimbursement rates and the cost of care, especially for infants and toddlers, children with special needs, and providers in rural communities (Capito & Workman, 2022). Multiple states are using the results of their models to inform policy decisions regarding how they fund child care for low-income families.

public funding, policy, fiscal modeling, cost-based, United States

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set F17, Room 105, first floor, Edward Street building

LEARNING STORIES: A NARRATIVE ASSESSMENT APPROACH, EXAMPLES FROM NEW ZEALAND AND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Annie White, California State University Channel Islands, United States

Learning Stories assessment practice (Carr, 2001, Carr & Lee, 2012, 2019) is being used across many international settings. This narrative method is a powerful tool used in multiple settings, as a strength-based approach that fosters diverse voices and perspectives. Through communities of practice, teachers participate in teacher inquiry groups to strengthen relationships with children and families, and support learner identities. At the same time, there is an increased use of artificial intelligence (AI) generative tools (King, 2023) used by teachers to write Learning Stories which has the potential to change the landscape of education, and concerns about integrity and ethics have arisen

(Huang, 2023). This symposium looks at how Learning Stories are used in New Zealand and United States as a pathway to build relationships and connections with families, and the potential benefits and challenges of the impact of the use of AI generative tools.

Writing Learning Stories with Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education: Whose Voices are Elevated or Silenced?

Presenters:

Annie White, California State University Channel Islands, United States

Lauren Chase, California State University Channel Islands, United States

This research examines how artificial intelligence (AI) is used by University students to generate Learning Stories as part of ECE pedagogy. It examines how AI tools may help or hinder ECE pedagogy. This study expands research on Learning Stories (Carr & Lee, 2001; 2012; 2019). It relates this to the ethics of AI use (Huang 2023) and good reflective practice (Sisk-Hilton & Meier, 2016). In higher education, students use AI to write Learning Stories as part of practicum and curriculum development. There is rising concern by educators on the use of AI tools and their impact on students' engagement with critical reflective practice (Sisk-Hilton & Meier, 2016). The study uses narrative inquiry (Clandinin 2013, 2016; Goeson, 2014, Stremmel, 2014) involving data collection from Learning Stories prepared by tertiary students, plus written reflection, interviews, and conversations. These data were analyzed to identify positive as well as negative impacts of AI on the pedagogy of Learning Stories. Consent forms were provided to participants. Informed consent was discussed, and participants could withdraw at any time. The use of AI to write Learning Stories was beneficial in some contexts. It is important to identify the right context in which AI can enhance learning. The emerging findings suggest that using AI to write Learning Stories must include ethical and responsible consideration. ECE University stakeholders will get actionable advice on navigating ethical issues and maximizing learning opportunities with AI in Learning Stories. Our goal is to guide responsible AI integration in documenting children's learning.

learning stories, artificial intelligence, generative tools, narrative inquiry, higher education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Partners in Practice: Learning Stories and Family Engagement through Inquiry Groups

Presenters:

Jessica Derby, Patagonia: Great Pacific Child Development Center, United States

This study focuses on families and educators in an early learning setting, by engaging families in creating Learning Stories and supporting the families' voice through meaningful dialogue and reflective inquiry (Meier & Stremmel, 2010; Escamilla & Meier, 2018). The inquiry investigates how sharing Learning Stories and collaborating with families can reshape and transform relationships. The study continues research on family engagement and Learning Stories through the inclusion of diverse voices and multiple perspectives to strength relationships (Escamilla, et al., 2021; White, 2016). The study explores the importance of involving the whole community to strengthen children's learning identities (Carr & Lee, 2019) while going beyond early childhood classrooms and supporting families learning identities in an inquiry group setting (Escamilla, et al., 2021). The study uses narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2016), to understand how Learning Stories support learner identities' and belonging among fellow parents/caregivers. Family inquiry groups are held monthly for six months with teachers, leadership, and families to deepen their relationships, storytelling, and reflection practices (Escamilla, et al., 2021). Teachers, leadership, and families, provide their permission for this research and can withdraw at any time. Early childhood settings that use Learning Stories to create inquiry groups across teachers, leadership, and families strengthen relationships while affirming parent/caregiver identity and belonging. Learning Stories, offers parents/caregivers an opportunity to make deep and meaningful contributions about their child's development (McMillan, 2023). Learning Stories strengthens learners' developing sense of self, identity as a learner (Carr & Lee 2012; 2019), and valued, caring community members (Escamilla et.al, 2021).

learning stories, learner identity, narrative inquiry, reflective , relationships

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring Artificial Intelligence in Writing Learning Stories: Benefits, Challenges, and Ethical Considerations

Presenters:

Wendy Lee, Educational Leadership Project, New Zealand

Co-authors

Roberta Skeoch, Educational Leadership Project, New Zealand

Lorraine Sands, Educational Leadership Project, New Zealand

This research explores how artificial intelligence (AI) can assist or impede the writing of Learning Stories in early childhood education (ECE) pedagogy. It examines the benefits, challenges, and ethical considerations in the generation of narratives by AI. This research expands on existing literature on Learning Stories (Carr, Lee, & Jones, 2005, 2007, 2009), and explores the ethics of using AI in education (Su & Yang, 2020, 2023). The research employs a teacher inquiry approach (McTaggart et al., 2017; Escamilla et al., 2021) utilizing Learning Stories (Carr and Lee, 2012, 2019; White, 2016) to explore pedagogy. It also considers ethical frameworks (Bankins and Formosa, 2023), including beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy, and justice, for integrating AI in ECE. This qualitative paradigm critically assesses AI's impact on authenticity, personalisation, relevance and ethics in Learning Stories. Narrative inquiry guides this examination of AI's potential impact on the pedagogy of Learning Stories practices (Carr and Lee, 2012; Lee et al., 2013). Ethical considerations are central, ensuring responsible AI use, (Bankins and Formosa, 2023) in ECE. Privacy, data security, bias, and consent are prioritised, respecting participant's rights. When used ethically and authentically, AI has the potential to improve Learning Story narratives. Stakeholders in ECE will receive practical recommendations to address ethical challenges and to leverage opportunities for expanding learning when using AI in writing Learning Stories. We hope this research will inform responsible integration of AI when documenting learning. This research indicates that integration of AI in Learning Stories can foster cultural shifts in relational pedagogy.

learning stories, artificial intelligence, ethics, narrative inquiry, generative tools

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F18, Room 211, second floor, Edward Street building

DO WE NEED TO REFRAME EXPERT KNOWLEDGE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TO AVERT THE CRISIS OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RECOGNITION?

Verity Campbell-Barr, Plymouth Institute of Education, United Kingdom

This symposium considers the journey of becoming a knowledgeable expert in Early Childhood Education (ECE), while questioning if definitions from within ECE will always sit counter to broader social and political perspectives of being knowledgeable. Considering the perspectives of those undertaking Initial Teacher Education (Evans) and those taking a retrospective reflection of their own learning journey (Fisher), the papers illustrate the social and political struggles for understanding expert knowledge in ECE and the continued struggles for recognition and status. Drawing on the example of ECE curriculum, Campbell-Barr considers whether the narratives surrounding ECE, such as those of child-centredness, are so at odd with Western conceptions of knowledge, that it is the ECE field that has created its own struggle for status. The symposium thus poses the question: Does a sustainable ECE system require a reframing of expert knowledge to avert the crisis of social and political recognition?

Learning and Expertism: The Relationship for Early Years Educators

Presenters:

Hayley Fisher, Plymouth University, United Kingdom

This study explores the relationship between learning and expertism for early years educators in England, concentrating on how the workforce perceive themselves as experts. Expertise can be defined as elite knowledge and experience (Bourne, et al., 2014) or being exceptional at a task or having a high level of knowledge or skills within a subject (Caley, et al., 2014). However, there is a difference between expertise and knowledge; something rarely considered for early year's professionals. Drawing on various adult learning theories (Knowles, 2002; Kolb, 2014; Mezirow, 2018) this research focuses on how early years educators experience learning, how they reflect on previous experiences, and how they perceive themselves as experts moving forwards. This study follows a qualitative interpretive approach, through semi-structured interviews, to gain an in-depth understanding of individual perspectives. Consent was gained from the gatekeepers to a chain of nurseries and the individual participants. Careful considerations were given to the research potentially uncovering sensitive issues, through exploring participants' learning histories and sense of expertism. Educators do not perceive themselves as experts and this is related to social recognition. Previous learning experiences impact choices made for future goals, and what they believe they can achieve. Theoretically early years educators can be positioned as experts, but this is countered by the lack of social recognition for their role.

expertism, learning, professionalism, educators, identity

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Narratives of Early Childhood Education Curriculum Run Counter to a Need for a Knowledgeable Workforce

Presenters:

Verity Campbell-Barr, Plymouth Institute of Education, United Kingdom

The research explored if narratives on curriculum from within the field of early childhood education (ECE) contribute to the struggles for recognition for a knowledgeable ECE workforce. Debates on the Early Childhood Education (ECE) workforce are well-established, presenting the case for a knowledgeable profession (Hordern, 2016). Debates on curriculum are less well-established (in the English context at least) but present a narrative for a child-centred approach (Wood and Hedges, 2016). The implications of this narrative for professional knowledge lacks consideration. Drawing on Bernstein's (2000) sociology of knowledge, ECE is presented as a field that has recontextualised philosophical knowledge on ECE to create a dominate narrative of a child-centred curriculum. Bernstein's work helps illustrate that this narrative is counter to western conceptualisations of both curriculum and professional knowledge. Through a mixed method, interpretive paradigm, the study adopts a Delphi-Survey of experts and Nominal Group Technique Focus Groups of educators to demonstrate the dominate narrative of ECE curriculum. These perspectives are contrasted with theoretical conceptualisations of knowledge as presented in the literature. Participants were provided with an Information Sheet, outlining that participation was voluntary and data would be confidential, but withdrawal of data was not possible due to the methodological design. The findings demonstrate that the narratives of ECE curriculum do not align with dominant western conceptualisations of knowledge and the official recontextualising field of political ideologies on curriculum. The findings have implications for if the ECE field should reframe the narratives of curriculum to align with dominant conceptions of knowledge.

curriculum, knowledge, child-centred, workforce, policy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Beyond the crisis narrative: Exploring the experiences of early career teachers in early years contexts in England

Presenters:

Katherine Evans, University of Plymouth, United Kingdom

This project explores the experiences of early career teachers (ECTs), in early years contexts, in relation to policy narratives affecting Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and early career support. Despite ongoing crisis narratives relating to the sustainability of teacher recruitment and retention, the voices and experiences of ECTs themselves are rarely

documented in research or acknowledged in policy making (Atkinson, 2023). This research engages aspects of critical theory, recognising the complexity and inherently political nature of education policy (Winton, 2013) and its impact on the experiences of teachers. The study is informed by a qualitative, interpretive paradigm, exploring the meaning and significance of objects, behaviours and experiences in context (Iruela, 2023). Critical policy analysis was used as a method for exploring intended and unintended outcomes of policy texts (Wood, 2019) with photo elicitation employed as a participatory method examining representations of experience for ECTs (Patton, 2020). Consent forms and information sheets were provided. Participants retained control in the co-construction of knowledge through photo-elicitation, choosing aspects of discussion that were meaningful to them (Patton, 2020). Findings indicate that current policy frameworks guiding ITE and early career support align poorly with the specialist knowledge needed by teachers working in early years contexts. Questions are raised about the contexts for early years ITE in England and the nature of support for early career teachers.

initial teacher education, policy analysis, early years teachers, photo-elicitation, participatory methods

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F19, Room 304, third floor, Edward Street building

ECEC PRACTITIONERS' CURIOSITY, JOY AND WELLBEING

Valeria M. Cabello, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile

The importance of promoting and supporting curiosity in early years staff

Presenters:

Kate Shelley, Tales Toolkit, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Alice Jones Bartoli, Goldsmiths, University of London, United Kingdom

Daisy Beales, Goldsmiths University of London, United Kingdom

We will examine the association between work stress and burnout, practitioner's own curiosity and practitioner-child relationship. Curiosity is arguably an important trait for educators. Neto et al (2022) suggest that curious teachers are more interested connecting with their students. Both children and teachers gain positively from curiosity and the fostering of classroom relationships. There is compelling evidence that levels of stress and burnout are high in the early years (Lambert et al., 2019), which negatively impact on quality interactions between children and teachers (Penttinen et al., 2020). We test the hypothesis that burnout reduces capacity for curiosity, impacting practitioner-child relationship. We base our work in the Demand-Resource theory of burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Work and emotional overload against a backdrop of organisational resources that do not increase sympathetically result in physical and mental exhaustion. We propose that this reduces an individual's capacity for authentic curiosity. This study uses a longitudinal methodology. Over 120 educators have been surveyed so far on their experiences using three questionnaires examining trait curiosity, burnout and practitioner-child relationship. Practitioners were pre-briefed about the survey items, and not required to engage with anything causing discomfort. All responses were anonymous. Post-survey signposted external sources of support. Preliminary findings suggest that facets of burnout predict capacity for curiosity, which predicts practitioner-child relationships. The implications of this work highlight the need to support practitioners to maintain their sense of curiosity and wonder against pressures in the workplace. Children gain from having practitioners who have space to be engaged.

curiosity, relationships, stress, burnout, quality interaction

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Finnish Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) teachers' sustainable wellbeing: Perspectives to realization of meaningful work and teacher retention

Presenters:

Reija Ahola, University of Helsinki, Finland

Co-authors:

Arniika Kuusisto, University of Helsinki, Finland

Satu Valkonen, University of Helsinki, Finland

This study examines Finnish Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) teachers' wellbeing and the dimensions of teacher retention. There is a severe labor shortage in Finnish ECEC, and the proportion of teachers considering leaving the ECEC field has increased (Heilala 2021). Teacher wellbeing and retention are critical to the quality and educational equality in ECEC (Karila 2016, Cumming 2017, Grant 2019). Theoretically this study is based on the theory of sustainable wellbeing (Helne and Hirvilammi 2021, Benjamin et al 2021) which is developed on the basis of Erik Allardt's (1980) wellbeing model. Wellbeing is understood from a holistic perspective and through the resourcing of the Having, Loving, Doing and Being elements. The methodological framework draws from qualitative Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz 2014). Data was gathered through focus group interviews (N=15) involving 50 ECEC teachers. Ethical concerns were addressed throughout the study. Participants were informed of the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time and an information sheet was provided to them. Pseudonyms are used instead of names of the participants. The results illustrate the ways ECEC teachers negotiate the resources contributing to their wellbeing through diverse expectations and ethical issues. The findings highlight the importance of leadership, teamwork, autonomy, work conditions and compensation. By cultivating the elements Having, Loving, Doing and Being, occupational wellbeing can be enhanced. The study raises several implications based on the findings and the holistic approach of the concept of sustainable wellbeing provides a viable framework for promoting retention in the ECEC field.

sustainable wellbeing , work wellbeing, teacher retention, meaningful work, ECEC leadership

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Curiosity in developing scientific explanation: Challenges for teachers' professional action

Presenters:

Valeria M. Cabello, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile

We explored curiosity and its relation to constructing explanations about socio-scientific issues and sustainability in a curricular enrichment out-of-school program with 4-8 year-old Chilean children. Scientific explanation and exploration can foster causal learning (Legare, 2014), and the mechanisms that support those actions are driven by curiosity to learn about unobservable and causal structures (Liquin & Lombrozo, 2020). Although there is a growing interest in children's curiosity (Canalan et al., 2020; Jirout, 2020), more research is needed to study curiosity in developing scientific explanations. The design was cross-sectional with an exploratory scope, interpretative paradigm. We used participative classroom observations, audio and documentary analysis of teachers' classroom portfolios to characterise explanation-seeking curiosity enhancers. The children assented to participate, and their parents signed informed consent. To ensure no ethical concerns became a reality, we trained early childhood educators in charge of data gathering, respecting voluntary, anonymity and secure data storage processes. The activities inconsistent with children's prior knowledge enhanced constructing or refining explanations. Responsive teaching offered learning experiences that challenged students' ideas. Scientific curiosity, expressed as exploring behaviours in the youngest and posing new questions in the oldest, operates as a drive for hypothesis and explanation construction. This finding resonates with the early-developing capacity to reason scientifically (Legare, 2014) and explanation-seeking curiosity as a drive to pursue the construction of more sophisticated explanations (Liquin & Lombrozo, 2020). We discuss the educational significance of the challenges for teachers' professional action, reflecting upon children's right to participate in enriched sustainable environments for integral development.

curiosity, socio-scientific issues, explanation construction, science education, professional action

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F20, Room 305, third floor, Edward Street building

TEACHERS' ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE AND POSITIONALITY AND ITS EFFECT ON CHILDREN

Larry Prochner, University of Alberta, Canada

Sensemaking of sustainability: A study of day-nursery managers perceptions

Presenters:

Cheryl Hadland, Tops Day Nurseries, United Kingdom

Nursery managers in a sustainably exemplar nursery group were interviewed using semi-structured questions in order to thematically and reflexively (Braun & Clarke 2022) understand how they made sense of sustainability in their day-to-day experiences. There is an imperative for day nurseries to become more sustainable (Yelland & Siraj-Blatchford, 2002) but there are over 600 frameworks for sustainability, including the UK Governments Energy Savings Scheme, B.Corp., ISO standards, Eco Schools, Planetmark and OMEP's Education for sustainability, that can be used to assess sustainability and indicate actions. Nursery managers are guided by the frameworks to which they or their leaders decide to subscribe, but face day-to-day decision making within the context of the inspection framework in which they operate (Ofsted in England) and needs of their many stakeholders, including children. Sensemaking theory is an influential theory and generally refers to those processes by which people try to understand events and issues that are their reality (Colville, et al, 2012, Maitlis, 2005, Weick, 1995) and is strongly associated with research that is interpretative and phenomenological, and thus utilised herewith in interpreting how managers perceive the phenomenon of sustainability in this nested case study. This research has ethics approval from Portsmouth University for DBA research, in particular addressing the power-relationship between the researcher/also their company founder/CEO, through informed consent, voluntary participation and reassurances that honesty wouldn't compromise careers. Provocations for sustainability include personal, cultural, organisational, and national context, knowledge and skills. Managers need support from all stakeholders to sensemake/give sustainability in ECE settings.

sustainability, sensemaking, nursery managers, nested case study, reflexive thematic analysis

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Preparing Teachers for Nature Preschools

Presenters:

Larry Prochner, University of Alberta, Canada

Kadriye Akdemir, University of Alberta, Canada

This study explores how principles of nature education shaped teachers' preparation and practices in both the distant past and more recently as approaches have re-emerged in international contexts. While Pramling-Samuelsson and Kaga (2008), acknowledge that "there is a great deal in the traditions of early childhood pedagogies that align with education for sustainability" they also highlight a need to "strengthen teacher training as a basis for learning and teaching about education for sustainable development" (p. 16), including learning in and from nature. The theoretical framework for this study draws upon humanist (Louv, 2010; Wilson, 1992) and posthumanist (Cutter-Mackenzie, Malone, & Barratt Hacking, 2020) ideas on the relationship between nature and learning in early years settings. The study is informed by a transnational historical framework that aligns with a humanist and posthumanist conceptual framework. The methodology included archival work on preparing teachers for nature education and qualitative interview with trainers to study the content of practices used in preparing teachers for nature based education in current contexts. A consent form and information sheet was provided to all participants. Participation was completely voluntary, participants were free to withdraw their consent at any time, and no identifiable information will be retained once data collection is complete. The use of historical methods together with qualitative interviews sheds light on how educational ideas develop within contexts, travel across boundaries, and are adapted in new contexts. The findings suggest alternatives for preparing teachers for nature-based teaching in a diversity of contexts.

history, nature, sustainability, teaching, environment

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F21, Room 307, third floor, Edward Street building

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AND DIALOGUE AS CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

Chair: TBC

Interpretations of self-reflection: Perspectives from preschool and early education teacher students

Presenters:

Rita Szaszó, Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, Hungary

Renáta Bernhardt, Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, Hungary

Co-authors:

Laura Furcsa, Budapest Business University, Hungary

This study aims to investigate the evolving understanding of self-reflection as a professional expression among preschool and early education teacher students. It contributes to existing research by providing a deeper understanding of how self-reflection serves as a practical tool for implementing instructional ideas. The conceptual definition of reflective thinking became known through Dewey's (1951) pedagogical perspective. Schön (1983) interprets reflective thinking in phases, while Korthagen and Wubbels (1996) view reflection as a spiral process. In reflective thinking, 'reflection on action' emerges, and as a more instinctive solution, 'knowing in action' is evident. This research adopts a qualitative paradigm to explore the subjective experiences and interpretations. Constant comparative method (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994) was used on students' reports. Ethical issues are crucial in this study to guarantee the confidentiality and anonymity of participants by obtaining informed permission. The sampling was purposive and all the reports of graduate students were analyzed. Our study suggests that the priority areas for self-reflection among early education teacher and preschool teacher students, include the application of acquired knowledge, development of skills and abilities and the shaping of attitudes with a focus on child-centredness. The analysis reveals a complex set of findings related to the reinforcement of personal and professional competence. Noteworthy differences emerge from different training courses, particularly in the emphasis on reflective evaluation, synthesis of theory and practice and consideration of concrete competences. The findings have implications for teacher education programs emphasizing the need to tailor reflective practices to the specific priorities of teacher students.

self-reflection, teacher students, pedagogical theories, content analysis, reflective practices

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Fostering Global Sustainability Literacy: Exploring the Experiences and Reflections of Student Teachers in Early Childhood Education

Presenters:

Carrie Ho, Anglia Ruskin University, United Kingdom

This study explores student teachers' experiences, challenges, and reflections in crafting sustainability-focused lesson plans to nurture young changemakers, amidst increasing global demand for sustainable education. Challenges have found in promoting sustainability education in early childhood context. Lasen et al. (2017) find teachers perceive Education for Sustainability as relevant but face curriculum constraints prioritising literacy and numeracy. Bautista et al. (2018) stress the need for dialogic interaction, urging children's involvement in sustainability discussions. This study combined post-humanism concept and Transformative Sustainable Education framework enriches lesson plan analysis, focusing on non-human agency, interconnectedness, and critical reflection (Freire, 1970; Orr, 2004). The study developed a content analysis matrix analysing 50 lesson plans from international student

teachers of 'Supporting Children's Learning 2: Promoting Early Childhood Provision' module, aiming to uncover factors influencing lesson plan effectiveness and implementation challenges. Gatekeeper and student consented to examine the module artefacts, and the ethical approval was obtained from the University Research Ethics Panel. The changemaker-based key themes include interdisciplinary pedagogical strategies, cultural/contextual influences, sustainability integration, child resilience and agency. By intertwining reflection, sustainability, and interdisciplinary elements within a robust pedagogical lesson planning, we can empower young learners to be proactive changemakers to a sustainable and equitable global future.

sustainable education, interdisciplinary, transformative sustainable education, changemaker, student teachers perspectives

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set F22, Room 308, third floor, Edward Street building

USING PHOTOS AND DRAWINGS FOR ELICITATION

Christine Thompson, The Pennsylvania State University, United States

Everything is Alive: children at the easel and diffractive methodology

Presenters:

Victoria Grube, Appalachian State University, United States

How can easel painting teach children about themselves? How does immersion in materiality demonstrate all matter matters? This research reveals human and non-human, complex, imaginative entanglements as children experiment with materials. Guillion's (2018) *Diffractive Ethnography* offers an ontological basis, experiencing material intra-actions. *Challenging Anthropocentric Analysis of Visual Data* by Hultman/Taguchi (2010) describes human/non-human bodies as flattened to avoid the hierarchy of being. Thompson's (2022) "Are We There Yet? In Search of Drawing Events in Early Childhood" in *Trafi-Prats/Schulte's (2022) New Images of Thought in the Study of Childhood Drawing* prioritizes authentic artmaking. Knowledge occurs between and among different forms of matter, forming mutually intelligible relationships, in *Going Beyond the Practice Divide in Early Childhood Education* by Taguchi (2010). Jackson and Mazzei (2019) establish the theory of new materialism: how the discursive and matter intra-act to illuminate new ways of seeing and thinking in *Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research*. The child alters matter and "matter speaks back to children," in the practice of the authentic in artmaking in *Encounters with Materials in Early Childhood Education*, Pacini-Ketchabaw, Kind, Kocher (2017). The paradigm is child centered artmaking versus teacher directed models. Through interviews, still photography, filmmaking, and artifacts of painting, the methodology is diffractive ethnography. A successful University IRB approved the study methods and ethics centered on respecting children, with accommodations including easels open to all children including non-participants. The human and non-human are changed by experimental easel painting and create unanticipated knowledge. Research must inform and reinforce the practice of authentic artmaking in preschool.

authentic easel painting, artroom new materialism, assemblages, diffractive ethnography, process of experimentation

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Outdoor education - children's stories through their own photographs

Presenters:

Tuva Schanke, NTNU, Norway

This paper explores the experiences of first-grade children with outdoor education, applying their own photographs. In Norway, outdoor education often happens once a week in elementary schools, whilst outdoor activities are more practiced in kindergarten. For young children, outdoor education may be important in bridging the gap between

these two institutions. The study builds upon prior research by Rasmussen (2023), Dockett & Perry (2005), and Einarsdottir (2005), which involved children taking photographs as part of the research process. The social studies of childhood constitute a central theoretical framework (Corsaro, 2017; Clark, 2022), emphasizing that children both create their own places, form connections to them, and associate friendships and play with specific locations. The paradigm of social studies of childhood is combined with the photovoice method (Harper, 2012; Rasmussen, 2023). The study provided first-grade children with cameras to capture photographs of their favorite outdoor places and natural elements. The data collection also involved walking interviews with the children, supplemented by ethnographic fieldwork. Children's participation was based on age-appropriate information about the project, followed by consent obtained from their parents and the children's own willingness to participate. All participants were anonymized. Main findings pinpoint that children have distinct preferences for favorite outdoor places and they articulate reasons for these preferences. The photographs of natural elements highlight the value children place on the diverse environments an outdoor day provides. The article emphasizes the significance of children's voices and their insights and perspectives on outdoor education.

outdoor education, children's places, nature, slow knowledge, transition to school

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Drawing together: Amplifying children's voices

Presenters:

Christine Thompson, The Pennsylvania State University, United States

This paper describes sketchbook sessions in varied early childhood settings over 25 years, Conversations conducted in multiple languages reveal local concerns, personal interests, and a shared children's culture. Research on children's drawing evolved from a developmental to a sociocultural and, more recently, post developmental understanding of drawing as a social and material practice (Pearson, 2001; Osgood & Sakr, 2019; Thompson, 2021, 2022; Trafi-Prats & Schulte, 2022). This research—Deleuzian and postmodern—highlights drawing events: the assemblage of influences that converge when child and materials inter-act. Informed by Malaguzzi's (Calgiari, et al, 2016) "hundred languages of children," Dyson's (1989, 1990) investigations of verbal and social interactions surrounding children's work in "writing" journals, and a Vygotskian perspective on social speech (1978), this research recognizes the human and non-human influences on children drawing. Methods include participant-observation, informal interviews, documentation and narrative. Qualitative and phenomenological in approach, data is presented as stories, I considered the impact of interfering in a child's drawing event. Assuming the role of "interested adult" (Schulte, 2022), I asked permission or waited for invitations to participate in drawing events. I refer to the children by pseudonyms, and highlight vignettes that enhance understanding of children drawing. Creating spaces for drawing as open-ended exploration is a powerful classroom practice. Drawing is given less attention in early childhood than it merits. Encouraging children to draw what they wish, in a communal space, at a time designated for that activity, enhances children's lives and learning.

drawing, social practice, children's culture, ket aesthetic, post-qualitative research

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set F23, Room 309, third floor, Edward Street building

LITERATURE REVIEWS AND LITERARY ANALYSIS OF ECEC RESEARCH

Kyunghwa Lee, University of Georgia, United States

Perspectives on the sustainable body in literature for toddlers

Presenters:

Cecilie Fodstad, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway

Ingvild Alfheim, OsloMet Metropolitan University, Norway

Our research question is to compare how the toddler's anatomy is represented in the picturebooks "Lars er stor" (2013), "Lille mage" (2015) and "Hele fine jeg" (2023). We view how the literary body becomes subject of identification, representations and agency. Earlier research in Norway shows that toddler's bodies in fiction does not represent children from different ethnicities (Alfheim & Fodstad, 2023: 97). Often, the toddler's bodies are idyllic and globalisation friendly simplifications (Rhedin, 2004: 66). There is growing awareness of eco-criticism and childrens literature (Goga et al. 2018: 1-23), but very few studies on social sustainability and the toddler body in fiction. The theoretical framework for this study draws upon early picturebook theory (Rhedin, 2013; Christensen, 2010; Nicolajeva, 2006 & 2009; Alfheim & Fodstad, 2023; Dybvig, 2023)

Our paradigmatic approach is ecocriticism and cultural studies. We work within picturebook methodology and the specific method is a comparative literary analysis. Our selected three texts, naturally, excludes many other texts. Our interpretations may be biased. We, therefore, stress that our interpretations cannot give a sound, nor objective, report on tendencies in toddler fiction. This awareness will be present throughout our analysis. The body in toddler fiction are reactionary to its environment. Implicitly, the literary motif of the toddler's body and its possibility for actions can depict early descriptions of equality or inequality, social inclusion, human and social sustainable development. Awareness of early reading diversity and sustainability in representation of the toddler body is important for early educators and the toddler reader.

anatomy, toddler reading, toddler fiction, representation, ecocriticism

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

U.S. Early Childhood Education Research Trends: An Analysis of Early Childhood Education Journal Through Topic Modeling

Presenters:

Kyunghwa Lee, University of Georgia, United States

Keon-Ryeong Park, Korean National University of Education, South Korea

Sukyong Park, Konkuk University, South Korea

This paper presents early childhood education (ECE) research trends by examining the topics of articles published in Early Childhood Education Journal (ECEJ), a premier peer-reviewed journal in the U.S. The results of this study will be used for international comparative research on ECE research trends. Lee (2021) examined the top three Korean ECE journals and identified that topics related to teachers, education, children, ability, and kindergarten were most frequently explored. However, topics connected to equity and sustainability were absent from the top 50 keywords list or the top 500 words cloud. These findings prompted us to investigate topical trends published in a U.S. journal. We draw on Bakhtin's (1984) dialogism and citationality to situate the keywords and topics of ECEJ articles in cultural-historical contexts. We analyzed 1,727 articles published in ECEJ from 2000 to 2023 using Blei et al.'s (2003) machine-learning-based Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) topic modeling. We used all articles published in this high-impact journal in the last 24 years to ensure a fair representation of U.S. research trends. Our analysis revealed that topics related to preschool, early childhood, literacy, educators, and disabilities were most frequently explored in ECEJ. Like Korean journals, however, topics connected to equity and sustainability were rare. We'll present detailed topical trends every 10 years, situating them in U.S. sociohistorical contexts. This study contributes to international comparative research on the past and present trends and future directions of ECE research in national and global contexts while exploring ways to promote research on sustainable ECE systems.

early childhood education, keywords analysis, research trends, international comparative research, topic modeling

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Various approaches to project-based learning

Presenters:

Kristina Lahe, Tallinn University, Estonia

Maire Tuul, Tallinn University, Estonia

Co-authors

Eve Kikas, Tallinn University, Estonia

Our aim is to examine the similarities and differences in the characteristics of project-based learning (PjPL) across scientific articles that use different project learning terms. Several studies (Chen et al., 2017; Hertzog, 2007; Pui-Wah, 2006) have highlighted that teachers may encounter difficulties in implementing essential characteristics of PjBL. As there are different instructional approaches to PjBL, it is difficult for practitioners to estimate their PjBL implementation fidelity and to improve their practice (Tamim, & Grant, 2013).

The study is based on John Dewey's philosophy of experiential education (Dewey, 1938) and on the Vygotskian socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1987). Drawing on an interpretivist paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018), this study utilizes a qualitative approach and employs content analysis to analyze scientific articles that address project learning at the early childhood level. Although this study is a literature review, thus relies solely on secondary data, ethical considerations have been taken into account to ensure that literature from various sources is fairly and proportionally represented and potential biases are avoided. The data revealed that the concept of PjBL is defined by using different terms: "project approach," "project-based learning," or "inquiry-based project learning". When specifying the characteristics of these various definitions, descriptions often remain too vague and generalized.

Defining the core characteristics of various approaches of PjBL can help teachers to estimate their PjBL implementation fidelity and to improve their practice. The findings can guide the design of professional development programs aimed at helping teachers to develop the necessary skills and competencies to implement PjBL successfully.

project-based learning, project approach, inquiry-based project learning, project-based learning framework, early childhood education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F24, Room 201, second floor, Dorset Place building

CONCEPTUALISING AND EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE CULTURES

Ursula Stenger, University of Cologne, Germany

Exploring the conceptualisation of environmental sustainability by children, families and practitioners at a UK nursery group.

Presenters:

Santa Sviike, Acorn Early Years, United Kingdom

Zoe Raven, Acorn Early Years, United Kingdom

This action research aims to identify how environmental sustainability is conceptualised by children, families and employees at the nursery group Acorn Early Years, to help inform actions towards improved practice. Previous research identifies a lack of adequate coverage of sustainability concepts in national frameworks (Weldemariam et al, 2017) and there is currently little empirical research exploring how the term is collectively understood in early years settings. This research is being conducted within a qualitative interpretive research paradigm, with a social constructive interpretive epistemology (McNiff, 2013; Hardy et al, 2004). 189 tailored questionnaires were completed by a range of participants, including parents/carers, eco-leads, managers/deputies and other employees and the children's voice is being captured using the mosaic approach (Clark, 2017). The data is then being analysed using discourse analysis. Ethical considerations included informed consent and anonymity for all participants, including parental/carer consent for children's involvement. Whilst the child's voice is still in the process of being captured, preliminary findings suggest that whilst most adult groups define sustainability as having resource longevity and focus on acts of minimising negative environmental impacts, the nursery eco-leads defined it as creating a positive impact on the environment, and related their definition to the protection of the Earth for future generations. This was a less prominent conceptualisation for wider staff teams and families. These findings highlight

a multiplicity of the ways sustainability is conceptualised, suggesting a need to ensure a shared understanding, which may strengthen collective action towards sustainability in early childhood education.

environmental sustainability, definitions of sustainability, conceptualisation, shared understanding, eco-activities

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring co-development of authentic learning experiences for Education for Sustainable Development in Early Childhood Education

Presenters:

Kerstin te Heesen, University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg

Co-authors:

Christina Siry, University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg

Sara Wilmes, University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg

Doriana Sportelli, University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg

This ongoing research analyzes how collaborative structures enabled the evolution from a collaboratively conceptualized river investigation into a professional development workshop aimed at enhancing teachers' capacity to integrate Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into their pedagogical practices. ESD is increasingly recognized as essential for young children, necessitating the creation of authentic learning situations to make ESD tangible in early childhood education (Samuelsson, 2011). Following Caiman et al. (2021) in their call for creativity to address wicked sustainability problems with young children, we elaborate how authentic learning scenarios can support ESD in classrooms. This study applies a sociocultural theoretical framework acknowledging culture's dynamic nature, agency-taking, and methodologies like interpretive and authentic inquiry, fostering a multilogical research approach (Tobin, 2015). Grounded in a qualitative constructivism research paradigm we collected various forms of documentation throughout the collaborative development process, including researcher notes, video-recordings, reflective journals, and correspondence. Data was analyzed using a methodological approach rooted in bricolage to holistically analyze the co-development journey (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2012). All participants were given an information sheet and a consent form. Participation in the study was voluntary and consent could be withdrawn at any time. Participants' names were replaced by pseudonyms. Main findings highlight the importance of collaborative processes in creating contextually-relevant and authentic learning experiences for children and facilitating teacher professional growth. Through episodes elaborating key points of the co-development journey, this presentation offers valuable insights and implications for teachers and stakeholders, namely the need for supporting instructional change through collaborative structures and policy frameworks.

education for sustainable development, teacher professional development, collaborative approaches, authentic learning experiences, primary school education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Aspects of transformation to sustainable cultures in kindergartens

Presenters:

Ursula Stenger, University of Cologne, Germany

The RoomQuality study (BMBF) examines interactions of pedagogical intentions, e.g. sustainability and lived spaces between children, things and the environment. All three daycare centres in Germany involved in the 3 ½ year project were researched from a phenomenological perspective following Brinkmann (2015) and with post-humanist approaches to how learning experiences (such as sustainability) develop between the participants, the materials and other (active) living beings (Stenger et al 2023). The state of research on sustainability with regard to ESD often shows a top-down logic of measures (Kauertz et al 2019), while posthumanistic approaches raise the question of multispecies forms of conviviality and reframe "sustainability" (Malone et al 2017, Taylor et al 2019). This study

follows the qualitative interpretative research paradigm (Denzin et al 2023). Field visits lasting several days with videographic observations were carried out in three field phases. Side-by-side interviews with professionals and children and guided daycare centre tours on the development of daycare centre cultures (on sustainability) were recorded. These data were interpreted phenomenologically including posthumanistic research approaches. All teachers, parents and children agreed to a declaration of consent (with information sheet). During the research, attention was paid to (non-verbal) signals of withdrawal of consent, which was open at all times. All names were replaced by pseudonyms. Results show that daycare centres are inspired by further training, but do not simply implement intentions, but develop their own logics of cultural development towards more sustainability that involve children and professionals. These findings are important for professionalization and curriculum development.

ESD, Transformation professionalization, cultures of sustainability, posthumanistic research, day-care centre transformations

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set F25, Room 401, fourth floor, Dorset Place building

SUPPORTING INFORMAL FAMILY LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT

Nicol Russell, Teaching Strategies, United States

Unveiling Intergenerational Engagements as Pedagogical Innovations and a Pathway to Sustainable Systems in Early Childhood Education and Care

Presenters:

Czarecah Oropilla, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

This presentation explores the transformative potential of intergenerational engagements as a pedagogical innovation within the realm of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). In an era marked by increasing societal complexities and environmental challenges, the need for sustainable educational practices is paramount. Based on a research project that investigates how integrating diverse age groups and agents, including children and older adults (Oropilla, 2023), into the learning environment can enhance the educational experience for young learners, a visual model based on different theoretical frameworks was conceptualized (Oropilla & Ødegaard, 2021). The above-mentioned visual model (Oropilla & Ødegaard, 2021) shall be presented. The presentation provides empirical examples from Norway and the Philippines, leading to implications and benefits of such intergenerational engagements, including the development of empathy, enhanced social skills, and a deeper understanding of cultural diversity. Collaborative and co-creative methodologies described in the EX-PED-LAB project (Ødegaard et. al., 2023) were utilized. Anchored in the UNCRC and adherent to the Helsinki Declaration, informed consent and assent forms have been filled out by everyone involved, including the children, the older adults, the children's parents, and the early years practitioners. The project was also presented in parent meetings. Examples to be presented help 'visibilize' (Oropilla et.al., 2022) the implications and benefits of such intergenerational engagements. The presentation emphasizes the potential impact of incorporating intergenerational practices in ECEC settings as a pathway toward sustainable systems. By nurturing a sense of shared responsibility and interconnectedness, we aim to advocate for a paradigm shift in early childhood education.

intergenerational engagements, pedagogical innovations, sustainable systems, intergenerational co-creations, lifelong learning

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Supporting the child, supporting the family'

Presenters:

Melissa Bonotto, ATU - Atlantic Technological University, Ireland

This research aimed to consider the role of a Family Support preschool in early intervention with children deemed to have 'additional needs.' Previous studies have placed preschool as an inclusive space for children to develop their social and cognitive competencies (Guralnick 2011). Primary Family Support strengthen families' informal social support and improve families' wellbeing in the early intervention context (Pinkerton et al., 2004). An interpretivist epistemological paradigm and constructivist ontological perspective underpinned this research study, which is embedded in the Bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). It is a flexible design with a predominant qualitative methodology, It includes the following research methods: semi-structured interviews and/or focus groups for preschool teachers and parents, the Mosaic approach (Clark, 2005) to capture children's views and one quantitative scale, the My Family Star Scale, only used with parents. It was approved by the University of Galway Ethics Committee, and careful consideration for children's assent and ways young children withdraw were taken. Family Support preschools emerged as a crucial source of support for families with children with additional needs. First, children themselves are coping better with their additional needs because they attend preschool. Secondly, parents find support (emotional and practical) for themselves as well when their child with additional needs is in the FS preschool, rather than in formal support groups. A FS preschool can be considered as part of a Family Support intervention and the value of ECEC providing social support to parents must be seen, which is under researched.

preschool children, family support, additional needs, Family support preschool, social support

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Supporting Children and Families with Extended Learning at Home

Presenters:

Nicol Russell, Teaching Strategies, United States

Donna Fowler, Teaching Strategies, United States

Co-authors

Caitlyn Forbes, University of Pittsburgh, United States

This two-year inquiry looked at effective strategies for engaging families during out-of-school time for children. Specifically, continuing learning for children during the summer months. Research demonstrates that family engagement is considered a best practice in early childhood education. Research has shown that family involvement is a powerful influence on children's development (Smith, Sheridan, Kim, Park, & Beretvas, 2020) and academic success (Park & Holloway, 2017). The narrow focus of this research was one program's strategies to implement a family engagement curriculum, ReadyRosie, with extension to the summer home learning environment through Family Learning Packs. This study is based on adult learning theory, conceptualized by Malcolm Knowles (1984), Mezirow's transformative learning (1994) and Kolb's experiential learning theories (1984). This study is being conducted within a qualitative interpretive research paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The analysis is being conducted through a thematic and content analysis within a phenomenological approach. To protect the identities of survey respondents, all surveys were done anonymously. In the final research paper, no respondents will be identified by name. In focus group interviews, family members often reported that ReadyRosie is a powerful tool provided by the program. Program administrators highlighted the importance of leadership, clear systems and practices for family curriculum uptake and usage, buy-in at multiple program levels, and supports for families. Among the most effective practices for supporting implementation were communication with staff, policies and supports for enrolling families and troubleshooting access issues, and systems for monitoring implementation and engagement.

family engagement, summer learning, family partnerships, learning at home, school to home connections

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Symposium Set G

14:55 – 16:10, Thursday 5th September

Set G1, Sallis Benney Theatre, ground floor, Grand Parade building

OUTDOOR PLAY AND LEARNING SIG: INTERNATIONAL REFLECTIONS OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Mehmet Mart, Necmettin Erbakan University, Turkey

This self-organised symposium will be the representation of various stakeholders's perspectives from different countries.

outdoor_play_and_learning

Parents' perceptions regarding their children's outdoor activities at preschool and after preschool hours

Presenters:

Michaella Kadury-Slezak, The Academic College Levinsky-Wingate, Israel

Co-authors:

Sapir Faruchi, The Academic College Levinsky-Wingate/ Israeli Ministry of Education, Israel

Sigal Tish, The Academic College Levinsky-Wingate, Israel

Iris Levy, The Academic College Levinsky-Wingate, Israel

Pninat Tal, The Academic College Levinsky-Wingate, Israel

Clodie Tal, The Academic College Levinsky-Wingate, Israel

The aim of this study is to show parents' perceptions regarding their children's outdoor activities during preschool and after preschool hours and to compare between their outdoor activities when they were young and their children's outdoor activities. Spending time outdoors supports the holistic development of children. Parents value the impact of outdoor activity on their children. Some parents have concerns related to safety. This study is based also on Bronfenbrenner's (1986) bioecological theory of development, stating that development of the child is a product of complex interactions between the children and their immediate environment. Mixed method design including quantitative and qualitative methodology. The qualitative component is based on semi-structured interviews with 15 parents; the quantitative component is based on a questionnaire that was filled out by 202 parents in 2022. Participants rights were respected as they were informed of the goals of the study before giving consent to participate. Their identities remained confidential as questionnaires were anonymous and by using pseudonyms in reports of the findings. Most parents reported that their children go out to the preschool yard every day. A minority of parents saw the yard as a place that invites learning.

62% of the parents reported that they spent time outside as children more than their children.

Most parents perceive their children's outdoor activity as a way to release energy. We recommend exposing the parents to variety of options available outdoor.

outdoor activities, parents' perception, preschool yard, natural environment, parents' and their children outdoor activity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Working outside with children – Potentials of outdoor pedagogy for educators in kindergartens

Presenters:

Armin Schneider, University of Applied Sciences Koblenz, Germany

Co-authors:

Lara Schindler, University of Applied Sciences Koblenz, Germany

Ulrike Pohlmann, University of Applied Sciences Koblenz, Germany
 Andy Schieler, University of Applied Science, Germany

The systematic review aims to identify effects of outdoor pedagogy on educators in the kindergarten and the derived potentials given the current challenges for educators in German kindergartens. Many studies focussed on benefits of outdoor play and learning for children (for reviews see Sella et al. 2023, Raith & Lude 2015). However, what is known about the benefits of outdoor pedagogy for educators in kindergartens and what potentials can be identified given the current challenges for educators in Germany? This study is based on the evolutionary Biophilia Theory (Wilson 1984), the Stress Reduction Theory (Ulrich et al. 1991) and the Attention Restoration Theory (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989), suggesting a variety of potentials of nature for human kind. The study uses the research paradigm of a systematic review (Gough et al. 2017). For this, we examine a variety of scientific databases by using participative generated keywords. We followed the university's ethical guidelines. For the systematic review, no personal data was collected. The study is still ongoing. First results show that there is a lack of research concerning the benefits of outdoor pedagogy for educators. However, some studies show that the quality of interaction between children and educators is effected by outdoor pedagogy, i. e. the increase of educators' sensitivity (Tonge & Jones 2018) and their participatory engagement in children's play (Sørensen 2021). These findings implicate the necessity of research concerning the benefits of outdoor pedagogy for educators and sensitize for the potentials given current challenges of educators' everyday work in kindergartens.

early childhood education, outdoor pedagogy, potentials, educators, kindergarten

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

The Impact of Out-of-school Learning Environments Course on Preschool Teacher Candidates

Presenters:

Mehmet Mart, Necmettin Erbakan University, Turkey

This research aims to identify whether out-of-school learning environments course impact on preschool teacher candidates' knowledge on organising out-of-learning abilities. According to recent studies, there is various research on the behaviours of individuals, impacting aspects of out-of-school learning environments (Göloğlu Demir & Çetin, 2021; Karademir & Erten, 2013). The teaching practices can be beyond indoor teaching activities including out-of-school and outdoor activities (Usta et al., 2023). Güloğlu-Demir and Çetin (2021) describe museums, hospitals, school gardens and so on as out-of-school learning environments having rich methods and techniques. Outdoor environments are key aspects to support children's holistic development (Engdahl et al., 2006). Having a child-friendly environment depends on various factors such as society, persons and environmental opportunities (Jansson and Lerstrup, 2021). This research has been designed as a mixed method, so one group pretest and posttest research design has been used to collect additional qualitative data from semi-structured interviews from undergraduate students. For the qualitative part of the research, the scale developed by Bolat and Köroğlu (2020) has been used and analysed with SPSS. To justify the impact of the course, the thematic analysis will be used to analyse interviews. EECERA (2015) ethical code was followed and the ethical approval from Necmettin Erbakan University has been gathered. Findings will serve as a representation of the impact of an undergraduate course on teacher candidates' understanding of out-of-school learning environments. The research will reveal the impact of the course taken by the preschool teacher candidates so that the context of the course can be re-considered.

out-of-school learning course, undergraduate, preschool, teacher candidates, one group pretest posttest design

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G2, Room G4, ground floor, Grand Parade building

PROFESSIONAL PATHWAYS IN ECEC

Karen Williams, Wolverhampton University, United Kingdom

Questioning identities: what we tell each other matters. An exploration of how early years professionals from a range of practice backgrounds are authoring themselves as University Lecturers.

