Transition to school – Understanding the child's journey and the teacher's role to effectively support the journey.

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Keyword
Transition to school

Abstract
This study explores the transition from Early Childhood Education (ECE) to primary school with the aim of providing teachers information to assist successful transition. Transitions come in many ways, shapes, and forms. They happen on a day to day basis and vary from person to person. By the time a child has reached the transition to school they have experienced a range of transitions already (Fabian & Dunlop, 2002; Kagan&Neuman, 1998; Rockel, 2002). Transitioning to school can be the first major 'vertical transition' a child may remember (Kagan&Neuman, 1998), which means educators collectively need to be approaching this sensitive time with a wealth of knowledge to effectively help create safe borderlands for our tamariki to cross over. The foundation of the research method and design is socio-cultural and ecological, with major influences from Vygotsky, Rogoff, and Bronfenbrenner. Neuro-science is also a strong feature, influenced by Satchel-satchel.

The first stage of the research explored the child's journey to school through case studies which followed six children over six consecutive weeks, three weeks pre- (in ECE) and three weeks post- (in new entrant class) transition. The Leuven scale was used to observe the interaction and well-being of the child. Interviews were also conducted pre- and post-transition with each child, their parents, and teachers to catch the voice of the transition from all the major stakeholders. This gathered the picture of transition and gave data and dialogs to lead into answering some of the research questions:

1.   How does dual curriculum knowledge and partnership between early childhood and primary teachers empower and support children's transitions?
2.   How can curriculum collaboration help extend teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, particularly in relation to young children's transition into schools?

The study also examines knowledge teachers hold of both *Te Whariki* (Ministry of Education, 1996; New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2017) and the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007), a term I have called Dual Curriculum Knowledge (DuCK). This will include focus groups with teachers from both sectors individually, and then collectively.

The current emergent findings suggest that relationships are at the core of the transition. Children that transitioned into schools that they were familiar with and with friends they already knew had a more seamless transition. There seems to be a need and a desire for more collaboration and understanding between ECE and primary, and the aim of the research is to find out where the sectors are at, and what can happen to create possible change.

This presentation will explore the case-study findings and conclusions from these stories, which represents the voice of the teacher, parent and child. It will provide a basis for moving forward with the focus group discussions, and a general exploration of where to next for the sectors in relation to the current literature.

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Critical pedagogy: Empowerment and advocacy in a kindergarten

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Keywords
Empowerment, critical pedagogy, social justice

Abstract
Rationale for the study
This paper draws from my doctoral study called *Critical pedagogy in early childhood education: Four case studies in Aotearoa New Zealand.* Critical pedagogy is described as "a politics of understanding and action, an act of knowing that attempts to situate everyday life in a larger geo-political context" (McLaren, 2003, p. 7). This paper focuses on the empowerment aspect of critical pedagogy through an advocacy lens. There are limited studies into critical pedagogy in ECE, both internationally and for the Aotearoa New Zealand context.

Purpose(s) and research question(s) of the study
In this paper I focus on one research question from my study: "How can critical pedagogy support the empowerment of young children?" This paper focuses particularly on sharing the case study of one teacher, who advocates for empowering practice in pedagogy. This teacher begins her work advocating for children who need support with sharing their ideas in group settings, and concludes with the teacher helping different groups of children to identify what actions the children themselves might want to take to support their peers.

Brief description of methodology including that used for data analysis
This study was undertaken in one centre, following four teachers as they used critical pedagogy to frame their work with children, although only one teacher's work is discussed here. The data consisted of video footage taken of teaching episodes, audio recordings of reflective conversations, learning stories, planning documentation, and copies of children's art. The data collection period encompassed four months in 2019, and used a participatory action research approach. The findings were written as

illustrative case studies, to support others in seeing how teachers implemented critical pedagogy approaches. The data was also analysed using thematic analysis, to identify overall themes from the case studies.

Summary of expected outcomes and anticipated contribution of the research

The data shows how processes of engendering collaboration amongst children through a critical pedagogy framework have created a mutually-explored social and cultural landscape, where teachers both work as advocates for children, and also support children to advocate for themselves and others. In this landscape children have the opportunity to inquire deeply into complex ideas using socially-informed critical approaches, thus creating an enriched sense of empowerment through experience, and the opportunity to collectively take action on issues the group has identified. The paper uses the findings to identify implications and strategies for unfolding belonging in ECE settings through a critical pedagogy lens.

