The Reggio Emilia and the Mosaic approach: Opponents or allies in multimodal teaching and learning? A discussion of their contribution to multimodal learning in early years education

Neuza Brandao
University of East London, neuzaecar86@hotmail.com

Evgenia Theodotou
University of East London, e.theodotou@uel.ac.uk

Corresponding Author

Neuza Brandao, Cass School of Education and Communities, University of East London, UK

The Reggio Emilia and the Mosaic Approach: Opponents or Allies in Multimodal Teaching and Learning? A Discussion of their Contribution to Multimodal Learning in Early Years Education

Neuza Maria Dias Brandao[1] and Evgenia Theodotou[2]

Cass School of Education and Communities
University of East London, UK
[1]neuzacar86@hotmail.com
[2]e.theodotou@uel.ac.uk

Abstract

Multimodality is an important element of teaching and learning in early years settings. It provides opportunities for young children to communicate using different resources they feel comfortable with. This paper focuses on multimodality and multimodal learning in early years education and the different approaches, which can be used to create a multimodal learning environment. The purpose of this paper is to discuss how two powerful approaches, such as the Reggio Emilia and the Mosaic allow multimodal learning, which is crucial for children's holistic development. The Reggio Emilia approach and the Mosaic approach are discussed, focusing on the strategies used to support children in their development using their multimodal ways of communication. The Reggio Emilia approach is analysed as an example that appreciates the artistic work of children (i.e., drawings to express their way of thinking) while on the other hand, the Mosaic approach is analysed as an example that supports children to have a leading role in their learning journey. This paper can be used as a starting point in raising awareness of practical multimodal teaching practices in early years education.

Keywords: multimodality, preschool, social and cultural contexts

Introduction

Learning is a significant and vital process for all children in the globe as it includes everything children will deal with in their future life. It is crucial children, in early childhood education, have opportunities to develop their social, physical, emotional, and intellectual abilities by exploring the world in many diverse ways. Therefore, early years education aims to contribute in this process by providing children with opportunities to develop their potential and their skills and at the same time enjoy this learning journey. Early years education also provides high quality educational benefits for the children by supporting them in their first steps in their learning journey.

There is a dispute in the literature about the type of educational approach in early years education. According to Eshach (2007), early childhood incorporates all forms of education (e.g., formal and informal education). He highlights formal education that includes activities in which knowledges is constructed in an educational setting (e.g., school classrooms) while informal education includes activities where knowledge is constructed outdoors and not in an educational setting. This happens when no guidelines are involved; such a setting could be children's home, playground, etc. On the other hand, there are researchers, such as Moyles (1989), who advocate that effective early childhood education should focus mainly on free play methods and not on formal procedures. Moyles (1989) stresses the positive effects of free play on children's cognitive development. She highlights an approach, which enables children to build up their confidence and develop important social skills. Bruce (2001) also supports this argument and presents a strong case in which she explains how young children make use of free play to understand the world and build new knowledge.

Looking at both sides, it can be argued early childhood education aims to support children to develop their academic, social, and cognitive skills. The good quality of care and education outside the children's home is essential to support children to flourish in school. According to the current policy documents of early childhood in the UK context (see Department for Education, 2017; Early Education, 2012), every child is unique and needs the opportunity to interact and build positive relationships with others in an enabling environment. This leads to the need to plan carefully the teaching interventions with young children in order to demonstrate effective practice.

Teaching approaches in early years settings are important to encourage children to develop their full potentials and build a strong learning basis (Tulbure, 2011). The Mosaic approach and the Reggio Emilia approach are two key approaches that have the potential to integrate multimodality and to facilitate children's learning. This is important as these approaches support early years professionals to share a better understanding about children's thinking and interactions and to respond to children's needs effectively.

Multimodality is an aspect of communication. Multimodality is important to be included in the teaching and learning process as it describes communication practices (Kress et al., 2001). However, it goes further than this and accepts that communication includes textual, aural, linguistic, spatial, and visual modes. The term mode is defined as aspects and resources that can be used to communicate ideas and thoughts (Yelland et al., 2008). The key is children understand new concepts and digest new information through groups of practice. The term groups of practice includes group of activities in which children learn through interaction with others. Through this interaction, they use learning strategies that are determined by the context where these interactions take place (Anning & Ring, 1999). Modes are influenced by the home cultures and beliefs, but also the educational settings. Allowing children to use different modes, supports them to make meaning through drawing, modelling and manipulating objects, gestures, pictures, signs, music, etc. (Edwards et al., 2012). Modes are very significant in multimodal learning in the meaning making process. With this way, children are able to create a foundation of knowledge and understand through or using symbolic representation in meaningful communication using their own ways to communicate (Mahn, 2012; Martin & Evaldsson, 2012).

