

**Reviewing, renegotiating and reframing pedagogies for contemporary times.**

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## ***Introduction***

### **Ppt 1 – title frame**

The theme of this conference meeting is a welcome change from the traditional use of the label of the 3Rs, to denote the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic. We live in a complex world and it is essential that we take the opportunity to review, renegotiate and reframe our thinking about the salient aspects of our profession.

In my own country at the moment we are in an election year, and education is being touted as the essential element that makes a difference in our society. On one side of the political spectrum we have Labor calling for an ‘education revolution’ and on the other we have conservative coalition with the slogan of ‘Australia rising’ saying that we will not be able to take on our role on the world stage without a world class education system. In presenting their cases both sides highlight the importance of the early years in providing the foundation for later (successful) educational experiences and talk about the necessity of ensuring that standards are rigorous and that teachers should be accountable for the outcomes of education. However, the debate about what can be characterised as an educational revolution is mainly occurring in the right wing media where those who argue for a back to the basics approach focussed around the teaching of phonics and spelling lists, the necessity to know the names of the Prime Ministers of Australia and who support the memorization of multiplication tables and basic facts, have the most influence on policy and practice. Those with alternative views are labelled ‘left wing ideologues’ and generally excluded from government decision-making processes. The call for a National Curriculum is one manifestation of the desire for standardization, based on the flimsy excuse that it will support those in transition from state to state, who in fact represent only a minute part of the total school population.

### **Ppt 2 – overview of talk**

So I will start with thinking about standardization and also diversity - in reviewing where we are or seem to be, in education today.

I will then go on to show some of the ways in which we have started to renegotiate pedagogies in specific ways, in the projects that we have been working on with teachers.

This is turn is leads us – every day – to reframe what we do in terms of changing our pedagogies and curricula to make them more relevant to the lives of children in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The desire for standardized curricula is not of course just an Australian phenomenon. In the UK it has been a fact of life for nearly 20 years. It is part of a growing movement to regulate and goes hand in hand with policy statements that purport to have children's best interests in mind. Such policies are written in language that is crafted with political skill. They dare you to disagree with them and then accuse you of not wanting the best for all children. Take *No child left behind* as an example. In the spirit of "You are either with us or against us!" if you oppose it – are you wanting children to BE left behind?

In the UK the fluency of statements in the Early years documents have a similar flavour.

### Ppt 3 – EYFS cover page

For example: The statutory framework for the early years foundation stage has the words: "setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five" together with cheery bright colours and six children representing boys and girls as well as different colours of hair and skin. Under them are the words

Every child matters

Change for children

Implicit in this is the assumption that this particular framework is aimed at making the lives of ALL children change with new regulated statutory goals that will improve on what currently exists for all young children in the UK. The words are of course repeated as you open the document so as to ensure that you really know they mean what they say!

The opening words behind the purposes and aims of the EYFS are

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential".

And it continues

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve the **five**, every child matters outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic well being by (another 5 points here!):

- Setting the standards for the learning, development and care young children should experience... ensuring every child matters and that *no child gets left behind*
- Providing for equality of opportunity and anti- discriminatory practice and ensuring that every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability.
- Creating the framework for partnership working (between parents and professionals and between all the settings the child attends)
- Improving quality and consistency
- Laying a secure foundation for future learning (through learning and development that is planned around the needs and interests of the child and informed by the use of ongoing observational assessment)

The document assumes that those involved in the care and education of young children have shared understandings about the meanings of all these terms and phrases, and that they are readily attainable in a principled approach that guides the work of ALL practitioners in four distinct but complementary themes.

A unique child

Positive relationships

Enabling environments

Learning and development

And further there are EYFS Principles into practice cards to explain how practitioners can use these in their day-to-day work. They aim to and I quote:

(1.13) "...set standards to enable early years providers to reflect the rich and personalised experience (note the singular) that many parents give their children at home."

The dot points of individual behavioural items that make up the rest of the document, entice teachers to consider them all and tick them off as they occur as part of an ongoing assessment arrangement. It is required that this should be formalised in the final year (prior to the final term

of the school year and no later than June 30) of the EYFS by a practitioner who must use the 13 scales and have regard to the scale points as set out in their Appendix.