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Love, attention, and early childhood education: Resisting neoliberal notions of 'professionalism' through a Murdochian understanding of the inner life of the teacher

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Keywords
Iris Murdoch, love, attention

Abstract

An ethical approach to early childhood education that resists a cognition/emotion binary is well-established (Biesta, 2010; Dahlberg, 2016; Dahlberg & Moss, 2004; Noddings, 2013) and a nascent movement towards the reconsideration of care and the role of love within pedagogical practice is growing (Aslanian, 2015; Dalli, 2006; Page, 2018). Relational, moral and ethical teaching can be enlivened by the philosophy of Iris Murdoch. Iris Murdoch's concept of attention, as an approach to pedagogy, holds interesting possibilities for making sense of the moral and emotional connections between teacher and child in the early childhood educational context; attention is an undertaking of "moral agents; it is an exercise of love through which we come to know others" (Roberts & Saeverot, 2018, p. 36).

This paper draws from a recently completed doctoral study (Delaune, 2020) that explores the possibilities of Iris Murdoch's concept of attention for early childhood education. Drawing from one thematic area, this paper will discuss love as it is understood through Murdoch's concept of attention, and utilise this philosophical framing to critically analyse neoliberal notions of 'professionalism' in early childhood education. Emotional expression and the demarcation of appropriate and inappropriate emotions shape the 'professional' teacher and eradicates the long history of feminist, social justice, and child advocacy movements in early childhood education. However, a deeper engagement with the concept of love can support a critical understanding of the realities of teachers beyond the discourses of 'professionalism'. Murdoch defends the notion of love as an aspect of our human existence that opens up our best imaginative possibilities and defends an understanding of love as unquantifiable, but no lesser for it.

This paper will offer a new understanding of the positive potential of conceiving the student-teacher relationship within the realm of the affective, placing love at the centre of the educative process.

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Young children's views about their world: Their learning, engaging in their community and the future

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Keywords:
Children's participation, children's perspectives, childhood studies

Abstract
Rationale for the study
In 2017 the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child Monitoring Group noted that in Aotearoa New Zealand children's views were not being sought in matters regarding their school, play and feelings of safety. This report prompted The Children's Commissioner to address these issues seeking the perspectives of only school-aged children (e.g. http://www.occ.org.nz/listening2kids/what-children-tell-us/). The small-scale study to be presented sought the views and voices of young children who had thus been excluded from these data sets.

Purpose(s) and research question(s) of the study
This research sought the views of young children regarding when and how they learn, how they participate in their communities and their hopes for the future.

Brief description
For six months the researcher met with young children in two early childhood settings in the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. Utilising an interview protocol created in consultation with primary school-aged consultants, focused conversations were recorded and transcribed with twelve children during regularly-occurring play sessions.

Individual storybooklets were created with each child's contributions towards the research questions. The researcher returned to each child to revise the storybooklets, ensuring that the child's views were being "shared with the world" (Gaches, 2020; in press) as the child had desired.

Only data from these storybooklets was analysed. Each statement from a child was coded based upon its relevance to the research questions then the topic of the child's response. The entire set of coded data was charted on an Excel spreadsheet and analysed for code frequency, themes present, and themes that didn't appear as anticipated. More extended passages of particular importance to a child, based upon the children's own emphasis during the sharing, were further analysed .

Summary
Children reported learning about a variety of things including regularly occurring play-based topics as well as world events and to "stand up for myself and have a giant voice". Children mostly stated they learned by just teaching themselves or that they "just knew" but also learning from family members. Teachers were minimally mentioned but cartoons and talking with the researcher were included.

Children reported engaging in the community primarily through their family interactions in shopping, community events and events with friends. For some children, community reached further including family farms and global destinations and even further with planets, stars and a ghost.

Children were often quite reticent to discuss the future. However, out of the 10 children who did respond to this inquiry, four girls mentioned they would be mums, another girl said she'd be in a band, and one boy said he would "be Captain America and save people". Given that this research occurred during the children's marches for climate change, it was surprising that none of the children mentioned this topic.

While this is a small scale study in one region of Aotearoa New Zealand, the children have provided insights into their worlds that the Children's Commissioner has not yet provided. Further larger scale research is needed for young children's views and voices to be prioritised alongside older children's.

