

EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDIES

A STUDENT'S GUIDE

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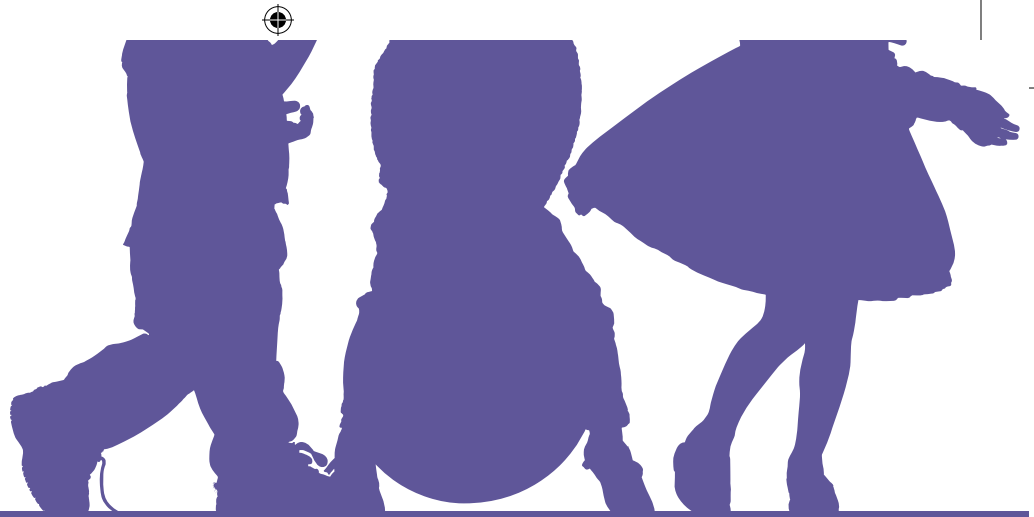
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CHAPTER

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BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL: ENTANGLEMENTS WITH IDENTITY AND PRACTICE

BY KAREN BARR

The chapter draws on the idea that, like children, professionals do not form a homogeneous group. It was able to assist my studies by highlighting the paradoxical world in which we live and reminding me that for both professionals and children, no two worlds are constructed in the same manner. Combined with this is the notion that whilst we have our own worlds, these worlds can be deeply embedded with ideological discourse which can frame and constrain us. Reading this chapter will therefore help you to consider your own world view and how you construct knowledge.

The chapter included a number of transcripts from focus groups which help you see how different people are able to construct different meanings from childhood objects. The tasks at the end of each section will also help you to cement your knowledge and apply what you have just read about, making the literature more tangible whilst providing a level of reflexive thought.



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learning outcomes

By reading this chapter and actively engaging with the material, you will be able to:

- explore systems that influence experiences of early childhood students
- reflect on processes relating to becoming an early childhood professional
- identify ideological issues that affect emerging futures in early childhood education and care (ECEC)
- create opportunities to engage with learning experiences in Early Childhood Studies (ECS).

There are numerous ways to conceptualise the learning and interactive experiences that shape who people become and how they develop. Some theories of learning draw on the notion that the world is there to be discovered, but this suggests that the world is static and can close off opportunities to embrace new possibilities in an ever-changing world (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). This chapter considers early childhood students, not as students who study to discover a static world already there, but as people interacting with and being shaped by, as well as shaping, the world. It draws on data from a focus group carried out with Early Childhood Studies students, in which their experiences illuminate elements of becoming within the field of ECEC. In this chapter, students are conceptualised as ‘becoming’; they are entangled with the world and through co-dependent relationships with environments they co-construct their study of early childhood and what early childhood professionals might become.

This chapter also considers the concept of professionalism in ECEC as ‘becoming’, as it evolves through time and across spaces of early childhood practice. Research with those working in this field suggests that, for many, their experiences in everyday practice are often emotionally rewarding and, at the same time, characterised by ambiguity, plurality, contradictions and inconsistencies, as they navigate standardised policy requirements and government **discourse** (Brock, 2013; Osgood, 2012; Simpson, 2010). The concept of professionalism is highly contested and, as such, offers rich potential for negotiation and the creation of meanings.