Presenters:

Karen Williams, Wolverhampton University, United Kingdom

To explore how early years professionals experience their sense of identities as University Lecturers in Early Childhood Studies. To investigate sites of struggle, resistance and agency, formed in a world of activity. Bennett et al (2017) Chaffee and Gupta (2017) discuss the importance of paying attention to the sociocultural and historical landscapes of differing professional contexts upon identities. One's ability to imagine oneself as part of the field being significant (Holland et al 1998). Figured worlds (Holland et al 1998), formed the primary theoretical and conceptual framework. The sociocultural and sociohistorical ideas allowed for the exploration of power and agency. Research was conducted within a qualitative, interpretivist paradigm (Birks 2011). Methodologically, narrative life history was utilised (Richards 2019). Analysis was conducted through theoretical thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006). Ethical consent was sought and obtained from the doctoral awarding HE institution and participants. Participant collaboration in maintaining anonymity in narrative life history was ensured by joint review of data. Identification by association with people, spaces and places was redacted. Findings highlight opportunities for participants to re-imagine themselves, set against the backdrop of deficit discourses and perceived lack of early years professional recognition. Significance of dialogue emerges as points of rupture, essentially what we tell ourselves and each other matters. As ECEC professionals there is a need to shift the dominant deficit narrative. To exert agency from within becomes a significant part of creating and co-creating a valued professional identity as well as through policy.

identities, agency, professionalism, discourse, figured worlds

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

ECEC Teachers' Motivation to Become a Qualified Supervisor

Presenters:

Catharina van Trijp, University of Stavanger, Norway

Co-authors

Ksenia Solheim, University of Stavanger, Norway

This study examined ECEC teachers' motivation to become a qualified supervisor in Norwegian ECEC. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is, together with educational institutions, responsible for the education and qualification of supervisors. A good system for supervision in ECEC can contribute to the development and competence of both students and new and experienced teachers (UDIR, 2023). However, research is lacking on ECEC teachers' motivation to become a qualified supervisor. The self-determination theory of Deci and Ryan (1985; 2000) emphasizes the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. Both intrinsic (e.g., finding a task interesting and enjoyable) and extrinsic (e.g., salary, acknowledgment by others) motivation can lead to individuals' action, but can have different implications for their wellbeing and performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This study belongs to the constructivism paradigm and aims to gain more knowledge about teachers' motivation to become a qualified supervisor in ECEC. Data was collected through two focus group interviews with five and six female teachers (Mage = 44.9 years; Mteacher experience = 15 years) who participated in a supervision master-course at a Norwegian university. This study is approved by the Regional Committees for Medical and Health Research Ethics. Ethical guidelines were followed (e.g., participant's written consent, data storage on a secured server). Preliminary results showed that teachers were both intrinsically motivated (e.g., extent current knowledge) and extrinsically motivated (e.g., course participants and teachers, leader who recommended this course). These findings can help to develop the course both regarding the recruitment and content.

qualified supervisor, motivation, self-determination, ECEC teachers, Norway

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

To Retain or Not to Retain? Future Career Plans of Recently Graduated Early Childhood Education Teachers

Presenters:

Maarit Alasuutari, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Co-authors:

Elina Koivusalo, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Saija Volmari, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

The research considers the retainment of early-career early childhood education (ECE) teachers to their profession. It examines: 1) How do the teachers describe their future career plans, and 2) Are their career plans associated with gender, age or work experience in ECE before the teacher education? Many teacher graduates consider leaving the teaching career during their first working years and this causes concern in many OECD countries (OECD, 2023). Previous research on teachers' retainment in their profession mainly focuses on primary school and subject teachers, but research on ECE teachers is scarce. The study addresses this gap in research. The study is informed by Bruinsma and Jansen's (2010) theorization on extrinsic (adaptive and maladaptive) and intrinsic (adaptive) motivation to become and retain as a teacher. The data draws on a survey conducted in Finland, with 595 early-career ECE teachers as respondents. The survey included closed questions concerning commitment to ECE teacher profession and an open-ended question about the respondents' future career plans. The open-ended question was analysed inductively by content analysis and quantified. Descriptive statistics were used to study the associations between the respondents' future career plans and the background variables. The survey was anonymous and participation in it was voluntary. Preliminary findings suggest that acquiring qualification in special education and ECE administration and leadership attract the respondents. Many of them do not see teaching young children as their future career. The findings have relevance both for higher education policy and the field of ECE.

ECE teachers, early career, profession, retainment, Finland

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G3, Room G62, ground floor, Grand Parade building

RESPONSES TO PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGES AND DILEMMAS

Kristin Dýrfjörð, University of Akureyri, Iceland

Balancing act - The duality of expertise in preschool headteachers role

Presenters:

Kristin Dýrfjörð, University of Akureyri, Iceland

The aim is to examine the challenges that preschool headteachers face in fulfilling their professional roles, with a particular focus on the dichotomy between task-related and institution-related expertise. As outlined by Evetts' theory of professionalism (2009). Professional expertise emphasises the importance of commitment, collaboration, and ethical standards, while organisational professionalism pertains to security, standardisation, external regulation, and accountability. This research investigates how preschool headteachers balance the need to safeguard their professional integrity, promote staff expertise for the wellbeing of children, and serve as primary institutional representatives, often creating conflicts in their roles (Dýrfjörð et.al 2024). Datacollection is based on quantitative methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994), questionnaire was distributed to all preschool headteachers in Iceland, 2023 with a response rate of 59%. This research falls under and is not violation of Icelandic law on data protection.

Findings reveal multifaceted challenges that test both aspects of headteachers expertise, including staff workload and difficulties in recruiting staff as well as strong commitment to childrens welfare. However, headteachers may struggle to maintain professional standard or compromise their vision. This research falls under and is not a violation of Icelandic law on data protection. The research offer insights into maintaining balance between task-related and institution-related expertise. It highlights the need for awareness and strategy development, enabling headteachers

to navigate complexities, promote wellbeing, and serve institutional interests, recognising the multifaceted nature of their roles. The study emphasises the importance of headteachers acknowledging and addressing challenges to enhance their effectiveness in shaping the educational environment

leadership, professionalism, headteachers, working conditions, quality

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Illuminating cracks of resistance: hopeful stories of refusing datafication in young children's learning

Presenters:

Nathan Archer, Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom

Jo Albin-Clark, Edge Hill University, United Kingdom

Liz Chesworth, The University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

This paper draws on three empirical studies to highlight the cracks of resistance to the dominant datafication paradigm in young children's learning. Recent early childhood policy in England, has been marked by intensified technocratic accountability demands (Mikuska and Fairchild, 2020). Such regimes, driven by measurement and datafication (Bradbury and Roberts-Holmes, 2016), can steer pedagogy. With posthuman feminist materialist theories, we consider resistances to datafication. This phenomenon is explored as dynamic and in relation with the more-than-human (Barad 2007). We also think with 'cracks' (Holloway 2010) as spaces of disruption to the current neoliberal order. Through interpretivist paradigms, we created multi-modal bricolages arranging images, text and memories. Analysis was ongoing and sensitive to relations between the human and more-than-human participants. (Truman, 2022). All studies secured institutional ethical approval. Additionally, data were seen as generative and analysis was an unrushed process inspired by Stengers (2018) notion of slow scholarship and Taylor's (2020) emphasis on feminist ethics of caring and relationality. Findings illuminate everyday ecologies in ECEC settings where resistance practices are at work. Those ecologies are complex yet often concealed in the underlife by the grand narrative of datafication. Enactments of resistance by children and educators cause cracks that forge creative spaces for different kinds of doings. Our provocation to educators and policymakers is to attend to the ecologies of resistances and the conditions for cracking points to emerge. We advocate for sharing hopeful stories of resistance to datafication as a realistic and generative endeavour.

datafication, resistance, cracks, early childhood education and care, feminist posthuman materialism

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

School leaders' strategies to tackle the schoolification of early childhood education (ECE) in Chile: An unadventurous leadership.

Presenters:

Marcela Pardo, Center for Advanced Research on Education, University of Chile, Chile

Co-authors

Maria-Jose Opazo, Center for Advanced Research on Education University of Chile, Chile

Pablo Rupin, Institute for Education Universidad de O'Higgins, Chile

Sergio Galdames, Humanities Faculty, Universidad de Santiago, Colombia

The research aim was to explore how school leaders tackle the ECE schoolification in Chile. The ECE schoolification is the introduction of objectives and practices traditionally associated with primary education. It restricts children's opportunities for holistic development and wellbeing (Moss, 2012). It has been reported in several countries (Vandenbroeck & Van Laere, 2020). In Chile, the Ministry of Education mandated PK-12 school leaders to develop a strategy to counteract it (Chile-MINEDUC, 2017). As school leaders are crucial to tackle challenges (González-Falcón et al. 2019), their perspectives and practices are worth to be explored concerning the Chilean ECE schoolification. Research design is exploratory qualitative. Data were collected through interviews. Participants were 5 principals

and 5 instructional coordinators, from PK-12 schools located in the Chilean capital city. Content analysis was conducted. All participants were entitled to anonymity, confidentiality and to leave the research at any time. All participants acknowledged that ECE schoolification is present in their schools. Disapproving it, they claimed their involvement to counteract it, by encouraging the pedagogical interchange between ECE and 1st grade teachers; promoting ECE teachers' professional autonomy; and infusing themselves into the ECE pedagogy. Nevertheless, they admitted those initiatives were scattered, not part of a systematic strategy. Findings suggest that school principals and instructional coordinators have not displayed the features of leaders that research highlights as critical to face challenging times. This suggests the need for the Chilean Ministry of Education to adopt effective measures to prompt school leaders to drive systematic actions to counteract the ECE schoolification.

early childhood education, schoolification, school leaders, chile, qualitative design

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set G4, Room G63, ground floor, Grand Parade building

EXPOSING THE BARS OF THE CAGE: EQUALITIES WORK WITH UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS WHO WILL WORK WITH YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

Monica Edwards, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

We explore equalities development work with Early Years and Childhood Studies students who will go on to work in early years, education and community settings. The studies interrogate the concept of developing equalities work in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals 10 and 13, enabling embedded and embodied long-term change. Each acknowledges the context of UK Higher Education, the impact of neoliberalism and resistance to equality development work (Ahmed, 2012). Each study explores how marginalised and silenced ideas, people and identities can take up space, grow and effect change towards the creation of sustainable and equitable communities, nationally and globally. One focuses on working with EYCS students on embedding climate action within their degree. Another explores the development of spaces in which Queer identities can move from space invaders (Purwar, 2004) to belonging and the final study focuses on pedagogically appropriate ways of talking about race with children.

Queering equalities work with early years and childhood studies degree students

Presenters:

Jayne Mugglestone, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

This research aims to explore how LGBTQIA+ early years and childhood studies degree students might positively navigate their identities as current and future early years professionals who can create embodied and embedded change within services for children and young people in line with SDG10. LGBTQIA+ children, families and practitioners deserve settings that positively embrace their identities and where they are not positioned as outsiders within a hetero- and cis-normative culture. Hetero- and cis normative- culture positions LGBTQIA+ people as outsiders at best and threats at worst (Robinson, 2002, 2016; Ferfolja, 2019), with severe consequences for peoples' health and wellbeing. Queer theory is 'committed to forging a politics that does not marginalise, normalise, or criminalise queer bodies' (Kafer, 2013: 23). Queer theory as a strand of critical theory (Somekh and Lewin, 2005)) is used as the research paradigm with qualitative methodology involving creative methods enabling ways of making sense of experiences and identities that have been of necessity, often hidden and suppressed. Consideration for the potentially distressing impact of reflecting on identity and experiences is addressed through an explicitly LGBTQIA+ led, positive and informed research process. The research design and process as well as the findings, aim to contribute to the potentially life changing impact (Ahmed, 2017:10) of research. Practitioners need to be able to effectively navigate their own identities in order to manage anti-LGBTQIA+ attitudes and practices. LGBTQIA+ students have the right to identity-based development opportunities, enabling them to navigate workplaces and create safe and affirming spaces for children.

LGBTQIA+, SDG10, students; , Queer theory, creative methods

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Social Sustainability: Cultivating Critical Race Consciousness Early Years Practice

Presenters:

Josephine Gabi, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

This study addresses the imperative need to equip racially minoritised Early Years & Childhood Studies students with the skills and knowledge necessary to engage in age-appropriate and sensitive discussions about race with early years children. Although racially minoritised students may be racially conscious and therefore assumed to be equipped to have conversations about race and racism, Versey et al. (2019) highlighted the need to be conscious of 'appropriated racial oppression' that may negatively impact their ability to offer race-positive conversations. The study underscores the significance of integrating Critical Race Theory (CRT) principles into curricula to actively foster socially sustainable practices and processes that promote an appreciation for racial differences (Hamilton, 2020). Drawing on duoethnography (Sawyer & Norris, 2013) as a methodology rooted in equity-based research praxis, the study allows racially minoritised students and the researcher to be fully engaged as equals. Adhering to the BERA (2018) guidelines, priority was given to ongoing informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality and psychological risk to safeguard participants and researchers from potential harm. Findings emphasise the importance of creating inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments that empower students to navigate nuanced conversations with young children. The research contributes a framework for integrating CRT into the curriculum as a necessary tool to address racial issues. It fosters a proactive stance in championing racial equity within educational settings. The study's outcomes provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and students seeking to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion from the earliest stages of a child's educational journey.

social sustainability, critical race consciousness, early years, duoethnography, education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

SDG13: Creativity and Climate Action: working with HE students on (re)learning sacred connections between the natural world and human communities.

Presenters:

Monica Edwards, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

Rachel O'Sullivan, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

This research aims to co-create empowering, creative spaces with undergraduate students linking climate action to equality work. Building meaningful equalities work with HE students (Gabi et al, 2022), explores how academics support students to creatively engage children and families in meaningful climate action. The work draws on principles embedded within education for sustainable development (ESD) (United Nations Brundtland Report, 1987). This work respects and learns from global indigenous knowledge, where generational collective knowledge from past and future connects with local place, as we act on, transition and adapt to, the impact of the climate emergency and sustainable development. (Nursey-Bray et al, 2022). Critical theory is the research paradigm with methodology to use creative methods for group conversations and activities to connect, share and envisage human communities with land and water. Power dynamics between students and academics and preventing harm to participants through creating informed principled spaces and working with university ethics on equality and diversity in teaching and learning. A model is proposed to work with children, families and communities in practice, to explore and adapt to the climate emergency in our individual and communal lives. This forms the start of a bigger aim to create open access resources for staff and students on creative climate action. Students must prepare for practice with young children, their families and communities that includes climate action. Empowering students and children as agents of change is vital to nurture an intimate relationship with the earth, based on care, respect and hope for the future.

climate emergency, sustainable development, indigenous knowledge, HE institutions, equality work

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G5, Room M2, Mezzanine, Grand Parade building

CHALLENGING BIAS AND SUPPORTING MARGINALISED FAMILIES

Mandy Andrews, Plymouth University, United Kingdom

Migrating Together or Left Behind? Parental Migration and Young Children's Development in Rural China

Presenters:

Shiqi Wang, Beijing Normal University, China

Co-authors:

Minyi Li, Beijing Normal University, China

This study aims to examine the influence and mechanism of parental migration on young children's development in rural China. Previous studies indicated that parent-child separation resulting from parental migration negatively impacts children's development (Lee & Park, 2020), but children migrating with their parents also encounter challenges in accessing education and public services (Fang & Shi, 2018). However, existing studies predominantly focus on school-aged children, with limited exploration of the pathways through which parental migration influences preschoolers' development. Based on the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1994), this study examines the impact and mechanisms of parental migration on early childhood development, considering multiple ecological levels, encompassing parents, family dynamics, and school, and extends to social policies. This quantitative study, grounded in a positivistic paradigm, utilizes data from a survey conducted in Guangdong province, China's prominent center of internal migration. In this survey, 2600 preschoolers were recruited, and their developmental outcomes were measured by eHCl. Following data cleaning, the final sample includes 2362 children, achieving a response rate of 90.8%. All participants received Informed Consent Forms regarding the voluntary nature of their participation and the confidentiality of the survey beforehand (APA, 2007). The results show that migrant children outperform their left-behind counterparts in early developmental outcomes. Further analysis underscores that migrating together primarily fosters early childhood development by providing a superior home learning environment and higher-quality education. This study recommends that migrant parents bring their children with them and strive to offer high-quality companionship. Moreover, it underscores the crucial need for government intervention to enhance social public services in support of children from migrant families.

parental migration, young children, home learning environment, early childhood education, early childhood development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Accessing Early Childhood Education: Developmental benefits for refugee children in Malaysia

Presenters:

Katharina Ereky-Stevens, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Kimberley Kong, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

Co-authors:

Iram Siraj, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

By exploring the benefits of accessing early childhood education (ECE) for refugee children in Malaysia, the study hopes to strengthen the call for measures that prioritise the provision of early education for refugees in low-resource contexts and thus attain SDG4. Over the last decades, international research including studies in low- and middle-income countries, drew attention to the benefits of high quality ECE for children's development (e.g. Rao et al., 2017, Aboud & Akhter, 2011). Based on a human rights perspective and capability approach, the debate on the importance of investing in ECE for vulnerable children in particular relates to benefits to child development and wellbeing, the tackling of inequality, and improvements in social cohesion and integration (Buzzelli, 2015). Children

were assessed using the International Development and Learning Assessment (Pisani et al., 2018). Information on the child and family background variables, including the Home Learning Environment (HLE) was collected. Two-level Hierarchical Linear Modelling was carried out to assess the effect of accessing ECE in a sample of 1,051 4-6-year-old children. Refugee communities were involved in decision making and data collection. Participant rights to informed consent, withdrawal and confidentiality were secured. Findings show positive effects of ECE access on emergent literacy/language and numeracy skills, and highlight the importance of the HLE on children's development. The evidence brought together by this project helps to highlight the importance of policies that address problems in the provision of early education for refugees in low-resource contexts.

ECE access, low-resource refugee context, developmental outcomes, home learning environment, quantitative evidence

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Marginalising parents through 'partnership': reframing policy and practice.

Presenters:

Philippa Thompson, Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

Helen Simmons, University of Northampton, United Kingdom

The research aims to challenge unconscious bias in current policy and practice with parents in early childhood (0-8yrs). It suggests reframing thinking by listening to the hidden voices of marginalised families. There is much written around partnership and reciprocity across both policy and literature (Rouse & O'Brien, 2017; Thompson & Simmons, 2023; Meyer, Waterman, Coleman & Strambler, 2023). However, bringing hidden voices to the fore is not prevalent. The approach to the investigation was informed by participatory research (Levy & Thompson, 2015), a model of family learning (Marsh & Thompson, 2001) and insight into experiences of contemporary motherhood (Simmons, 2020). Through an interpretivist paradigm, Connelly & Clandinin (2006:375) suggest narrative inquiry is 'the study of experience as story'. Excerpts of parent stories will be used to illustrate and challenge current practices and potential unconscious bias. The research then considers applying models of participation (Shier, 2001; Lundy 2014) to harness the power of story to change current practice. This research has followed the Ethical Codes of Conduct from Universities of the Principal Investigators. Ethical guidelines (BERA 2018; EECERA 2015) also informed the design of the research regarding consent, right to withdraw and anonymity. Initial findings were presented in an edited book published by Sage. The research continues with parents of children with anaphylaxis to consider uses of participatory models in practice to support those marginalised to find a voice. To challenge perceptions and understanding of how current policy and practice surrounding partnership with parents suggests a deficit rather than credit model, resulting in marginalising and silencing of voices.

parents, partnership, co production, marginalised, participatory

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G6, NEW ROOM: Room 306, third floor, Edward Street building

PROFESSIONAL WELLBEING AND OVERCOMING PROFESSIONAL BARRIERS

Ilaria Folci, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Wellbeing and stressful situations in a sustainable work climate

Presenters:

Marina Lundkvist, Early Childhood Education, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Helsinki, Finland

Cecilia Heilala, University of Helsinki, Finland

Mirjam Kalland, University of Helsinki, Finland

The aim is to explore how multi-professional work groups in ECEC perceive stressful situations and how they handle them constructively. The division of labour in a multi-professional work group can be unclear and there is

uncertainty about what is expected from different professional groups. A central starting point for the study is a sustainable work climate in which staff strengths and skills are utilized and participation plays an important role in handling stress (Heilala et al., 2022; Thorpe et al., 2020). The research is based on effort-reward imbalance (ERI, Siegrist, 1996) and Jameton's (1993) thoughts on ethical dilemmas and moral stress that can arise in work teams. The study is situated within a qualitative paradigm. Data consists of five focus group interviews with teams at daycare centres. Content analysis was adopted. The study follows the ethical standards by the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (2023). Informed consent was obtained, pseudonyms were used, and the participants were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The preliminary results clearly show how the quality of internal communication between the staff in the teams affects the sense of emotional and cognitive participation and wellbeing. The results also show that the teams are looking for an available and present leader who supports and guides the staff in situations characterized by ethical dilemmas and moral stress. Our research contributes to knowledge on how to handle stressful situations constructively and can therefore lead to development of working conditions.