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Advocating for the whole child: Mixed-race (*hafu*) children's experiences of Japanese early childhood education

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Abstract
Japan has been characterised as a mono-ethnic society (Willis, 2006), and this myth of a homogeneous society labels mixed-race (*hafu*) people as different to other Japanese (Befu, 2010; Kimura, 2020). The number of *hafu*, are growing significantly in accordance with Japan's increasingly diverse population (Takahashi, 2020). Early childhood education represents the first formal context where children's home culture(s) and the Japanese education system intersect, and early childhood centres are places where new cultural forms and communities can emerge (Tobin, Arzubiaga & Adair, 2013). Early childhood centres are also sites where close relationships form between teachers and families, and these relationships can be threatened if teachers lack understanding of the complexity of children's home lives (Ramsay, 2009).

In order to explore the experiences of *hafu* children and their families, this study draws on the *Preschool in Three Cultures* (PS3C) methodology (Tobin et al., 1989; 2009; 2013), which uses video as a stimulus for dialogue, in order to generate a 'multi-vocal text' through the use of film and interviews. The first step of the method involved observing and filming over a two-month period at the public kindergarten chosen as a field site. Filming focused on a class of four-year-old children including one *hafu* child and two foreign children in a class of thirty-five students. The hours of film were then edited down to a twenty-minute video of a "typical day".

To address issues of typicality and accurate representation, teachers at the kindergarten were asked first to comment on the video, before it was shown to the parents of *hafu* children. A total of 46 'mixed' families, living in urban and rural settings across Japan, were interviewed for this project. The parents were a mix of Japanese mother/foreign fathers and foreign mother/Japanese fathers living in diverse urban and rural settings throughout Japan. Finally, the video was shown to focus groups of Japanese early childhood education teachers and students for discussion, along with an edited presentation of families' comments. All of these discussions were audio recorded for further analysis.

This study found that while the bodies of *hafu* children mark them as 'other' in the eyes of their classmates, they are expected to assimilate into Japanese society (Burke, 2016). There are few acknowledgments of diversity in the early childhood setting, and despite the claim that that all are treated equally (Moorehead, 2013), many *hafu* children experience inconsistent treatment or exclusion. *Hafu* children are also subject to homogenizing discourses when in reality they embody a wide range of experiences, identities, and cultures and straddle different socio-economic and class lines. Japanese early childhood teachers tend to promote the dissemination of Japanese culture and focus on Japanese language acquisition, rather than introducing or fostering children's home cultures in the early childhood setting. This paper suggests that if Japanese early childhood teachers engaged in more culturally responsive teaching they could better advocate for and support *hafu* children in their centres.

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Deeping whānau understanding of assessment through the voices of tamariki

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Keywords

Trissessment (assessment), tamariki (children), agency

Abstract

Making learning visible through assessment is one of the ways that early childhood teachers are able to develop a shared understanding with whānau (families) of children's learning and dispositions (Carr & Lee, 2012). The importance of involving children, parents and whānau (family) in children's education, including assessment, is strongly emphasised in New Zealand Aotearoa's curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017).

This research was a collaborative Teacher-led Innovation Fund project with three teachers from a New Zealand early childhood education centre (ECE) and three initial teacher education (ITE) educators. Feedback from the centre's family survey had shown that families wanted more information about their children's learning and to 'see' more learning. The project aimed to investigate the power of a multi-participant assessment process, known as trissessment (Cown, Werry, Bell, & Skeoch, 2016), to hear children's voices more to increase and deepen the whānau (family) involvement in their children's learning. We asked how assessment for learning using the trissessment approach could amplify tamariki (children) and whānau (family) engagement and participation in children's learning.

Using an action research approach (O'Hara, Carter, Dewis, Kay, & Wainwright, 2011) the ITE educators worked collaboratively with the centre's teachers. The participants were three teachers, the 3- and 4-year-olds from the centre and fourteen parents. The project began with the teachers using the trissessment process where assessment begins by recording verbatim children's 'stories' of their learning. This 'story' (sometimes with photos) is sent home with an expectation that the family will write what they see in the 'story'. The teacher contribution to the assessment is then written, informed by the insights from the children and their family. Data was collected from recorded interviews with teachers and families, copies of the trissessments, and meeting notes. Thematic analysis of the data and the documents was used to look for themes in the experiences of teachers, children and families.