This document *also* describes in dot points and short paragraphs, what many of the key terms refer to.

- For example: At a basic level, high quality early years provision can be defined as provision which:
- Improves all children's outcomes (which can be measured by children's progression and achievement in the EYFS profile)
- Provides increased support for children at risk of exclusion or poor outcomes
- Builds the foundations of future attainment in key stage 1

So what you have is policy by dot points and short paragraph definitions which have been generated by government department personnel in explicit ways – so that within a specific time frame, usually 3 to 5 years, they can show that they have value added to the lives of young children in very definite, specific and narrow ways. Teachers and carers are expected to assume and absorb the general definitions and observable behaviours as representative and little or no discussion about what constitutes – 'quality', the most effective, or best (for example) takes place.

The messages seem to be the same globally, from both conservative and more liberal governments. They are in government for 3 to 5 years and want to show their impact in overt ways that can be measured both nationally and internationally. They need and want to keep education quantifiable and accountable. This avoids complex discussions and consideration of the long-term goals for an education system that exists in new times that are radically different from those many politicians have experienced.

In reviewing what is – this quest for standardization, regulation and reporting, is there a space not only for critical discussions about our work and for opportunities to shape it based on our professional experiences. But also to consider it in relation to what we read in the literature, experience in our lives and hear from our parents and communities about what they want and need.

Ppt 4 – the golden arches

Take this familiar icon – that was founded on the notion of standardization. No matter where you went – firstly across America then across the UK and Australia – the goal was that your Big Mac would taste the same and your fries would be just perfect!

### Ppt 5 – Tijuana MacDonalds

The logo became the most recognisable in the world. It remains the last thing you see as you move from the first world (USA) over the boarder to Mexico. However, as the symbol became more ubiquitous, things began to change. The opening scene in “pulp Fiction” advises us that in Paris the Quarter Pounder is called a ‘**Royale**’. We know from our travels that in China you can get **Chicken wings** in MacDonalds. In Greece you have the choice of a bun or a wrap (souvlaki) that links to traditional food. In Thailand you can buy a **sticky rice roast pork burger**, In Japan a **Samurai pork burger**, a **Kosher burger** is available in Israel, and in South American countries they have a *McHuevo* (burger and fried egg)

### PPT 6 – MacDonald’s with style

Take a look at this advertisement. It is a customised Mac advertisement. What country do you think it is displayed in?

### Ppt 7 and 8

The Finnish people are known for their design industry. They have appropriated MacDonalds and made it fit their lifestyle which calls for more curves and softer lines to seats that were designed with hard lines to move customers through quickly. The Finnish population like to linger over their food! Can we achieve the same outcome in the educational arena?

So the message is that even within standardized systems there is scope to move. That is the space we have attempted to work in – subverting the system - we have been exploring such possibilities with teachers across all Australian States and the ACT!

### Pp9 montage of pictures

What I want to do today is to share with you the stories of the journeys we have taken in our projects around a pedagogy of multiliteracies and how it evolved into the learning by design projects. We (Mary Kalantzis, Bill Cope and I) have worked with teachers from pre school to the middle years across 4 states and the ACT (since 2003) reviewing, negotiating and renegotiating and reframing pedagogies in what might be considered as a hostile educational

environment where governments want specific, observable and quantifiable outcomes which show the ways in which they perceive they have value added to the lives of children. The most valuable aspect of the project has been the times spent in discussions with the teachers around our shared understandings of educational concepts and debating complex questions and issues. Our work is characterised by the theoretical frame now called Learning by Design which itself evolved from a pedagogy of multiliteracies (New London Group 1996) and has undergone a variety of iterations with input from all those involved in the projects!

## **Review**

What is the nature of our work with young children?

Knowledge workers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Pedagogues? Professional Leaders? Teachers?

Facilitators of learning?

What types of places do we want our EC centres / classrooms to be?

These issues resonate with the questions posed for our conference:

What kinds of lives do young children deserve/ want in these times?

What kind of professional/ worker will work with these young children and their families?

What is the purpose of our pedagogical work with young children and their teachers?

How do we relate our work in ECE to the world beyond education and the lives of the young children?

In the beginning.....Our work with teachers invariably started with discussions around - Living in contemporary times – What kind of world are we living in now and in the future? And what are the ways in which this will impact on what we think and do.

