Becoming an artist/teacher: Diverse interpretations of socio-cultural theories and what this means for children's learning through the visual arts

Dr. Sarah Probine. *Manukau Institute of Technology*

Abstract

Since the 1980's socio-cultural theories have increasingly influenced the early childhood sector impacting both curriculum design and teachers practices. Despite this, in the domain of the visual arts, a myriad of theories, approaches and macro level beliefs about childhood, learning, knowledge and the role of the teacher continue create confusion about what is appropriate practice and why. This chapter will unpack these assumptions and will explore the key issues currently contributing to the confusion in this domain. Differing interpretations of socio-cultural theories in relation to visual arts pedagogies will then be examined. Rich practice based examples will be provided, demonstrating how these ideas have been enacted in three early childhood communities in New Zealand. The narratives shared about these settings will reveal how each teaching team developed their pedagogical ideas over time, and will offer stories of children's engagement in the visual arts and the impact these experiences had on their learning both in their early childhood settings and their homes. This chapter concludes with some new proposals and provocations about the role of the teacher within a socio-cultural paradigm and considers what such interpretations could mean for both the role of the teacher and the agency and involvement of children when learning through the visual arts.

Introduction

Since the 1980's socio-cultural theories have increasingly influenced the early childhood sector. These theories have impacted both how curriculum is conceptualised as well as teachers practices. Despite the increasing dominance of these theories in this sector, in the domain of the visual arts, a myriad of theories, approaches and macro level beliefs about childhood, learning, knowledge and the role of the teacher continue to create confusion about what is appropriate practice and why?

Over the past seven years, my research has explored teacher's practices and children's experiences of the visual arts in early childhood settings that have been influenced by socio-cultural theories. I was interested to learn about how these theories had been interpreted in differing ways, to gather teachers' stories about the factors that had impacted how they conceptualised their teaching approaches, and to understand how they had overcome barriers and challenges. Finally, I was curious about what this meant for children? I wanted to understand how teacher's practices that are influenced by socio-cultural theories impact children's developing identities as art makers and their learning through the visual arts.

The videos you have watched, and this supporting document draw upon my recently completed doctoral research project. A key finding was the unique interpretations of socio-cultural theories that informed the teachers practices in each of the three learning communities who participated in this study. The stories from this research demonstrate the power and possibilities of how socio-cultural theories can enable teachers to conceptualise visual arts curriculum in ways that respond uniquely to their contexts and the aspirations and needs of their individual communities.

Untangling the issues

In order to understand the significance of these practices, it is important to spend some time understanding what issues are currently impacting how the visual arts are currently perceived and valued in early childhood. Existing research uncovers a tangle of theories and values surrounding how

the visual arts are perceived, valued, and taught in the early years. At a macrolevel, several authors argue that societal level "truths" or "myths" can impact how children and their artmaking is valued at a microlevel (Kindler, 1996; Lindsay, 2018; McClure, 2011).

One particularly significant myth is the idea that all children are innately creative, the implication being that they do not need to be taught about the visual arts because they are already "artists". As a result, many teachers feel uneasy about teaching visual arts techniques or talking with children about their artmaking. Further, Lindsay (2018) found in her research that teachers with little content knowledge or confidence to teach the arts were more likely to align their teaching practices with this 'truth' and other myths about children and their art. These beliefs make it easier to justify taking on a 'teacher as onlooker' role and for teachers not pursue further professional development in this domain.

Another macrolevel issue is the impact of political and economic conditions. In New Zealand, the early childhood sector has undergone a number of transformative changes since the 1980's. Although the publication of the early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996) enabled the normalisation of socio-cultural theories, since the turn of the century changes in governance at a national level have resulted in an increasing climate of compliance (Haggerty & Alcock, 2016). The government's emphasis on increasing overall participation in early childhood services resulted in many new early childhood centres opening (Everiss et al., 2017). Whilst all centres in New Zealand receive funding, most charge additional fees. Early childhood settings in communities that cannot absorb additional costs are therefore less well-resourced. The 2010 governmental decision to relinquish an earlier goal of achieving 100% qualified early childhood teachers is a further issue. Reduced numbers of qualified staff can limit the potential for the visual arts to play a meaningful role in curricula. Finally, the current government's view of early childhood education as 'preparation for school', perpetuated by the macrolevel belief that increased competency in literacy and numeracy is the critical factor in impacting future educational outcomes has decreased emphasis on other curriculum areas such as the visual arts (Azzam, 2009).