A key finding of the project was the shift in parents and whānau (families) understanding of assessment. It moved from not knowing there was assessment of learning in ECE to new insights not only into their children's learning but also a deepening understanding of families' potential role in the assessment process. Being asked to contribute their insights before the teacher completed the story helped whānau (families) to feel like 'experts' in their children's learning. Teacher-parent relationships deepened and led to changing teachers' assumptions about children's interests, skills and dispositions.

Documenting the shift in parents' perspectives around assessment in early childhood education is an interesting outcome of the research (Anthony, McLachlan, & Lim Fock Poh, 2015). This presentation proposes that assessment for learning through trissessment can be one of the most effective ways to build relationships, and develop a strong sense of belonging and agency for parents to contribute to children's learning. As this was only one case study, more research needs to be done to see if using the trissessment process in different ECE settings creates a similar shift in parents understanding assessment and their role in it.

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Assessing four-year-old children's learning – Assessment methods utilised, and aspects of learning being assessed by New Zealand ECE teachers

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Keywords
Assessment; Early Childhood Education; Teacher Practices

Abstract
Assessment plays a key role in the teaching and learning nexus (ERO, 2007) and is a key element of the teachers' role in supporting children's learning. Yet little is known about how assessment is undertaken in the New Zealand early childhood sector, and research relating specifically to assessment and four-year-old children is absent. The purpose of this study therefore was to explore early childhood teachers' assessment practices, purposes and knowledge in relation to four-year-old children's learning. Three research questions underpinned the study relating to early childhood teachers' beliefs about the purposes of assessing four-year-old children's learning, how they assess four-year-old children's learning, and the knowledge which underpins their assessment practice. This presentation focuses on findings relating to the assessment methods implemented by teachers and the aspects of children's learning being assessed.

A mixed methods design was developed, involving the implementation of a large-scale national online survey inviting qualified participants from both parent-led and teacher-led early childhood services, along with 14 key informant interviews. The interviewees were accomplished and experienced teachers representing a broad range of early childhood service types, including playcentre, kindergarten, Māori immersion, Te Kura and education and care settings. Interviewees also completed a paper copy of the survey and shared three pieces of assessment documentation as evidence of assessment practice. Both thematic and statistical analysis were then used to analyse the quantitative and qualitative data gathered across the two phases of the study.

While participants were aware of a range of assessment methods available to them, findings indicated teachers' preferences for using informal methods to collect assessment information about children's learning. The findings also demonstrated that teachers were often using a narrower range of assessment methods in comparison to earlier studies (Mitchell & Brooking, 2007; Mitchell, 2008). Assessment information was reported as frequently being documented in learning stories, although some participants indicated that they did not believe there is a place for assessment in the early childhood sector. In addition, findings also suggested that teachers were assessing selected aspects of children's learning rather than their holistic learning and development. A narrow focus on assessing children's strengths, interests and dispositions was evident, with less emphasis placed on assessing children's skills, knowledge, working theories or the learning outcomes of the New Zealand early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996).

The findings of this study suggest that New Zealand early childhood teachers rely predominantly on informal methods to assess a narrow range of aspects rather than four-year-old children's holistic learning. In comparison with international research and literature relating to quality assessment practices in the early childhood sector it is evident that teachers need to be supported to increase the range of assessment methods utilised and to further develop their understandings of what assessment means in relation to a curriculum with such a holistic focus.

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Development of pedagogical thinking capacities and navigating future-oriented practice

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Keywords
pedagogical thinking capacities, future-oriented practice, professional learning

Abstract
The paper examines the influences on ECE curriculum and professional practice based on findings from a mixed method study, as well as with the use of theoretical models. Within the context of global trends in the educational landscape, the priorities and needs of professional learning and needs are also evolving. Educators must negotiate between the 'new' and the 'old', history and the future, as well as between local and global. The questions that are asked in this paper are: i) How can we adapt the curriculum in order to meet the needs of a future-oriented practice? ii) How can we challenge ECE practitioners to expand their pedagogical capacities to meet the demands of a 21st century curriculum. Findings from the mixed methods QUAL-quant research design with ethnography, interviews and survey data are highlighted. The findings across the different data sets demonstrate a spectrum of practices that define the enactment of the curriculum, barriers, as well as enablers to effective and sustainable practice. These barriers include the resistance to change, socio-cultural factors, unconducive work environments, misalignment between expectations and priorities and other factors. The implications for practice and professional development are discussed based on models adapted from Goodwin's domain of Teachers' ideas, knowledge and experiences, as well as Clarke and Hollingsworth's Dynamic Interconnected Model of Professional Development.