BECOMING WITHIN SYSTEMS

Lenz Taguchi (2010: 49) contends that ‘our meaning-making and the learning we do is dependent on the material world around us’. As asserted in Chapter 2, sensory interaction with the world has a profound effect on the development of a baby’s brain and body and this continues throughout life. We are active participants in learning that happens and neurological research indicates that brain plasticity continues across a person’s lifespan. Learning is never finished, but, rather, through endless interaction with our environments, we are continually learning, always becoming something new. Each encounter has the capacity to affect and change us. We can see ourselves as *becoming* in the sense that part of *being* is becoming changed through interaction with the world.

Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological theory, as discussed in previous chapters, suggests that a series of systems interact with and affect each other. One view of how this relates to ECS

students would be to consider a student's home, university, work and social environments as a student's microsystems. These operate within an exosystem that impacts on students' experiences; for example, government policies affect children's services where students might work; student loan policies affect financial situations, which impact on the time available for study and leisure. At macrosystemic levels, political **ideology** and societal values impact on government policy. It is useful to reflect on how these influences are productive of what we do and how interactions within the systems alter our understanding and strategies.



reflection point 24.1

- Make a list of things in your life that matter to you in your personal, academic and professional life.
- How do these relate to different systems?
- How do the systems influence each other and, in turn, affect your own experiences and responses?

We could think of these systems as '**assemblages**'. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) use this term to describe a collection of affective materials within a given situation – in other words, interconnected elements in particular circumstances that interact with and affect other elements. Assemblages are constantly in flux, or in a state of becoming, and are therefore continually renewing in response to how different elements affect one another. Assemblages and all the elements within them can be said to be *emerging*, as all parts of the assemblage, including the people within it, are constantly changing or becoming through interactions within the assemblage.

You might have thought, in the first instance, of things to do with more immediate environments. Perhaps you thought of family, friends old and new, belongings that you brought to university, transport systems such as buses to work, university library lending systems, shopping for clothes, the students' union, government policies that you are reading, a place where you study or meet friends, a job application, and so on. You might have considered how you travel to different places, how your finances affect this, how much mobile phone credit you have to contact friends or renew books online, how you access emotional support and how relationships and systems in your life affect this. Any of these things and anything else in your life can be thought of as part of an assemblage with converging factors that affect you and that are affected by your relationships with them. Dynamic relations between these factors form a network of flowing entanglements that connect us within our environments. Interactions within these entanglements generate continuous renewal of the assemblage and create unique experiences, simultaneously affirming and changing things that matter to us.

MATTERS OF TRANSITIONING

Changes in our circumstances are sometimes described as **transitions** that we need to respond and adapt to in order to manage them. Often, transitions tend to be conceptualised as one-point events, such as starting school or university, or a new job. However, Taylor and Harris-Evans

(2016) think of becoming as endless differentiation and transitions, which are not necessarily events with a clear start and finish but are ongoing processes. They challenge the idea of transitions as defined trajectories or sequenced stages and, instead, see the concept of transitioning as a dynamic, continual process of unfolding. Taylor and Harris-Evans (2016) explored the experiences of students on a BA Hons Education Studies course who were transitioning into higher education. They found that things that matter to students experiencing transition vary widely and include aspects of their lives within and beyond university. In each student's assemblage, numerous active elements played a part in their experiences, including daily processes, physical materials, surprises, people and responsibilities. Although these happen to be common factors, each student's becoming through transitioning was part of a unique web of relationships with these elements. The research findings highlighted the **heterogeneity** of students' experiences – in other words, no two students' experiences were the same.

This diversity has implications for how we think of students' experiences at university. Whilst there are written curricula specifying course content and learning outcomes, each student's experience will be unique. Continually unfolding processes of transitioning in response to connections and evolving relationships generate opportunities to further explore transitioning, becoming and things that matter.