This is concerning as in the 21st century young children are continuously exposed visual texts. The visual imagery surrounding children can significantly influence how they come to value the visual arts and the artworks they create. Therefore, it is vital that children come to understand how visual texts are constructed, to think critically about images and that they have many opportunities to create their own images to convey meaning. Crafton et al. (2009) argue that this can support children learn to "consider different perspectives, to analyse and problem solve complex issues, and to think critically about social issues" (p. 34).

Conflicting and contrasting views about the role of the teacher are another issue of particular concern because teachers are influential in creating cultures in schools. It is teachers that construct the environment, provide materials, and decide when and where children will create visual arts. They decide how they will respond to children's visual arts processes and products. This is significant as my research demonstrates that experiences of the visual arts in the early years can impact how children view themselves as learners and art makers and these perceptions can endure into adulthood (Probine, 2015; 2021).

Debate around these issues has now spanned five decades. Despite increased exposure to socio-cultural theories, a developmentalist 'hands-off' approach which disregards the contextual nature of knowledge construction, continues to prevail in some early childhood settings. Lindsay (2018) has identified another disquieting trend, where teachers, who may lack confidence or pedagogical knowledge to teach the arts, have returned to more teacher directed approaches, inspired by a proliferation of websites such as Pinterest that offer a myriad of prefabricated art projects.

This recent development highlights the important connection between personal identity and teacher identity. Teachers who have not had access to the arts within their own education, or, who recall negative memories of engaging in the arts, can avoid further learning in this domain (Kenny et al., 2015; Moilanen & Mertala, 2020). Although other early childhood teachers have developed pedagogical approaches to teaching the visual arts that are influenced by socio-cultural theories resulting in children being actively taught about visual arts whilst retaining their agency, only a small amount of research has explored such practices (Lindsay, 2017). A further area that has been under-researched in New Zealand are the perspectives of families and children on the visual arts. This is noteworthy due to the emphasis that socio-cultural and bioecological theories place on contextual and cultural knowledge.

Socio-cultural theories

Both socio-cultural theories and bioecological theories are key concepts that underpin the national early childhood curriculum, Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 2017). These theories recognise that children are embedded within their social, cultural and historical contexts (Clarkin-Phillips, 2012). Children are recognised for the knowledge and skills that they have developed prior to coming to an early childhood setting. Knowledge, in a socio-cultural paradigm is understood as subjective and contextualised. These theories have been fundamental in challenging theories of universal development that have previously dominated the early childhood sector.

Differing interpretations of socio-cultural theories

Vygotsky's theories empahsise the social nature of learning. He argued that children interact with others on an interpersonal level before internalising new information on an intrapersonal level. This process is mediated by cultural tools. Vygotsky was best known for his work on language as a key cultural tool in facilitating cognition, however, he argued that multiple symbol systems can act as languages, including the visual. For him, the key function of language is to aid the transformation of understanding which occurs via a process of articulating thinking in a social context.

The work of Brooks (2017) is particularly significant in terms of understanding how the visual arts can mediate children's meaning making. She believes that a key facet of cultural tools is that they not only aid communication but also promote higher mental functions. These are described by Bodrova and Leong (2007) as the cognitive process that are attained through teaching and learning. They are "deliberate, mediated, internalised behaviours built upon lower mental functions" (p. 20). Higher mental functions are significant because they enable children to become self-reliant learners who have the metacognitive capacity to make choices about which tools will support their learning.