The use of technology is of great influence in early years classroom and in the process of multimodal learning. According to Jewitt (2012), teachers' and students' roles can be transformed

in classrooms due to new technologies innovation features. The use of technology in the curriculum recalls a reconceptualization of communication modes especially in a multimodal classroom. For example, new technologies provide an extensive range of communication modes such as music, voice, text, image, colour animations, movement, and sound effects (Siegel, 2006). This shows the strong impact of a multimodal environment in children's learning process. It shares great potential of providing interactive relationships, and different ways of learning to accommodate everyone's needs. In a multimodal environment, each individual has the opportunity to utilise different resources and modes.

In the next sections, there is a discussion of the two different approaches that can be linked with multimodality. Critical arguments are made to analyse the many aspects these approaches influence and support child development in the meaning-making process in social and cultural contexts.

Reggio Emilia Approach

This paper argues that the Reggio Emilia approach allows children to choose how they want to communicate and explore the world using different modes. The Reggio Emilia approach was developed after the World War II by Malaguzzi in Italy to support children under six years old and it used the arts as a way of learning and communication. It protects the rights of the child to be recognised as a constructor of their own experiences extending their potential and ability to socialise with others (Yelland et al., 2008).

The Reggio Emilia approach aims to support children to use their own way of communication such as cognitive, gestural, expressive, or symbolic in an environment, which allows children to reflect their own ideas, behaviours, and culture (Edwards et al., 2012; Moss, 2016; Rinaldi, 2004a). Similarly, Nutbrown and Abbott (2009) state this approach allows children to be creative by using different modes to communicate and express themselves. It values their interests and promotes child responsibility, discovery, exploration, empowerment, participation of the family, community, and autonomy. For example, in a Reggio classroom the use of text, image, and audio are used during the interactions among the practitioners and the children. Also, movement and dance are highly considered in the Reggio Emilia approach as an important part of everyday routines and interactions. These aspects are strongly linked with multimodality, because they use different modes where children can freely express themselves to communicate their thoughts and ideas.

The Reggio Emilia philosophy encourages discovery, exploration, and creativity. There are a lot of inherent factors within this philosophy that describe the quality of interactions among adults and children. This paper analyses them and demonstrates the link with multimodal learning.

The Reggio Emilia approach demonstrates that children have a *hundred* languages to communicate and these are through expressive arts (Strong-Wilson & Ellis, 2007). In a Reggio school, children are encouraged to participate in a variety of expressive art activities such as sculpture, dramatic play, shadow play, puppetry, painting, dancing, music, ceramics, construction, and writing (Giardiello et al., 2014). This is important because such practices support young children to develop all areas of learning and understanding, not only the logical and linguistic. For example, this can give children the opportunity to look at and experience their surroundings in many

different ways. Children through expressive arts are encouraged to use all their senses to seek a greater understanding through observation, analysis, and piecing together what they experience (Valentine, 1999).

In a similar vein, the hundred languages give to the child the capacity to communicate through a variety of means, such as gestures, glances, emotion, dance, music, sculpture. The Reggio Emilia approach is an educational philosophy that focuses on experimental learning in educational environments where children are the centre of their learning journey. Therefore, the philosophy of the Reggio Emilia approach provides emphasis on the environment of the educational setting, the physical environment, participation, family, and community involvement. As defined by Edwards et al. (2012), the hundred languages of children are a key principle in the Reggio Emilia philosophy, which allows children to share their thoughts and ideas using different ways of communication such as gestures, drawing, movement, music. This enables the practitioners to use developmentally appropriate ways to support children to expand their academic and social potential and being free to share their ideas with the world surrounding them (Valentine,1999). Additionally, the hundred languages of children also denote endless opportunities each child naturally takes advantage of during their free time activities. An example of these activities could be dancing, talking, painting, writing, and acting. This knowledge encourages children's initiatives and also creates a secure positive environment, which supports each child individually in their educational journey.