ECE, multi-professional teams, wellbeing, ethical dilemmas, moral stress

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Educating in and for wellbeing. Supporting the quality of services 06 through the care of its professionals

Presenters:

Ilaria Folci, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Co-authors:

Silvia Maggiolini, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Elena Zanfroni, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

An exploratory study involving 80 nursery and kindergarten educators in the North of Italy utilized individual interviews and an innovative qualitative research tool. Its aim was to identify personal and professional challenges, strengths and areas for development, providing insights to enhance training programs in ECEC. Extensive international research underscores the pivotal role of educator wellbeing in preschool services. Ranging from positive psychology to organizational wellbeing studies, these explore caregiving roles, and recent contributions address new vulnerabilities, especially in post-pandemic work environments. This study aligns with the theoretical framework of professional wellbeing and preschool education quality. Conceptual cores within this framework are intertwined with the themes of reflectivity, self-reflectivity, and the caregiving dimension of adults in this sector (Cumming, 2017; Levi, Rusu, 2023; Albin-Clark, 2020). Individual interviews, utilizing a qualitative inquiry tool, aimed to grasp professionals' perspectives on critical elements and challenges in educational work with 0-6-year-olds. The goal is to enhance developmental, organizational, and systemic aspects. Each participant was provided and signed an informed consent, drafted by the university's legal office, outlining data processing procedures in full compliance with current regulations. The use of "The Mountain of Professions" during interviews enabled the collection of pertinent data on individual and professional profiles of educators in pre-school services. This information is valuable for pedagogical analyses regarding ECEC quality and worker wellbeing. Establishing dedicated and protected spaces for individual educators promotes a sense of care from the organization, addressing group challenges guides service coordinators in seeking improvement actions, contributing to overall service quality.

wellbeing, reflexivity, pedagogical colloquia, 'Mountain of Professions' tool, motivation and professional skills

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Teachers' struggles to increase children's autonomy in early Primary classrooms

Presenters:

Soizic Le Courtois, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Sara Baker, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

We worked collaboratively with teachers in England to help them support the autonomy of pupils aged 4 to 6. We explored the changes teachers made to their practice and the barriers they faced. Research suggests that feelings of autonomy support students' inner motivation (Reeve et al., 2004) which is a driver of deep learning (e.g. Benware & Deci, 1984) and wellbeing (Levesque et al., 2004). However, children's autonomy and motivation are undermined by controlling teaching practices (Assor et al., 2005). This study draws on Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) as well as research on children's self-regulated learning (Perry, 2013) to understand teachers' practices that support or inhibit children's autonomy. This study used interpretive methodology and thematic analysis to map out teachers' practices and barriers they faced. Data were collected through live classroom observations and interviews with teachers. Participating teachers signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the researchers and were interviewed after observations so they could tell their own story about the lesson. We found that the classrooms in the study functioned as ecosystems of teacher control, through pressure from senior leaders and top-down governmental policies. This resulted in a mindset focused on strict learning objectives which only left 'pockets of space' for children's autonomy. Our work provides 'lessons learned' for schools and has implications for policy makers whose work directly impacts (and restricts) teachers' ability to make changes to their practice.

autonomy, motivation, teacher control, playful learning, institutional pressures

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set G7, Room 144, first floor, Grand Parade building

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH ANIMALS AND THE NATURAL WORLD

Fengling Tang, University of Roehampton, United Kingdom

Preschool children's knowledge about and attitude towards wild animal species

Presenters:

Per-Arvid Wold, Queen Maud University College of early childhood education, Norway

Co-authors:

Claudia Melis, Queen Maud University College of early childhood education, Norway

Anna Maria Billing, Queen Maud University College of early childhood education, Norway

This study investigated kindergarten children's species knowledge, including both domestic, wild native, and wild exotic animal species. Furthermore, we studied their attitude towards these animals and the origin of their knowledge. Since younger generations are expected to face serious environmental challenges, there has been an increasing focus on how kindergarten children interact with nature (Kahn et al. 2018). Few studies have referred to kindergarten children's species knowledge (Mohneke et al., 2016; Randler & Wieland, 2010, Wold et al. 2023) and children's attitude towards animals (Borgi and Cirulli, 2015). Knowledge about biodiversity is considered one of the major pathways to sustainability (Edwards & Cutter-Mackenzie, 2013). It is therefore crucial that the next generations possess necessary knowledge and the motivation to conserve biodiversity (Gayford, 2000, Chawla, 2007, Collado et. al., 2015). This study uses a quantitative paradigm. We collected data by introducing the children to photographs of different animals. Data collected from interviews were quantified to fit standard statistical models to compare groups of answers. Participation in this study was voluntary and it could be discontinued at any time without providing any reason. After the link between data from different sources was established, we anonymized all data according to current procedures. Preliminary findings indicate that the children have more knowledge about some species, including both native and exotic species. This study can contribute to increase understanding about kindergarten children's knowledge about nature and their ability to preserve biodiversity in future.

sustainability, species knowledge, education for sustainability, attitudes towards animals, early childhood education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

To investigate preschoolers' environmental awareness by viewing earth images

Presenters:

Lee-Feng Huang, National Pingtung University, Taiwan

This study aims to explore the awareness of environmental issues among preschoolers who have yet to receive environmental education and to investigate children's interpretative abilities regarding images. Spiteri (2022) researched the awareness of environmental issues among multicultural children under age 8. The results indicated that children can recognize and discuss environmental topics. This research intends to understand whether children become aware of environmental issues through Earth pictures or require guidance from adults while viewing the pictures to comprehend the impact of the environment. This research employs a qualitative approach. Seven teacher students collected descriptions and thoughts from 146 preschoolers aged 5-6 after viewing two images of the Earth. The information is then categorized, coded, and analyzed to draw the final research conclusion. Apart from obtaining informed consent from the parents, this study explains the research content to preschoolers in a way they can comprehend, allowing them to agree understandably.

1. Most preschool children can describe the content of images, but only a few can infer the conveyed meaning behind the images.
2. Through questioning, most children can understand the meaning of the images and express a willingness to protect the Earth.
3. Adult support is deemed necessary for establishing awareness of environmental issues among preschool children.

This study recommended that preschool teachers design diverse activities to guide children's attention toward environmental issues. Using images and discussion as teaching tools is considered one of the appropriate avenues.

preschoolers, environmental issues, environmental awareness, environmental education, visual literacy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Exploring how multispecies relations support ecological justice and sustainable futures

Presenters:

Tracy Young, Southern Cross University, Australia

Co-authors:

Patty Born, Hamline University, United States

Presenting research from the book, *Multispecies Thinking in the Classroom and Beyond: Teaching for a Sustainable Future* (Born, 2024), we consider what it means to share worlds beyond the human gaze as multispecies entanglements challenge and expand ecological worldviews towards more just and hopeful futures. Multispecies relations in childhood (Taylor & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2015, Young and Rautio, 2024, Young and Bone, 2020) and justice (Haraway, 2008) have been aligned with pedagogy that broadens how social justice intersects with the lives of other creatures (Chao, Bolender and Kirksey, 2022) with what Anna Tsing (2015) calls 'the arts of noticing'. Critical posthumanism (Braidotti, 2017) that deconstructs human exceptionalism and speciesism and multispecies relational ontologies that shows species connections (Riley, Jukes & Rautio, 2024) were employed. Post-qualitative methodology and multispecies ethnographic methods in early childhood settings with animals and children were adopted including walking/tracking/noticing/attuning/questioning-with diverse ways of life, (Nelson, 2018). Involvement was voluntary and written consent given by teachers and parents. Ongoing assent was negotiated with the children each time the research was carried out and pseudonyms were used. Multispecies relations strengthen connections that matter for sustainable futures. Teaching and learning with, and as animals can be known and practiced differently, in ways that bring about the reciprocity of living through discussions, stories and observations

that provoke shared understandings of home, family and life desires. Making space for ethical relations with other animals in multispecies policy/curricula helps to unlearn human dominance and exceptionalism and relearn how to co-exist in multispecies communities.

multispecies, relationally, sustainability, ecological justice, posthumanism

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set G8, Room 202, second floor, Grand Parade building

RESEARCH WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

Robin Samuelsson, Mälardalen University, Sweden

Toddlers actualization of affordances during free exploration in a varied natural environment

Presenters:

Steffen Tangen, Østfold University College, Norway

Alexander Olsen, Østfold University College, Norway

Co-authors:

Ellen Beate Hansen Sandseter, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway

Ole Johan Sando, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway

This study aims to investigate how toddlers actualize affordances during free exploration in a varied natural environment Heft (1988) proposed a functional taxonomy for children's outdoor environments based on affordances (Gibson, 1986), which Lerstrup & van den Bosch (2017) further developed, and their published taxonomy inspired our initial coding of data in the present study. The study is based on research on affordance, referring to the meaningful action possibilities of the environment (Gibson 1986), and Lerstrup & van den Boschs (2017) developed taxonomy for children's outdoor environments The study was conducted within an explorative qualitative approach (Dalland & Keeping, 2020; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Observations were collected through head mounted GoPro cameras while seven toddlers, aged 17-25 months, explored a natural environment. Informed consent from ECEC staff and the children's parents were gathered, and the children could choose when and how to wear the camera. Pseudonyms replace participants' names. The results show that toddlers, when freely exploring a varied natural environment, approach and actualize a variety of affordances of exploration and play. A considerable amount of time is spent on exploring natural materials and water activities, and walking between their chosen areas of exploration. The findings suggest implications for an ECEC practice where children, even as young as 17-25 months, should be given ample time and space to freely explore varied natural environments.

toddlers, exploration, GoPro, affordance, nature

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Maintaining children's curiosity through balancing scaffolding and play: A seven-month design-based study developing programming for 1-2 year-olds

Presenters:

Robin Samuelsson, Mälardalen University, Sweden

This paper presents a seven-month design-based work developing programming activities for 1-2-year-old children, using a programmable floor robot. Programming is steadily becoming a subject in early childhood (Yang et al., 2023), in decreasingly earlier stages (Wing, 2008). However, little is known about creating early computing education suitable for under-threes (Bati, 2021). The Swedish context changed in 2018, accentuating instruction and digital skills, in a traditionally play-based and care-oriented setting. The study builds on theories of learning balancing teacher scaffolding (Alfieri et al., 2011), guided play (Weisberg et al., 2016), and free play (Xu & Kushnir, 2013).

Instructional, guided play, and free play activities were developed during a three-phase design study, detailed using video ethnographical methods. Using a mixed-methods analytical approach (Samuelsson, 2023), Children's time-on-task, teacher scaffolding, and successful coding actions were behaviourally coded in video data using MAXQDA. Qualitative analysis detailing non-measurable aspects of children's engagement with the robot. The Swedish Ethics Review Authority has approved the project [2021-05725-01], during the project, particular considerations have been taken to ensure children's continued participation and wellbeing. All three designs offer synergistic potentials for children's learning. Teacher scaffolding supports extended programming but limits exploration. Guiding play increases time-on-task. Free play increases frequency of simple programming actions, leading to unexpected learning beyond the curriculum. The study developed programming activities for nursery-aged children. However, structured and playful activities must be carefully balanced to maintain children's joy and interest. It is discussed how scaffolding and play-based initiatives can be synergistically used within childhood coding education initiatives.

technology, play, guided play, programming, mixed methods

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Verbal interaction regarding social norms in early stage of speech development: From the observation of 1-year-old class in a Japanese daycare center

Presenters:

Machiko Tsujitani, Ochanomizu University, Japan

This study aims to investigate how toddlers, in the early stage of verbal interaction, utilize words related to social norms such as possession, waiting their turn, and customary practices. Children typically begin enforcing social norms around the age of 3, exhibiting behaviors like imperative protests (e.g. Schmidt et al., 2019), seeking permission and tattling (Tsujitani, 2021). However, verbal interactions among very young children and their understanding of social norms remain understudied. Drawing upon developmental psychology, this study broadens its focus beyond age-specific developmental abilities, emphasizing interactions within various contexts. It adopts a perspective centered on children's participation, defining social norms based on children's perceptions rather than solely reflecting adult perspectives. Observations of children from 1 to 2 years old were conducted at a Japanese daycare center from June to November 2023. Interactions were recorded as episodes, and instances of children's verbal expressions related to social norms were analyzed. The research was conducted with informed consent from educators and parents, ensuring confidentiality by anonymizing names. Approval was obtained from the research ethics committee. Verbal expressions fell into three categories: requests, references to norms, and inquiries. Children sometimes echoed their peers' words, indicating shared norms. Some children referred to norms like waiting their turn. Inquiries about the daily schedule provided opportunities for children to engage with educators. Verbal protests by children who are around 2 years old serve as indications of their understanding of social norms. Considering the multifaceted meanings of children's words is crucial due to their ongoing speech development.

social norms, verbal interaction, toddler, observation, daycare

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G9, Room 204, second floor, Grand Parade building

DIGITAL PLAY

Gabriel Kappeler, University of Teacher Education Vaud, Switzerland

When pupils pretend to be researchers : influences of a digital object on their play

Presenters:

Jérémy Passeraub, Haute Ecole Pédagogique de Lausanne, Switzerland

Gabriel Kappeler, Haute Ecole Pédagogique de Lausanne, Switzerland

This case study examines how N=4 pupils aged 7 to 8 year olds appropriate the role of researcher in their pretend play and how the use of cameras influences their play and their representation of the researcher profession. We draw on previous research on children's appropriation of objects, moving from exploration to integration into their play (Hutt et al., 1989), sometimes redirecting and multiplying the roles and uses attributed to them (Bird et al., 2015). As part of our research on convergent play (Edwards, 2013), some pupils used the researcher's camera to play out scenes of participant observation, imitating the researcher who had previously collected data. From a historical-cultural perspective, we analyse the interactions between the researcher, the pupils and the teacher (Fleer & Veresov, 2018). The project was approved by an ethics committee, and information and consent documents were provided to the teacher and parents. The pupils' consent was also obtained verbally, paying attention to their body language (Pálmadóttir and Einarsdóttir, 2015). The aims of the research were explained to the pupils. We postulate that the use of cameras influences the pupils' play, the use of a digital object, and their understanding of the researcher's professional role. The results provide answers about the use of digital material in pretend play, but also about the participation of pupils in data collection as part of participant research and the ethical questions that arise.

pretend play, convergent play, digital education, research pupil, ethic

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Nurturing Teacher-Child Inquiry through Digital Play and Project Work

Presenters:

Karrie Snider, University of Central Missouri, United States

This case study describes how teachers and children from one United States (US) public preschool achieved technology integration through digital play (DP) (Bird & Edwards 2015) and the Project Approach (Helm, Katz & Wilson, 2024). DP sparks playful learning, sensemaking and engagement with print concepts (Flint & Adams 2023; Neumann 2018; Undehim 2022). DP fits naturally within children's traditional play (Edwards et al. 2020). Birds and Edwards (2015) suggest appropriate technology integration in early learning settings is achieved alongside play-based pedagogies. The Digital Play Framework (Bird & Edwards 2015) applies Vygotsky's (1977) socio-cultural theory and Hutt's (1966) explanation of epistemic and ludic activity to illustrate how technologies act as tools to mediate children's learning. This case study included a secondary analysis of teachers' and children's first-time experiences with digital play and project work. Content analysis of observations and documentation were analyzed using a constructivist paradigm. This research is a secondary analysis of data related to an action research process (Author et al 2023). Human subjects research ethical considerations were followed. Children generated digital and non-digital representations of their learning (Magnusson 2021) and strengthened self-regulation and communication skills (Siskind 2020). Child outcomes emphasized intellectual development over typical themes of the preschool years (Helm & Author 2020). Teachers' observed children's enhanced attention, concentration, motivation and persistence in learning (Wood et al. 2019). Not all US children have equitable access to technology (Konca 2022). Incorporating DP into the Project Approach fostered both teachers' and children's meaningful exploration with technologies.

digital play, project work, technology, preschool, the Project Approach

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Capturing complexity: The role of observational research in understanding preschoolers' digital play

Presenters:

Gabriel Kappeler, University of Teacher Education Vaud, Switzerland

Jérémie Passeraub, University of Teacher Education Vaud, Switzerland

This communication examines the challenges and biases of collecting and analysing data from a preschool, using an approach of observational and participatory research. Our study, conducted in the canton of Vaud, Switzerland, focuses on children's interactions with unplugged digital devices during 'convergent' pretend play (Edwards, 2013; Bird et al., 2015) at the age of 4-6 years. Building on Fleer and Veresov's (2018) work on the possibility of intervening

and documenting the researcher's influence on the context being studied, as well as Pálmadóttir and Einarsdóttir's (2015) work on obtaining pupils' consent by observing their body language, our study continues the line of previous research on children's interaction with objects and their integration into play (Hutt et al., 1989). We recorded 44 hours of play using multiple GoPro cameras, which allowed for a detailed analysis of the dynamics between children and materials, as well as between children and adults. This scenario-centred approach highlights the importance of context and interaction in how children engage with objects. The project was approved by an ethics committee and information and consent documents were provided to the teacher and parents. The findings of this study highlight the complexity of participatory observation in preschool settings and its implications for educational practice and policy. By analysing the biases of participatory observation in preschool contexts, our work enriches methodological and theoretical debates and offers new insights for research into the interactions between young children, adults, and materials in the context of pretend play with unplugged digital devices.

participatory research, pretend play, convergent play, unplugged digital education, methodology

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G10, Room 207, second floor, Grand Parade building

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATION CULTURE

Lotta Uusitalo, University of Helsinki, Finland

Preschool teachers' experience-based leadership knowledge

Presenters:

Ulrika Larsson Bodin, Mälardalens Universitet, Sweden

Anne Lillvist, Mälardalens University, Sweden

The purpose of the study is to contribute knowledge about how preschool teachers, through reflection, understand and describe their pedagogical leadership. Previous studies indicate that preschool teachers have not assumed a particular responsibility for leadership in the pedagogical work (Eriksson et al. 2018; Zulkifly et al., 2020), although recent changes in the curriculum emphasizes preschool teachers as leaders. The theoretical framework of this study draws upon the theories of Aristotle (1967) who highlighted that knowledge can be seen from both theory and practice through episteme, techne and phronesis. The study was conducted within a qualitative research paradigm. The methodological steps of dialogue seminars (Hammarén, 1999) were completed with 12 preschool teachers in Sweden. Data were analyzed through a hermeneutic approach with several phases where the context and the study's knowledge-theoretical starting points form an understanding of the empirical evidence (Gadamer, 1997). Ethical considerations have included pseudonymizing all participants, offering them the opportunity to withdraw their participation and obtaining informed consent. The results show that regardless of how much theoretical knowledge the preschool teacher has, the professional knowledge is a practical knowledge (phronesis) in which preschool teachers use their judgment to decide how to lead in an educational situation. These findings implicate that reflection can be seen to be helpful and contribute to the preschool teacher becoming more aware and insightful about their practical actions and laying a foundation for seeing themselves as leaders within the preschool context.

dialogue seminar, leadership, preschool teacher, professional skills, reflection

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Organizational culture in early education: an inside look at nurseries and kindergartens

Presenters:

Alejandra Falabella, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Chile

Ximena Poblete, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Chile

The propose of the research project is to understand early childhood centers' organizational cultures. The research studies ECE headteachers and teachers' discourses, subjectivities and daily practices, examining the ways in which these are mediated by educational policies, gender discourses and institutional conditions. The literature review alerts critical knots related to ECE organizational culture, such as: institutional precarious conditions; a highly feminized workforce according to a sexual labor regime (Osgood, 2012; Poblete, 2018); public management policies (Falabella et al., 2018; Moss & Dahlberg, 2008); added to the risk of schoolification (Pardo, Opazo & Rupin, 2021). The study draws on three theoretical perspectives: the tradition of ethnography; Foucault's post-structuralist approach and school micro-policy theory (Ball et al.); and gender theories (Butler, Osgood). This is an ethnographic study developed in four early childhood centers during one whole year, including weekly observations, 56 in-depth interviews and document analysis. The study was conducted under the norms and supervision of the University ethics commission. All ECE teachers, head teachers, parents' and children where informed about the reserch project and voluntarily wished to participate, and all adults signed an informed consent. The research findings suggest that a wellbeing and caring organizational culture prevails, although together with tensions and contradictions, as a marked hierarchical gap between professional and non-professional workforce; sense of fear towards authority; and efforts to avoid and conceal any conflict. The conclusiones propose challenges in this field of educational leadership and organizational culture.

ethnography, gender, organizational culture, early childhood centres, profesional identity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Strength-based leadership in early childhood education head teachers

Presenters:

Lotta Uusitalo, University of Helsinki, Finland

The present intervention study aims to promote strength usage, flourishing, and work engagement among 101 early childhood education (ECE) head teachers in Finland. The high turnover rates among ECE teachers are increasingly concerning, particularly regarding head teachers, as their turnover can present severe challenges for the entire organization. Previous studies have shown that various factors can enhance work engagement and retention (e.g., MacDonald et al., 2018). The teachers will participate in a two-month intervention consisting of six 4-hour instructional sessions and home assignments. The intervention is based on our previous study (Vuorinen et al., 2021, 'Nourishing Compassion in Finnish Kindergarten Head Teachers') on assisting head teachers in utilizing their strengths to support the organization. A classic quantitative pre-post-delayed-post-test design will be followed, with half of the participants serving as a wait-list control group for the intervention group. The test battery will include measures for strength identification and usage (Govindji & Linley, 2007), flourishing (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2009), and work engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Additionally, 12 head teachers will be interviewed. Participation in the research is voluntary and anonymous. Participants' informed consent is obtained before the data collection. The rules of ethical research outlined by the Finnish National Board (2023) on Research Integrity are followed. The intervention will take place from March to May 2024, with all results expected by June. We are eager to receive authentic input from ECE teachers regarding work engagement and opportunities for improvement.

strength-based leadership, head teachers, work engagement, flourishing, job retention

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G11, NEW ROOM, Room 209, second floor, Edward Street Building

DEVELOPING PRACTICE WITHIN CULTURALLY DIVERSE, MULTILINGUAL SETTINGS

Katarzyna Tunkiel, University of Stavanger, Norway

Aesthetic Literacy Learning through Playful Fantasy-Making for Preschool Children Belonging to Non-dominant Linguistically and Cultural Communities

Presenters:

Hiroaki Ishiguro, Rikkyo University, Japan

This study aims to develop an effective workshop program for linguistically and culturally non-dominant preschool children to learn aesthetic literacy. Drama play and theater experiences enhance children's creativity (Ishiguro, 2022; Cremin and Macdonald, 2013) and are effective for literacy development (Archila et al., 2022). In an increasingly globalized society with increasing linguistic and cultural diversity, aesthetic literacy, where meaning is diffused, diverse understandings are encouraged, and the uniqueness of expressive activities is emphasized, becomes more critical. Children should be "meaning-making" designers (New London Group, 1996). In this formative experiment (Vygotsky, 1997), ten Portuguese-speaking preschoolers participated with the assistance of adults. The project used multiple media, including spoken and written Japanese and Portuguese, pictures, and the body. Each child chose their favorite word, and everyone combined them to create one story and act on it. With the preschool principal's cooperation, the consent of all participants, including children, was obtained. It promised that pseudonyms were used in the research report, and personal information was not revealed in any research process. Participants could withdraw from the activity at any time. Since no one had unrestricted control over the entire story, it naturally became nonsense, freeing the children from the psychological constraints of making a good story. Even in translanguaging (Poza, 2017), interpreters might have created asymmetries in power relations among language users. The presence of an interpreter implies the dominant language. By making the story only with physical expression, it may be possible to downgrade the dominant language.

aesthetic literacy, play, learning, translanguaging, non-dominant language

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Reading practices with multilingual children in Norwegian ECEC

Presenters:

Katarzyna Tunkiel, University of Stavanger, Norway

Cecilie Dyrkorn Fodstad, Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education in Trondheim, Norway

Co-authors

Trude Hoel, University of Stavanger, Norway

This multimethod study strives for in-depth knowledge about reading practices with multilingual children in Norwegian ECEC. Earlier research suggests that books in languages other than Norwegian are rare in Norwegian ECEC (Hofslundsengen et al., 2020:420) and that languages other than Norwegian are seldom used for reading (Romøren et al, 2023:12). ECE teachers may rather use books in the majority language with simpler content, less text and more pictures when reading with multilinguals (Hofslundsengen et al., 2023:29). The theoretical framework of this study draws upon the social semiotic theory of multimodality (Kress, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021). The study was conducted within the mixed research paradigm (Johnson et al., 2007), with a nationwide survey answered by 1,192 ECE teachers, followed up by six semi-structured focus group interviews, conducted in three different parts of Norway. Answers to four survey questions were analysed descriptively, and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used for the interview data. Survey and interview participants were informed in writing about the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, and their opportunity to withdraw without providing reasons. Interview transcripts were anonymised. Findings demonstrate that reading in languages other than Norwegian is rare, and that ECE staff rely on resource persons, particularly parents, to promote multilingual reading. Otherwise, reading pictures in books in Norwegian, use of concrete materials and a whole-body approach emerge as key resources for reading with multilinguals. Findings suggest how creativity and a problem-solving approach in ECE staff may promote diverse reading practices with multilingual children.

dual language learners, multilingual children, multimodality, reading, linguistic diversity

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Engaging Parents to Understand and Improve Social Cohesion in a Diverse Public Preschool

Presenters:

Qimti Paienjon, Middle East Technical University, Turkey

Co-authors:

Elif Karsli-Calamak, University of South Carolina, United States

Within a context of sudden diversification of classrooms in Türkiye, the country with the largest number of refugees, the aim of this study was to engage host and refugee communities on the issue of social cohesion through the public preschool setting. While there have been many studies on refugee education, seldom are host communities engaged in such research (Erdal & Oeppen, 2013), nor are perspectives of children, parents and school administration usually captured at the same time (Vrdoljak et al., 2022). This study relied primarily on the bioecological theory of human development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) and the ecologies of parental engagement (Calabrese Barton et al., 2004). The social constructivist paradigm was used whereby parents and children were assumed to be shaping their environment and their experiences within it (Freeman & Mathison, 2009). The study was designed as a pragmatic action research in one preschool classroom to generate knowledge through intervention (Levin & Greenwood, 2001). The co-creation of a children's book with parent engagement was facilitated and semi-structured interviews were conducted. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used for data analysis. Informed consent was granted by parents and children and they could withdraw from the study at any time. Both refugee and host parents positively extended the narrative of the cross-group friendship. They also used their participation to voice concerns about their children's school life and shared their aspirations for cross-group relations. Similar interventions in other preschool settings could empower host and refugee communities and improve social cohesion in partnership with parents.

refugee education, parent engagement, action research, social cohesion, diverse preschools

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set G12, Room 225, second floor, Grand Parade building

PEACE EDUCATION

Marlene McCormack, Dublin City University (DCU), Ireland

Nurturing peace for wellbeing and sustainability in early childhood

Presenters:

Marlene McCormack, Dublin City University (DCU), Ireland

Sarah O'Leary, Cheeky Cherubs, Ireland

This study documents peace-nurturing initiatives that are grounded in the everyday life of the preschool and which aim to support collective wellbeing and promote peaceful and inclusive societies (SDG 16). Bottom-up approaches (Lederach, 1995) involving children in everyday peacebuilding offers the best possibilities for sustainable peace (McEvoy-Levy, 2011). Research has focused on peacebuilding with older children (O'Sullivan et al. 2023) but a gap exists in understanding the relationship between peace and young children. The study is grounded in new materialist thinking (Lenz Taguchi, 2010) and draws on documentation to bring fresh ways of seeing and understanding peace-nourishing practices with a preschool room. This study is grounded in a discursive and social constructivist paradigm, (Lenz-Taguchi, 2010) and draws on post-qualitative inquiry/methodology (Lather & St. Pierre, 2013). Documentation in the form of photos, videos, work samples, etc. act as both method and data, which will be analysed in thinking with theory (Mazzei & Jackson, 2013). Ethics has been approved by Dublin City University but is understood as an encounter (Dahlberg & Moss, 1999), and as a responsibility (Barad, 2007, p.394), which calls into question how decisions are made and who counts with the study. The research is ongoing within the preschool. It is envisaged that through the processes of peace-nourishing initiatives, the wellbeing of children and educators will be enhanced. It

may be that in valuing peace as a process and nourishing it in small ways within the preschool, that transformative experiences in the present may underlie sustainability into the future.

sustainability, peacebuilding, documentation, wellbeing, practice

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Teaching for a peaceful and sustainable future. Students' transformative learning in conflict management

Presenters:

Sara Frödén, Örebro University, Sweden

Co-authors:

Sanela Bajramovic, Örebro University, Sweden

This study aims to highlight the transformative potential of teacher education by exploring students' learning processes in the field of conflict management. Conflict management knowledge and skills are essential in building peaceful societies: the basis for sustainable development (UN, 2015, 1998). However, there are few investments in peacebuilding through formal education (Harris, 2010). Teachers' lack of tools to handle challenging situations led to the introduction of conflict management as an examination objective in Swedish teacher education (Hakvoort, 2010). Nevertheless, the need for transformative peace education remains. The study combines theories of positive peace (Galtung, 1969) and peacebuilding (Lederach, 1997) with Mezirow's (2000) theory of transformative learning. The phases of transformative learning are used in a document analysis within a critical paradigm: a) self-examination, b) critically reflecting and reconsidering one's and others' assumptions and actions, c) exploring new roles, and d) describing and applying new ways of acting. The documents are produced within a preschool teacher program course and include teaching materials, course evaluations, and 134 students' texts. Only texts written by students who signed consent forms were used. The results show how teacher education can contribute to peacebuilding by stimulating transformative learning. There were shifts in perspectives regarding students'

- 1) view of conflict,
- 2) self-identification concerning conflict styles,
- 3) leadership style,
- 4) ability to handle conflicts constructively, and
- 5) understanding and responding to preschool children's acts of resistance.

The study provides concrete examples of course designs that encourage students to reconsider previous beliefs and actions through problem-solving and non-violent communication.

environmental and sustainability education, conflict resolution, higher education, early years education programme, nonviolent communication

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Peace education for sustainability in preschool in a time of conflicts and uncertainty

Presenters:

Farhana Borg, Dalarna University, Sweden

Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson, Gothenburg University, Sweden

Co-authors

Pia Williams, Gothenburg University, Sweden

This paper aims to explore children's views of social and economic sustainability and discuss how preschool can introduce peace education through encouraging children to solve conflicts peacefully, cultivating respect for

diversity and developing interconnectedness of all living things. Studies have shown that there is a correlation between peace education and teaching of peace values at an early stage in reducing conflict in society (Affolter et al., 2020). Researchers argue that developing a culture of peace in early childhood education can be the best investment (Angelica Ponguta et al., 2018; Sunar et al., 2013). This study draws from Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory that looks at the ways society impacts children's development and behavior (Vygotsky, 1978). Employing qualitative research methodology, 403 children were interviewed from 50 preschools in 25 municipalities in Sweden. Data were analyzed thematically. The Swedish Ethical Review Authority did not raise any objection to the study. The study follows the Swedish research council guidelines, including that informed consent was negotiated with the children and parents. The findings demonstrate that preschool children are aware of the ongoing conflicts and war through news and conversations of adults. Some of them were willing to help the victims with money, toys, food and even accommodation. To contribute to the creation of a more peaceful and equitable society, preschool needs to incorporate peace education initiatives, to establish a robust foundation for fostering a sense of responsibility towards both individuals and the environment, thereby promoting the welfare of both current and future generations (United Nations 2015).

diversity, interview study, kindergarten, socio-cultural theory, sustainable development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set G13, Room 229, second floor, Grand Parade building

CONSIDERING SYSTEMIC SUPPORT FOR OUTDOOR LEARNING

Zoe Lewis, Birmingham City University, United Kingdom

Arguing for children's nature experience in out-of-school care and activities (BOA) in Flanders – A systematic review

Presenters:

Liesa Lammens, Karel de Grote Hogeschool (KdG), Belgium

Co-authors:

Siska Van Daele, KdG, Belgium

Leen Dom, KdG, Belgium

This systematic review argues for the importance and urgency of children's nature experience in out-of-school care and activities (BOA) in Flanders. In 2019, the Flemish government launched a new decree which aims for an integrated provision of BOA for all children and families. However, nature experience has not been mentioned in any of the documents. Previous research has studied how children's nature experience is related to their wellbeing, nature connection, play quality and involvement in green outdoor environments (Garip et al., 2021: p.7; Prins et al., 2022: p.11; Arola et al., 2023: p.10). The conceptual framework of this study draws upon Health Sciences, Nature Pedagogy, Environmental Psychology and Early Childhood Environmental Education (ECEE). The methodology consisted of a detailed eight-step protocol for systematic reviews in educational research (Newman & Gough, 2020). In the screening process we identified 2.257 records in seven bibliographical databases, cross-screened 562 peer-reviewed scientific articles and finally selected 31 articles for our review. We followed a directed content analysis approach (Hsieh & Shanon, 2005) as we used existing theories and scientific literature to guide the initial codes. Ethical consideration has been given by selecting from a wide range of sources, conducting peer-reviewed screening and critical quality assessment. The results of this systematic review demonstrate that children's nature experience in BOA entails important and urgent policy arguments for children's wellbeing, play quality, biophilia and environmental involvement. These findings result in valuable implications and policy recommendations for the implementation of children's nature experience in Flanders' out-of-school care and activities.

out-of-school care and activities, nature experience, policy arguments, systematic review, early childhood environmental education

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Thinking with posthuman theory to explore children's outdoor creative encounters with ecological sustainability in ECEC

Presenters:

Zoe Lewis, Birmingham City University, United Kingdom

This research aims to explore the potential of posthuman theory in seeking new possibilities for fostering ecological sustainability within children's outdoor creative encounters. Creativity is an important way in which children learn and express themselves (Craft, 2002), as well as a source of wellbeing (Moula, 2022). Innovation is highly prized in today's market-driven society where new products increase consumer demand (Craft, 2005). However, consumerist approaches to creativity are often at the expense of sustainability (Chappell et al., 2011) and detrimental to life on a damaged planet. This research adopts a relational material theoretical framework (Ringrose et al., 2020) as a means of challenging anthropocentrism and troubling ontological divides between child, nature and culture (Rautio, 2013). A post-qualitative stance (Lather & St. Pierre, 2013) and sensory ethnographic (Pink, 2013) approach were adopted. Observation and photography were used as part of the researcher's 'deep hanging out' (Geertz, 1998) in the outdoor setting and the findings were analysed diffractively (Barad, 2007). Ethical principles and response-ability were integral to every stage of the project. Consent/assent was obtained from all participants and photographs were framed to avoid children's faces, or they were blurred on the rare occasions when this was not possible. The findings suggest that when children are understood as being part of nature, rather than apart from it, they are more likely to be creative within a principled framework of ecological sustainability. The research offers new possibilities for competent, capable children of the Anthropocene to share creative encounters within more sustainable and liveable worlds.

nature, posthuman, creativity, ecological sustainability, outdoor learning

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G14, Room 318b, third floor, Grand Parade building

CHILDREN'S PLAY IN HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Lea Ann Christenson, Towson University, United States

Children's play takes place under certain historical and cultural traditions (Fleer, 2002, Gaskins & Göncü, 1988). Some generations ago it was normal for children to play in large groups in the streets and in playgrounds. Today preschools comprise children's conditions for playing for many children. Preschools are organized in many different ways, depending on the culture of which it is a part (Ringsmose & Kragh-Müller, 2017; OECD, 2006). The studies in this symposium investigated play in Danish and US traditions. Observations included the interactions of children at play and the teachers' role. The teachers understanding of play, and the importance they attribute to it, played a role in play conditions. This cross-cultural study makes it possible both to learn about different contexts and, through analyzing the similarities and differences across cultures, contribute to understanding of values and everyday practices which may be generalizable to other cultures and settings.

Children's Play in a Cultural context - the Nordic Tradition

Presenters:

Grethe Kragh-Müller, Aarhus University, Denmark

Children's play takes place under certain historical and cultural traditions (Kragh-Müller, 2024, Gaskins & Göncü, 1988). In Denmark today 96 % of children attend preschool where teachers set up children's conditions for play. The aim of this study was to explore children's conditions for play, the teachers approach to play, and types of and

contents in play. The OECD describes two different approaches to preschool - the Nordic and the Anglo-American tradition (2006). The starting point for the Nordic tradition is that children's learning and development takes place in social interaction and processes (Ringsmose & Kragh-Müller, 2017). Theory: The study was framed within socio-cultural theories and a dialectical-materialistic approach (Dreier, 2018). According to Vygotsky (1971) and Holzkamp (2005) human life and development is intertwined with history, society and culture. Paradigm: cultural-historical, subject science. Methodology: Action research. Methods: Non-participant observations in Danish two preschools. Concerns: Mitigate negative consequences. Measures: Informed consent of participants. Respecting participants rights to withdraw from project. Non-intrusive observations Findings of the study showed that Danish teachers allow much time for self-initiated play and saw their role as setting up play areas and only supporting children's play to help solve conflicts and support children who lacked playing skills. Within setting differences were found in conditions for play, teachers' approaches, type and contents of play. The implications of the study are a deeper understanding of factors that teachers can implement to create optimal playing conditions for children's wellbeing, learning and development through play.

play, teacher's role in play, children's conditions for play, play in a cross-cultural context, children's wellbeing and development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Illumination of Children's Play Across Diverse Contexts in the US

Presenters:

Lea Ann Christenson, Towson University, United States

Conditions for children's play are informed by historical and cultural traditions of the contexts in which they are located (Kragh-Müller, 2024, Gaskins & Göncü, 1988). Currently, in the US there is an emphasis on didactic learning in the place of play for preschool children in the interest of assuring that they are academically 'ready' for Kindergarten (age 5) (Mader, J., 2022). This study investigated the current conditions for children's play in diverse contexts. This work builds on Siraj-Blatchford and Pramling-Samuelsson (2016) who have shown that educational practice can support children's wellbeing. Socio-cultural theories and a dialectical-materialistic approach (Dreier, 2018) framed this study in addition to the premise that human life and development is intertwined with history, society and culture (Vygotsky, 1971; Holzkamp, 2005). A cultural-historical paradigm informed the case study methodology, and data was collected via non participant observations. Consent forms were provided and children were informed each visit to ensure their assent. Ethics followed US ethical procedures (IRB). Findings from this study illuminated similarities and differences during children's play across the diverse contexts (i.e high socioeconomic status (SES) and low SES preschools). Specifically, there were differences in the interactions between children and peers and children and their teachers. This is likely a result of how the teachers created learning environments in response to the increased emphasis on didactic learning instead of play. Implications of this study are to provide a deeper understanding of interactions during children's play which can help teachers create and advocate for optimal learning contexts.

play, preschool, teacher's role, children's wellbeing and development, play in cross-cultural contexts

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Supporting Children in Disadvantaged Positions the First 1000 Days

Presenters:

Janne Mekawi, Aarhus University, Danish School of Education, Denmark

Nana Manniche, Aarhus University. Danish School of Education, Denmark

Grethe Kragh-Müller, Aarhus University. Danish School of Education (DPU), Denmark

The first three years of life are of major importance to children's opportunities for positive later life outcomes (Heckman, 2006). The purpose of this study was to investigate how to support children's conditions for learning and

development with a focus on play and growth promoting relationships in family and ECEC. Children in disadvantaged positions do not have the same developmental life outcomes as other children (SFI, 2003), and often attend ECEC with poor quality (Ringsmose et al, 2012). Studies also show that ECEC of good quality can make a difference (SFI, 2014). Theory: Socio-cultural theories and a dialectical-materialistic approach (Dreier, 2008). According to Vygotsky (1971), Holzkamp (2005) and Schibbye, (2002) human life and development is intertwined with history, society and culture. Paradigm: Cultural-historical, subject science. Methodology: Action research. Participants co-researchers. Methods: Observations, group reflections, interviews. Ethics: Concerns: Mitigate negative consequences. Measures: Informed consent of participants. Respecting participants' right to withdraw from project. Increased educational quality in everyday practices in family and ECEC gave the children better conditions for wellbeing, play and learning, such that on starting kindergarten, The children were linguistically, socio-emotionally and cognitively better equipped to join in social relationships, play and pedagogical activities. The project also showed a range of challenges that are important to address when working with play and relationships in ECEC. Implications include a deeper understanding of factors that authorities, parents and teachers can implement to support childrens' conditions for play and development during their first three years of life.

play in ECEC and family, growthpromoting relationships in ECEC, supporting families in early years settings, supporting children in disadvantaged positions, promoting quality early childhood education

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set G15, Room 103, first floor, Edward Street building

REFLECTING ON EXPANDING THE COGNOSCENTI TO DEVELOP NATIONAL EARLY LEARNING FRAMEWORKS.

Susan Irvine, School of Early Childhood and Inclusive Education, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

This presentation is based on a tri-partite University partnership, engaged by and in collaboration with the Australian Children's Early Childhood Quality Authority (ACECQA), to update the national Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) for Australian children from birth to five years. This presentation explores the design and findings from the three phases of the project. Terms of Reference set by national, state and territory governments emphasised children's rights, agency and curiosity with consideration of diversity and inclusion. Central to the design was to bring together a transdisciplinary consortium of researchers and educators, supported by a detailed stakeholder communication and engagement strategy that facilitated broad, meaningful participation by providers, educators, children and all Australian governments to garner professional action and engagement.

Educators and children as 'cognoscenti' in policy decisions

Presenters:

Fay Hadley, Macquarie University, Australia

This research sought to use multiple funds of knowledge to update the Australian Early Years Learning Framework [EYLF]. Stakeholder engagement as a construct is often seen as disconnected with varying ideas of who holds knowledge and how should they be engaged (Kujala et al., 2022). A participatory framework where knowledge is co-constructed through the interactions with the phenomenon and participants was used (Schwandt, 2000). A constructivist paradigm using mixed methods involved gathering diverse perspectives in three phases over 15 months. Methods included: online surveys, written submissions, Delphi panels, focus groups, children's drawings and conversations, educator video diaries and analysis of planning documentation. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS and qualitative data used NVivo. In this paper, we concentrate on the pilot of the draft updates in partnership with ECEC providers, educators and children. Participants signed a consent form and informed assent negotiated with children with parental permission. Pseudonyms were used, and all given opportunity to withdraw at any time. This paper follows the global to the local context where educators and children were recognised and respected as "cognoscenti" and their insights and experiences were sought to inform the updated EYLF. The process of engagement stretched typical research and engagement processes to elicit the voices of educators and children in ECEC which are often silent or unheard in policy decision-making. For high-quality, inclusive and sustainable ECEC systems to flourish gathering multiple funds of knowledge to inform policy decision-making is critical.

stakeholder engagement, educator voice, participatory, multiple funds of knowledge, child voice

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Expanding the view of the ‘cognoscenti’ and the impact on ECEC systems

Presenters:

Susan Irvine, School of Early Childhood and Inclusive Education, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

This research sought to use multiple funds of knowledge to update the Australian Early Years Learning Framework. Stakeholder engagement as a construct is often seen as disconnected with varying ideas of who holds knowledge and how they should be engaged (Kujala et al., 2022). A participatory framework where knowledge is co-constructed through the interactions with the phenomenon and participants was used (Schwandt, 2000). A constructivist paradigm using mixed-methods involved gathering diverse perspectives across three phases. Methods included: online surveys, Delphi panels, focus groups, children’s drawings and educator video diaries. Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS and qualitative data used NVivo. Participants signed a consent form and informed assent was negotiated with children with parental permission. Pseudonyms were used, and all given opportunity to withdraw at any time. This paper sets the context for policy decision-making in ECEC in Australia. It explores the definition of ‘cognoscenti’ and how research in a national education system expanded the view of those in the know and how they could contribute. The Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority oversaw this project that sought to engage with different funds of knowledge. On reflection our definition of ‘cognoscenti’ changed as all participants across a bio-ecological model from children and educators to policy-makers, politicians and international researchers influenced policy. For sustainable, inclusive, high quality ECEC systems to flourish, gathering multiple funds of knowledge to inform policy is important. Checking across the spheres of a bio-ecological system to gather stakeholder views ensures many not few become the “cognoscenti.”

national curriculum, child voice, stakeholder engagement, multiple funds of knowledge, policy decision-making

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Contributing global cognoscenti knowledges in updating the Australian Early Years Learning Framework

Presenters:

Lennie Barblett, Edith Cowan University, Australia

This research used multiple funds of knowledge to update the Australian Early Years Learning Framework [EYLF]. The quality of evidence to inform policy decision making is critical but little evidence is available as to how governments utilise it (Head, 2016). A scoping literature review (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005) then expert input was used to locate and analyse literature and international early learning frameworks. Interpretivist and constructivist paradigms were used. Five data bases were interrogated for English peer reviewed articles using specific search terms. Added were project consortia expert literature recommendations and 15 international and 5 Australian state Learning Frameworks. Content analysis was used to identify new approaches in contemporary curriculum, compare ideas with the original EYLF and identify potential curriculum gaps. Researchers used a scoping protocol, a quality audit and a consistent approach to presenting information that maintained the integrity of the review. This paper shares the literature review that identified 12 focus areas requiring examination in the updating of the EYLF. In the 12 areas, findings also describe what is evident in the original EYLF and potential ideas to strengthen and update. The analysis of the 15 international and 5 Australian state frameworks will be described to show the comparisons that emphasise the global ‘cognoscenti’ in early childhood. For sustainable, accessible and quality ECEC systems to flourish gathering multiple funds of knowledge to inform policy is important. There was much that was transferrable to Australia and using other knowledge bases had great impact guiding governments and policy makers.

national curriculum, multiple funds of knowledge, policy decision-making, international early learning frameworks, transferrable knowledge

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set G16, Room 104, first floor, Edward Street building

THREE PRACTITIONER ACTION RESEARCH PROJECTS STORYING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONERS AND LEADERS ACROSS THE PEN GREEN CENTRE FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Felicity Dewsbery, Pen Green, United Kingdom

This symposium details three practitioner action research projects undertaken at the Pen Green Centre for Children and their Families in the UK. Each presentation explores the complexity of working as an early years practitioner, researcher and leader across the organisation. The first presentation considers the relationships and interactions within the Crèche provision reflecting on their primary task within the organisation. The second presentation shares the stories of the early years practitioners from the maintained nursery school who detail the anxiety they felt during Covid19 and the impact the pandemic has had on their practice. The final presentation explains what the term supervision means across Pen Green. The Pen Green model of supervision and how regular supervision can contain some of the anxieties, emotional labour and complexity felt across practitioners and leaders within the organisation.

An exploration of relationships and interactions within an early years Crèche provision

Presenters:

Katherine Clark, Pen Green Research Base, United Kingdom

Susan Fleming, Pen Green Research Base, United Kingdom

This research aimed to understand how relationships and interactions effect access to early childhood services, children's learning and parental support. Research has shown that parent partnership positively impacts children's learning experiences (Whalley and Arnold, 2013) and that authentic relationships between parents and practitioners within Crèche provisions can improve children's learning and care (Benford, 2013). To develop understanding of relationships and interactions a psychoanalytical lens was used. This guided research towards understanding practice wisdom (Klein and Bloom, 1994), and how values impact the primary task (Rice 1963) of organisations. A interpretivist stance was taken, with practitioner research (Newman and Woodrow, 2015) and grounded theory methodology (Charmaz 2006). Qualitative data was collected through three reflective story telling sessions with parents who accessed the Crèche provision. Participants were invited to take part by members of the Crèche team, dialogues were held to ensure trust, informed consent and right to withdraw were clearly understood. Detailed consent forms were completed, reinforcing the practical tenants of ethical processes. Pseudonyms have been used throughout to ensure participants are afforded anonymity. The ethical principles of Bertram et al (2015) were adhered to. The shared values and practice wisdom of practitioners meant the 'primary task' of the organisation (Roberts, 1994) remained clear. This generated positive relationships and interactions that enabled parents to access additional support, build confidence and overcome challenges, while bringing about new opportunities. The findings suggest joint working towards a primary task (Roberts, 1994) can balance external and internal organisational challenges.

practice wisdom, supporting families, creche, primary task (Roberts, 1994), organisational challenges

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

An exploration of 'supervision' to consider how it contains, supports and improves the 'emotional labour' and the 'wellbeing' of early childhood practitioners.

Presenters:

Felicity Dewsbery, Pen Green, United Kingdom

The research explores how 'supervision' is experienced by early years practitioners alongside some of the benefits and challenges. I would like to understand practitioners perceptions of supervision. My goal is to develop a supervisory system for early years practitioners. Soni (2019) discusses the practice of supervision within the early

years sector in the UK. Elfer (2014) highlights misunderstandings of the function of supervision, in particular, its use as an audit tool. My model of supervision is relational and based on the work of Shohet and Shohet (2020). 'Emotional labour' is emphasised by Hochschild (1983). My research follows an interpretivist/naturalist paradigm. To be able to really look closely at the concept of supervision I have identified two qualitative methodologies to conduct my research, these are, phenomenology, to find out about the phenomenon of 'supervision', and auto ethnography, to capture my story. Data is gathered using journaling, video diaries, and in-depth interviews. Research participants are colleagues, therefore Ellis (2007) 'relational ethics' is applied. Participants are authentically engaged as co-constructors of the research and at each stage of the research I check in with them and I continuously ask myself questions about their levels of co-construction to ensure it is genuine. Reflections and adaptations of the research methodology are discussed. Data collected so far has been analysed using reflexive thematic analysis alongside the participants. Within this cycle participants have shared their experiences and perspectives of supervision. The aim is to identify a supervisory model to be shared across the early years.

supervision, methodology, reflexive thematic analysis, ethics, early years practitioners

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

'Unmasking Covid': Exploring the realities of early years practice after Covid-19 - the impact according to practitioners in an early years centre.