In her study of children's drawing as a cultural tool, Brooks (2017) found that visual representations are more closely connected to thought than verbal language. The process of drawing helps children to retain information. The tangible nature of drawing makes children's ideas visible to others, thus, fostering co-construction. Children's artwork can be revisited many times and can support children who may not have the verbal language to also contribute their ideas. Therefore, in a social climate, where children are exchanging ideas and working theories through their artwork, the visual arts are a fundamental metacognitive tool.

Brooks (2017), however, highlights that the teacher's role in this process is crucial as it is the teacher that is responsible for creating an environment of co-construction and exchange and who role models the use of valued cultural tools. How teachers interpret socio-cultural theories is therefore a critical part of the puzzle as differing interpretations could result in conversely different classroom cultures. For example, the notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) has been a very significant

influence on the early childhood sector. The ZPD is the distance between the current level of development and the level that can be achieved with the guidance of a knowledgeable other. This theory has since been interpreted in conversely different ways. Examples include scaffolding and co-construction. Scaffolding, conceptualised by Bruner (1962), has been critiqued due to the way this approach emphasises the adult's knowledge. It is the adult who gradually diminishes control as the child develops their capacity to develop a new skill, therefore, taking a position of power. In contrast, co-construction positions the child as a key participant in their own learning (Jordan, 2009). The teacher's role is far more complex when implementing a co-constructivist approach due to the need to understand the child's prior knowledge, their dispositions and their culture as a basis to plan for their learning.

Taking on a co-constructivist approach has been argued to better address knowledge-power issues by allowing both teacher and child agency as art-makers. However, in terms of the visual arts, residual influence of previous developmentalist approaches have contributed to the pedagogical confusion leaving many teachers questioning how much involvement is appropriate when supporting children's artmaking. The work of Bae (2004) and Jensen (2018) for instance, leans towards positioning the teacher as a guide who scaffolds children's visual arts making. Taking on the role of guide enables teachers to actively engage with children, however, the teacher is still compelled to withhold their full ability from the child, focusing instead on developing the child's artistry and ideas. I believe this interpretation continues to place the teacher in a position of power. Through partially suppressing their artistic skills and knowledge, the child is still regarded as sacrosanct in terms of their 'unfolding' creativity.

Ongoing interpretations of socio-cultural theories have challenged this perspective. Clark and de Lautour (2010) and Knight (2008) for instance, claim that both child and teacher can be active participants in visual arts making through co-construction and collaboration. Knight (2008), for example, argues that forms of intervention such as collaborative drawing can lead to teachers and children developing understanding each other's cultural perspectives. This position seeks to readdress knowledge-power issues and allows the teacher and child to retain agency in the meaning-making process.

All these interpretations recognise the integral roles relationships and thus, teachers, play in the learning process and highlight how different interpretations of theory can result in conversely different approaches to pedagogy. Socio-cultural theories argue that visual arts curriculum be conceived according to each unique context. Settings need to take into consideration the values, needs and aspirations of their setting and surrounding community, how knowledge, learning and childhood are understood in their context, and the cultural tools that are valued. In terms of pedagogy, it is critical that teaching teams develop a clear conception of their identities as art makers and teachers and to consider what means in terms of how the visual arts will be taught (Probine, 2020b).

Introducing the research

These ideas come alive when they are illustrated through stories from practice. My doctoral research explores narratives collected from three participating early childhood settings demonstrating how each centre community developed their visual arts curriculum and pedagogies, influenced by these theoretical ideas.

This was a qualitative interpretivist project that was underpinned by socio-cultural and bioecological theories. These two sets of theories strongly underpin the early childhood curriculum, Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 2017) and so were a good fit for this project. Because these theories recognise

that knowledge is subjective and that context, including relationships, the environment, cultural tools, and time all impact children's development and learning, I chose to draw upon Narrative inquiry as a methodological approach. Clandinin and Rosiek (2019) argue:

> Beginning with a respect for ordinary lived experience, the focus of narrative inquiry is not only a valorising of individuals' experience but also an exploration of the social, cultural, and institutional narratives within which individuals' experiences were constituted, shaped, expressed, and enacted— but in a way that begins and ends that inquiry in the storied lives of the people involved (p. 42).