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Supporting children's expression in play based learning programmes in ECE and School

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Abstract
Evidence in international and New Zealand research indicates that the acquisition of vocabulary and the ability for learners to express themselves in a multitude of ways is an essential part of the framework for strong foundational learning in literacy and learning across the curriculum in early childhood educational settings and in early school (e.g., Hart & Risley, 2003; Alcock, 2013).

There has been a proliferation of play-based learning environments established in New Zealand and anecdotal evidence suggests that the dialogic nature of play might be advantageous to children's expression. Notwithstanding, there is a paucity of evidence to corroborate the links between play-based learning and children's enhanced expression. Conversely, the extant research suggests that play based learning is fraught with teachers' difficulties in reconciling child-directed play with academic expectations, particularly at school (Blucher, Aspden, & Jackson, 2018; Feeseha & Pyle, 2016; Martlew, 2011).

The present study sought to examine the efficacy of play based learning approaches within one professional learning community comprising early childhood teachers and early school teachers (n=12 teachers). The purpose was to improve children's multimodal expression and support their sense-making within play-based environments in early childhood and junior primary school. Data were gathered though peer observation and teacher reflection journals. Teachers gathered assessment data of children over the course of a year and analysed shifts in their teaching practices as well as shifts in the children's expression. Analyses were thematically based whereby the qualitative data from the teachers were aggregated and commonalities identified and coded iteratively.

A significant finding and implication for possible other settings was the improved relationships that the teachers reported between adults and children and between children and their peers. Furthermore, a higher quality of interaction amongst participants was reported, which more often than not suggested that teachers recognised and responded to an increasingly diverse range of children's expression with greater confidence compared with their previous experiences of instruction-based teaching.

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Cultivating a culture of collective leadership: A values-based imperative

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Keywords
Everyday collective leadership; leadership values; New Zealand

Abstract
Cultivating a culture of collective leadership where boundaries between teachers and designated leaders are intentionally blurred can be an ambitious task in any sector, including in early childhood education. Embracing this notion of collective leadership relies on the assumption that leadership comes from multiple sources (Leithwood & Mascall, 2009). Researchers highlight a positive link between a culture of shared leadership and positive outcomes for children, while illuminating the role that designated leaders play in establishing the structures needed to cultivate this culture (Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007). However, there is sparse literature on the values-based conditions that might underpin a culture of collective leadership in team-based settings in early childhood education. This presentation addresses the question: *What contextual conditions help to bring everyday collective leadership into being?* I report on a qualitative, interpretive case study in New Zealand (NZ) (Cooper, 2018) that explored the perspectives of 16 teachers, with and without designated leadership positions, 10 parents in relation to teachers' and teacher-leaders' collective leadership practice, and the conditions that brought this leadership into being. The participants' centre was known for promoting positive outcomes for children, having received the highest possible quality rating from the Education Review Office (which governs the quality of educational provision in NZ) several times. Data were generated through focus groups, observations of practice, and interviews, and analysed using cultural-historical activity theory (Engeström, 1987) and a leadership-as-practice perspective (Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2010). The study uncovered core values that underpinned the joint activity of teachers and teacher-leaders, and the strong sense of belonging that parents felt, in the centre. First, the presence of values such as *congeniality*, *collegiality*, and *relational trust* was identified in team dynamics and teacher/teacher leader-parent interactions; second, an emphasis on the Māori concepts of *whanaungatanga* (relationships, kinship, connections) and *manaakitanga* (care, hospitality) underpinned teachers', teacher-leaders', and parents' actions and interactions in the centre; and third, empowering teachers through the promotion of power-with, rather than power-over relationships helped them to see themselves as co-leaders in an enabling environment. The study highlighted the significance of these values in forging a strong sense of togetherness and a culture of collective leadership inclusive of teachers and teacher-leaders. Implications suggest that centre leaders contemplate modelling similar values to underpin centre-wide activity and encourage teachers and designated leaders to sustain these values by enacting them in their everyday practice.