Presenters:

Emma Hewitt, Pen Green Centre, United Kingdom

Colette Tait, Pen Green Centre, United Kingdom

Considers the impact of Covid-19 on practice in an early years centre, regarding the school cohort September 2023. Research reflects findings from similar, large-scale studies regarding lower levels of children's attainment (particularly prime areas), increased levels of SEND and subsequent practitioner pressure (Nelinger et al 2021; Linnavalli and Kalland 2021; Hardy et al 2022; Early Education and Childcare Coalition (EECC) 2023). In developing our understanding of post-Covid-19 early years practice researchers drew upon literature regarding: key person (Elfer et al., 2012), pedagogy (Lawrence & Gallagher, 2017), emotional labour (Menzies-Lyth, 1959), and minor gesture (Manning, 2016). Interpretivist, practitioner research was undertaken. Data was gathered through a parent survey and semi-structured interviews with five practitioners (McNiff 2015). Contributions to the research were sought through voluntary, informed consent, including participants understanding their right to withdraw (BERA 2018). Anonymity and confidentiality were adhered to using pseudonyms (Arnold 2015). Reflecting the wider early years landscape (EECC 2023) researchers found high levels of anxiety and missed opportunities during lockdown resulting in significant changes to early years practice. Increased SEND, family complexity and an overall drop in attainment, alongside practitioner anxieties, resulted in higher practice demands have been crucifying in terms of emotional labour (Menzies-Lyth, 1959). Through practitioner stories we can see evidence of 'minor gestures' (Manning, 2016) demonstrating practitioners making a difference. In a challenging early years climate this research suggests highlighting the importance of these 'minor gestures' (Manning 2016) may contribute to changing perceptions of post-covid-19 early years practice.

emotional labour, family worker, covid recovery, early years workforce, minor gesture

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set G17, Room 105, first floor, Edward Street building

SUSTAINABLE PLAY CULTURE, NARRATIVES AND CREATIVE THINKING: CULTURAL-HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Igor Shiiian, Moscow City University, Russia

Joint play, imagination and creating narratives help children to process their genuine experiences and contribute to their peer culture (Mouritsen, Rossel, 1998, Singer, DeHaan 2019). Adult's role in supporting these activities is crucial but still challenging. The adult should be the partner and mediator of cultural forms of play and storytelling (Vygotsky, 2016, Bredikyte, 2022) but still didactic position remains popular. This symposium introduces the cultural-

historical perspective on child's development and aims to analyse the meeting points of play, imagination, narratives and the ways they enrich each other. The first paper highlights teachers' ways to maintain the balance of initiatives in the joint play to nourish children's play culture. The second presentation analyses the interrelation between teachers' reflection and play support strategies and highlights the possibilities to use video analysis in professional development. The third presentation discusses the role of creating fairy-tales with contradictions in the development of creative thinking.

rethinking_play

Promoting sustainable play culture in the ECEC classroom Presentation 1

Presenters:

Milda Bredikyte, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Agne Brandisauskiene, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

This paper analyzes how different children's play practices create a sustainable play culture in the classroom and cultivate play autonomy in children. Edwards' (2021) working paper highlighted the diversity of conceptions and practices of play in different cultures and countries. Her analysis highlighted three different orientations toward play practices: (1) self-organized children's play, (2) adult-organized didactic play, and (3) something in between – collaborative play of children and adults as partners. We suggest connecting these different positions. In the cultural-historical school of thought, the preschool period aims for the children to achieve play autonomy. Vygotsky (2016) pointed out that play is the context and the vehicle for learning at this age. Children's play autonomy leads to a sustainable children's culture in the classroom. The research involved a qualitative case study design. Play sessions took place in the Play Research Laboratory environment. All participants provided informed consent per the University's ethical committee requirements. All parents were informed about the study, gave their children written permission to participate, and approved the publication of the results. The study revealed that children's play autonomy is cultivated when all forms of play are recognized and given appropriate attention because they all support and maintain a sustainable play culture in the classroom. The professional teacher must create the conditions for all play, considering individual children's and the group's needs. Research findings inform ECEC teachers that all forms of play need to be recognized and given appropriate attention as they all support children's play autonomy and learning.

sustainable play culture, play autonomy, self-organized children's play, adult-organized didactic play, collaborative play of children and adults

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Narrative practice "Fairy tales with contradictions" as a space for the development of creative thinking and imagination in preschoolers

Presenters:

Olga Shiyan, Moscow City University, Russia

Igor Shiian, MCU, Russia

The purpose of the study is to analyze how narrative practice including cognitive conflict can influence the development of creative thinking and imagination in preschoolers. Research shows the importance of narrative practices for the formation of identity, speech, reflection (Paley, 1991; Rothuizen, Harbo, 2017; Veneziano, Nicolopoulou, 2019), as well as the manifestation of creativity in children's narrations (Mottweiler, 2016). Theoretical framework is cultural-historical approach (Vygotsky, 2001) and the idea of socio-cognitive conflict (Perret-Clermont, 2022). The study involved 60 5-6 year old children (30 each in the experimental and control groups). Children from the experimental group for 12 weeks took part in narrative practice, including writing and discussing fairy tales with contradictions (composing stories about someone who was both alive and dead etc.). Diagnosis of creative thinking (Veraksa, 2006), imagination (Dyachenko, 2016) and narration (Shiyan, 2022) was carried out. EECERA ethical code was followed. All subjects participated voluntarily in the study, and had the

opportunity to withdraw at any time. In the experimental group (unlike the control group) significant positive changes were found at a significance level of 0.01 (Two Sample Wilcoxon rank sum test) in all parameters: in creative thinking and imagination, as well as in characteristics of children's narratives (creative transformations and artistic (symbolic) image, as well as the structure of narratives). The ability to resolve contradictions while composing fairy tales, together with discussing fairy tales, has a positive effect on solving creative problems outside the narrative context. The results can be used to develop children's creativity through narrative practices

creative thinking, imagination, narrative practice, contradiction, socio-cognitive conflict

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Interrelation between teachers' reflection and play support strategies: cultural-historical perspective and insights for sustainable play practice.

Presenters:

Anna Iakshina, Moscow City University, Russia

Igor Shiyan, Moscow city university, Russia

Olga Shiyan, Moscow city university, Russia

Co-authors

Veronika Kuzmina, Kindergarten 56, Russia

Ekaterina Starodubceva, Moscow city university, Russia

Ekaterina Trifonova, Moscow state pedagogical university, Russia

Research aim is to analyze the interrelation between the play support strategy and the level of teachers' reflection. Despite the widely recognized importance of play support in ECE (Singer, DeHaan, 2019, Pramling et al., 2019), the actual quality of conditions for play development remains low (Iakshina, Le-van, 2023). Researchers highlight teachers' distorted understanding of the play, the replacement of spontaneous play with play forms, preference of the outsider position in play (Bredikyte, 2022, Devi et al., 2021). Theoretical framework is Vygotskian theory (Vygotsky, 2016). Reflection is considered as the step beyond the immediate activity for its analysis, highlighting the situation of difficulty and making sense of it, and is considered as one of the factors ensuring the effectiveness of play support. Interpretative paradigm, qualitative and quantitative analysis were used. Play support quality was assessed based on video recordings of joint play provided by 39 preschool teachers, the level of reflection was assessed through analysis of structured teachers' comments on these videos. Participant's consent was obtained after providing information. Data were anonymized. EECERA ethical code was followed. There is the significant relation between the play support quality and the level of teachers' reflection ($r=0,7$, $p<0.01$). Teachers who maintain the balance of teacher-child initiatives in joint play more accurately analyze the development of children's play, set a proper pedagogical goal for play support, and identify their own deficits in joint play, plan the next step for their professional development as play supporters. The results may impact in-service programs on play support.

play, play support, reflection, Vygotskian theory, professional development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Set G18, Room 211, second floor, Edward Street building

SPECIFIC APPROACHES TO TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Charlotte Öhman, Jönköping University, Sweden

Enhancing International Early Childhood Education through Mursion Simulations: A Case Study of Pre-service Teachers from Australian Graduate Diploma of Early Childhood Teaching

Presenters:

Anamika Devi, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

Jennifer Cutri, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

Wendy Goff, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

This research aims to explore the efficacy of Mursion simulations for pre-service teachers in early childhood education, with a specific focus on immersive technologies for young children. Numerous studies have emphasized the effectiveness of immersive technologies and Virtual Reality (VR) as an effective tool for students to practice their teaching skills before entering classrooms and working with real children. However, most studies have been aimed at formal schooling contexts, with little work conducted in ECE. The research data was analyzed using Vygotsky's concept of social situation of development and mediation, where learning is perceived as an active process rather than a neutral or passive one. In this study, we analyzed the learning experiences and perspectives of international Grad Dip ECT students who used an immersive technology (Mursion software) before they commenced their placement. Participants were anonymous, and no personal information was disclosed. Our findings indicate that the virtual platform provides a realistic simulation of Australian early childhood settings, which develops international students' confidence to understand the local dynamics and class environment. Immersive technologies prepare them to be culturally competent to interact with children in real situations. We argue that immersive technologies offer a risk-free environment for skill development and rehearsal, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. The project posits that immersive technologies provide a comprehensive platform for international students to gain a realistic understanding of the Australian educational context, thereby contributing to the sustainability of early childhood education systems.

Mursion software, immersive technology, GD-ECT students, early childhood, sustainability

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Reflective practice and the quality of interaction: using the VERP method to improve the quality of interaction in early childhood education and care.

Presenters:

Krystyna Heland-Kurzak, The Maria Grzegorzewska University, Poland

What potential do VERP workshops have for increasing the effectiveness of interactions between caregivers and children? A meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials found that targeted interventions focusing on improving children's quality of care and practitioners interaction skills had a positive impact on them (Werner 2016). Experimental research has shown that feedback in the VERP workshop using video results in improved parents' attitudes towards children (Marttila 2023). There was a significant increase in appropriate comments directed at children with social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties (Quinn 2015). The VERP workshop (Kennedy 2015) is based on the theoretical concepts of intersubjectivity (Trevarthen 1979) and scaffolding (Wood 1976). Reflective practice in an educational context focuses primarily on behavior related to improving one's skills and social competences, but also goes beyond visible activities to understand how processes related to reflection influence behavior (Stacks 2013, Perkowska-Klejman 2019, Marttila 2023).. Qualitative research, quasi experiment, small-scale pilot intervention study. Consent and privacy for video recordings. Anonymization and limited access to videos. The project received approval from the ethics committee. The workshop is based on the principle of attuned interaction, which occurs when adults actively share the same attention, communicating and negotiating meaning and intentions. Practitioners receive video recordings documenting their interactions with children in order to reflect on their own communication. Experimental research has shown that feedback in the VERP workshop using video results in improved parents' attitudes towards children (Marttila 2023). This project aims to see if this effect could be achieved using this method with practitioners in a nursery.

VERP, ECEC, practitioners, reflective practice, intersubjectivity

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in Early Childhood Teacher Education (ECTE) setting; student's professional development

Presenters:

Nina Anette Angeltveit, NLA, Norway
 Kristin Aadland-Atkinson, NLA, Norway

Co-authors

Svitlana Holovchuk, NLA, Norway
 Kari Kvandal, NLA, Norway

The research aim is to explore the value of PBL for professional development in ECTE through student's perspective. The study is focused on some of the previous research from the last fifteen years related to PBL and student's professional development (Meyer, Reigstad & Serikova, 2023; Mørreaunet, 2020; Fung, 2013; Tork & Shahin, 2011). The theoretical and conceptual framework for this study is based on social constructivist and active learning theories (Vygotsky, Bruner, Dewey), PBL as a learning method (Pettersen, 2017; Bransford & Steins, 1993, 2000; Barrows, 1994, 2007; Pettersen, 2017; Savin-Baden & Major, 2004) and students professional development (Biesta, 2013; Hennem & Østrem, 2016). The study is based on a qualitative phenomenological approach. As a research method, we have used a digital survey with ECTE students. The study will follow the guidelines of the Norwegian National Committee for Research Ethics (SIKT). Participants have given informed consent and are anonymized. The main findings will highlight PBL in ECTE and in the students' professional development. In our project, we have some preliminary results, where cooperation, knowledge, and practice are key elements. We hope this study will give new perspectives and opportunities to improve the ECTE context. This study is important for the discussion of the student's participation and "What Works" in education (Biesta, 2013) for the student's professional development.

problem-based learning (PBL), early childhood teacher education, (ECTE), student professional development, student active learning, qualitative phenomenological approach

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G19, Room 304, third floor, Edward Street building

SUSTAINING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES THROUGH COACHING

Adrienne Golden, Vanderbilt University, United States

The Pyramid Model (PM) is a tiered framework of evidence-based practices supporting social-emotional development and addressing challenging behavior in young children. Coaching is an important driver for supporting fidelity of practice implementation. Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) is an evidence-based model with defined components (action planning, focused observations, reflection and feedback). When PBC is implemented with fidelity, positive effects on teachers' practice implementation and associated child social and behavioral outcomes are observed. Initial studies of PBC to support PM implementation utilized research staff as coaches. While effective, it was not sustainable in authentic practice settings. Focusing on sustainability, this panel presents projects that (a) build the research-base for the effectiveness of PBC to support teacher implementation of the PM and the impacts on child outcomes, and (b) illustrates how to build the capacity of staff within early childhood programs to deliver coaching to scale up PM implementation in a range of settings.

Examining the Efficacy of the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Development in Early Childhood Classrooms**Presenters:**

Mary Louise Hemmeter, Vanderbilt University, United States
 Lise Fox, University of South Florida, United States

This research examined the effects of Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) on teachers' sustained implementation of Pyramid Model practices and children's social and behavioral outcomes. The prevalence and impact of social-emotional delays and challenging behavior in young children is a critical concern. Evidence shows that social-emotional and behavioral challenges that are persistent in the early years are linked to emotional and behavioral disorders in older children (Brennan et al., 2015; Miller et al., 2017). Many teachers feel unprepared to address the

needs of children with social-emotional delays and challenging behavior (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015). The Pyramid Model practices are based on research on effective instruction, teacher-child relationships, strategies to promote engagement, promotion of social-emotional competencies, individualized behavior support planning for children with severe behavior challenges, and the use of family-centered, culturally affirming strategies. A cluster randomized trial involving 76 schools randomly assigned to experimental conditions was used. Measures examined fidelity of PBC, teachers' implementation of PM practices, and children's social and behavioral skills. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. To maintain confidentiality, all programs and participants were assigned unique identifiers for all study-related data and documents. PBC, delivered by research staff, was effective for supporting early childhood teachers' sustained use of Pyramid Model practices. Positive changes were found in children's social and behavioral outcomes. While the professional development intervention was effective, future research must examine more efficient approaches to professional development in order to scale the intervention.

coaching, sustainability, Pyramid Model, preschool classrooms, social-emotional development

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Bringing Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Teaching Practices to Kindergarten Classrooms

Presenters:

Elizabeth Vorhaus, Vanderbilt University, United States

Mary Louise Hemmeter, Vanderbilt University, United States

Adrienne Golden, Vanderbilt University, United States

Lise Fox, University of South Florida, United States

The goal of this project was to expand the Pyramid Model to PreK and Kindergarten classrooms in diverse school districts, evaluate the efficacy, and create mechanisms for scaling the model across the United States. Research on student success in elementary school has shown that social-emotional competence supports academic outcomes and positive relationships (Jones et al., 2015; Korpershoek et al., 2016). Pre-K and kindergarten teachers feel underprepared to address social-emotional needs. Consequently, there is a need for supporting teachers to implement developmentally appropriate, evidence-based strategies to support social-emotional learning. Previous work on the Pyramid Model has used research staff as coaches (Hemmeter et al., 2016; 2021). In this study, school district personnel served as the coaches. The Pyramid Model (PM), an evidence-based framework for promoting social-emotional competence and addressing challenging behavior in young children, has been found effective in improving student outcomes including social skills and positive social interactions (Hemmeter et al., 2016, 2021). A randomized control trial is being used to evaluate the effectiveness of PM implementation in Pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms. Child and teacher outcomes are being measured using a battery of classroom observation tools as well as child outcome measures. Informed consent was obtained from participants. To maintain confidentiality, all programs and participants were assigned unique identifiers for all study-related data and documents. Preliminary findings indicate training and coaching were delivered with high fidelity and teacher implementation of PM increased. The model, delivered by school-based coaches, is effective for supporting PreK and K teachers to use PM practices.

Pyramid Model, kindergarten implementation, social-emotional development, challenging behavior, coaching support

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Building Capacity to Support the Implementation of Social-Emotional Teaching Practices: A Program-Wide Approach

Presenters:

Adrienne Golden, Vanderbilt University, United States

Elizabeth Vorhaus, Vanderbilt University, United States

Mary Louise Hemmeter, Vanderbilt University, United States

This study aims to extend the current literature by evaluating the effectiveness of Program Wide Supports for Pyramid Model Implementation (PWS-PMI) in childcare programs in Tennessee and Florida. A key feature of PWS-PMI is the initial provision of external coaching (i.e., research staff) support that is gradually faded as the program builds their capacity to support PM implementation through structures for coaching and behavior support. Results from a pilot study (Hemmeter et al., 2021) indicate PWS-PMI can be effectively implemented in childcare programs. The Pyramid Model (PM; Fox et al., 2003) is an evidence-based framework for promoting social-emotional competence and addressing challenging behavior in young children. PM implementation has been effective in individual classrooms (Hemmeter et al., 2016). From an implementation science perspective, supporting at the program level will allow for scaling and sustainability. A randomized control trial is evaluating the effectiveness of PWS-PMI in childcare programs. Implementation and data analysis are ongoing. Primary program and teacher outcomes are measured using direct measurement tools (i.e., SPIFI, TPOT, CLASS). Child outcomes are assessed using a rating scale (SSIS) completed by teachers. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. To maintain confidentiality, all programs and participants were assigned unique identifiers to be used on all study-related data and documents. Preliminary findings indicate that with training and external coaching, programs can develop a leadership team and build systems and capacity for supporting PM implementation. These findings will provide additional evidence for the effectiveness of PWS-PMI in childcare programs and implications for scaling.

Pyramid Model, program-wide implementation supports, social-emotional development, challenging behavior, professional development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G20, Room 305, third floor, Edward Street building

ENSURING SUSTANABLE QUALITY OF ECEC PRACTICES THROUGH ON-SITE TRAINING IN JAPAN

Riyo Kadota, Seinan Gakuin University, Japan

To sustainably improve preschool teachers' practical skills and disposition, Japanese ECEC centers have traditionally conducted "on-site training" as a professional development, where participants usually observe, review, and discuss their practices.

This symposium will argue "on-site training" from three perspectives.

1. Structural issues of "on-site training": Creating a learning community from the viewpoint of who provides the training, what kind of content, and how it is provided.
2. The relationship between "on-site training" and the preschool teachers wellbeing
3. Ways in which pre-service training impacts "on-site training"

After receiving comments and questions from our discussant, we would like to discuss the possibilities and prospects of "on-site training."

Learning through interaction through participation and dialogue.

Presenters:

Takako Noguchi, Tokyo Kasei University, Japan

This study explored how childcare practice and the wellbeing of childcare workers are perceived for primary and secondary school teachers through short on-site training by local authority. In Japan, the cooperation and the "bridging period" between early childhood and primary schools is being further emphasized. However, there is a lack of time for teachers to interact with each other (MEXT,2017a,2017b,2017c; MHLW,2017). The image each teacher has tend to be different and establish the connection is difficult(Noguchi, et al, 2023). This study focused on the disjuncture (Jarvis, 2009, 2018) that occurred when teachers experienced on-site training in which they participated and practiced in childcare settings. Participant observation at one nursery, and a questionnaire with open-ended questions about the participants' impressions of the training were conducted. Permission was obtained from local

authority and nursery /school teachers. Questionnaire was conducted anonymously after training. The results showed that each teacher had an image of children and childcare practice, experienced a disconnect with actual classroom practice, and learned individually through dialogue with nursery teachers. Many teachers were surprised at the agency of children and the child-centered ways by nursery teachers. They also referred to the focus on team teaching, the difficulty of the work and teachers' wellbeing. Primary and secondary school teachers realized the importance of learning from childcare settings, but they showed difficulties in having a common image of children as nursery teachers had. The importance of on-site training and on-the-job training by local authority-led is suggested.

transition, disjuncture, the wellbeing of childcare workers, participation to childcare settings, Primary and secondary school teachers perspectives

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Exploring ECEC pre-service teachers' perception towards in-service teachers' "on-site training

Presenters:

Riyo Kadota, Seinan Gakuin University, Japan

This study aims to clarify how pre-service teachers perceive the meaning of in-service teachers' on-site training and how this relates to their practical knowledge. Studies show that what preschool teachers learn during preservice education is not connected to the content of their in-service training (OECD, 2019). Additionally, educational policies have led in-service preschool teachers to teach in ways that do not align with the pre-service education curriculum (Gallo-Fox & Cuccini-Harmon, 2018). Then, to what extent are learning contents at the university relevant for in-service preschool teachers? Therefore, this study examines how preservice teachers perceive the image of cultivating practical knowledge (Elbaz, 1983; Shulman, 1987) through onsite training and explores how they generate this knowledge. About 30 university students enrolled in the ECEC teacher education program were asked to participate in multi-vocal visual ethnography. In this method, they responded to video clips of on-site training sessions, made comments simultaneously, and determined their perceptions of the training. Participants were informed of the purpose and methods of the study and that their anonymity would be guaranteed during the data analysis and publication phases through a consent form. As a result, the preservice teachers mentioned that efforts by preschool teachers to improve their professional knowledge in between everyday practices would lead to a deeper understanding of children and that they were fascinated by how preschool teachers happily discussed the children's growth. The results illustrated that preservice teachers realized the difference between the theory they learned in university classes and practice.

ECEC teacher education program, on-site training, multivocal visual ethnography method, professional knowledge, curriculum

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Structural issues of "on-site training": Creating a learning community from the viewpoint of who provides the training, what kind of content, and how it is provided.

