Leaving the Harbour for the Sea in Search of the Pedagogical ‘Holy Grail’: Why as Teachers We Alone Can Steer the Ship.

Prof Emer Ring,
Dean of Early Childhood and Teacher Education,
Mary Immaculate College,
Limerick

INTO Consultative Conference on Education,
Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny
Saturday November 16th Tuesday 2019
Overview

• Introduction
• The Single Greatest Challenge
• What We Know
• Times they are a Changin’
• The Teacher Education Continuum
• Pedagogy at the Heart of the Teachers’ Role in the Past, Present and Future
• A Melange or a Mosaic of Theories?
• Key Messages As We Leave the Harbour
• Conclusion
Coast watch: Amazing imagery of our stunning coastline celebrated at awards

Hook Wild Skies by Myles Lambert

Gareth Morgan
October 23, 2019 10:29 PM

The place where land meets sea has a special spot in the psyche - as these stunning photographs of the Irish coastline demonstrate.

Photographic talent and the beauty of our natural landscape were celebrated at the Clean Coasts Love Your Coast Photography Awards.
I got no reason,
But that I must
Maybe I feel
Like I’ve been gatherin’ dust
I must leave this harbour for the sea

David Gray – Gathering Dust
The Single Greatest Challenge

exclusion  segregation  integration  inclusion  teaching to diversity

Shelly Moore, 2019 @TWEETSOMEMOORE
It it lawful to put my five-year-old on a reduced-hours timetable?

Ask Brian: Limiting a child’s access to schooling is a failure by the education system
Hundreds of children with autism, special needs without appropriate school places

Total of 384 children are in receipt of home tuition grants, latest figures show

Carl O'Brien Education Editor

Minister for Education Joe McHugh: 'I am deeply conscious of the stress and anxiety facing parents and their children as we work to secure more places. It is a priority issue for the department.' Photograph: Alan Betson

m/news/education/cao
Let’s Be Clear...
1993

Report of the Special Education Review Committee

Deireadh Fómhair, 1993
We call upon all governments and urge them to...adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise.

(UNESCO, 1994)
750 million adults around the world cannot read or write. And 262 million children and youth are out of school worldwide.
What we Know...

As the level of teacher professionalism gradually increased in Finnish schools during the 1990s, the prevalence of powerful teaching methods and pedagogical classroom and school designs increased.

(Sahlberg 2015: 49)
The Times they are a Changin’

“This is a story about ... whether an entire generation of kids will fail to make the grade in the global economy because they can’t think their way through abstract problems, work in teams, distinguish good information from bad, or speak a language other than [their own].”

How to Build a Student for the 21st Century, TIME Magazine, December 18, 2006
Education today is much more about ways of thinking which involve creative and critical approaches to problem-solving and decision-making. It is also about ways of working, including communication and collaboration, as well as the tools they require, such as the capacity to recognise and exploit the potential of new technologies, or indeed, to avert their risks. And last but not least, education is about the capacity to live in a multi-faceted world as an active and engaged citizen. These citizens influence what they want to learn and how they want to learn it, and it is this that shapes the role of educators.

(Schleicher 2019)
Holistic Development of the Child

- Spiritual
- Moral
- Cognitive
- Emotional
- Imaginative
- Aesthetic
- Social
- Physical
The child is the starting point, the centre, and the end. His development, his growth, is the ideal. ... To the growth of the child all studies are subservient...

Personality, character, is more than subject matter. Not knowledge or information, but self-realisation, is the goal. To possess all the world of knowledge and lose one's own self is as awful a fate in education as in religion.