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Navigating a dual teacher leader identity: Supporting teachers to lead without a positional title

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Keyword
Teacher leaders, leader identity, informal leadership

Abstract
Teachers have the potential to embrace multiple identities such as, teacher, colleague, and leader. However, navigating a dual teacher leader identity is a complex process that requires a collaborative and supportive context (Cooper, 2020). What we know is that teachers who have opportunities to informally lead and recognise their own leadership actions can potentially embrace their leader selves (Cooper, 2018; Douglass, 2018). However, many teachers do not recognise ways they engage in leadership activity nor do many identify themselves as everyday teacher leaders despite often enacting informal leadership in a range of ways. Examples include leading an aspect of team/centre review or teaching and learning, and supporting colleagues and student teachers (Cooper, 2018, 2020; Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). This presentation addresses the question: *What experiences and support might assist ECE teachers to navigate a dual teacher leader identity?* I report on a qualitative study in New Zealand (Gorst, 2021), that explored six early childhood teachers' views, perceptions and experiences of educational leadership and their leader identity. Data were obtained from one focus group with each teaching team, an individual interview with each teacher, and analysis of centre documentation, from two early childhood services. Based on an inductive, thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2013), the study revealed that while not all teachers recognised their own actions as leadership, teachers with positive experiences of leadership had positive perceptions of themselves as teacher leaders, and with support and encouragement from positional leaders, enjoyed leading aspects of practice. Both settings included leaders who practised effective leadership where they encouraged teachers to experience a range of roles and responsibilities and invited them to lead in areas based on their own strengths, interests and passions. In particular, the study identified that teachers preferred to construct an informal, rather than a formal leader identity. This study endorses important implications. First, teachers who have not had positive experiences of leadership may need support to reframe their views of leadership in order to embrace leadership as part of their everyday practice. Additionally, the concern that some teachers may not recognise their own actions as leadership emphasises the need for teachers and leaders to consider the diverse range of informal leadership practices that are possible, so all teachers can embrace leadership as part of their everyday practice.

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Senior teacher leadership: defined, understood and enacted

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Abstract
Leadership is a key factor in raising the quality of early childhood curriculum provision and learning outcomes for children (McDowall Clark, 2012; Thomas & Nuttall, 2014). Research on educational leadership has not kept pace with changes in early childhood policy, organisations and structures (e.g. size, hours of operation, management structures). Given these changes there is a need to empirically examine how leadership is conceptualised in different settings and contexts. Therefore, the present study sought to illuminate the beliefs and understandings of one group of leaders and explore how they enact leadership within a complex internal and external context.

The study was guided by the research question: how is leadership defined, understood and enacted by senior teachers within kindergartens in Aotearoa New Zealand? The interest in kindergartens and senior teachers emanated from my own experiences as a senior teacher within a kindergarten association. It was my intention to explore senior teachers' understandings of leadership in order to reveal the ways in which leadership might be enacted.

The study was situated within a pragmatic paradigm and was descriptive in approach, offering insight into participants' beliefs and practices. Employing a survey to gather both qualitative and quantitative data provided an avenue for participants to describe their understanding, their practice and their enactment of leadership. Qualitative data were analysed thematically with an inductive approach taken to identify patterns of meaning, while simple descriptive statistics were used to summarise and interpret quantitative data such as categorisations and ratings.

Findings indicated senior teachers' understanding of leadership as a collaborative, relational endeavor focused on building the professional capabilities of others with the intention of strengthening curriculum and pedagogy and thereby influencing outcomes for children. The leadership role as enacted by senior teachers was characterised by complexity; as senior teachers navigated multiple and, at times, competing demands on their leadership work. While leadership was seen to be rewarding and valuable, noted challenges included lack of time, limited scope to change the practice of others, a concentration on compliance and accountability functions and a perceived lack of influence on strategic work within their organisations. Contextualisation of the positional leadership structure in kindergartens will be described to support international implications for the present study.

Consistent with extant literature, challenges including lack of time and demands associated with accountability and compliance, were seen to limit the ability of senior teachers to effectively navigate their role and maintain a focus on capacity building and quality curriculum and pedagogy at the forefront of their work (Stamopoulos, 2012; Strehmel, 2016). Findings suggest senior teachers may need support to manage their daily workload to look beyond the multiple demands made of them, to engage in critical reflection and find ways to effectively and collectively engage in activities that optimise quality early childhood. Recommendations for leaders in similar positional leadership roles will be discussed. Steering the canoe carefully requires knowledgeable and skilled leaders.