It is argued that the hundred languages are extremely expressive, with an enormous capacity for sharing feelings and emotions, and that imagination plays a key role in the child's search for knowledge and understanding (Valentine, 1999). Multimodality provides freedom to communicate in many different ways using different modes. Therefore, it can be argued that Reggio's expressive arts link with multimodal learning as it involves children experiencing the world based on the use of words, gestures, discussions, mime, puppets, and constructions to communicate.

As the role of parental involvement is important in child development (Wild 2007),, the Reggio philosophy promotes parents' active participation in the school's routines. Therefore, parental involvement is essential to support children to reach their goals. For example, parents are part of the school activities, learning programmes from school to home, school improvements, attendance, and homework support. It can be argued, as an outcome of this engagement, family support benefits the children in social, emotional, physical, and practical development since children are more likely to improve their behaviour and social skills with higher levels of self-esteem (Zellman & Waterman,1998). It is argued that this practice of parental involvement will facilitate children to develop an understanding of theirs and others' emotion expressions. This is based on the argument that the individual differences in family dynamics may be relevant to children's patterns of responding to positive involvement and engagement during activity in any contextual environments (Montague & Walker, 2002).

The parental involvement in the school activities builds a very strong foundation in children's school performance and this can result in benefits in multimodal learning (Al-Alwan, 2014). In fact, the relationship between parent, teacher, and the learner can be much more effective if the teacher seeks advice from the parent about the preferred ways of communication of the child (Theodotou, 2017). This collaboration supports children to build up confidence.

On the other hand, Thornton and Brunton (2015) critically mention this outcome could not be the same for all learners. For example, working parents might not have the time to fully dedicate their participation in children's activities. Edwards et al. (2012) disagree with this by outlining that accepting parents to participate in children's schooling life contributes to harmony in practice. They focus their arguments by looking at child welfare and essential rights to social participation and in empowering children to be at the centre of their learning at all times. They conclude that this practice will encourage society to recognise each child is unique.

The above arguments share strong links with multimodality. Developing strong links between the home and school is a good practice to encourage children to participate using the forms of communication that are better for them. This also involves meetings among children, parents, and teachers to build the image of the child as an individual, and often involves the child doing a task relevant to them and derives from their own desires. For example, as an outcome of their holiday, making a holiday booklet of photographs, songs they have learned, what they have seen, what they know about their culture, and favourite nursery rhymes. In this way, children are allowed use their own modes to communicate and express their ideas which is a basic part of multimodal learning (Edwards et al., 2012).

Another aspect within the Reggio context, which is important to discuss, is the teaching and learning process. The learning process within the Reggio Emilia approach considers parents' and teachers' participation and children's free play as an important aspect in education (Nutbrown & Abbott, 2009). Therefore, the reason for documenting the child learning experiences is crucial. For example, teachers observe children during their free play and focus on elements of their relationships, behaviour, and knowledge (Rinaldi, 2004a). This shows the need of the documentation in terms of the pedagogy of the Reggio Emilia approach as it takes place during true learning experiences and not during pre-designed activities that are forced on the children to do (Rinaldi, 2006). Moreover, it also helps the teacher to identify any potential difficulties on a behavioural, physical, or emotional level and have evidence for future support development (Rinaldi, 2004a).

The Reggio Emilia approach is not about developing teachers understanding of how to teach but about developing their understanding of how children learn (Rinaldi, 2004b). This explains teachers are encouraged to understand children's learning processes rather than acquiring skills and knowledge they then expect children to learn. Teachers are co-constructers of learning. This means partnership between teacher and children and other educational professionals is developed, providing creative learning opportunities in the Reggio Emilia settings (Rinaldi, 2004b). This co-construction approach highlights a collaborative partnership among teachers and children. This had strong links with social constructivist theory that has been strongly highlighted by Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky states children are born with intellectual abilities that are developed in four stages: attention, sensation, perception, and memory. He adds children learn best when they interact with others and gives strong emphasis on the socio-cultural environment (Tudge & Rogoff, 1999). Therefore, the teacher's role is important in an educational setting because it supports learners to shape their knowledge during learning process. In this way, teachers encourage and engage children to interact with others and collaborate during activities without any restrictions on how to express themselves (Alzahrani, 2016).