It relates to the shifting roles of: **ppt 10 – The ‘why’ of multiliteracies - context**

Worker

Citizens

Individuals

Learning

In the past **work** has been characterised by the Fordist mentality of mechnisation and workers followed sets of procedures that were not to be deviated from in the simple chain of events. Post-Fordism represented a gradual shift towards further automation, multi-skilling, collaboration and increased human communication in the workplace. New times are characterised by **productive diversity** in which knowledge workers contribute to organizations and the core values are around human skills and relationships, culture, knowledge and new learning. Hence the knowledge society.

The interconnections between education and society are inextricably linked to notions of **citizenship**. Mass schooling emerged in Nationalistic contexts in which the state established what was good for you. In the last part of last century neo-liberal policies encouraged the free market and the privatisation of education became part of this process.

**Civic pluralism** is a vision of what might be possible in a system of distributed governance and self managing citizenship in workplaces, communities and schools. It is based on the ethics of responsibility and participation which constantly requires negotiating differences.

As work and society changes so does the complexity of our lives and the ways in which we construct our identities. We need to engage with issues and ask questions such as: To what extent are our identities shaped by new media or influenced by popular culture? And - Does our sense of belonging relate to our commitment to openness and inclusivity? We have **multi-layered identities** that reflect the kind of person we are in the range of communities that we inhabit.

The role of education in assisting in the process of creating socially productive persons is relevant here. A new basics is continually emerging. The new basics reflect contemporary changes and a different view of **new learning** that is:

- General and interdisciplinary in focus
- About creating kinds of persons with dispositions and orientations that are global and local in focus – rather than simply commanding a body of knowledge. In these contexts we are required to navigate change and diversity, learn as you go, problem solve, collaborate, be flexible and extend our imaginative capacities.

## Learning

### Ppt 11– conditions for learning

This then led us to a consideration of what learning is and under what conditions will it thrive?

*How do we know when effective learning is occurring?*

*What does it look like?*

*What effect does it have on the learner?*

What facilitates learning – we think belonging and transformation

### Ppt 12 – creating the conditions for learning

We believe that when a child learns, the experience connects with them. That is they feel a sense of belonging with the context and activity. Trying to find out how to connect with kids lived experiences – or lifeworlds – is how we (as educators) do diversity. I will return to this in a minute.

Learning also involves transformation. Trying to negotiate this is hard as the learner journeys into unfamiliar territory and needs to feel confident about this - not alienated. Teachers can encourage kids to explore and take risks and also have to scaffold the experiences so that the learning is meaningful, relevant and explicit.

### Diversity ppt 13

So.... If learning is about belonging :

*How does diversity impact on learning?*

*What, as teachers, do we do about this?*

### Ppt 14

#### Gross demographics – Diversity 1

We live with difference.

The gross demographics of difference capture reality in one dimension. One of the dangers of course is that in considering difference we often make over-generalisations and create stereotypes for example about *boy's literacy* or *working class attitudes*.

Another dimension we call **Diversity 2** are the underlying experiences that make up children's **lifeworlds** – interests, orientations to the world, values, dispositions, sensibilities, communication styles and more. These everyday lived experiences are what the learner brings to educational settings. This lifeworld has shaped them and made them who they are. These are the attributes that form the basis of their identity and subjectivities and we need to address them in order to create a sense of belonging and connection to learning for the children we teach.

In this way the underlying differences of Diversity 1 – can be misleading although we have a tendency to go with them. It is not unusual to find greater internal differences within a demographically defined group than between the average difference between each group. For example, between boys and girls in a particular ethnically defined group, or within different age groupings. The internal differences between members of a group might be so strong that (for example) the ethnic descriptor in the first example is way too simple a variable. So difference 1 is only a first take on difference and difference 2 is where we do diversity.

### Ppt 15 – examples

Building on Moll et al's (1992) work on funds of knowledge from communities - one of our projects involved teachers going home with the kids in order to find out more about their 4 year old pre schoolers use of various technologies in the home. The teacher asked the child to take them on a 'techno tour' of their home. What constituted techno/ or technology was left for the child to decide. When the child showed the teacher what turned out to be various machines invariably they showed how it worked and in most cases the teacher was surprised by the ways in which the young children could use the machines with ease! As a result of the experience the teacher gained new insights into the children they were teaching and tried to incorporate what they had learnt in their planning.