(Dewey 1902)
The Teacher Education Continuum

Conceptualising the Inclusion of Mandatory Elements in Initial Teacher Education Programmes

(Mary Immaculate College 2019: 34)
Summary of Key Principles Underpinning a Policy Statement on Initial Teacher Education

(Mary Immaculate College 2019: 53)
Teacher Roles in 21st Century

Teacher-as-Researcher
Teacher-as-Collaborator
Teacher as Pedagogical Leader
Teacher-as Lifelong Learner
Pedagogy at the Heart of the Teacher’s Role in the Past, Present and Future

- Pedagogy (how we teach)
- Theories (how children learn and develop)
- Philosophy (beliefs and values about education)

(Jones and Shelton, 2011)
A Melange or a Mosaic of Theories? How Theoretical Perspectives on Children’s Learning and Development can Inform a Responsive Pedagogy in a Redeveloped Primary School Curriculum

(Ring, O’Sullivan, Burke and Ryan 2018)
Exploring and Applying Theoretical Perspectives on Children’s Learning and Development in the Classroom

- Bioecological
- Sociocultural
- Multiple Intelligences
- Neuroscience and Neurocognitive Science
- Meta-Cognition and Self-Regulation
- Attachment and Relational
- Cognitive Psychology
- Motivation
Founding Theorist: Urie Bronfenbrenner
1917-2005

Child at the centre of an ecosystem model

Bioecological
• Child is influenced by his/her environment
• Each child has a unique ecosystem
• Relationships are critical
Each Child’s Ecosystem is Different

Bronfenbrenner cited in Santrock 2008: 33
Learning occurs in social contexts

Founding Theorist: Lev Vygotsky
1896-1934

Sociocultural
• Learning and development happens through social interaction
• Cultural tools are internalised
• Zone of Proximal Development
• Role of the adult
• Playful approaches
• Language and dialogue are central
Founding Theorist(s):
Lev Vygotsky 1896-1934 &
John Flavell 1928 -

Activating and sustaining cognitions

Meta-Cognition and Self-Regulation
• Planning, monitoring, evaluating learning
• Self-regulation
Attachment and Relational

Positive relationships promote emotional security

Founding Theorist: John Bowlby 1907-1990
Attachment and Relational

- Classroom environment
- Importance of teacher-child relationships
- Relatedness
- Secure base
The mental state that arouses, directs and maintains behaviour

Motivation

Founding Theorist: Abraham Maslow 1908-1970
• Autonomy
• Choice
• Challenging goals
The systematic study of mental processes

Cognitive Psychology

Founding Theorist: Ulric Neisser 1928-2012

Founding Theorist: Ulric Neisser 1928-2012
• Learning requires effort
• Background knowledge is important
• Learning needs to be planned and sequenced

Cognitive Psychology
Exploring structure, function and nervous system of the brain

Founding Theorist:
Santiago Ramón y Cajal
1852-1934

Neuroscience and Neurocognitive Science
- Prior learning - neuronal networks
- Multi-modality
- Instruction and exploration
- Feedback
- Brain development

Neuroscience and Neurocognitive Science
Harnessing Rapid Brain Growth in the Early Years

C. Nelson, in *From Neurons to Neighborhoods, 2000*

(Nelson 2000, cited in Melhuish 2015)
Founding Theorist: Howard Gardner 1943-

Multiple Intelligences

Intelligence is comprised of distinct modalities
Multiple Intelligences

- Lack of empirical evidence
Key Messages as We Leave the Harbour
Relationships in the Classroom Matter: Interactions Drive Learning and Development

- Meta-Cognition and Self-Regulation
- Attachment and Relational
- Motivation
- Cognitive Psychology
- Neuroscience and Neurocognitive Science
- Multiple Intelligences
- Bioecological
- Sociocultural

Child
Each Child is Different

- Bioecological
- Sociocultural
- Meta-Cognition and Self-Regulation
- Attachment and Relational
- Motivation
- Cognitive Psychology
- Neuroscience and Neurocognitive Science
- Multiple Intelligences
Planning for Children’s Learning is Crucial

- Bioecological
- Sociocultural
- Meta-Cognition and Self-Regulation
- Motivation
- Attachment and Relational
- Cognitive Psychology
- Neuroscience and Neurocognitive Science
- Multiple Intelligences
- Child

