THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON

Conference or Workshop Item

Title: Young children's research behaviours: teachers and parents as help or hindrance?

Creator: Murray, J.

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Note: Presentation notes

http://nectar.northampton.ac.uk/9263/

Part 1: Introduction to the Young Children as Researchers (YCAR) Study
Part 2: How do Young Children Behave as Researchers?
Part 3: What Influences Young Children to behave as Researchers?

Part 1: Introduction to the YCAR Study

Starting Point 1

Starting Point 2
UNCRC (OHCHR, 1989)

Article 12
States Parties shall assure to the child who is **capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child**, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
Article 13
The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include **freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds**, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.
Starting Point 3
Young children are excluded from the academy

'Children are excluded by tradition, authority and dependency, first from the adult world and then from the even more rarefied worlds of academia and policymaking' (Redmond, 2008:9)

Starting Point 4

Can young children be researchers?

Starting Point 5

Children are Capable

The Capability Approach

Agency: a person's ability to pursue and realize goals she values and has reason to value.

Can we interpret children's behaviours as research (Murray, 2012)?

Why did we need the **YCAR** Study?

YCAR Aims and research questions

Aim: To conceptualise ways in which young children aged 4-8 years are researchers, could develop as researchers and may be considered to be researchers

Research Questions:

What is the nature of ECEC research?

How can a study be conducted to establish young children as researchers?

What enquiries are important to young children and how can they engage in them?

What support structures might encourage young children to participate in research? What barriers might prevent this?

YCaR How can a study be conducted to establish young children as researchers?

Plural Paradigms

YCaR Methodology

How can a study be conducted to establish young children as researchers?

YCaR Participants (Phases I and II)

YCaR Phase III Participants

YCaR Multiple Methods

Part 2: Some YCAR Study Findings

Phase I - What is the nature of ECEC research?

Phases II and III - Findings…

YCaR Incidences of Young Children's presentations of Four Important Research Behaviours

Children find new ways to conceptualise when an adult has stopped their conceptualisation

How do Young Children Behave as Researchers?

Applies a mental model

Translates external processes into symbols

Reasons to elicit new symbols

Retranslates the new symbols into external processes

(**Craik, 1943**; Forrester, 1975; Johnson-Laird, 1983; Klein and D'Esposito, 2007; Kant, 1787)

Part 3: Young Children's Capabilities as Researchers
YCAR Findings – Phases II and III
What support structures might encourage young children to participate in research?
What barriers might prevent this?

The Capability Approach
 'Children are excluded by tradition, authority and dependency, first from the adult world and then from the even more rarefied worlds of academia and policymaking' (Redmond, 2008:9)
YCAR provides the building blocks for including children in those 'rarefied worlds'
The Capability Approach
Agency:
a person's ability to pursue and realise goals she values and has reason to value.

YCAR Key Messages through the lens of the Capability Approach
Young children engage in important research behaviour in their everyday activities: this deserves recognition by policymakers, practitioners and the academy.
This is young children's agency.
YCAR highlights young children's natural behaviour and shows how links to extant literature can reveal highly sophisticated processes underpinning those behaviours. **Young children can and do behave in ways that are congruent with adult researchers' behaviours.**
These are young children's capabilities.

YCAR reveals key epistemological factors that influence young children's high quality constructions of knowledge. For practitioners supporting and assessing young children's constructions of knowledge, referencing the YCAR epistemological factors may be useful.
They are young children's functionings in research

Read more about the YCAR Study...
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Murray, J. (2015a) Young Children as Researchers in Play. In J. Moyles (Ed.) (2015) *The Excellence of Play*. 4e. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education. Pp. 106-124. ISBN -13:978-0-3352-6418-6.
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Murray, J. (2014a) Young Children Explore: Critical thinking for the early years. *Inspire*. **8**: 24-27.
Murray, J. (2013c) Young Children's Research Behaviour? Children aged 4-8 years finding solutions at home and at school. *Early Child Development and Care*. **183** (8): 1147-1165. ISSN 0300-4430.

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Murray, J. (2013a) Young Children Explore. *Teach Nursery*. **3** (8): 30-31.

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