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Fishing along: The application of environmental education and life education in project approach

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Keywords
Project Approach, environmental education, and life education

Abstract

Following the intensification of global warming and the exacerbation of climate change, environmental education is pressing due to the changes in nature. In an era of fast-developing technology, children are exposed to social media and virtual reality without ever paying attention to nature. Starting from their preschool education, cultivating solicitude for the nearby environment, and educating correct attitudes towards animal conservation, not only evokes in children valuing the significance of life, but also helps children engage with reality.

During the five-month course development, experimenters would act as fully committed participants leading a middle and senior class (13 middles and 13 seniors) to develop innovative project approaches. A new project approach discusses how children can explore fish and their habitations through their experiences in cross-field education. Children are given a task: to take good care of their new friends, fish, through the cooperation with one another. Eventually, at the end of the project, children extend their discoveries, improving the environment of nearby communities in order to provide those fish they take care of with a suitable home. The purposes of this study are: illustrating the learning process of how children explore, to discover, implement, and amend, revealing the obstacles children discover and how they were able to confront, contemplate, and act, and assisting educators to understand education regarding children learning the equality, respect, and significance of life and evoking their solicitude on nature.

This study adopts a case study which collects course information from every class through a variety of methods and processes the collected information into analysis and verification. The case study mainly applies practical observation to observe and record actions and experiences learned from distinct "classroom environments" as well as collect all kinds of information regarding the topics. Finally, interpretation and explanation are put in action after organizing, reading, and analyzing all the information.

The discoveries from the study reveal that:

1. Education of life and environment starts from outdoor exploration, inspiring children's interest and motive regarding nature and its creatures.
2. Through diverse cross-field learning and art creations, children are supported to express details they picked up, trained to sharpen their senses, and are encouraged to conceive stories on the interactions between them and natural creatures with their imagination and creativity.
3. Children will cultivate empathy along with valuing the significance of life after undergoing actual caretaking experiences. Fish, for instance, experience life cycles

frequently, which forces children to face birth, sickness, and death. They are required to overcome those challenges and generate spirits of cooperation. Examples of facing and overcoming challenges are discovering the importance of water quality, executing an experiment on water purification, and proposing multiple ways to measure and change the water.

4. Environmental education in the campus helps children connect with peers, nearby regions, and nature, further setting in motion actions on improving the environment.

Study on authenticity of Chinese culture in Chinese picture books

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Keywords
Picture Book, Chinese Culture, Cultural Authenticity

Abstract
This study aims to look into the cultural authenticity of the Chinese culture-related picture books published in South Korea. For this reason, the author examined the texts and pictures of 20 picture books for the accuracy of their content regarding concrete culture, behavioral culture and symbolic culture, as well as the existence of bias and stereotypes. The results show that there are errors in terms of the concrete culture, including food, transportation, costumes, characters, and the map and national flag of China. There is the stereotype that the Chinese culture is largely represented by the traditional culture, not fully reflecting the recent development and current status of China. In terms of the behavioral culture, there are mistakes in the description of Chinese festival's customs and portrayal of Chinese people to be small-eyed with exaggerated facial expressions, as well as stereotypes about Chinese people's social roles influenced by gender and uncivilized behaviors in public places. In terms of the symbolic culture, there are misinterpretations about the connotation of gifts and stereotypes about Chinese people's Confucian values, neglecting the diversity of China's contemporary social values. By examining the texts and pictures in the Chinese culture-related picture books, the paper aims to find errors and rectify stereotypes, suggesting that it is imperative to make active efforts to maintain cultural authenticity.

Strategies adopted by Hong Kong parents to promote young children's mathematical development

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Keywords
Mathematical development; Home learning environment; Parents

Abstract
Rationale for the study
Early mathematical competence is predictive of mathematical achievement in later school years (MacDonald & Carmichael, 2018). Though there is evidence that the home mathematical environment is associated with young children's mathematical development (Kleemans et al., 2012; Skwarchuk et al., 2014), insignificant findings were obtained in some studies (e.g., Missall et al., 2015). One possible reason is that the items of the existing home mathematical environment scales have not covered all the related resources, activities and interactive strategies adopted by parents. In particular, the situation in Asia may not be fully captured, given that the scales are mostly developed in the West. Therefore, it is worthwhile to conduct a qualitative study to understand how parents in Asia foster young children's mathematical competence.