Planning for Children’s Learning is Crucial

- Bioecological
- Sociocultural
- Meta-Cognition and Self-Regulation
- Motivation
- Attachment and Relational
- Cognitive Psychology
- Neuroscience and Neurocognitive Science
- Multiple Intelligences
- Child
Language-rich Environments are critical

- Bioecological
- Sociocultural
- Multiple Intelligences
- Neuroscience and Neurocognitive Science
- Meta-Cognition and Self-Regulation
- Attachment and Relational
- Cognitive Psychology
- Motivation

Child
Active Learning and Supporting Children’s Thinking

- Multiple Intelligences
- Bioecological
- Sociocultural
- Meta-Cognition and Self-Regulation
- Attachment and Relational
- Motivation
- Neuroscience and Neurocognitive Science
- Cognitive Psychology
- Attachment and Relational
- Motivation
Listening and Including Children’s Voices Promotes Participation and Engagement

- Multiple Intelligences
- Neuroscience and Neurocognitive Science
- Meta-Cognition and Self-Regulation
- Attachment and Relational
- Motivation
- Cognitive Psychology
- Sociocultural
- Bioecological
The Role of the Teacher is Pivotal

- Bioecological
- Sociocultural
- Multiple Intelligences
- Neuroscience and Neurocognitive Science
- Cognitive Psychology
- Motivation
- Attachment and Relational
- Meta-Cognition and Self-Regulation
- Child
### A Responsive Pedagogy