In this research, I was interested in collecting the stories of my participants through a range of differing methods including the visual, and to present the final research project also as a collection of stories. A third set of theories surrounding how identity is formed in the early years and that consider how personal identity impacts teaching pedagogy also informed my study design (Olsen, 2008; Pillen et al., 2013).

The research sought to understand ways in which contextual factors shape how young children come to value and use the visual arts in their learning across the differing contexts of early childhood settings and homes. For this reason I spent time in three microsystems but was also interested in exploring mesosystem interactions between early childhood settings and children's homes. To this end, I purposively selected three early childhood settings in Auckland, New Zealand. Each of these settings are known for their rich practices in the visual arts that are influenced by socio-cultural theories. These centres and my participants were given pseudonyms apart from my key child participants and their parents who gave their permission to use their given first names in the reporting of the research.

At each centre, key documents including philosophy statements and pedagogical documentation were analysed. I conducted classroom observations and gave the participating teachers reflective art journals. In these journals, the teachers were invited to reflect on their own visual histories and current practices through creating and finding images and writing reflections. At the end of this phase, a group conversation took place with each teaching team and an online questionnaire was made available for parents and caregivers. At the questionnaire's conclusion, families could indicate their interest in participating in phase two and becoming 'key participants'. This phase took place in five homes of children attending these settings. Children and their parents were given digital cameras for a period of three weeks and were invited to record experiences they found visually meaningful. Later, a conversation focused on these images took place in either the child's home or at their early childhood setting. Narrative approaches were also employed during the analysis of data. I created interim research texts as I sought connections between macro-level influences and the micro-level narratives I had collected (Creswell, 2019).

Narratives from the research

A key finding was the way that all three centre had conceptualised a distinct image of childhood which informed the teacher's visual arts pedagogies. All three centres positioned children as agentic contributors to their own learning. I discovered how the teachers' practices, underpinned by this positioning, strongly influenced how children in each centre experienced visual arts.

Amanta kindergarten

Figure 1: Amanta kindergarten

The physical environment at Amanta is similar to that of an artist's studio. All five teachers created a reflective art journal. The stories the recorded in these revealed the influence of early role models of the visual arts as they each recalled their creative mothers', art works in their family homes, galleries visited, and materials explored and played with as children. Several of the teachers experienced the anguish of a shift in pedagogical approaches as they reached secondary school art classes. These stories revealed how changes in how the arts are valued and teachers differing pedagogical approaches as children move through their schooling can impact children's developing artistic identities (Probine, 2020a).

The process of collectively examining different pedagogical ideas had been significant for this teaching team. Several of the teachers had found engaging with the pedagogical ideas of Reggio Emilia had deepened their understanding of children's capabilities, the potential of visual arts as a mediator of learning, as well as their own roles as teachers of and with the visual arts. The most significant finding derived from these stories however, was the way that each of these teachers, despite challenges faced in their own educational experiences, had discovered ways to reawaken their artistic identities. This was something they nurtured in their personal time, for example, through painting, drawing and repurposing and remaking.

Children at Amanta are viewed as artists, however not in the sense of a romanticised view of the tortured creative, but rather, children are viewed as capable of exploring visual media and ideas in an exploratory way and of applying creative thinking to solve their own problems.