Presenters:

Junko Minowa, Musashino University, Japan

This study aims to examine the structural issues of on-site training in Japan. We will examine the training climate, who provides the training, the content, and how it is provided. On-site training, which is an opportunity for ECEC teachers to learn together in the preschool, is said to have the significance of reconstructing views and perceptions in childcare (Wakabayashi & Sugimura, 2005), and of allowing ECEC teachers to grow together in the process of sharing knowledge (Akita, 2001). However, what childcare providers find challenging in their training needs to be clarified. This study focused on the disjuncture (Jarvis, 2009, 2018) that occurred when teachers experienced on-site training in which they participated and practiced in childcare settings. The study took an interpretive approach and a questionnaire method. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire about what they learned from the

training and what they found difficult. The data were analyzed using qualitative methods. We explained the purpose and content of the study and asked only those who agreed to cooperate to fill out the questionnaire. We also told them that they could withdraw their consent later. As a result, it became clear that 1. the theme of the training should be set based on their issues and what they want to discuss, and 2. there should be devices and rules to facilitate discussion in the training. This study will be helpful for leaders in ECEC centers to consider how to organize and implement on-site training.

on-site training, professional development, PD training, professional learning, Japanese ECEC

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G21, Room 307, third floor, Edward Street building

RESEARCHING IN PARTNERSHIP: THE MUTUAL INFLUENCE ON EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

Ingrid Gronsdal, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

This symposium presents findings from a R&D-project (2021-24) aiming at researching new ways of developing high quality early childhood educational practices. Four groups of kindergarten staff and one group of educators/researchers at HVL, Norway, cooperated closely on researching several different strategies for creating practices that allow toddlers to perform their democratic right to influence their everyday life in kindergarten. The project method is based on Educational Design Research (McKenney & Reeves, 2012) and observation and interview data were analyzed using the theoretical frame of practice architecture (Kemmis et al., 2014), emphasizing the semantic, material, and social dimensions. Paper 1 focuses on how the different architectures of practices in university and kindergarten are mutually influenced. Paper 2 presents an analysis of how written observations of practice help facilitate dialogue amongst the staff, and paper 3 explores how staff experience the effect materials have on toddlers in kindergarten.

“Making it explicit” -Changing pedagogical practices through dialogue and written observations

Presenters:

Hannah Belsvik Hansen, HVL - Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Liv Ingrid Fjellanger, HVL - Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Linn Sjøvoll Torkildsen, Espira Salomonskogen Kindergarten, Norway

Co-authors:

Wenche Fylkesnes Ørjansen, Espira Salomonskogen Kindergarten, Norway

The Norwegian National Strategy for Quality and Cooperation in Teacher Education (Ministry of Education and Research, 2018) aims to develop collaboration between kindergartens and kindergarten teacher education. This paper presents how such collaborations can initiate change and represent negotiations of core values in kindergarten practices and teacher education. Research shows that collaborating with others is a powerful way of learning and developing (Wegerif, Mercer & Dawes, 1999; Wells, 2000). Through collaboration, tensions caused by differences can be explored and challenged, leading to renewed perspectives and practices (Wells, 2007a). Theory of Practice Architecture (Kemmis et al. 2014) is used as a theoretical lens for analysing kindergarten teachers sayings, doings and relatings in order to identify mechanisms that sustain, change or potentially dissolve established practices. The research methodology is positioned in the qualitative paradigm and is inspired by Educational Design Research (McKenney & Reeves 2012). The data material analysed consists of 13 interviews with kindergarten staff. All participants were informed about the project, protection of data and signed a consent form. The main finding is that the addition of the new systematic “doing” of writing down observations by kindergarten staff served a way of making “sayings” of their practice more explicit. This also functioned as a catalyst for identifying what elements of their practice the staff wanted to improve, thereby also changing the “sayings” of the kindergarten practice architecture. Implications for practice are that systematic written observations can be used as a tool for making the potential for development explicit.

collaboration, observation, dialogue, professional development, practice architecture

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Flattening the hierarchy? New ways of institutional collaboration for increased quality in kindergarten and early childhood teacher education

Presenters:

Ingrid Gronsdal, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Johanne Geitung Håvik, Espira Salamonskogen kindergarten/ Western Norway University College of Applied Sciences, Norway

Co-authors:

Heine Larsen, Espira Salamonskogen kindergarten, Norway

The purpose of this paper is to present an analysis of how the collaboration between a kindergarten and a university can be seen as meeting between two different sets of practice architectures that come into play. Research shows that different forms of research-practice partnerships between different stakeholders within a field of practice can improve the quality of education for children (Coburn, Penuel & Geil, 2013). However, there is not much research on impacts of collaboration between kindergarten teachers and teachers in early childhood education at universities. Theory of Practice Architecture (Kemmis et al. 2014) is used as a theoretical lens for analysing participants sayings, doings and relatings in order to identify mechanisms that sustain, change or potentially dissolve established practices. The research methodology is positioned in the qualitative paradigm and is inspired by Educational Design Research (McKenney & Reeves, 2012). The data material analysed consists of interviews, field notes and observations during a period of two years. All participants were informed about the project, protection of data and signed a consent form. Findings show how the sayings-doings-and relatings work together in an interplay that influences the practices in both kindergarten and university. At the same time these practice architectures were influenced by each other through the research-practice partnership and the hierarchic perception of university and kindergarten was replaced by a reciprocal relationship. This study can serve as an example of how the theory of practice architectures can help analyse how change in practice can be understood.

research-practice partnerships, practice architectures, collaboration, early childhood teacher education, professional development

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Democratic involvement of toddlers as a strategy for challenging practices of room typology and use of materials

Presenters:

Sissel Halland, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Annette Kristoffersen Winje, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

Co-authors

Tove Agasøster Korneliussen, Espira Salamonskogen kindergarten, Norway

Bente Stavland, Espira Salamonskogen kindergarten, Norway

The objective of this paper is to analyse changes kindergarten staff made to the materials in kindergarten environment and the effect these have on toddlers patterns of participation in play activities.

Research from English kindergartens shows educational environments with visible and varied material that can support children's participation, exploration and play (Nordin-Hultman, 2004; Evenstad & Becher, 2018; Syed & Haugen, 2021). Research from Nordic kindergartens shows less access to materials (Becher & Evenstad, 2018; Nordin-Hultman, 2004), but young children are perceptive and exploratory, and need a sensory pedagogy (Johannsson & Løkken, 2013). The findings are interpreted in the light of a body phenomenological approach (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/1994), a phenomenological and theoretically perspective on child topology (Krogstad, 2012)

and a democratic view of children (Bae, 2010). The research methodology is positioned in the qualitative paradigm and is inspired by Educational Design Research (McKenney & Reeves, 2012). The data material analysed consists of 4 interviews with kindergarten staff. Using a hermeneutic-phenomenological approach, we have analyzed the nursery staff's statements. All participants were informed about the project, protection of data and signed a consent form. Findings show that when the staff change the play environment, and adapt rooms and materials to the toddlers needs and interests, the playful, exploratory and sensitive children come to the fore, the social interaction "blooms" and the children are recognized by the staff as co-creators of the kindergartens physical environment.

The study can provide knowledge to the nursery field about how the toddler can participate through rooms and materials.

Toddler, democratic involvement, materials, play environment, topology of rooms

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G22, Room 308, third floor, Edward Street building

ADULT-CHILD DIALOGUES ON ISSUES OF SUSTAINABILITY

Bin Guo, UCL, United Kingdom

Exploring children's perspectives on climate changes through parent-child dialogues: a participatory study with parents as co-researchers in England and China

Presenters:

Bin Guo, UCL, United Kingdom

Jie Gao, UCL, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Junqing Zhai, Zhejiang University, China

Wendy Sims-Schouten, UCL, United Kingdom

Yuwei Xu, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

Francesca Salvi, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

Frans Kruger, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

Yan Zhu, UCL, United Kingdom

Understand how English and Chinese young children perceive climate change in different societal contexts and how dominant discourses affect their views. This project will contribute to international education for sustainable development. Young children's voices (aged 4-8 years) remain primarily marginalised in global discussions about the implications on children caused by climate change (Hoskins et al., 2023; Spiteri, 2023). This project built up the theoretical framework based on children's participation right and sustainable development in ECEC. This participatory study worked with 10 families in England and China respectively. We involved parents as co-researchers. With support from researchers, parents could choose a variety of interactive activities (e.g., picture-elicited dialogues, puppet storytelling and shared-reading of a picture-book of climate changes) to have dialogues with their children to gain insights into young children's perspectives on climate changes and their impacts. After parents have completed the participatory activities with their children, we interviewed parents to explore their experiences of engaging their children and collaboratively reflected on their initial findings and the research process. We followed BERA ethical guidelines and worked with parents as co-researchers. Throughout the research process, we were mindful of power imbalances between children and adults and prioritised respecting children's right to participation. This paper will present the preliminary findings and discuss the implications of conducting participatory research with parents as co-researchers in cultural contexts. Research findings will guide recommendations for parents, teachers, and scholars. They can contribute to children's sustainable development by encouraging meaningful dialogues about climate change and prompt action.

climate changes, children's voices, international, parents as co-researchers, participatory study

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Joint conversations on organic waste recycling: Exploring mothers' reminiscing style as a learning tool

Presenters:

Seçil Cengizoğlu, Atılım University, Turkey

Co-authors:

Refika Olgan, Middle East Technical University, Turkey

The study aims to explore to what extent mothers' conversational style contribute mother-child joint conversations about organic waste recycling to foster children's knowledge on composting. Research on intergenerational learning so far mainly focuses on primary/secondary school children (Duvall & Zint, 2007; Peterson et al., 2019), yet there is little done with preschool children (Boyd, 2020; Spiteri, 2020). Taken together, mothers in this study authentically act to foster children's learning which makes this study significant to connect home and school environment on a common sustainability topic. Sociocultural theory proposed by Vygotsky (1978) and Rogoff (1990) guided the study. Twenty-three mothers and their 6-year-old children were purposefully selected and jointly took part in five-day learning process (including storytelling, music, science etc.) in this case study. At the end of each day, mothers were expected to have conversation with their children. Each conversation was coded accordingly participants' usage of questions, context statements and evaluations. Voluntary participation was essential. Both mothers and children were given written consent forms and informed about the purpose. Participants' names replaced with coded names. Mothers who possess high elaborative reminiscing style assist their child to remember specific aspects of a shared past event. Data analysis of this work revealed that high elaborative mothers provided more open-ended questions, more context statements and evaluations about learning process to encourage children to talk. The findings are encouraging to demonstrate the agentic role of parents. Arranging daily routines to immerse children in conversational interactions to stretch their thinking on sustainability can be recommended.

early childhood education for sustainability, intergenerational learning, parents' conversational style, organic waste recycling, preschool children

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Making an effective contribution to sustainability of EC provision across the UK.

Presenters:

Ann Stubbs, Bright Horizons, United Kingdom

Louise Burness, Bright Horizons, United Kingdom

Co-authors

Caroline Wright, Bright Horizons, United Kingdom

Identifying effective ways to encourage children and adults to make long term changes that promote sustainability and empower children to become agents for change. Boyd et al (2022) confirm early childhood as a crucial period in developing sustainability values. Grindheim et al (2019) argue sustainable practices must be relevant to early childhood. Davis (2010) suggests children are vulnerable to the impact of unsustainable lifestyles, but can become active and informed citizens, with adults' empowerment. We consider pedagogical and research models, where children, practitioners and parents are active participants. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015) provide the aims for global citizens, and Eco-Schools (1992) support this vision, believing that young children can develop the knowledge, skills and values to thrive in a more environmentally sustainable world (Boyd, Liverpool John Moores University 2017) This praxeological research (Formosinho & Formosinho 2012) examines the initial impact of the engagement of 40 English settings in a national sustainability programme. We collated data across ten topics and analysed the cumulative impact of engaging children, parents and practitioners, through anecdotal, photographic and other documentary evidence of activities. Nursery practitioners engaged as part of curriculum delivery. Parents and wider community members volunteered to engage and could withdraw at any point. Initial findings suggest

improved child, parent, practitioner and community engagement and greater knowledge of sustainability topics such as, repurposing, biodiversity, litter and waste material diversion. Findings suggest that an early childhood environmental curriculum, improves child, parent and practitioner knowledge of sustainability and positively impacts on the wider global agenda.

early childhood sustainability, early childhood pedagogy, environmental awareness and impact, children's agency, sustainable practices

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G23, Room 309, third floor, Edward Street building

EXPLORING SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Nicola Kemp, Canterbury Christ Church University, United Kingdom

This symposium will explore the importance of understanding different social and cultural perspectives in developing Sustainability in Early Childhood Education. Based in diverse contexts (China, Norway, England and the USA), the presenters share a commitment to understanding how sustainability can be authentically integrated into practice. Discussion will focus on the factors that can facilitate and hinder engagement with sustainability leading in relation to young children and the adults who care for them. It will also consider the similarities and differences between contexts and the opportunities for inter-cultural learning.

sustainability_early_childhood_education

Cultural, social and spatial factors that mediate outdoor interactions for babies and toddlers

Presenters:

Jo Josephidou, The Open University, United Kingdom

Nicola Kemp, Canterbury Christ Church University, United Kingdom

Co-authors:

Polly Bolshaw, Canterbury Christ Church University, United Kingdom

The research aims to support the development of inclusive and democratic practices outdoors for babies and toddlers. Our interest is in the intersection of children's geographies and early childhood studies and builds on previous work in both these fields (sf Kemp & Josephidou, 2021; Josephidou, Kemp & Durrant, 2021; Holt & Philo, 2022) Our thinking is particularly influenced by Keith and Pile's (1993) concept of spatialities and the need to 'capture the ways in which the social and the spatial are inextricably realised in one another' in outdoor contexts. The paper is based on a systemic review designed in accordance with procedures developed by the Evidence for Policy Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (Gough, Oliver and Thomas 2017) Our primary ethical concern has been to ensure the accurate re-presentation of the data contained in the papers we reviewed through a rigorous collaborative process. We identify a range of cultural, social and spatial factors that mediate outdoor interactions rendering them connective (leading to inclusion) or disconnective (leading to marginalisation and exclusion). The development of more inclusive outdoor practices for babies and toddlers requires our understanding of what the 'outdoors is' to be extended. This means looking beyond the dominant cultural narrative in the Global North of human/nature separation. By focusing attention on outdoor possibilities for tiny humans, critical questions are raised about planetary health and the role of the ECEC sector in supporting this.

babies, toddlers, nature, outdoors, inclusive practice

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

A comparative case study into kindergarten teachers' beliefs about education for sustainable development in China and Norway

Presenters:

Minyi Li, Beijing Normal University, China

Co-authors:

Åsta Birkeland, Asta.Birkeland@hvl.no, Norway

Jingyi Xu, Futian Preschool Education Development Centre, Shenzhen, China

It is now internationally recognized that teachers have a crucial role in readying learners for sustainable development and global citizenship from early on. This case study aims to examine how the concept of sustainability and education sustainable development might be understood by kindergarten teachers differently within distinct social and cultural contexts in China and Norway. Previous research on teachers' and preservice teachers' ESD beliefs has been largely limited to environmental aspects and focused on science or unspecified subjects in a separate context. We adapted a theoretical framework from Green (2013) and focused on three ECEfS concepts: the meaning of sustainability, children as agents of change for sustainability, and sustainability in young children's everyday lives (Kim and Dreamson, 2020). This qualitative study was applied and two kindergartens as research sites were recruited in China and Norway, respectively. Ten teachers were interviewed: these interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed, and responses were coded using the SOLO Taxonomy and the OMEP ESD Rating Scale by a thematic analysis. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study when they gave informed consent. They were also informed that they could withdraw their consent anytime. The findings indicate that although Chinese and Norwegian teachers share some common understanding on sustainable development, they have different, or even opposite, understanding on social and cultural sustainability, economic sustainability and environmental sustainability. We suggest that future work builds to strengthen links between teacher education for sustainability in enhancing quality education.

education for sustainable development, teachers' beliefs, professional development, China, Norway

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Folktales and Storytelling in Ghana and the USA: Playful Eco-Literacy Education for Sustainability in ECE

Presenters:

Victoria Carr, University of Cincinnati, United States

Co-authors

Felicia Dzamesi, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

To explore indigenous folktales and storytelling as catalysts for elevating children's eco-literacy and notions of sustainability. Storytelling and folktales are educational equity practices for sustaining cultural heritage and literacy strategies that elevate children's narrative skills (Arko-Achemfuor, 2013; Melzi et al., 2022), vocabulary (Wright & Dunsmuir, 2019), and children's inner affect (Collins, 1999) through organic activity and reciprocity (Rosenblatt, 2018). They advance children's content interest, problem-solving, and imagination, skills needed for positive and sustainable futures (Agbagbla, 2018). Folktales and storytelling are social, playful, and meaningful strategies for sharing ecological narratives about climate, resilience, and sustainability. As transactional and co-constructed processes, children take part in their eco-literacy and sustainability education (Dewey, 1916; Piaget, 1971; Rosenblatt, 2018; Vygotsky, 1978). Descriptive case study research employing a naturalistic qualitative paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 2014) documented pedagogy and children's interpretations of Native American stories and Ghanaian folktales. Professional learning occurred before implementation in both settings. Video, photographs, interviews, and reflective journals were analyzed and triangulated. Two case studies will be presented. Adults provided consent and children provided assent to participate within university ethics-approved guidelines. All were assured they could opt out at any point at both study sites. Pseudonyms replaced participants' names. Sharing Ghanaian folktales increased children's understanding of environmental concepts. Teachers embraced culturally appreciative Native American storytelling and traditional ecological knowledge. Folktales and storytelling enhance young children's construction of knowledge of their environments, notions of climate change, indigenous culture, and sustainability. Full references upon request.

folktales , storytelling, traditional ecological knowledge, early childhood eco-literacy, early childhood education for sustainability

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G24, Room 201, second floor, Dorset Place building

PARRENT- STAFF COLLABORATIONS IN ECEC

Eija Sevon, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

ECEC professionals' talk about collaboration between parents and early childhood education and care

Presenters:

Eija Sevon, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Merja Koivula, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

The present study explores what meanings the ECEC professionals attribute to the collaboration between them and parents. In Finland, the Early Childhood Education and Care Act (540/2018, § 21) denotes that the child's guardians could participate in and influence the planning, implementation, and evaluation of their child's ECEC. According to the National Core Curriculum for ECEC (EDUFI, 2022), the personnel is encouraged to actively initiate discussions with parents regarding ECEC, considering at the same time, the diversity of families, children's individual needs, as well as questions regarding guardianship and parenthood. Although collaboration between parents and professionals are prescribed in steering documents, collaboration is seldom explicitly defined (Devlieghere et al., 2022). Collaboration embodies two frames, the one highlighting the horizontal partnership and the other prescribing a vertical, asymmetrical power relationship between the professional and parents (Alasuutari, 2010; Råde, 2020). The data consists of 12 ECEC professionals' interviews, analyzed with discourse analysis focusing on the meanings ECEC professionals construct about collaboration between parents and the ECEC institution. The study adheres to social constructionist approach (Burr, 2015). The study rigorously followed the research ethics guidelines and adhered to voluntariness, confidentiality, and privacy throughout the data collection. Preliminary findings propose that ECEC professionals talked about collaboration between parents and ECEC institutions through different discourses, namely support, success, critique, and incompatibility discourses. Implications of the study display the diverse and somewhat discrepant meanings of professionals attached to collaboration. Therefore, the discourses found enable interrogation of presumptions regarding collaboration and developing collaboration practices in ECEC.

collaboration between parents and professionals, discourse analysis, power relations, early childhood professionals, parents

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Collaboration between parents and staff in ECEC

Presenters:

Ingrid Midteide Løkken, Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioral Research in Education, University of Stavanger/BI Norwegian Business School, Norway

Guttorm Helgøy, Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioral Research in Education, Norway

Co-authors:

Dziuginta Baraldsnes, Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioral Research in Education, Norway

Andre Baraldsnes, Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioral Research in Education University of Stavanger, Norway

The aim of the study is to collect knowledge about collaboration between parents and staff in ECEC settings. This study will aim to identify thematic content on cooperation in general, related to safe learning environment, and

within the special education. Collaboration between staff and parents are important for friendship and to secure a safe learning environment (Aaseth et al., 2021). The theory in this study is based on Bronfenbrenner's theory (1979) that children develop in relationships and collaboration within their surroundings. This study is based on an ongoing scoping review that investigate studies of the collaboration between parents and staff in different education settings in the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden). We will use thematic analysis to capture the different areas of content. The review has been conducted in accordance with the JBI methodology for scoping reviews and the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA). Preliminary results show that the studies thematic areas from 67 studies is about building trust, establish partnership and having meetings with the parents. Other thematic areas are following: how the staff and parents collaborate about creating a safe psychosocial learning environment, special needs education and about children's development and functioning in daily routines, and also how they collaborated in transition to school. Implications of the study is to get knowledge about the collaboration between staff and parents in ECEC settings in the Nordic countries.

ECEC, collaboration, parents, staff, review

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Family–professional collaboration in early childhood education – a deliberative democratic approach

Presenters:

Martin Samuelsson, Nord University, Norway

Tove Ingebrigtsen, Nord University, Norway

We address the notion of family-professional collaboration in ECEC. Based upon the view that family-professional collaboration should unfold as a partnership (Venninen & Purola, 2013; Ward, 2018), we presented a draft of a deliberative approach to family-professional collaboration at EECERA 2019. It has since then has been published in Norwegian (Ingebrigtsen & Samuelsson, 2022 – Dialogisk foreldresamarbeid i barnehagen [A dialogical approach to family-professional collaboration in ECEC]). Our main argument is that when ECEC professionals and parents are to make decisions regarding their shared ECEC institution, they should do so by engaging in deliberative dialogue where they weigh arguments and alternative courses of action against each other to reach conclusions they can all agree on, or accept (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; Habermas, 1998; Fishkin, 2009). To investigate this approach further, we conducted a qualitative study and interviewed ECEC professionals having applied this approach for 9 to 12 months. This study follows the ethical standards approved by the Norwegian Social Science Data Service and The Norwegian Data Protection Authority – participants' confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed as well as their voluntary participation. The results concerning how the deliberative approach affected the collaboration between ECEC professionals and parents, how the ECEC professionals implemented, led, and managed the collaboration, and how they dealt with aspects such as collaborative decisions-making and joint responsibility, will be discussed. We have developed the deliberative approach to family-professional collaboration with a Norwegian ECEC context in mind, but believe that the basic idea is relevant to other ECEC contexts.

family-professional collaboration, deliberative democracy, parent partnership, Norwegian ECEC, qualitative study

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Set G25, Room 401, fourth floor, Dorset Place building

INTEGRATED SYSTEMS AND MULT-AGENCY WORKING

Chiara Dalledonne Vandini, University of Bologna, Italy

Leading for Early Education, Development and Advocacy (LEEDA): A new model for supporting effective service integration across the early childhood education and care context

Presenters:

Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett, University of Wollongong, Australia

Co-authors:

Marc de Rosnay, University of Wollongong, Australia

Kim Stouse-Lee, University of Wollongong, Australia

Janine Singleton, University of Wollongong, Australia

Children residing in non-metropolitan areas in Australia experience higher rates of vulnerabilities coupled with inadequate access to the early childhood health and intervention services, posing increased risk to development and wellbeing (Arefadib & Moore, 2017; AEDC, 2021). This study responds to the inherent complexity of supporting integrated service provision in regional contexts (Barnes et al., 2018), developing a model of effective service integration which leverages the capacity and opportunity of universal early childhood education (ECE) and the role of educators in supporting children's development. The study - which was informed by an ecosystem lens (Bronfenbrenner, 1995) - adopted a mixed-method pre-post intervention to explore the impact of a professional learning program (LEEDA) on quality practice and service connections. Data included: (1) baseline and follow-up audits of the service system landscape coupled with facilitated focus groups to identify facilitators and challenges to service integration along with patterns of service usage and engagement; (2) measures of classroom pedagogical quality; (3) educator focus groups to explore perceived impact on practice and child wellbeing. Informed consent was obtained from all participating educators across the six services. Transcripts and audit(s) were shared with participants to ensure accurate capture of data/discussions. Results revealed enhanced educator practice and wellbeing, while systemic constraints (i.e., limitations in community infrastructure, program atrophy) undermined service connections. Findings speak to the potentiality of the ECE context as a hub for effective service integration. We conclude by offering a suggested model to build professional capacity and support service connections and sustainability.

professional learning, workforce development, service integration, regional and rural contexts, quality pedagogy

This application discusses a completed piece of research.

