Abstract

There has been much interest in emergent curriculum in early education in the last twenty years, partly due to the inspirations of collaborative pedagogical work between children and teachers of the municipal preschools of Reggio Emilia, Italy. In the absence of research denoting the tensions inherent in the complex role of the teacher co-constructioning curriculum in a long term project, this narrative inquiry case study investigates the decision making process and implementation of experiences among nine preschool children and two teacher researchers inquiring about a topic related to their new school building. The data will consist of field notes, transcripts of meetings, and video recording of work with children, as well as teacher reflections and pedagogical narration. Data analysis will be carried out by narrative descriptions of the tensions within the decision making process. This research attempts to fill a gap in understanding of the ECE teacher’s role in starting and sustaining inquiry based learning in their programs. Findings include a discussion on the impact of constructivism on the teacher’s decision making, the privileging of oral language as a form of meaning making, the value of revisiting work with children and the connection between passion and the teacher’s role in project work.

Keywords: projects, long term investigation, Early Childhood Education curriculum, The Reggio Emilia Approach, the role of the teacher, art based learning