Also significant, was the way in which the teachers at this centre made the conscious decision to make their artistic identities visible to the children and families. As such, they role modelled projects and processes with and alongside children. They created collaborative projects for children to be involved in and at times co-created alongside children. The purpose of these practices was to role model their own creative thinking and problem solving and make this visible for children. As a result, the children at Amanta are independent and accomplished visual art makers

Twins, Ellie and Sydney and their mother Rebecca, were some of my key child participants at Amanta. The images captured both by Rebecca and Ellie and Sydney, revealed they have constant access to visual arts materials in their homes as well as opportunities to regularly visit visually rich environments outside of their homes. The photographs Ellie and Sydney captured were particularly interesting. These girls were infatuated with animals. Their images helped both myself and their mother, Rebecca,

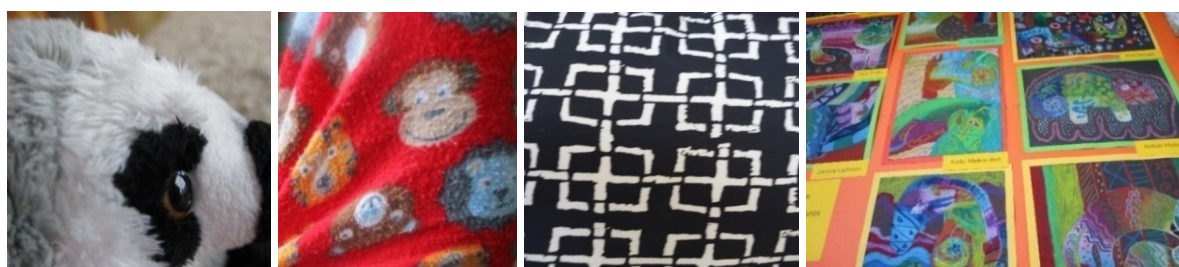to understand more about this interest and to realise that texture and fur were a deep preoccupation

Figure 2: Images captured by Ellie and Sydney

for them.

Ahwero community based centre

Figure 3: Awhero community based centre

The philosophy at Awhero is strongly influenced by a Māori[1] world view but is also influenced by the pedagogical ideas of Reggio Emilia. The environment at Awhero is dominated by a large room called te ao toi which translates as (the world of art).

Two of the teachers who worked predominantly with the older children at this centre shared their stories, Hannah created a reflective art journal and Susan told me her story aurally through a video-taped interview. Hannah's story evoked aspects of the teachers' stories at Amanta; she recalled the influence of early role models of art and creativity and recalled the significant learning she had engaged in during her years at Playcentre[2].

Susan expressed a deep value for education as a means to open doors. She shared her personal passion for rāranga (weaving). Through weaving she had accessed her personal creativity. Through our conversation I was able to recognise threads of connection between her description of the process of learning to weave with harakeke (flax) and her visual arts pedagogy. She spoke of gently guiding children in their work whilst ensuring they developed a deep sense of self-worth and an understanding of their cultural identity as they engaged in visual arts. Likewise, when describing the weaving process she explained the flax always had a say in how a final piece came to life. For Susan, identity and visual arts are intrinsically intertwined.

---

[1] Māori are the Tangata whenua (original inhabitants) of New Zealand.
[2] Playcentre is a type of early childhood provision in New Zealand in which parents play an integral role in the running of the centre (Densem, 1980)

Figure 4: Working collaboratively

Children at Awhero are viewed as Taonga (treasure), and a core value held by the teaching team is the notion that visual arts are a conduit for developing individual and cultural identity. As a result, children at Awhero collaborate continuously. Each day, when the children make small but personally significant discoveries in their environment, their teachers respond sensitively, recognising opportunities to make connections with Papatūāuku and Ranginui[3]. For example, on one occasion, four year old Debbie, discovered some flowers in the garden and Myra, one of her teachers responded by suggesting she paint them. Together, they collected the materials they needed, inviting other children along the way.

Rose and her mother Lucy were two of my key participants at Awhero. Rose and Lucy's images reflected, as her teachers also shared, the important role of family in her life. The influence of popular culture in Rose's life was more evident in these images than in the documentation gathered in the centre. Rose didn't have the access to art materials that some of the other key child participants involved in this study had. Lucy explained that in a busy home, with many children, setting up art experiences could be quite challenging and this is why she deeply valued the opportunities Rose had at Awhero.

