InSEA 34th Congress
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The see-saw of visual arts in early childhood education: Are we up, down or somewhere in between?

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http://citygirlinthecountry

Pepeha

- Tēnā koutou katoa
- Ki ngā maunga o Moehau oku maunga
- Ko Waihou te awa
- No Thames ahau
- Ko ngāti Pakeha te iwi
- Ko Helen Wrightson ahau
- Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tautou katoa
Context theme: How do we address/contest/maintain arts education in diverse contexts?

**Contexts to consider:**
- My context
- Current context of early childhood visual art education in Aotearoa/New Zealand
- Recognising, promoting and maintaining indigenous visual arts in an early childhood

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**My context**

- Previously an early childhood teacher
- Currently lecturer – Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood Education)
- Doctoral student
Doctoral studies research

- Part one:
  - Methodology:
    - Genealogy
    - Using discourse analysis
    - What discourses influence early childhood visual arts pedagogy?

- Part two:
  - Teacher observations
  - Interviews about their philosophies and practice

United Nations Committee

- "on the Rights of the Child announce the adoption of an official document, or "General Comment" (GC), that clarifies for governments worldwide the meaning and importance of article 31 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC)" (International Play Association, 2013, p.1).
Article 31

- Been considered the "forgotten article"

- It now "ensures that "States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities...and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts" (International Play Association, 2013, p.1)
Movement towards socio-cultural theories influencing visual arts pedagogy has been acknowledged but there is still evidence of "developmental, progressive education and psycho-analytical theories still" dominating practice in Aotearoa (Visser, 2005, p.1).

- These theories also influence debate about the following dichotomies:
  - "process versus product,
  - academic versus non-academic,
  - integration versus segregation of the arts,
  - free play versus adult direction, and

Recognising, promoting and maintaining indigenous visual arts in early childhood education
Conference concepts

- Indigenous visual arts
- Tangata whenua: people of the land
- Communal ideas
- Visual art ‘events’ - disturbance
- Relationship to ancestors – way of knowing, being and doing
- Emphasis on culture
- Real learning – field based training

Chapter 2:

Ngā taonga tuko iho – Māori visual arts and cultural fusion: studying authentic engagement

Collaboration with Yo Heta – Lensen: the promotion of ngā toi ataata
Māori visual arts have the potential to transform understandings of the world together with recognition of a cultural fusion becoming evident in the artworks of our nation.

Te Whāriki states that teachers “have a responsibility to promote ‘the use of the Māori language and creative arts’ and that staff should be supported to develop understandings of bilingual teaching and learning” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p.73).
Aspects of Kaupapa Māori

- Whakawhanaungatanga
- Kaitiakitanga
- Te Kete Manaaki Whenua

- Building relationships
- Carer/guardian
- Caring for the land

Making connections between nature and symbolic representations
Promoting sustainable practices through the use of ephemeral art experience

Students recreate images they have sketched when out in the natural environment using clay

"In this way, tamariki of Aotearoa can also appreciate the influence of Ranginui me Papa-tū-ā-nuku by expressing their experience, interpretation and representation of the world through visual art."

(Wrightson 8)
"The rich kōrero and whakapapa (narratives and histories) contained within Māori art are evident in the patterns and the rhythms created in the kōwhaiwhai rafters, whakairo carvings and the tukutuku (lattice panels)" (Hindle, 2002, cited in Wrightson & Heta-Lenson, 2013, p. 13).

Creating a pou

The carved panels in the wharenui

They tell the narratives and histories of the iwi/hapu/whānau

Students depict their stories through the creation of their own pou
Poutama

Detail of a Tukutuku P parcel in the Field Museum of Natural History

Have the potential to assist in knowing the child, their family and culture

- Visual arts have an important place in early childhood programmes as they “engage our senses, capture our imaginations and record our memories” (Wrightson & Heta, Lensen, 2013, p. 13)
Teachers of Aotearoa/New Zealand are urged to recognise, promote and maintain indigenous visual arts in an early childhood context and demonstrate commitment to symbolic, visual and oral literacies of Māori (Ministry of Education, 1996).

Thanks

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- Image of my grand daughter, Willa
- Yo Heta-Lensen for working in collaboration with me
- Thank you for listening
References