This mirrors the way a Reggio classroom is formed and designed (Kress et al., 2001). The Reggio Emilia approach is an educational model that involves and emphasizes the role of the environment and puts children's curiosity, creativity, and wonder in the centre of their learning journey. In a Reggio classroom, an atelier is a classroom where children freely use different forms of arts to express themselves such as painting, drawing using their hands or stamping toes with paint. Many other types of materials and resources such as books, colourful pictures, mirrors, cameras, clay, and drawing resources are freely provided to children to use (Giardiello et al., 2014). Looking carefully at a Reggio classroom, it can be argued it shares links with multimodality as it adapts key features of the multimodal methods. For example, resources are used and displayed to extend the children's learning and not just to decorate the environment. There is a variety of different modes children are free to use to extend their learning and to communicate.

Edwards et al., (2012) agree with Malaguzzi (1987, cited in Hall et al., 2014) that Reggio teachers see children with plenty of curiosity to explore the world on their own time. They promote self-respect, support children's rights and values, and avoid forcing them to do a learning activity in which they are not interested. This shows the Reggio Emilia approach embraces the pedagogical theoretical framework of social constructivism, which emphases social interactions as part of knowledge construction. The Reggio Emilia approach draws on social and cultural context with the purpose of supporting children's transition and development using multimodal means of communication and learning. This is an extra asset of this approach, since it provides opportunities for different ways of communication based on social interactions.

Considering the role of the teacher in the Reggio Emilia approach, the facilitator has a teaching style that listens to children's needs, placing them at the centre where everyone is accepted by all members and there is freedom to participate without any force (Yelland et al., 2008). Reviewing the Reggio teacher, it is obvious teachers are seen as learners who are able to process, document children's projects, and listen to the hundred languages children use in order to communicate with others. It can be argued this encourages multimodal communication because teaching and learning in such a setting provides the necessary resources to support children's alternative ways of communication (for example, visual images, gestures or drawings).

Progettazione (planning stage) in the Reggio Emilia approach is another important feature. This term focuses on the image of the child and their rights. It gives children the leading role in their learning and gives them the opportunity to decide their own goals, while teachers gather information and share it with children to extend their learning. This can contribute positively to multimodal teaching and learning practice, because it allows children to explore a range of elements and concepts according to their will. They can also transform signs through their selection, or use different formats, style, or layouts, which have also a strong relationship with multimodality.

Last but not least, the environment of the Reggio Emilia approach has a role as a third teacher. This feature strongly links to multimodal environment. The Reggio environment values movement, arts, colour, natural lights, and pictures of children's works. The environment is the third teacher as it invites, inspires, provokes, and enriches children with opportunities. Working inside the classroom, but also outdoors ensures children take advantage of all the available opportunities and modes as a source of learning opportunity. The Reggio Emilia vision creates progressive and child-sensitive insights in early childhood environments, which are

developmentally appropriate. In this way, it empowers children to have a voice. Children in the Reggio environment are free to explore the materials indoors and outdoors and use this experience to communicate.

In Moss' (2016) view, modes are crucial features in multimodal learning and environment. The reason why modes are crucial in the multimodal learning environment is because modes are key features that share meaning from a variety of sources. Children can combine creatively what they see, hear, and touch to produce meaning and encourage interactions with others in order to improve social learning development (Moreno & Mayer, 2007). This means using different modes of communication offer a cognitive advantage in learning. Using different modes of communication, children have the opportunity to use pictures, audio, and body language in order to learn (Flewitt, 2012; Narey, 2008). Gandini (2003) highlights that these features transform environments in education with remarkable distinction by their strong links to multimodal features contributing to children learning. This means outdoors and indoors environment features are essential in multimodality to support children's communication and learning. This demonstrates links between the Reggio Emilia approach and multimodality as it uses open ended materials so children can extend their imagination and develop their creativity.

Summarising the above arguments, there was a discussion about the content of the Reggio Emilia approach. It was also argued there are strong links with multimodality as the Reggio Emilia approach promotes a teaching methodology in which adults talk to the child, listen to the child and observe the child. Therefore, the Reggio Emilia approach is an example of a dialogic learning environment that connects the child to community and draws upon a variety of knowledge sources using different modes for children to communicate.

Mosaic Approach

From the previous discussion, it is obvious the Reggio Emilia approach inspires ideas and open-ended environments reflecting on the ideas, attitudes, and cultures of people. The Mosaic approach is another approach with strong links to multimodal teaching and learning. The Mosaic approach has been introduced in academia as a research method, which enables children from all ages to develop different skills and aspects of their personality through their experiences. It follows participatory principles, which involve consistency and coherency through practical considerations (Clark & Moss, 2011). According to Clark (2005), the Mosaic approach includes a variety of methods to listen to children's voice. This approach was created during a research project, which included children's voice in outdoor environment (Clark, 2005).