Bennett (2010) describes such matters – material, human and non-human – as catalysts or things that can produce effects. She sees 'distinctive capacities or efficacious powers of particular material configurations' as catalytic because of the vibrancy of matter (2010: ix). Matter is vibrant in that the characteristics of these things resonate to the point that they compel engagement with them as they provoke responses. We are and feel affected in some way by matters that resonate with us. If we are attentive to the effects that are produced, this can illuminate the potential of environments to affect experiences. Mayer-Hoffer (2015) suggests that if we identify reference points or things that matter to us, we can recognise affective relationships and how interactions bring about particular effects. If we are part of a group, our very being or becoming, our beliefs, convictions and experiences, are all constructed as part of our belonging to the group. An awareness of capacities and feelings can enable us to understand how our responses to our environments are shaped.



spotlight on practice 24.1

Focus Groups

In order to explore things that matter to Early Childhood students, after gaining ethical approval from the university I invited students to participate in a focus group. There were four students in the group of volunteers. This created opportunities for the group to listen and respond to one another's experiences and thoughts, thus building our understanding in collaborative ways that one-to-one interviews would not have afforded. I asked them in advance to bring three things – objects or ideas – that they associated with being an Early Childhood Studies student, and asked them to talk about what they had brought. The conversation was rich and only fragments of stories are told here. They tell of connections between material

(Continued)

objects and lives within and outside of university, of things that matter, that affect relationships between experiences past, present and future, all assembled into continual processes of becoming.

Childhood toys

A teddy bear ... I thought about it and thought that when kids bring ... toys into school and they are told to put them in their drawer and they get upset, ... they all mean something to the kids. Like, when I broke my elbow when I was 11, it came into hospital with me, hence why it has a hospital tag on, ... the nurse was really good at trying to make me feel comfortable and I had to wear the wrist band so she said 'Oh, shall we give one to your teddy bear too?' ... thinking about that reminded me ... why you've got to get down to children's level all the time rather than just thinking like a grown-up where like wearing a silly little wrist band wouldn't have been scary.

I had a massive box of Barbies ... I used to play with them for... days, even secretly when I was in year 7 ... I had lots of teddies but I preferred to have them sitting there. I didn't like to play with them and my sister was the opposite. She had a toy cat; mine was like, pristine and nice, but my sister's was like, it's been through mud, it's been everywhere and is all mangled and weird. And I think that's really interesting, the differences, like I was, 'oh that has to look nice'. I didn't touch it because it would get ruined and her attitude was, no it's coming everywhere with me, like in the bath with me ... it makes me reflective, like what has that made me think about practice?

Books gifted by family members

'We're going on a bar hunt' ... a parody ... and the 'The very hungover caterpillar' ... reading them just sort of reminded me ... you can appreciate the things a child likes but still have fun at the same time ... the teachers at my school are like, 'oh ... you have to do paperwork', and it's just to remind me that there are the good funny sides to working with kids, so try to see them all the time, and try to have a fun time with becoming an early childhood graduate.

I chose my youth bible because the youth bible goes with other things that I did ... I'm still a Christian, so that's also influenced ... my attitudes towards things, how I view certain situations. Again, going back into practice, there are going to be some kids from religious backgrounds and some that aren't, so I think that being a Christian I can understand what it's like to be in a family or background where religion is important ... not necessarily that's mine, but because there'll be some things that influence a way that a child is brought up and conversations about their religious experience.

Photographs

My family was a massive part of me growing up ... we were around each other a lot and we went on holiday together at least once a year ... my family has influenced me and like, coming to university and my attitudes here and attitudes when I work are to do with how I've been brought up and what my family has viewed as important ... I chose this one because we were on holiday together ... From a very early age we went out on trips and things ... when I go into settings there's gonna be some kids who always go on holiday with their family, and that's something that I'll be able to relate to, whereas there'll be some kids that maybe don't ever go on holiday, and maybe that will be something that I won't relate to but it will be something that I can maybe encourage in practice, like going out and doing stuff.