**Table 1. Deconstructing the Mosaic of Theories for Application in the Classroom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bioecological</th>
<th>Sociocultural</th>
<th>Meta-Cognition and Self-Regulation</th>
<th>Attachment</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Cognitive Psychology</th>
<th>Neuroscience</th>
<th>Multiple Intelligences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>○ Attention needs to be directed to individual child characteristics; family and community contexts.</td>
<td>○ Providing enriched opportunities for children to learn with others.</td>
<td>○ Providing activities which promote a child’s autonomy and creating autonomy supporting classrooms where children are given opportunities to make choices; children’s autonomy and self-regulate learning.</td>
<td>○ Creating school environments where children are given opportunities to experience being competent; having choice, autonomy and relatedness leading to intrinsic engagement.</td>
<td>○ Learning is effortful and curriculum activities should be cognisant of the limits of memory.</td>
<td>○ Effective pedagogy should elicit previous learning.</td>
<td>○ Facts should not be presented in isolation but as broader concepts in a structured, meaningful way.</td>
<td>○ While multiple intelligences and learning style theories continue to be popular in education, the lack of validation of these theoretical perspectives suggests that caution is required when interpreting what these perspectives tell us about children’s learning and development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Quality of the physical, pedagogical and interactional classroom environment matters.</td>
<td>○ Exploring the potential of play-based learning.</td>
<td>○ Engaging in ongoing reflection on how as teachers we interact with children and remembering that ‘interactions drive development’</td>
<td>○ Developing meaningful partnerships with parents.</td>
<td>○ Supporting children’s learning through providing multi-modal representations can increase the child’s capacity to process new information e.g. providing both auditory and visual explanations.</td>
<td>○ Direct instruction can be efficient for some types of learning.</td>
<td>○ Multi-modal teaching enhances memory.</td>
<td>○ Harness the research related to multi-modal representations and motivation theory, suggesting that children’s engagement increases through recognising the role of both cognitive and affective processes in learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Children’s relationships with others are critical.</td>
<td>○ Considering the potential of the emergent curriculum and children’s interests.</td>
<td>○ Ensuring curricular experiences are meaningful for the child, for example play is a meaningful activity for children.</td>
<td>○ Ensuring a consistent approach across teachers and across the school.</td>
<td>○ Provide appropriate knowledge about a topic prior to asking a child to solve problems.</td>
<td>○ Children will learn best in encouraging, risk-free environments.</td>
<td>○ Individual differences can be met by alternative teaching approaches.</td>
<td>○ MI and learning style theories remind us of the need for an individual focus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Relationships and shared understandings between key people in a child’s life are important.</td>
<td>○ Reflecting on the central role of the adult in guiding the child’s learning and development.</td>
<td>○ Including collaborative activities.</td>
<td>○ Providing consistent boundaries sensitive to the child’s individual needs.</td>
<td>○ Timely, corrective feedback is important.</td>
<td>○ Fixed intelligence is not supported.</td>
<td>○ Fixed intelligence is not supported.</td>
<td>○ Fixed intelligence is not supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ A curriculum responsive to each child’s context is necessary.</td>
<td>○ Providing the child with access to developmentally appropriate curricula.</td>
<td>○ Considering the role of mixed-ability groups in encouraging other- and co-regulation.</td>
<td>○ Providing activities which allow children to articulate their learning.</td>
<td>○ Avoid activities likely to lead to repeated failure for some children e.g. spelling tests.</td>
<td>○ Individual differences can be met by alternative teaching approaches.</td>
<td>○ Fixed intelligence is not supported.</td>
<td>○ Fixed intelligence is not supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Responsive policy development ultimately impacts on a child’s learning and development.</td>
<td>○ Creating a non-stressed context that takes cognisance of children’s well-being and belonging.</td>
<td>○ Understanding the implications of providing a secure base for children’s learning and development.</td>
<td>○ Praise the effort not learner trait.</td>
<td>○ Distribution of learning through interleaving; providing retrieval practice and allowing the child to articulate learning.</td>
<td>○ Fixed intelligence is not supported.</td>
<td>○ Fixed intelligence is not supported.</td>
<td>○ Fixed intelligence is not supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Children need to be engaged in learning.</td>
<td>○ Considering the ZPD – socio-dramatic play as a ZPD for self-regulation skills.</td>
<td>○ Promote mastery rather than completion.</td>
<td>○ Provide learners challenging learning opportunities.</td>
<td>○ Effective pedagogy should elicit previous learning.</td>
<td>○ Facts should not be presented in isolation but as broader concepts in a structured, meaningful way.</td>
<td>○ Multi-modal teaching enhances memory.</td>
<td>○ While multiple intelligences and learning style theories continue to be popular in education, the lack of validation of these theoretical perspectives suggests that caution is required when interpreting what these perspectives tell us about children’s learning and development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Placing the Teacher at the Centre

- Voice
- Profession
- Teacher
- Adequate Resourcing
- Investment in the Continuum of Teacher Education
- Supported Diversity
Celebrating our Success
Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see.

(Postman 1982: 8)
References


• Mary Immaculate College (2019) *Submission to the invitation received from the department of education and skills on 15th August 2019 to contribute to the proposed policy statement on initial teacher education, 7th October 2019*, Limerick: Mary Immaculate College.


References Images

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4gktUvUMX0
- https://www.amazon.co.uk/Finnish-Lessons-2-0-Educational-Finland/dp/0807755850
- https://www.muckrosshouseresearchlibrary.ie/Ireland-1930s-1940s.php
- https://www.flickr.com/photos/biwook/147626990/
- https://www.pinterest.ie/pin/845058317554247576/
- https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0d/Reading_books.jpg
- https://sites.google.com/site/bibliotekaedukativa/registro-de-revistas/educacion/flavell-john-h
- https://alchetron.com/Ulric-Neisser
- https://psicologiamentep.com/biografias/santiago-ramon-y-cajal
- https://www.firstdiscoverers.co.uk/howard-gardner-child-development-theories/
- https://kids.lovetoknow.com/wiki/Multiple_Intelligence_Test_for_Children

Images not referenced from SIREN Films 2019/2020 subscription @ Mary Immaculate College