Johnson et al. (1998) mention, in a theoretical perspective, the Mosaic approach sees children as competent and not as passive objects. It makes children's voice visible and heard in the adult community. This is a strong similarity with the Reggio Emilia approach, which was discussed earlier. The theoretical perspectives that were explored in Reggio preschools contributed to the Mosaic approach regarding children voices in oral, visual, kinesthetic, and experimental way. The Mosaic approach found inspiration from Reggio Emilia methods of children's learning and adapted multi-methods in which children use pictures and maps. They used this experience to demonstrate the knowledge they gained using with different modes of communication (Clark, 2011). As a result of this, teachers have a better understanding of children's perspectives and thoughts in the learning process (Clark, 2017).

Looking at these arguments carefully, it is obvious both the Reggio Emilia and the Mosaic approach use the same pedagogical methods in teaching and learning. For example, children are always at the center of the learning process, there is a freedom of choosing the best way to communicate and children are free to experiment and play with others in a multimodal environment. Clark (2005) claims Mosaic approach looks at children as competent and young explorers and places a set of methods to make children's voices heard about their life experiences. This means the use of different modes, such as real materials, links to multimodal features (for example, shells, beads, stones, pulses, seeds, clay, paper, cardboard, wood). Analysing the links to multimodality, the Mosaic approach considers children as competent and young explorers and gives them the opportunity to communicate using the modes of communication that are better for them. This explains the link between multimodality and the Mosaic approach as it uses multimodal features considering children's creativity related to their interests and imaginative work when they have a wide and varied choice of material and resources available to them.

A practical example to illuminate the arguments could be a picture book, in which the textual and visual elements are arranged on individual pages that contribute to an overall set of bound pages. Another example could be a webpage, in which elements such as sound effects, oral language, written language, music, and still or moving images are combined. Consequently, this indicates links to multimodality since it shows an understanding of communication and representations to be more language by always drawing on a multiplicity of modes.

Therefore, the Mosaic approach brings together children and adults by giving the opportunity to associate visual and verbal communication and using specific methods to collect data. For example, observation or reaction maps, which again have strong links with multimodal learning, enables children to learn using a variety of modes (Clark, 2017). Clark explains the Mosaic approach involves three theoretical stages such as: Stage 1 children and adults collect documentation, Stage 2 put together information for dialogue, and Stage 3 decide on extension and change. Clark (2004) contends this method aims to find techniques to include children's voices in early childhood, allowing them to play and be active investigators in an outdoors environment by using tools to make their own exploration, such as drawing and photographs. This has strong links with some key features of multimodal learning. Being more specific, the physical environment and outdoor play provides access to children to open-ended data, which supports their learning by using diverse modes (for example, real material such as videos, pictures, plants, diverse smells and textures from outside play).

Equally to the Reggio Emilia approach, the Mosaic approach also embraces the facilitator as a teaching style that can be used to develop questions to listen to children's voices and by making questions using in their hundred languages as described earlier. The Mosaic approach underlines the belief children are experts and have the ability to collaborate in different levels and contexts. It also allows children to physically see, manipulate, and explore the findings themselves by using diverse modes (Clark, 2005). Clark (2010), analysing the content of the Mosaic approach, describes children as little scientists of their own survival and sees children as little experts challenging their own experiences and making their own interpretations. Considering this practice within the early childhood professional practice, listening to children includes multimodal strategies as it provides opportunities for practitioners to consider the diversity of identity development across home and school contexts and enable children to share their views.

Another important feature of the Mosaic approach is the documentation of discussions. Clark and Moss (2011) suggest taking notes of conversations between children, observing their own way of play, and identifying the resources they use (e.g. allowing children to photograph or handle the equipment) helps children improve confidence and engages them in learning new skills, such as manipulating materials, listening, and reflecting. Before the Mosaic approach, perhaps one of the main causes for researchers to fail to listen the views of children under five, was because of the adults' assumptions children are not capable or do not have the competence to express their own opinion (James & Prout, 1990). However, Piaget (1932) did demonstrate a great respect for children's ways of thinking suggesting a child is not less valuable than an adult. This means the idea children are incompetent, immature, and untrustworthy must change for children to demonstrate independence and confidence (Qvortrup et al., 1994).