I've got a picture of my mum and my brother ... When I was five I always wanted to have a sibling so I always said 'mummy I want to have a brother'. And then she got pregnant and then my brother came ... Our personalities are really different ... I'm the one that was like, really open, and like 'Would you like to give me a hug?' and he was 'mmm, eeeww, no!'. This is, I think a month before I came to university, because I got my hair cut, I shaved my head last year in March and it's like, a woman's hair doesn't determine who you are. My brother secretly wrote a script to tell the class about introducing an important person, and he wrote about me. My mum, when she was cleaning things, she found it. I never realised that he loves me because he never says that and he always runs away when I say 'Oh I love you and I want to hug you'. And so, deep inside my heart I knew that he loved me but when you really see the letter and the script that he wrote, I burst into tears ... he introduced me because he thinks that I'm really creative and because I really want to help people. So I shaved my head ... I find this quite cool, to watch our hair grow and so our hair is like a similar length. We look really similar now but he is 5 years younger than me.

This is my little brother ... I was 13 when he was born so when I grew up I kind of matured a lot quicker because I wanted to help my mum out with my brother ... I used to teach him how to add and write letters and that sort of stuff ... I suppose that's what's kind of made me want to become a teacher, because I kind of realised I was actually alright at it ... they all look up to me for the fact that I've moved away because nobody in my family has moved away yet.

My photo album ... My mum was the most influential person because, although she didn't want me to go, she was like, 'You're gonna do great', and every time I tell her ... when I'm having problems at uni she's like, 'You're gonna be fine, you can do this, you can stay at uni, you can get through it'. ... My best friend ... she moved away because she works in the RAF but she influenced me because she was like, 'No you can do it, I've done it, you can do it, you've got to do it'. ... When I went to Butlin's for a weekend I saw all these wonderful people talking about their lives ... and I was thinking my life seems pretty dull to be fair, I don't like my job, I don't like where I live, and like, I realised then that I needed to do something about it ... so this is a picture of me at Butlin's ... after I came back, I applied for uni straight away ... I have got the experience of being in a childhood setting before and I did volunteering but ... I always thought I probably won't get in ... I'm not gonna be as far forward as everyone else, and all that sort of stuff. But my mum was like, 'Don't be silly you'll get through, you'll be fine ... you've got to work hard to get where you want to get', and that kind of inspires me.

Leaflets from placement

Because I was confused about schema when I was in uni, I asked the manager of the setting, and she gave me this and ... told me that ... you have to find the interest of that child, what they like to do. So I find this quite important and to let the parents know as well ... they put them where the parents pick up and drop off children, so parents can access this as well ... it's quite important to have that.

Paintings made with children

They use ... a squeegee sponge ... with different colours ... I'm always experimenting with things when I play with them. And the other one was a toy, like this ... a bobbin ... so then they would just like, roll it or ... stamp with it.

(Continued)

The vibrant matter in these unique assemblages includes treasured materials that invoke emotion and thought; people; places; holidays; fun; paperwork; love; anxiety; reassurance; inspiration; a nurse's kindness that now provokes new understanding of children's experiences and concern where practice jars with this understanding; reflection on similarities and uniqueness between family members; a hairstyle being cut and growing out; surprise and delight at the extent of sibling affection in a found script; spaces and materials for sharing practice and knowledge; playful experimentation; and many more things besides.

These things highlight relational entanglements between things that matter. Stories from childhood shape thinking about practice in ECEC settings. Past, present and future encounters connect notions of becoming, continual unfolding and potential. Stories provoked responses in the group, particularly where experiences resonated due to differences and similarities. This sparked off new ideas and conversations about memories of objects not brought along, which generated reflection that might not otherwise have been shared. Each story was unique and told in response to unique assemblages of things that matter. Sharing stories can open up spaces for collaborative, creative reflection:

- What things might you have brought to the focus group?
- What stories would you tell of them?
- How are they entangled with your experiences of becoming in ECS?

ENTANGLEMENTS WITH IDEOLOGY AND EMERGING FUTURES

This continual unfolding process affords rich opportunities. Semetsky (2011: 140) speaks of the 'dynamic *process* of becoming, comprising multiple evaluations and revaluations of experience. Experience is rendered meaningful ... by experimentation on our very *being* for the purpose of *becoming*'. Exploring how our views and understandings are shaped, things that matter, how they influence our meaning making and open up potential adventures, can help us to make sense of how we relate to the world as part of a continuous process.