Alfredo private early childhood centre

Figure 5: The physical environment at Alfredo

Alfredo, like Awhero, is strongly influenced by Reggio Emilia. This centre has a full time atelierista (arts specialist) who works predominantly from a main atelier and smaller atelier in all the classrooms. The centre atelierista and three of the pre-school teachers participated and created reflective art journals. Andrea, the centre atelierista holds a Masters of fine arts, however, the other teachers spoke of their reticence about their artistic abilities. This was significant as the literature suggests that if teachers do not develop confidence or appreciation for the visual arts as part of their personal identities, they are less likely to develop this aspect of their teaching (Barry and Durham, 2017; McArdle, 2012). Yet, at Alfredo, because of the nested model of support (including the pedagogical team, atelierista and regular professional

---

[3] The earth's formation is described by Māori by the creation story in which Ranginui (the sky father) and Papatūānuku (the earth mother) were initially joined. Their children eventually parted them, frustrated by their cramped confines and went to become atua (gods) of the earth.

development) that has been developed to support each teaching team, the teachers have embraced the visual arts in the classroom.

Alfredo is a part of a larger franchise. All of the centres that are part of this group have a shared pedagogical focus. The current focus of this group was 'How do we nurture an ecological future?' The children and teachers spend time each day working on long term inquiry based projects where children explore their working theories. Children are invited daily to work on these projects at a morning meeting where the teachers, supported by Andrea, the centre atelierista, remind children of their previous thinking and work before suggesting new proposals for the next day's work. The visual arts play a central role in supporting children to explore their ideas and communicate thinking to others. Each teacher articulated how they are developing a rich understanding of the intrinsic role the visual arts play in children's knowledge construction processes.

Children at this centre are viewed as theory makers, capable of conducting their own research about their world. The visual arts are valued as a key means through which they can explore ideas and share their thinking with others. I found that the children at Alfredo utilised the skills they learned during their inquiry based projects and transferred these skills to their self-directed play. They often created visual arts in groups, collaborating, exchanging ideas and selecting materials thoughtfully.

Figure 6: Images of winged 'My little ponies' captured by Finn

Finn, and his parents, Shannon and Dylan were my key participants at Alfredo. This families images revealed the deep interest Finns parents took in his art making. Finn has many opportunities to create art at home, and at his Nan's house. His parents are very interested in his work at Alfredo and support him to continue his inquiries at home, for example, his interest in winged creatures.

Key findings about the role of the teacher in a socio-cultural paradigm

The teacher's stories in this research revealed that significant memories from each teacher's personal history were significant in shaping their beliefs about the arts and their role in education. Other macrolevel influences, for example, the pedagogical ideas of Reggio Emilia had also been significant. There is therefore, great value in teachers spending time establishing links between their personal artistic identity and teacher identity, to think about how they personally value visual art and why that is, and to consider what this means for how they teach in this domain (Probine, in press).

What is particularly significant in this research is the way in the teachers at each setting had personal experience and knowledge of the arts and creativity and this knowledge strongly impacted their teaching. Having personal understanding of the visual arts is significant as it means teachers are more likely to conceptualise curriculum that encompasses this domain (Lummis et al, 2014; Garvis & Pendergast, 2011). Furthermore, in this research, the teachers' at all three centres explicitly shared

their knowledge of the visual arts to the children and families they worked with. Each centre did this in differing ways. This could be due to the fact that some of the teachers had been nurturing their artistic identities for many years, whereas others, such as some of the teachers at Alfredo, were beginning this journey with support of the centre atelierista and the wider pedagogical team. Having personal content knowledge of the visual arts meant that these teachers could engage in meaningful, authentic discussions with children as they could truly empathise with children's visual arts processes and challenges. This also meant that in some cases, these teachers could offer support to teachers who were less confident with this domain.