Critically, Lahman (2008) explains the Mosaic approach may not allow all children to express themselves or create meaning in the way they have chosen–for some children drawings or paintings are a way of expressing themselves instead of cameras or recorders. In contrast, Clark (2005) explains that the use of photography, videos, and art are methods that strongly support children's expression of ideas and thoughts. Both arguments show strong links with multimodal learning as all of the above resources allow children to be more open and use alternative ways of communication apart from the verbal and written mode. Researchers from the field of early childhood have embraced the Mosaic approach arguing children must be seen as competent negotiators in a social environment (Alanen, 2004). James and Prout (1990) stated children are specialists of their own world and see issues differently form adults. This demonstrates links between the Mosaic approach and multimodality as it makes explicit the way children listen and act through a collaborative process. The dominance of traditional developmental approaches is interrogated by socio-cultural investigators due to the many doubts about children's competencies (Waller, 2006). Bronfenbrenner (1979), Hogan (2005), and Vygotsky (1978) share similar ideas about giving children the opportunity to experiment and make their own choices in their everyday environment.

For this reason, Clark and Moss (2011) explain the Mosaic approach has two phases: phase one–children and teachers gather data through observations and phase two–the observation is put together by the teacher and children in a dialogue, reflection, and interpretation. This shows how the Mosaic approach challenges the dominance of traditional development approaches to research children as the key dispute is the empowerment of children's actions in their learning (Coad & Lewis, 2004). Participatory learning methods are a key element in the Mosaic approach as a research tool, which allows teachers to access the children in many different levels, and through different resources, which have strong links with an ethnographic research tool (Clark & Moss, 2011). This approach also offers opportunities of using different methods and modes to support children's learning and development.

Summarising the above arguments, there was a discussion about the content of the Mosaic approach. It has been argued there are strong links with multimodality since the Mosaic approach advocates that there is a need to listen to young children, which is a basic part of multimodality. Child competencies are one of the key features of the theoretical perspectives, which have influenced the development of the Mosaic approach. This shares a link with multimodality as it emphasises exploring children's perceptions, their interests, priorities, and concerns using visual

and verbal tools (for example, using observations and interviews and allowing children to use cameras, maps using their photographs and drawings).

Conclusions

In conclusion, this paper has recognised the importance of multimodal approaches in teaching and learning in early years settings by sharing two representative examples. Both of the discussed approaches demonstrate children are capable of understanding and developing their own knowledge independently. This paper argued children need freedom to be able to show their competences and understanding of things that surround them. It discussed the importance of the environment to support children's experiences, since it influences children's social and physical skills. It argued the Reggio Emilia and the Mosaic approaches offer children experiences and knowledge through a multimodal approach, which leads to an extensive language and literacy development. Finally, it concludes that these approaches support areas of children's mental growth such as memorizing, thinking, and metacognition if activities and strategies are well planned and embrace aspects of multimodality.

Summarising the discussion about multimodality, and the Reggio Emilia and the Mosaic approaches, it is obvious both approaches have similarities and differences. The Mosaic approach is a multi-method approach in which children's own photographs, tours, and maps can be joined to talking and observing to gain deeper understanding of children's perspectives on their early childhood settings. The Reggio Emilia approach also has a child-centred philosophy, which utilizes self-directed, experiential learning in relationship-driven environments. Both of the above, enable children to express themselves in many ways by using a diversity of different modes according to their needs.

This paper would be useful to early years educators to raise their understanding about the Mosaic and the Reggio Emilia approach as multimodal approaches. It can also enhance the educators' practice as it analyses and discusses links to multimodality bringing together a range of methods for listening to young children about their lives and new experiences. This paper provides a discussion about the approaches, which underpin successful teaching and learning in which teachers and students are likely to engage, which has immense practical value.

Theoretical Implications

This paper describes why multimodal approaches might be chosen by researchers and teachers to support children's voices in the teaching process. The paper draws on theoretical and empirical perspectives about multimodal approaches and makes arguments about teaching in early years settings for outdoor spaces. The paper explores multimodal opportunities for early childhood pedagogy. Examples were given through the Mosaic and the Reggio Emilia approaches as multimodal approaches to consider practical teaching examples in the field. This discussion challenges the concept of how the opinions and experiences of young children can become the focus of the teaching approach adults use in the early childhood education. It further makes arguments on how multimodal methods are used to understand and practice listening to young kids in early childhood facilities.