Moss (2014) urges us to see the possibilities of practice and professionalism as emerging potentiality. In this way, what we do and how we think can shape future practice as much as it shapes us, but we must be aware of ideological forces within systems of practice. As we have seen in other chapters, there are many ways in which political ideologies and government policies impact on practice throughout ever-changing systems in which ECEC settings are positioned. Therefore, ECEC professionals can face dilemmas where political ideologies and expectations are incongruent with personal values and ethics. What happens if something seems unfair – for example, if practices appear to disadvantage particular people but legislation or local policy makes this difficult to address? It is useful to reflect on how entanglements within these systems shape practice, as well as how problematic influences can be navigated and challenged.

Moss (2014) describes the story of **neoliberalism**, which in the UK and similar economic systems is the prevalent, market-driven ideology that is underpinned by assumptions that people are free to make choices about which services they access. This means that competition is a key driving force for enhancing quality in ECEC as services compete for funding and service

users and are thus positioned as competitors. This can be problematic for numerous reasons, including questions of whether people are really free to choose services, whether it is ethical to force competition rather than collaboration between services, how this affects the quality of practice, how quality is conceptualised and what happens in ECEC if quality suffers. Pressures and affordances created within such systems influence what ECEC becomes.

Within neoliberal ideology, ECEC professionals are often positioned as needing to achieve quality that is measured by predetermined, quantifiable outcomes such as reading scores, school attendance, health statistics, league tables, and so forth. Quantifiable measurements of quality make it easy to compare outcomes with competitors, but we might ask how quality can be measured in other ways. We might consider the bits in between easy-to-measure outcomes, which could offer alternative evaluations that explore the intricacies of things that matter in early childhood services. The driver of competition is inequality as people compete to have needs met by limited resources, but if we want to address inequalities rather than using them for market purposes, other ways to measure and evaluate practice are needed. Quantifiable measurements are sometimes favoured because of the supposed certainty that they imply, but if we think of assemblages as ever-unfolding and becoming, there is a great deal of uncertainty involved. Quantifiable measurements play a part in producing understandings of quality in practice, but they do not tell the whole story. Ethical practices that address inequality require listening to experiences of how those involved are affected. Massumi (2015: 11) believes that ethical action involves assessing the potential of the action and ‘what it brings out in the situation’. Moreover, he asserts that ethics are ‘about how we inhabit uncertainty, together’. This implies a need to tune into each other’s experiences to understand the bits in between quantifiable measurements and find practical, ethical responses in order to navigate uncertainty collaboratively.

Moss opens up new ways of seeing the world and opportunities to experiment with ideas of emerging futures and practices, by deliberately choosing to phrase his telling of neoliberalism as a *story* as opposed to a *truth* that must be accepted. He suggests that we can choose to see the story of neoliberalism as a frame of reference and understand that this is one view of the world, without believing that it is the only way. Furthermore, he advocates listening to alternative stories of early childhood education that are based on democratic participation in what quality might be, and explore what stories of early childhood might become through curiosity and imagination of alternative responses to the effects of political systems.

EMERGING PROFESSIONALISM

Moss contrasts neoliberal views of the ECEC professional ‘as a transmitter and producer of predetermined knowledge and values’ with that of ‘a professional with an overriding responsibility towards her or his’ role in working with people (2014: 45). Rather than being locked into pre-conceived ideas and discourses, he asserts that a professional can be “rich” and competent with enormous potential, an active learner co-constructing knowledge in relationship with others ... a reflective practitioner, a theorist and a critical thinker’ (2014: 89).

There are numerous models and theories of professionalism in ECEC and there is a lack of consensus on what this complex concept means. Policy systems continually emerge, thus meanings of professionalism entangled with these systems are continually emerging. From neoliberal perspectives, a key aim of ECEC is to invest in children and families as an investment in the

future economy, but what about the ethics of investing in ECEC as a social principle of equality? Harwood et al. (2013: 10) highlight a notion of ‘oscillating identities’ in relation to their findings in a multinational study with early childhood educators. Participants spoke of the complexities of their roles, which encompass both care and educational responsibilities. The researchers advocate listening to the experiences of such professionals in order to empower them to advocate for care as a social principle in their multifaceted roles as part of navigating what professionalism means.