Purpose(s) and research question(s) of the study
The present study aimed to explore the strategies adopted by Hong Kong parents to support young children's mathematical development outside school. Specifically, we had three research questions: (1) What materials did parents provide with children to help them learn mathematics? (2) What activities did parents engage children in to help them learn mathematics? (3) What interactive strategies did parents adopt during joint activities to help children learn mathematics?

Brief description
A total of 31 parents and their children were recruited as participants. All children were in their last kindergarten year and were about five to six years old. To achieve our study aims, each parent was asked to engage children in four mathematical activities (about 10 minutes for each activity) at home or school. The activities included worksheet completion, shared reading of a number-related book, number board game playing, and number card game playing. Moreover, each parent was interviewed on phone or in person about their home mathematical practices for about 20 minutes. Both the parent-child activity and parent interview sessions were electronically recorded for transcription. The transcripts were then coded for the materials, activities and interactive strategies used by parents to help children learn mathematics.

Summary
Our results showed that Hong Kong parents provided children with a wide range of resources for mathematics learning. Examples included picture books, card games, board games, and measuring toys. At home, parents engaged children in both formal mathematics learning activities (e.g., completing exercise books), as well as informal mathematics learning activities (e.g., shopping role play activities, practicing mathematical skills during mealtimes). Parents also discussed with children the mathematics in everyday life when they went out together. During joint activities, it was common for parents to use real objects and visual aids to teach children how to solve mathematical problems; however, some parents often missed the moments to scaffold children's mathematical learning. To conclude, our findings can help researchers to develop a home

mathematical environment scale that is more comprehensive and culturally responsive. Meanwhile, in view that there are great variations in the home mathematical experiences across families, it is suggested to provide more support to parents on how to create a stimulating home mathematical environment.

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Parent-child mediated learning experience strategies - Kelas MateMatika @CC story

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Keywords
Mediated Learning, Positive Parent-Child Interactions, Early Learning opportunities

Abstract

Formed on 10 October 1982, Yayasan MENDAKI (Council for the Development of Singapore Malay/Muslim Community) is a pioneer Self-Help Group in Singapore. Its programmes assist students and individuals with education and training, helping to uplift the Malay/Muslim community's educational performance and develop its resilience and adaptability. MENDAKI continues to work extensively with partners that share and support its vision and mission. They consist of government agencies, schools, mosques, Malay/Muslim organisations, employers, community centres and MAECs, family and student service centres and many more.

Yayasan MENDAKI has adopted Feuerstein's concept of Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) for its KMM@CC programme to support young learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to be ready for early primary by engaging parents. KM@CC is a programme targeted at Malay/Muslim parents with preschool children aged four to six years old and it aims to empower parents to be effective mediators as learning companions for their child's journey into the study of Mathematics and be ready for formal education.

MLE is often perceived as interactions between learners and facilitators (Tzuriel, 2014). This paper/workshop looks at improving quality interactions between the child and their environment through the mediator to improve the cognitive development of the child. Building on Feuerstein's theory of structural cognitive modifiability, intervention during the early years can potentially enhance cognitive functions of young children (Chua, Tan, & Chng, 2017). Enhanced cognitive functions will prepare young children to successfully adapt in changing landscape.

This workshop will also share how we innovatively engage stakeholders in the community to support to ensure fulfilling the last mile service delivery, communicate and impart pedagogical strategies to parents in addressing their concerns on how to scaffold positive parent-child interactions and complement their child's learning in school at home. The KMM@CC does so by integrating real life case scenarios, demonstrations and hands-on activities to strengthen the parent-child interactions. Riding on Feuerstein's theory of MLE, parents are guided to select questions that are relevant and appropriate so as to elicit quality responses from the child. In this approach, the intended outcome is enhanced parents' competency in the context of teaching and learning of basic numeracy concept by using available resources at home. The cross-sharing of knowledge in a small setting facilitated by volunteers form the protector factors in seeding resiliency and functioning families. This workshop will share how parents are assessed as mediators and guided by KMM facilitators to improve their pedagogical practices at home.

Moving forward, a longitudinal study has been initiated to address concerns of long-term impact and sustainability of learning from the KMM programme to improve academic outcomes. In particular, the impact of the programme on reducing the number of students enrolled in the Learning Support for Mathematics (LSM) programme in primary school.