Practical Implications

Using the Mosaic and the Reggio Emilia approaches as multimodal methods can support children from an early age to make informed decisions about their life, which will lead to more informed decisions as citizens in the future. Experiencing the provision of such multimodal approaches provides practical opportunities for hands-on learning activities such as drawing, using photography in play, repurposing the language, and drawings, etc. Such activities can result in strong, powerful, and skilled learners, who used deep thinking skills. This paper shows how these approaches can support a multimodal teaching approach in early childhood education in order to enhance children's learning journey. This has a substantial benefit in teaching practice since it shows practical examples for achieving learning outcomes and milestones for the learners.

Limitations and Further Research

Some limitations need to be acknowledged as this paper focused only on two practical examples in multimodal teaching and learning. Also, this paper made arguments only on early childhood education and not in the later levels of education. It was considered beneficial to limit the discussion only on the above in order to analyse our arguments in depth and provide practical solutions for the teaching and learning process. Therefore, further research is suggested to include more practical examples and additional age groups in multimodal teaching and learning.

References

Al-Alwan, A. F. (2014). Modelling the relations among parental involvement, school engagement and academic performance of high school students. *International Education Studies, 7*(4), 47-56.

Alanen, L. (2004, November). Theorizing children's welfare. Paper presented at WELLCI Network Workshop 1: New Perspectives on Childhood, Leeds, England.

Alzahrani, I. (2016). The role of the constructivist learning theory and collaborative learning environment on wiki classroom, and the relationship between them. *International Journal of Education and Pedagogical Sciences, 10*(3), 891-894.

Anning, A., & Ring, K. (1999, September). *The influence of the socio-cultural context on young children's meaning making*. Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, Brighton, England.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design.* Harvard University Press.

Bruce, T. (2001). *Learning through play: For babies, toddles and young children*. Hodder Education.

Clark, A. (2005). Ways of seeing: Using the Mosaic approach to listen to young children's perspectives. In A. Clark, A. T. Kjorholt, & P. Moss (Eds.), *Beyond listening: Children's perspectives on early childhood services* (pp. 29-49). Policy Press.

Clark, A. (2010). Young children as protagonists and the role of participatory, visual methods in engaging multiple perspectives. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *46*(1-2), 115-123.

Clark, A. (2017). *Listening to young children: A guide to understanding and using the Mosaic approach* (3rd ed.). Jessica Kingsley.

Clark, A. (2004). The Mosaic approach and research with young children. In V. Lewis, M. Kellett, C. Robinson, S. Fraser, & S. Ding (Eds.). *The reality of research with children and young people* (pp. 142–161). Sage.

Clark, A., & Moss, P. (2011). *Listening to young children: The Mosaic approach*. National Children's Bureau.

Coad, J., & Lewis, A. (2004). *Engaging children and young people in research: Literature Review for the National*

Department for Education. (2017). *Early years foundation stage profile. Standards and testing agency*. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/669079/Early_years_foundation_stage_profile_2018_handbook.pdf

Early Education. (2012). *Development matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)*. Department of Education. https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2012/03/Development-Matters-FINAL-PRINT-AMENDED.pdf

Edwards, C., Gandini, L., & Forman, G. (2012). *The hundred languages of children* (3rd ed.). Praeger.

Eshach, H. (2007). Bridging in-school and out-of-school learning: Formal, non-formal, and informal education. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, *16*(2), 171-190.

Flewitt, R., S. (2012). Multimodal perspectives on early childhood literacies. In L. Joanne, & M. Jackie (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of early childhood literacy* (2nd ed., pp 295-309). Sage.

Gandini, L. (2003). Values and principles of Reggio Emilia approach. In L. Gardini, S. Etheridge, & L. Hill. (Eds.), *Insights and inspirations from Reggio Emilia: Stories of teachers and children from North America* (pp. 25-27). Davis.

Giardiello, P., Parr, E., Mcleod, N., & Redman, C. (2014). Understanding pedagogy. In S. Rodrigues (Ed.), *Handbook for teacher educators* (pp. 15-32). Sense.

Hall, K., Horgan, M., & Ridgway, A. (2014). *Loris Malaguzzi and the Reggio Emilia experience*. Bloomsbury.

Hogan, D. (2005). Researching the child in developmental psychology. In S. Greene, & D. Hogan (Eds.) *Researching children's experiences* (pp. 22-41). Sage.

James, A., & Prout, A. (1990). *Constructing and reconstructing childhood.* Falmer Press.