In order to counter discourses of professionalism imposed externally by standardised, outcomes-driven measurements of quality, Brock (2013) investigated the perspectives of 12 early years educators. She emphasises a need for practitioners’ voices to be part of debates around professionalism. Listening to practitioners’ experiences in her study provoked the creation of a **typology** of early childhood professionalism, which took account of ‘the interplay between personal voices and professional ideologies’ (p. 27). This typology highlights the significance of autonomy in making appropriate judgements in changing situations, which are based on expertise, collaboration and ethical values, and not merely the application of technical competence to produce prescribed outcomes. The typology comprises seven dimensions of professionalism:

1. *Knowledge*: study of theory; experience; practical understanding of policy frameworks.
2. *Qualifications, training and professional development*: further and higher education, apprenticeships; self-directed continual professional development and training.
3. *Skills*: planning curricula and teaching through play-based pedagogies, observing and assessing children’s learning; monitoring, evaluating and reflecting on practice and provision; multidisciplinary and teamwork skills; making appropriate judgements; effective communication with a range of stakeholders.
4. *Autonomy*: recognised knowledge and expertise in relation to pedagogy; making appropriate provision for groups of children based on own judgements; autonomy in professional responsibilities; using discretion; shaping policy and practice; recognition of professionalism, status and value; recognition and endorsement of vocational aspects of working with children.
5. *Values*: sharing similar ideologies and values, such as belief in play-based pedagogies and principles for appropriate provision; commitment built on moral and social purposes; accountability to children and families; creating a trusting, mutually respectful environment.
6. *Ethics*: engagement with ethical principles and values; high level of commitment to professional role and to children and families; collaboration with colleagues within and beyond the setting; inclusiveness and valuing diversity in working relationships in the setting and community.
7. *Rewards*: personal satisfaction, interest and enjoyment in work; strong, supportive relationships with children and families; strong commitment to the professional role and to personal professionalism; being valued for professional expertise; appropriate salary. (abridged from Brock, 2013: 35–6)

Brock presents her typology not as a fixed model, but instead as a mechanism to enable reflection and engage practitioners and students in debate about early childhood professionalism. The typology emerged as a response to engaging directly with practitioners who are navigating professionalism in ECEC. Views and stories of professionalism are characterised by both heterogeneity *and* commonality in experiences, so different learning communities can find

different ways to ‘inhabit uncertainty, together’ (Massumi, 2015: 11) and produce new theories in response to unfolding assemblages. It is useful to consider how studies such as Brock’s create and shape understandings of professionalism. Payler and Davis (2017) provide a useful summary and discussion of further early childhood research and policies that contribute to current conceptualisations. This can be accessed on the book’s website to support reflection on issues of professionalism that Early Childhood students encounter in their learning.

Early Childhood students have a complex network of entanglements to navigate. Campbell-Barr (2016) explored ECS students’ development of attitudes and dispositions in relation to professionalism and found that students value and call for support in understanding relationships between professional identities and practical experience of engaging in reflective practice. If we see the world as unfolding and emerging, an answer that we might have today will shift as it is evaluated and re-evaluated continuously.



spotlight on practice 24.1

Ideas of Professionalism

Participants in the focus group for this chapter suggested that continuous and varied experiences shape their ideas of professionalism:

I think ... it’s based on other people that you’ve seen ... like who you want to be like, who you see ... I think that’s kind of where my idea of professionalism [comes from]. I think sometimes there’s a grey area ... I can understand that some professionals don’t see eye to eye ... I think professionalism means something to different people ... I’m learning what I do want to be like in a professional setting but also definitely what I don’t.

A professional challenge ... would be being in the same setting, there being a different opinion of teaching that can influence the children ... maybe in the morning a child asks to help a teacher ... and in the afternoon is there another teacher that asks children to sit back down ... but then that child’s saying, ‘I want to help’, so then it’s really difficult for the children to accept two different teaching staff.