Traditionally, the artist/teacher has been understood and presented in the literature as someone with professional expertise who works as a specialist in this area, for example, Andrea's role as atelierista. Not all centres however, have the capacity to hire a full time arts specialist, and so, I believe there is great value in recognising and nurturing the expertise of teachers who have personal experience and knowledge of the visual arts, to be acknowledged for their expertise, and to be encouraged to work with children and mentor teachers in their centre communities. An alternative is that centres could access external experts to work for periods of time in the centre on specific projects.

All three of these centres practices were underpinned by socio-cultural theories. These theories require a "commitment to particular values such as uncertainty, subjectivity, democracy, creativity, curiosity and a desire to experiment and border cross" (Dhalberg et al., 2013, p. xii). The influence of these theories became visible in the ways in which each setting had conceptualised unique ways of valuing childhood, knowledge, learning, and the role of the visual arts in education. As such, their practices and curriculum were unique to each context. A crucial aspect of their practices were the environments of collaboration and exchange they created in which children's ideas and interpretations were as valued as adults. These practices align with a co-constructivist approach. Also significant was the way each centre worked hard to share their work and the value of the visual arts to their wider communities. In response, the families at each centre expressed their understanding of how the visual arts can support children's learning. They continued to support children's visual interests at home sharing this with their children's teachers. Through all of this, the children in this research demonstrated that they are adept visual researchers.

Implications and provocations for future discussion

Over the past few decades there has been much debate surrounding the dominance of developmental theories and the resulting hands-off approaches that continue to dominate many early childhood teacher's practices in the visual arts. Socio-cultural theories have been argued as more appropriate due to the way that they recognise the crucial role of relationships in learning, the subjective nature of knowledge and the complex set of influences that impact each learning context. What has been less explored in the literature is the differing ways that socio-cultural theories have been interpreted throughout past decades and how these differing interpretations can impact children's learning through the arts.

The unique interpretations of socio-cultural theories explored this research demonstrate that there is scope to continue the conversation about the teacher's role in this domain. What these stories illustrate, is that there is value in empowering teachers to move beyond the position of 'guide', to nurture their artistic identities and to make visible their skills and knowledge of the visual arts to the children they work with. I argue that in doing so, teachers can truly reposition themselves as co-constructors of learning with the young children they work with.

Acknowledgements

References

Azzam, A. M. (2009). Why creativity now? A conversation with Sir Ken Robinson. *Educational Leadership, 67*(1), 22-26.

Barry, N. H., & Durham, S. (2017). Music in the early childhood curriculum: Qualitative analysis of pre-service teachers' reflective writing. *International Journal of Education & the Arts, 18*(16), 1-19.

Bae, J. H. (2004). Learning to teach visual arts in an early childhood classroom: The teacher's role as a guide. *Early Childhood Education, 31*(4), 247–254.

Bodrova, E., & Leong, D. J. (2007). *Tools of the mind: The Vygotskian approach to early childhood education* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Prentice Hall.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development*. Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological modes of human development. In M. Gauvain & M. Cole, (Eds.), *Readings on the development of children* (2nd ed., pp. 37–43). Freeman.

Brooks, M. (2017). Drawing to learn. In M. Narey (Ed.), *Multimodal perspectives of language, literacy, and learning in early childhood* (pp. 25–44). Springer.

Bruner, J. (1962). *On knowing: Essays for the left hand*. Belknap Press of Harvard University.

Clandinin, D. J. (2014). *Engaging in narrative inquiry*. Left Coast Press.

Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2019). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: Borderland spaces and tensions. In *Journeys in Narrative Inquiry* (pp. 35-75). Routledge.

Clark, B., & de Lautour, N. (2009). In early childhood education, should the adult's role be hands on or hands-off, or is there a role which is somewhere in-between or somewhere beyond? *Scope (Art & Design), 4*, 115–119.

Clarkin-Phillips, J. (2012). Connecting curriculum and policy to assist families' aspirations. *Waikato Journal of Education*, *17*(1), 17-27.

Crafton, L., Silvers, P., & Brennan, M. (2009). Creating a critical multi-literacies curriculum: Repositioning art in the early childhood classroom. In M. Narey (Ed.), *Making meaning: Constructing multimodal perspectives of language, literacy, and learning through arts-based early childhood education* (pp. 31–51). Springer.