Jewitt, C. (2012). *Technology, literacy, learning: A multimodal approach*. Routledge.

Johnson, V., Ivan-Smith, E., Gordon, G., Scott-Villiers, P., & Pridmore, P. (1998). *Stepping forward: Children and young people's participation in the development process*. Intermediate Technology.

Kress, G., Jewitt, C., Ogborn, J., & Tsatsarelis, C. (2001). *Multimodal teaching and learning: The rhetorics of the science classroom*. Continuum.

Lahman, M. K. (2008). Always othered. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, *6*(3), 281-300.

Mahn, H., (2012). Vygotsky's analysis of children's meaning making processes. *International Journal of Educational Psychology*, *1*(2), 100-126.

Martin, C., & Evaldsson, A. C. (2012). Affordances for participation: Children's appropriation of rules in a Reggio Emilia school. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, *19*(1), 51-74.

Montague, D. P., & Walker–Andrews, A., S. (2002). Mothers, fathers, and infants: The role of person familiarity and parental involvement in infants' perception of emotion expressions. *Child Development*, *73*(5), 1339-1352.

Moreno, R., & Mayer, R. (2007). Interactive multimodal learning environments. *Educational Psychology Review*, *19*(3), 309-326.

Moss, P. (2016). Loris Malaguzzi and the schools of Reggio Emilia: Provocation and hope for a renewed public education. *Improving Schools*, *19*(2), 167-176.

Moyles, J., R. (1989). *Just playing? The role and status of play in early childhood education*. Open University Press.

Narey, M. (2008). *Making meaning: Constructing multimodal perspectives of language, literacy, and learning through arts-based early childhood education* (Vol. 2). Springer Science & Business Media.

Nutbrown, C., & Abbott, E. (2009). Experiencing Reggio Emilia. In L. Abbott & C. Nutbrown (Eds.). *Experiencing Reggio Emilia: Implications for pre-school provision* (pp. 1-7). Open University Press.

Piaget, J. (1932). *The language and thought of the child.* Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Qvortrup, J., Bardy, M., Sgritta, G., & Wintersberger, H. (1994). *Childhood matters: Social theory, practice and politics.* Avebury.

Rinaldi, C. (2004a). *In dialogue with Reggio Emilia: Listening, researching and learning*. Routledge.

Rinaldi, C. (2004b). The relationship between documentation and assessment. *Innovations in early Childhood: The International Reggio Exchange*, *11*, 1-4.

Rinaldi, C. (2006). *In dialogue with Reggio Emilia: Listening, researching and learning*. Routledge.

Siegel, M., (2006). Rereading the signs: Multimodal transformations in the field of literacy education. *Language Arts*, *84*(1), 65-77.

Strong-Wilson, T., & Ellis, J. (2007). Children and place: Reggio Emilia's environment as third teacher. *Theory Into Practice*, *46*(1), 40-47.

Theodotou, E. (2017, January 17). *Working together or working apart? An effective approach to parent-school relationships. BERA blog*. https://www.bera.ac.uk/blog/working-together-or-working-apart-an-effective-approach-to-parent-school-relationships

Thornton, P., & Brunton, L. (2015). *Understanding the Reggio approach: Early years education in practice* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Tudge, J., & Rogoff, B. (1999). Peer influences on cognitive development: Piagetian and Vygotskian perspectives. In P. Llyod & C. Fernyhough (Eds.), *Lev Vygotsky: Critical assessments: The zone of proximal development* (Vol. 3, pp. 32–56). Taylor & Frances

Tulbure, C. (2011). Do different learning styles require differentiated teaching strategies? *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 11,* 155-159.

Valentine, M. (1999). *The Reggio Emilia approach to early years education.* Learning and Teaching Scotland.

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

Waller, T. (2006) Don't come too close to my octopus tree: Recording and evaluating young children's perspectives on outdoor learning. *Children, Youth and Environments 16*(2), 75-104.

Wild, M. (2007). The family and its role in development. In M. Wild & H. Mitchell (Eds.), *Early childhood Studies: Reflective reader* (pp.67-80). Learning Matters Ltd.

Yelland, N., Lee, L., O'Rourke, M., & Harrison, C. (2008). *Rethinking learning in early childhood education*. Open University Press.

Zellman, G. L., & Waterman, J. M. (1998). Understanding the impact of parent school involvement on children's educational outcomes. *The Journal of Educational Research, 91*(6), 370-380.