### Ppt 16

In another context we worked with Sudanese refugees who were given a computer for their home use. As a by product of this we found that when we observed them in their homes there was a lot of teaching and interactions between the children in the extended families. The youngest children, like the ones you are going to see in the video, were already becoming fluent with technologies in a variety of ways as a result of this. Further, some of the concepts that they were encountering were in advance of those that they would be required when they attended school. For example – watch how Arziki (who is just 4 years old) is talking to her older siblings and also the range of numbers and letters she is using that she will spend many weeks doing worksheets with in her first year of school! The children are fluent in Dinka and Australian English – and flow between them in a very fluid way. In a similar way they move from drawings on the computer to drawing with pencils and making pictures with paint. As teachers we felt that we needed to know about these lifeworlds in order to create conditions for learning that were relevant for the children.

Ppt 17, 18, 19

In thinking about children's interests our teachers have made attempts to incorporate them into their programs in a variety of ways. For example, one of the teachers noted that George was incredibly proficient at building complex structures so she extended the range of materials she had in the room and made sure he had other materials such as paper and pencils with which he could represent and share his ideas.

Ppt 20, 21, 22, 23

When we came to Australia (ppt)

In this example very recent young migrants used digital photos and text to describe the difference between their old and current lifeworlds and incorporated this into a simple powerpoint.

## **Renegotiate and reframing**

### **Ppt 24 – Four pedagogical traditions**

In the beginning there was pedagogy of multiliteracies

#### *Situated Practice (Progressive Pedagogy)*

Immersion in experience and the utilisation of available discourses.

#### *Overt Instruction (Traditional Pedagogy)*

Systematic, (*involving*) conceptualisation and conscious understanding.

#### *Critical Framing (Critical Pedagogy)*

Interpreting and analysing the social and cultural context of particular designs of meaning.

#### *Transformed Practice (Applied Learning)*

Transfer in meaning-making practice into other contexts or cultural sites; applying knowledge.

In working with the teachers this frame offered a useful way of considering their work, which had hitherto been in their heads, created and re-created as each new group came in. However, the language was complex and not easily absorbed into their lives as a professional language.

Learning by Design evolved from this condition and represented an:

### **Epistemological view of pedagogy ppt 25**

- Pedagogy viewed as ways of knowing.
- Knowing reflect ways of being, thinking and for making multi-modal meanings.
- Learning by Design:

‘acts of knowing’ or *Knowledge Processes* ...

### **Ppt 26**

Learning by Design is a pedagogical frame – with the following components of - experiencing, conceptualising, analysing and applying

Conversations with teachers – shared professional language

### **Experiencing**

**The known** – is personal knowledge, gained from the learners everyday lives.

So it is a knowledge process involving learning via immersion in the ‘real world’ of these everyday experiences, drawing on the learning resources of prior knowledge, community background, personal interests and so on

**The new** – is immersion in new information and experiences. However, it needs to have a connection to the known in order to make sense so that learning can occur.

### **Conceptualising**

**Is a knowledge process that involves thinking about, naming and coming up with new ideas**

Naming – involves defining and applying concepts

With theory – requires putting concepts together to make new ideas

**Analysing – is a knowledge process that requires a consideration of the elements of an idea, object or observation. It can be analysing**

**Functionally** – this is about what things are for and considering for example – what does it do?

How does that happen?

**Critically** – involves thinking about people’s point of view and the purposes, motives and intentions behind their actions and ideas. We might ask – Whose point of view is being represented? Whose interests are served?

**Applying is a knowledge process that requires we use what we know in a new context or way.**

**When we apply** appropriately – we use knowledge in a relevant or context specific way

We can also use it creatively – in an innovative or novel way that has not been tried before

The focus here is on ways of knowing (epistemology) and knowing as meaning and actions. Learning by design recognises 4 – they will not all be used at once in every context but their application will reflect differences in varying contexts – that involve a consideration of culture, learner diversity, knowledge domains and which pedagogies are appropriate in relation to any of these.