Creswell, J.W. (2019). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. (6th ed.). Pearson Education.

Densem, A. (1980). *The Playcentre way*. The New Zealand Playcentre Federation.

Dahlberg, G., Moss, P., & Pence, A. (2013). *Beyond quality in early childhood education and care: Languages of evaluation*. Routledge.

Everiss, L., Hill, D., & Meade, A. (2017). A story of changing state priorities: Early childhood care and education policies in Aotearoa New Zealand. In H. Li, E. Park, & J. J. Chen (Eds.), *Early childhood education policies in Asia Pacific: Advances in theory and practice* (pp. 163–186). Springer.

Garvis, S., & Pendergast, D. (2011). An investigation of early childhood teacher self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching of arts education. *International journal of education & the arts*, *12*(9), 1-15.

Haggerty, M., & Alcock, S. (2016). The changing roles of early childhood care and education in Aotearoa New Zealand: A shifting policy landscape. *Global Studies of Childhood, 6*(1), 136–146.

Jensen, K. (2018). Early childhood: Learning through visual art. *He Kupu, 5*(3), 75–82.

Jordan, B. (2009). Scaffolding learning and co-constructing understandings. In A. Anning, J. Cullen, & M. Fleer (Eds.), *Early childhood education: Society and culture* (2nd ed., pp. 39–52). Sage.

Kenny, A., Finneran, M., & Mitchell, E. (2015). Becoming an educator through the arts: Forming and informing teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 49*, 159–167.

Kindler, A. M. (1996). Myths, habits, research, and policy: The four pillars of early childhood art education. *Arts Education Policy Review, 97*(4), 24–30.

Knight, L. (2008). Communication and transformation through collaboration: Rethinking drawing activities in early childhood. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 9*(4), 306–316.

Lindsay, G. M. (2017). *Art is experience: An exploration of the visual arts beliefs and pedagogy of Australian early childhood educators* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). University of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia.

Lindsay, G. M. (2018). The art of the matter: Challenging educator beliefs and misbeliefs. *Preschool Matters, 4*(1), 40–42.

Lummis, G. W., Morris, J., & Paolino, A. (2014). An investigation of Western Australian pre-service primary teachers' experiences and self-efficacy in The Arts. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 39*(5), 50-64.

McClure, M. (2011). Child as totem: Redressing the myth of inherent creativity in early childhood. *Studies in Art Education, 52*(2), 127–141.

McArdle, F. (2012). New maps for learning for quality art education: What pre-service teachers should learn and be able to do. *Australian Educational Researcher, 39*(1), 91–106.

Ministry of Education. (1996). *Te Whāriki matauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum.* Wellington, NZ: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (2017). *Te Whāriki matauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum.* Wellington, NZ: Learning Media.

Olsen, B. (2008). *Teaching what they learn, learning what they live*. Paradigm.

Pillen, M. T., Den Brok, P. J., & Beijaard, D. (2013). Profiles and change in beginning teachers' professional identity tensions. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 34*, 86–97.

Probine, S. (2015). *The visual arts as a tool for learning within an early childhood setting* (Unpublished master's thesis). The University of Auckland.

Probine, S. (2020a). Becoming an artist/teacher: Supporting pre-service teachers to develop their confidence and pedagogical knowledge to actively teach the arts in early childhood. In J. Perry, & S. Probine (Eds.), *Fresh provocations: Exploring the Interface between theory and practice* (pp. 105-113). Manukau Institute of Technology.

Probine, S. (2020b). *Examining the in-between: Contextual factors on how young children learn through the visual arts* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). University of Auckland.

Probine, S. (In press). Becoming an artist/teacher: Supporting pre-service teachers to develop their confidence and pedagogical knowledge to effectively and actively teach the arts in early childhood. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education.*

Vygotsky, L. S. (1962). *Thought and language*. Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Harvard University. Press.