Working on the integrated system: supporting children's and families' participation from the early years

Presenters:

Chiara Dalledonne Vandini, University of Bologna, Italy

Co-authors:

Arianna Lazzari, University of Bologna, Italy

An overview of the Italian areas at high risk of social exclusion highlights the challenges faced by children and families regarding access to quality education (Quality Framework, 2014; Child Guarantee, 2021). Our presentation illustrates the results of a national project implemented with Save the Children addressed to 0-6 children and their family from low income backgrounds. The pandemic has indeed intensified existing inequalities, particularly for children that are vulnerable to being left behind in terms of education (UE Recommendations, 2022). We refer to the systemic approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) that integrates the educational, social, and health dimensions: this is crucial for promoting holistic development and wellbeing among children and families. Within the phenomenological paradigm, we adopted a qualitative methodology such as the training-research with operators of 0-6 hubs through different methods like focus groups, participant observations, interviews and follow-up meetings. Since this is a project targeting children and families our priority has been to always ensure the privacy of each participant through data anonymization according to ECCERA Ethical code (p. 2-3). The preliminary results emphasize the importance of a reflective process starting from the pillars of the integrated 0-6 system such as accessibility, family participation and horizontal/vertical continuity to create situated projects that are sustainable over time and capable of integrating the educational with the social and health spheres. Addressing these issues, requires a comprehensive approach involving collaboration among local governance, educational institutions and communities to prioritize the needs of vulnerable children and safeguard their right to education.

early years, social inclusion, children and families participation, integrated approach, qualitative research

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

Enhancing and fortifying collaboration among multi-professionals in early childhood education for a sustainable future

Presenters:

Kati Rintakorpi, Laurea University of Applied Sciences, Finland

The three-year Early Childhood Education and care (ECEC) research and development program across four Nordic-Baltic countries (Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) endeavors to enhance collaboration among multi-professionals, tackling challenges in securing diverse and qualified labor within intricate contexts. The program aims to establish and advance high-quality social and pedagogical practices in ECEC, ultimately contributing to a socially sustainable future. Social sustainability seeks to improve children's quality of life across various levels (Naidoo & Muthukrishna, 2016). The renewal of ECEC underscores the realization of relational expertise (Rintakorpi, Holmikari, Jalasmäki & Kukkonen, 2023), allowing professionals to share and utilize intersecting competencies for a common understanding (Rantavuori, 2019). The program employs social pedagogy, examining social and growth-related aspects for socially sustainable ECEC. Core components encompass dialogical encounters, agency facilitation, community building, functionality, and creativity, emphasizing the integration of practice and theory across individual, community, and societal levels (Nivala & Rynnänen, 2019). The research adopts a qualitative constructivist paradigm (Tennyson & Volk, 2015) utilizing interviews, focus groups, and document reviews analyzed through thematic and constant comparative analysis. Research details will be shared with participants, obtaining consent through a form, and pseudonyms will safeguard confidentiality. Critiques of the system or employers won't be linked to specific individuals. The program aims to foster collaboration among professionals with diverse competences to create socially sustainable ECEC. The four participating countries will create a digital education platform to distill the study findings into training courses (MOOCs), addressing the diverse needs across different countries.

social pedagogy, multiprofessional collaboration, social pedagogue, children's rights, social sustainability

This application discusses an ongoing piece of research and findings may be preliminary/emerging.

PEDagogical Talks

16:25 – 17:15, Thursday 5th September 2024

Set A, Room 207, second floor, Grand Parade building

Chair: Irene Gunning, EECERA

A1

Shackling Calypso: the struggles of implementing play-based practice in England

Soizic Le Courtois, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

Play is considered an essential part of childhood and early childhood education. However, in this talk, I want to discuss the impact of rigid schemes of work and accountability measures on teachers' ability to support play and playful learning, and how these pressures turn the complex craft of teaching into a tick-box exercise that leaves teachers with little agency or opportunity to improve their skills. During my PhD, I found that teachers struggle to support children's playful learning autonomy because of top-down pressures, and that they can experience dissonance between their practice and their beliefs about education. Soon after I finished, I lived these findings: returning to the classroom in the hope of applying what I had learned, I was struck by the rigidity of a system that dictated every aspect of my practice, leaving me no space to work towards being the kind of teacher I wanted to become. Calypso is the kindergarten teacher in the renowned and loved TV series *Bluey*. Calypso is a gentle teacher who epitomises what Clark (2023) calls 'slow pedagogy'. But Calypso is Australian, and I teach in England. By describing Calypso's practice and how it differs from my own experience returning to an early years classroom, I wish to shed light on the absurdity of what is happening in classrooms in England. I will also make links with my research on children's agency in learning and the impact of institutional pressures on teachers' practice.

children's agency, teacher learning, play-based learning, England, teacher agency

A2

"There are no wrong answers." Empowering children to be diverse thinkers, explorers, and experts of their own worlds.

Katie Crouch, University of the West of England, United Kingdom

What happens when we empower children's thinking within early childhood? Is there an impact upon children's thinking and ideas when we take away the potential to give a 'wrong answer', or even 'fail' an assessment? As an experienced teacher, consultant, researcher, and lecturer in Early Childhood I have worked with children who were free thinkers, problem solvers and creative artists. As a neurodiverse educator, I value the privilege of being invited to see a child's world through their eyes and understanding. At times, I was statutorily required to test and assess learners (Department for Education 2019; 2023). Often, these young meaning-makers, would change, dramatically. They would gaze at my face for clues on how to 'de-code' potential clues on what answer they were expected to give, to guess what the right answer was. This presentation discusses an approach to assessment, in a way which involves children's thinking and perceptions (Clark, 2011; Pascal and Bertram, 2009). Children's interactions with phonemes and phonics, intrigue me as a neurodivergent learner, researcher, and educator. Standardised testing within the UK, judges children's ability to de-code phonic relationships with a pass/fail outcome (Department for Education, 2017). Therefore, I carried out a study which explored individuals' perceptions of phonics. Children were able to give me meaningful suggestions of how they build understanding through their experiences and observations rather than as a product of rote teaching. This approach is something which could be used to inform both the teaching and the assessment of phonics and early literacy.

assessment, neurodiversity, processing, free-thinking, phonics

A3

Throwing the baby out with the bathwater: the need for an ethic of care in early years provision

Zoe Raven, Acorn Early Years Foundation, United Kingdom

In 35 years of working within the early years sector, I have witnessed an increasing valorisation of education over care, arising from an understandable need for early childhood education to be taken seriously. Early years provision is undervalued, with an underpaid and underqualified workforce. My doctoral research journey, over the last six years, confirmed my impression that childcare practices are often poorly understood. Care as a moral value rose to the fore during the Covid-19 pandemic, but primarily in rhetorical terms, with 'carewashing' a feature of many sectors, including early years. Marketisation threatens the quality and inclusivity of early years provision, with profit a key driver for corporate entities. Respectful, personalised childcare and early education is jeopardised by the drive for efficiency, and UK government funding policy, in the words of its own education committee, is "entrenching disadvantage." The move away from the terminology of 'nursery nurses' to 'educators' exemplifies the intention to recognise the importance of early education, but the granular detail of childcare routines also needs to be understood and recognised as important. Children learn respect for their own bodies and others' when they are themselves cared for with loving attentiveness, and practitioners need to understand and value their own embodied skills and knowledge. An ethic of care offers a way to recognise the importance of childcare practices, and the importance of care as a moral value which can influence policymaking at all levels, and which highlights the universal interdependence of humans within the natural world.

ethic of care, embodied care, childcare practice, marketisation, funding policy

A4

Professional reading and its contribution to sustainable early childhood education and care systems

Jackie Brien, the university of melbourne, Australia

How can professional reading contribute to developing sustainable early childhood education systems? I have long been interested in, and highly engaged with, professional reading. For 15 years, I have held an honorary role on our National Publications Advisory Committee for Early Childhood Australia, as editor of the national magazine, Every Child, and a reviewer for the research journal. I am also a doctoral candidate with the University of Melbourne, exploring perceptions and experiences of professional reading for professional learning, growth and motivation, using a systems-based approach. Defining professional reading: Professional reading materials encompass professional magazines, research journals, textbooks and policy implementation guidance materials. Impact of professional reading: Professional reading supports researchers, practitioners and policymakers to share and learn from evidence-based knowledge and insights. For educators and leaders who participated in my research, professional reading was integral to their concept of being 'professional' and led to deepened understanding of children and of evidence-based professional practice. Importantly, for leaders, professional reading enabled them to support colleagues to understand concepts and evidence and be challenged to improve practice, positively influencing children's learning, development and wellbeing. Professional reading and sustainable ECEC systems: Professional reading plays an important role in linking evidence and theory with practice (Council of Australian Governments, 2009). Leaders, policymakers, researchers and practitioners can all play a role in knowledge transmission, professional growth, and positive influence of professional practice, to the benefit of young children. Perhaps all of us in the ECEC 'system' should be engaging in regular and deeply reflective professional reading?

professional reading, professionalism, professional growth, systems improvement, child outcomes

Set B, Room 225, second floor, Grand Parade building

Chair: Ferre Laevers, Research Centre for Experiential Education (CEGO), University of Leuven, Belgium

B1

What is the role of the inquiry educator in play?

Sue Tee, International Baccalaureate Organization, Netherlands

In many early years contexts around the world, play is under threat. Play and learning are often seen as opposites and pressure is being exerted to focus on more formal learning. However, there is also much evidence about how play can support learning of knowledge, skills and understanding. A key factor in this is the role of the educator, the environment they create and the relationships they build. What are some of the educator moves that nurture curious, engaged, reflective, collaborative and communicative young learners? What are some of the ways educators can support and nurture play in their setting? How many times have I heard, 'They're just playing.' or 'What about literacy and maths skills?' As a former early year's educator and administrator, I often had to defend or explain the purpose of play to leadership, parents, colleagues. Now as a curriculum designer, working across international contexts, I work with schools to develop materials which will help educators to: understand and be able to articulate the importance of play, sensitively facilitate play which supports learners to test theories, wonder, take on challenges, communicate, use prior knowledge, and more. Looking at examples of practice in early learning settings across multiple countries and contexts, this talk will explore the actions of educators with questions, such as how is learning monitored and documented? How are concepts within the learner's thinking identified? What other voices are included? How do educators extend and challenge learners' thinking?

play, inquiry, role of educator, assessment, evidencing

B2

Preparing preschoolers for assent: equipping preschoolers with choice before child-led action research.

Bridget Steenkamp, University of Roehampton, United Kingdom

Gaining assent from preschool children, thus enabling them to fully participate in a child-led research process interests me. I designed two picture books to facilitate gaining assent thus helping empower children with agency and choice. This process is inspired by the Mosaic Research Approach (Clark and Moss, 2017). My doctoral research, as a practical theologian, aims to provide preschoolers a verbal and non-verbal voice using Theological Action Research (Cameron, 2010). As they conduct child-led research in their outdoor play space I will be considering their findings in the light of Frobelian spiritual views they might hold which include connecting to others, the natural world, and the transcendent and how this might support them as they face climate change. The delicate nature of this Action Research requires a thoughtful approach to gaining assent. My PED talk will cover how I plan to gain assent before the preschoolers conduct and analyse their research. This includes involving preschool children from the outset of the research process so that they can make daily choices about opting in or out of the research journey. I will be describing my use of a story circle and the creation of shared oral narratives using Frobel's first gift of soft spheres (Best, 2016, p.8) and the two picture books designed to help the preschoolers understand the research process. I hope more researchers will be inspired to creatively consider how to gain assent and include this in applications for research and ethics clearance.

assent, climate change, action research, child-led, narratives

B3

Solving the Puzzle: How to Increase the Supply and Sustainability of Quality Early Childhood Teachers

Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett, University of Wollongong, Australia

Many ECE systems across the world are in a state of flux. Within Australia we are experiencing a workforce crisis which is further complicated by recent changes to national practice frameworks, the development of a new preschool outcomes measure, a national productivity commission into early childhood and the call for national wage reforms. The talk responds to these challenges exploring key solutions, strategies and policies needed to ensure the successful transformation of a quality ECE system. As the Director of a teacher education university program and as a researcher in ECE quality practice and teacher pedagogy I am constantly thinking of innovative ways to strengthen the workforce and to build the capacity of the sector more broadly. This talk is designed to challenge the way we approach workforce development across different systems. The shortage of qualified early childhood teachers is currently the single most pressing issue facing Australia's early learning sector. In exploring ways to respond to this shortage, I liken the construction of a high functioning ECE system to assembling a puzzle, with the first piece being a quality workforce. If we are going to build a high quality and functional ECE system, then we need to not only think about the key components of our puzzle — the pieces — but also the order in which we place those pieces down. This speaks to the need to think about how we prioritise and sequence initiatives to achieve a high-quality, effective and sustainable workforce.

early childhood systems, innovative practice, accelerated degrees, ECE sustainability, workforce development

B4

Taking stock of continuing professional development in the early childhood education and care system in England

Alexandra Nancarrow, Institute for Employment Studies, United Kingdom

Practitioners in England's early childhood education and care (ECEC) system are often celebrated for their passion to deliver high-quality curriculum; yet the quality and content of their own learning tends to be overlooked. Continuing professional development (CPD) provides opportunities for practitioners to refresh and gain skillsets. Indeed, practitioners tend to report increased skills and confidence after CPD (e.g. Dawson, Garner & Nancarrow, 2023; Nancarrow, Garner & Dawson, 2024). However, finding high-quality CPD that is relevant to educators as well as time and budget is often challenging. I am an advocate for fair access to high-quality childcare, but that currently is not the case in England. Many factors contribute to this, but a central issue concerns the ECEC system itself, specifically its inherent complexity (e.g. Dawson, Williams, & Nancarrow, 2023). The ECEC system encompasses a workforce with a retention problem, the need to develop curriculum, the ability to provide funding and regulation guidance, and the maintenance of practices such as qualifications and staff-to-child ratios (Kagan, 2019; Sylva & Eisenstadt, 2024). This is across different providers, including maintained and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) settings. CPD that is sustainable, relatable and effective is necessary for retaining staff and knowledge. This talk will highlight key issues currently facing the ECEC system, particularly regarding CPD, and will propose avenues for future research and steps for improving CPD, including suggestions such as CPD that links to more holistic programmes such as those that are integrated across communities and family support services.

continuing professional development (CPD), sustainable practice, practitioner training, practitioner skills, cascading knowledge

Set C, Room 202, second floor, Grand Parade building

Chair: Maelis Karlson Lohmander, University of Gothenburg, Sweden / EECERA

C1

Curriculum planning cycles: Complexity, linearity, and flexibility

Susan Grieshaber, La Trobe University, Australia

A range of planning cycles exists in the international literature, with the basic models following an 'observe, plan, act' approach. Most begin with observation, and more complex models suggest additional steps such as assessing, evaluating, collaborating with others, and more frequent observation. Planning cycles tend to be represented as straightforward and linear processes, with some literature indicating that the cycle can occur spontaneously, iteratively, or over shorter or longer periods of time. The likelihood of variations from the original plan or cycle is rarely recognised, with few documented exceptions available. Throughout my career as an early childhood teacher and academic, I have been perplexed about the concept and expectations of a planning cycle. In this presentation I discuss planning cycles and consider that linear sequences might not always be accurate representations of what happens in practice. Little is known about how educators enact the planning cycle, potential barriers to implementing steps, how contextual factors impact implementation, and how the expected linearity affects the scope of curriculum, pedagogical and assessment-related decision-making. I investigate the idea that planning cycles could more accurately reflect the complex decisions and actions that are made by educators as they engage in everyday curriculum, pedagogical, and assessment work.

planning cycle, flexibility, linearity, complexity, reductionist

C2

Young children's interaction with story and storyteller

Kristin Aadland-Atkinson, NLA university college, Norway

Storytelling, as well as story listening, is natural to mankind, and yet a skill children need to learn, Bruner, among others argue. We need stories to make meaning of experiences, and we need to make meaning to stories we take part in. How do children participate in an oral storytelling situation? How do they interact with the storyteller - and the story - in the situation, and how do they continue their process of understanding and constructing meaning after the situation? Out of seven years of university studies, the half year I studied oral storytelling left the deepest traces. Later, as an educated storyteller and researcher within science of education and ECET, I have met several groups of children both in kindergarten and early school years, listening to professional storytellers, and talking about the situation afterwards. I have seen big open mouths, wide open eyes, and bodies leaning forward, as if they are afraid to miss out on details. I have heard verbal outbursts, and seen how even children with attention difficulties seemingly can disappear into the world of storytelling. I have through my research heard several children retelling the same stories afterwards - some in full detail, and some making new versions. Through recounting parts of a storytellers' story, and some children's retellings I will explore how the children's more or less new narratives reflect their construction of meaning, and further how this kind of activity can enhance their abilities to tell and make meaning through stories.

storytelling, story listening, story, construction of meaning, interaction

C3

Have we moved on from a tokenism approach to cultural diversity?

Melissa Bonotto, ATU - Atlantic Technological University, Ireland

If we were to use all the knowledge science has given to us so far, multilingualism should be a priority in preschool. Living in an English-speaking country, I would like to share some interesting reflections from my PhD research: early childhood educators seem to be very engaging and supportive in helping children with a speech delay to navigate through the preschool room. However, if a child speaks English as a second language and has limited or non-English – it is dealt with in a different manner: “It is not our job”. I speak four languages, and I am a mother of two young multilingual children, ages 6 and 3, who are fluent in English, Portuguese and Irish. Malaguzzi reminds us that children have a hundred languages. I would like to share my personal experience of seeing home languages along with family traditions and festivals being truly celebrated in early years settings - not merely touched in a tokenism away. It will present a great deal of reflectivity regarding current guidelines for inclusion, diversity and equality in the ECEC sector and its implementation. Reflections regarding an antibias approach and a tokenism approach will be pointed out embedded in these research findings. “Every child has a language”. What else can we do to value children’s heritage languages and family traditions?

multi-cultural, multilingualism, preschool children, diversity, home language

Set D, Room 318b, third floor, Grand Parade building

Chair: Jóhanna Einarsdóttir, University of Iceland, Iceland / EECERA

D1

Rethinking Play - privilege and response-ability

Mandy Andrews, Plymouth University, United Kingdom

We are living in the age of the Anthropocene (Crutzen and Starmer), and humancentric economic efficiency is impacting on sustainable futures. We need to acknowledge other ways of thinking and being. Western structured instrumentalism is also impacting on play. Outdoor and free play opportunities are increasingly managed and limited, but place and more-than-human entanglement is essential for future citizens having earthly response-ability. Being passionate about play I wish to present from a posthuman perspective a challenge to the adultist humancentric perspective and its link to being on the world and mastering it, arguing for the importance of minoritarian playful creative events and commutative exchange with the more-than-human agents of the world. Challenging a deeply embedded humancentric perspective and acknowledging a philosophical shift to post-humanism is difficult, but such play offers new awareness of children's involvement with places of becoming. This reconceptualization of play challenges play as ‘work’, or tool for ‘purposeful’ learning according to a given adultist agenda, requires release of adult control, and is a challenge to current education, and play theory, agendas. Adults can no longer ‘empower’ children, but may seek to re-side response-ably. Being involved intra-actively in a play event leads to an emergence of new potentialities and ways of being-becoming, potentially in greater harmony with the places in which we find ourselves. How then might the playful posthuman child of the late 21st Century experience education and care?

posthuman, play, assemblage, deleuzian, sustainability

D2

Early Childhood Education and Care settings as intergenerational spaces: Working with grandparents and grandparent figures as authentic partners

Ann Farrell, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

ECEC settings are emerging as intergenerational spaces, with older people such as grandparents and grandparent figures being seen as authentic partners. OECD countries such as Australia indicate that grandparents and older people have greater longevity in the workforce along with more flexible work arrangements, affording greater possibilities for their contributions to families and communities. Conceptualizing and enacting ECEC as an intergenerational space has potential for improving the quality of life and learning for children, educators, parents and older generations. As a practitioner-researcher of long standing, I am now a grandparent of six grandchildren, all of whom have a parent with a cultural and linguistic background different to my own (as an English speaker with a Caucasian heritage). Given their rich and diverse backgrounds and their active participation in ECEC settings, I have had opportunity to reflect on the ways in which grandparents experiencing cultural and linguistic diversity can contribute to ECEC. My lived experience has fuelled my curiosity to explore the contributions of grandparents in young children's lives in ECEC and home contexts, potential which is largely untapped in ECEC services. The talk provides an overview of research and practice involving grandparents and older people in ECEC, showing the evidence of mutual benefits for learning, health and wellbeing. Informed by Nancy Fraser's (2008) framework of recognition and representation, the talk highlights the potential benefits of intergenerational interactions in ECEC young children and older people see each other as co-learners in respectful and stimulating intergenerational settings.

grandparents, grandparent figures, intergenerational spaces, intergenerational interactions, partnerships with families

D3

Innocence to Influence: Children Shaping Social Sustainability

Carmela Garcia Manas, University of Dundee, United Kingdom

The Transformative Power of Children's Perspectives in Fostering Sustainable Communities. My career is devoted to early childhood education and social justice, aiming to empower young children and challenge power dynamics. Advocating for inclusive early childhood education is a personal mission, driven by a desire for positive change. Sharing this message with a wider audience is essential to underscore the importance of empowering young children for the development of a more just and sustainable future. In my three years researching education for sustainable development in ECEC, I've found a significant gap: studies often overlook actively involving young children in the research process. Yet, my findings show children are not passive learners; they actively engage in their preschool communities and possess the curiosity and ability to understand complex social and economic concepts. I'll explore how children's perspectives can contribute to societal transformation, urging support from educators and policymakers. Throughout the talk, I will share examples to illustrate the significance of young children's perspectives in the context of social and economic sustainability. Moreover, my research has shed light on the significant power dynamics that exist within preschool environments, where adults often wield a considerable degree of influence. Ultimately, I hope my audience will take away a heightened awareness of the power dynamics at play in early childhood settings and a renewed commitment to empowering young children. By investing in their empowerment, we can work towards building a more compassionate, equitable, and resilient society for future generations.

sustainability education, children's rights, social sustainability, human skills, soft skills, life skills, new sociology of childhood

D4

Learning Outside Together (LOT): Building Connections to Land as Teacher in British Columbia, Canada

Karolyn Hendra, Thompson Rivers University, Canada

Jennie Roberts, BC Aboriginal Childcare Society, Canada

Online learning reduces access barriers for populations living in rural and remote areas, yet these programs often struggle with engagement and retention of learners. We created a model where program graduates could train to be mentors of a subsequent groups. Mentors meet weekly with program participants and support their inquiry and learning. The professional development program is for, and thus supported by, certified Early Childhood Educators. Success of our course is contingent upon sufficient alumni expressing interest in becoming a mentor and them having the training and support to mentor well. This model has exceeded expectations. Applications for the mentorship opportunity have been successively more numerous, suggesting sustainability. Mentors improved program participant outcomes and satisfaction. Additionally, our professional development program was innovative in its content. The participant course embeds both Indigenous and Western world views and wisdom. Mentors must therefore be sensitive to cultural safety and cultural appropriation in the era of Truth and Reconciliation. Co-presenters are one of the mentor course writers, and one of the mentors. The content creator shared that co-creating the LOT Mentorship course was a unique opportunity to learn and contribute to a collaborative process. She is interested in sharing the experience of working with the committee, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and participants to create, implement, evaluate and revise the mentorship course. She will offer considerations for others interested in supporting online early years professional development, specifically exploring how one creates conditions for learning in, about and with a common worlds' perspective. The mentor shared that being part of this program was personally and professionally impactful. She will speak to her dual perspectives: as a learner being mentored and as a mentor supporting learners in this program.

mentorship, Indigenous knowledges, land as teacher, professional development, environmental sustainability