### **Ppt 27**

***How explicit are teachers about knowledge processes in planning learning experiences.***

- *Experiencing?*
- *Conceptualising?*
- *Analysing?*
- *Applying.*

***Why do you think it might matter to be explicit about the knowledge processes and using them to create learning pathways?***

### **PPT 28 – Pedagogy**

This involves questioning what pedagogy might suit the varied contexts of learning you are planning

The following represent some of the issues and questions that we have been considering

***Consider the present design for learning in your centre, classroom, school and community.***

- *Who makes the decisions in each domain?*
- *What sort of factors are considered?*

***What is included in your learning plans?***

- *Planning heuristic?* (in learning by design we use a word template with the teachers to document the planning process. A learning element is a series of learning activities around a coherent topic in which the children and teachers are explicitly aware of the range of knowledge process that they are engaging with. I will show you an example after the next slide
- *Sequencing of activities?*

- *Reason for making choices?*

### ***How is curriculum decided?***

- *How is content selected?*
- *What sort of media are used?*
- *What learning processes or routines are used?*

Ppt 29/ 30/ 31/32

### **Multimodal learning**

Also arising out of a pedagogy of multiliteracies in this context is the notion that new technologies have provided new affordances for learning in multimodal ways and a consideration of various modes of meaning

Ppt 33

Modes of meaning

- *How is meaning/ communication made using different modes?*
- *How are different modes used together to make meaning/ communicate?*

*What sort of knowledge and or, skills, do you think you need to have for each mode and to use the modes together successfully?*

In working with the teachers we have asked them to think about modes of learning and how to extend these to increase their pedagogical repertoire.

Ppt 34

## New learning media

- Multimodal {*digital convergence*}
- Collaborative
- Spaces for knowledge creation rather than pipes for knowledge transmission - changing the direction of the knowledge flow

Ppt 35

Bianca

An example from one of the teachers reflective journals also indicated how using the learning by design frame had enabled her to think in diverse ways that incorporate multimodal learning:

“The LbD framework provided a base for scaffolding learning from what children know through to processes of higher order thinking. It encouraged me to incorporate multiple modes of learning ... to support all students in developing their own meanings and understandings. In thinking about the responses from some of the children in my class... relating to choices they made when providing a personal response to the story of The Very Hungry Caterpillar. These choices allowed them to convey their feelings, ideas and understandings in a manner that best suited their needs and developed their self-confidence ... especially when it came to writing. (Learning Activity 1 \* Experiencing the New). I believe that providing opportunities for children to make choices about their learning and incorporating multiple representations of the text helped address many of the individual needs in my class...”

ppt 36 to 42– snow leopard

more recently we have done this type of thing with podcasting – which has been amazing as the kids love everything to do with ipods!!!

## **Summary**

### **FINAL PPT 43**

Diversity: lifeworlds of learners

Multimodality: New Technologies & New Learning

Pedagogy: The ‘Knowledge Processes’ of Learning and Knowledge Producing Communities

It might seem as if we have raised more questions than we have answered, and indeed this might be the case. Comments from the teachers have indicated that prior to their involvement in the project they felt like much of their planning and thinking went on in their head and was not articulated around shared understandings and owning a shared professional language. With their learning elements they are learning from each other, engaging in conversations, providing feedback and responding to the suggestions. The learning elements are living and dynamic documents that contain artefacts of learning and are being constantly modified and shared.

A lot of our research workshops have involved complex discussions but they have been important to us and the teachers. Working despite the regulation – making a space to do ‘cool’ stuff. Many of the teachers have reported that being in the project has enabled them to think about critical issues in a community of practice that has meant that they have new insights into their pedagogies and practices that they previously kept to themselves. They believed this was the main contribution to the changes that they played with!

Interestingly.... The ACT Lanyon Cluster –improved test scores beyond other clusters in the Territory and won over \$150 000 additional funding with the mentor winning the Ministers literacy and numeracy week prize for innovation!!!!!! But that was not our goal – it was serendipitous – mostly working with the teachers as researchers and the realisation that they are researchers too with their work as data which in many cases has led to further qualifications and being able to spend time on complex issues and share ideas about new pedagogies has been most exciting and enabled us to continue being productively subversive.

**QUESTIONS?**