I think I’m shaped by my past job. I used to work for a swimming school ... which was like a family swimming school and all of the ladies I worked with were just like a big family ... when I look back we were ... almost like siblings so in a way ... you don’t have to keep a professional life separate to your personal life, I think you can connect them.

When you’re working with kids it’s different to working with their parents sometimes so you’ve got to have multiple identities while you’re being professional ... If you look at other teachers it helps with your own identity and professionalism because it shows how you can actually balance all of those things, how to talk to people differently.

With placement, some of those days where I went in and didn’t have to go in I learned more than when ... I had to go in, because ... I’d be going in on different days of the week

(Continued)

and they do different activities in class ... with different teachers ... I learned a lot more about different types of teaching ... you can go and work with a different teacher or... the head teacher or... the dinner staff.

When I was volunteering ... they would kind of treat me like I was one of the teachers ... I'm on placement at a SEN school, now. I've never thought of going into that environment before ... Now I'm actually intrigued to go a bit further into research because it's very interesting.

Make the most of being at uni ... things like sports coaching courses ... first aid ... not everyone knows what they want to do so it's good to try out a few different things.

Evidently, participants found it important to be receptive and responsive to opportunities and investigate different experiences. This can create new understandings of professionalism and open up new possibilities as part of studying early childhood.



action point 24.1

- Make a note of ways in which your experiences have shaped your ideas about professionalism.
- Think about the kind of impact you want to make in the world of ECEC.
- Imagine the opportunities that you could find, create and become entangled with to explore new possibilities within and beyond your course of study.
- Generate a plan of how you will engage with opportunities in your adventure of continually becoming professional.

Reflecting on dynamic forces within unfolding assemblages can inform our understanding of entanglements within systems. MacNaughton (2005) asserts that reflection and dialogue in collaborative learning communities enable practitioners to manage or challenge dominant ideologies that have ethical implications for practice. By sharing experiences we can explore alternative pathways and ideas can grow or change direction.

As Moss (2014: 8) puts it, 'The future is immanent and present, which has itself emerged from the potentiality of the past'. Past encounters that affect us now and in the future are entangled with continually becoming. The snippets of becoming through relational entanglements included in this chapter have offered glimpses into events and potential adventures in an emerging world, and, as Semetsky (2011: 140) explains, 'Event is always an element of becoming, and the becoming is unlimited'. Sharing reflections and responding to resonances in the stories of others create unpredictable connections that spark off new learning. If we tune into the world around us, we can begin to understand how vibrant matters provoke our responses and shape how we take part in unfolding adventures.

SUMMARY

- Continually unfolding systems, such as ECEC assemblages in which we are entangled, influence our experiences.
- Reflection on processes of transitioning and becoming affords opportunities to understand our entanglement with the world in general, and with early childhood in particular.
- Identifying ideological issues, such as the current prevalence of neoliberalism, can illuminate understandings of how ECEC professionalism is conceptualised. Considering alternatives to dominant ideology can open up the potential to challenge current influences on practice.
- Sharing stories and engaging with new learning experiences affords new opportunities as part of studying early childhood.



online resources

Make sure to visit <https://study.sagepub.com/fitzgeraldandmaconochie> for selected SAGE videos (with questions), SAGE journal articles, links to external sources and flashcards.

FURTHER READING

Giugni, M. (2011). 'Becoming Worldly With': An Encounter with the Early Years Learning Framework. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 12(1): 11–27. [online] Available at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2304/ciec.2011.12.1.11> [Accessed 2 July 2018].

Giugni reflects on her experiences of implementing an early years curriculum policy. She challenges limited definitions of children's learning that are articulated in the curriculum document and discusses pedagogical choices that create opportunities for ethical practice.

Lenz Taguchi, H. (2011). Investigating Learning, Participation and Becoming in Early Childhood Practices with a Relational Materialist Approach. *Global Studies of Childhood* 1(1): 36–50. [online] Available at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2304/gsch.2011.1.1.36> [Accessed 2 July 2018].

This article takes a deeper look at the concept of 'becoming' in relation to the material world. It considers alternative ways of thinking about pedagogy and opens up opportunities to challenge dominant forces in education.

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