

## BOOK REVIEW

**Conn, C., & Murphy, A. (2022).** *Inclusive pedagogies for early childhood education.* Routledge. Taylor & Francis.

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This book is a volume of studies in which a collection of theoretical studies and empirical research can be read that explores inclusive pedagogy what can be observed in the everyday practices of early childhood education – that reinforces learning and supports the acceptance of the diversity of disability and culture.

The book starts with the words of the editors, in which they formulate their thoughts on the relevance and importance of the book: “This essential textbook explores inclusive pedagogies by presenting theoretical viewpoints and research on everyday practices in early childhood education that affirm diversity about learning, disability, and culture.” (p. 1)

The table of contents provides an opportunity to review the title and author of the studies included in the volume, and it is also possible to see on which page each study begins. In addition, a List of figures subsection appears, which describes the title and page number of the figures appearing in the studies; Contributing authors subsection, where you can read a short biography of the authors of the studies published in the book, as well as an introduction written by the editors: Inclusive pedagogy as an ethics of responsibility and care.

In the Introduction the editors, Carmel Conn and Alison Murphy talk about the concept of inclusion, and inclusive pedagogy and describe the importance of this book: “*We hope these chapters will contribute to the ongoing conversation about best practices suitable for all children in early childhood education and serve to highlight the importance of close attention to the ways in which we think about and engage with them as learners.*” (p. 7). In their reading, “*inclusion is the result of people coming to know each other, accepting the other as they are and adjusting to people’s different ways of being in the world.*” (p. 2), and inclusive pedagogy “*focuses specifically on educational practices, but also the ideas, values, and knowledge that shape and justify these*”. After clarifying the conceptual background, the editors briefly present the further structure of the book, as well as the essential ideas of each study.

The volume consists of two large parts. It is entitled PART I: Theoretical perspectives on inclusive pedagogy, in this part inclusive pedagogy, is scrutinized from a theoretical approach, and in PART II: Using research to develop inclusive pedagogies, relevant empirical research

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on the topic can be read. There are four written works in the first part, and six in the second part.

The first part begins with a theoretical paper by Alison Murphy and Jane Waters-Davies, in which they focus primarily on the Welsh approach to children's rights and how it is translated into a political context. The study by Murphy and Waters-Davies aims to explore the current educational environment for young children in Wales and presents initiatives such as *The Right Way: A Children's Rights Approach for Education in Wales* (Children's Commissioner for Wales, 2017) and *Rights Respecting Schools Award* (UNICEF 2021).

In the second chapter of the first part, Matt Hutt reports on the topic of inclusive leadership, defining the concept of leadership for inclusion, the role of leadership development programs, and describing the concepts of distributed or shared leadership. Finally, the chapter explores some key areas of leadership.

The third chapter is Carmel Conn's study, in which she explores the importance of relational and attentional practices for inclusive pedagogy. Their important finding is that we need to understand how the child perceives the world around him with his body, and it is important to look at special cases with a non-judgmental attitude. They also draw attention to the fact that by being able to assess the child's body-world relationship, our task is to create a unique learning environment for the child that supports his receptiveness.

In Claire Pescott's study (chapter four), she draws attention to the creation of an early childhood education environment and reveals a practical design method for improved care, using Tuff spots, which supports meaningful but also inclusive play experiences.

The second part focuses on the use of research for the development of inclusive pedagogies.

Amanda Bateman and Linda Mitchell present a case study in which they report on the interaction of two refugee toddlers through joint doll play. Through an ethnomethodological approach, the authors reveal how early socialization practices are structured through conversation analysis of teacher-toddler interaction.

In his research, Ben Simmons looks for answers to the question of how suitable mainstream education is for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). It reports on the results of a three-year project funded by the British Academy which investigated how different school settings (special, mainstream, nursery, primary and secondary) provide alternative social interaction opportunities for children with PMLD. The findings suggest that mainstream and special schools do not always differ in terms of opportunities for children with PMLD, and also highlight that children with PMLD may be at risk of social isolation in both mainstream and special schools.

Alison Murphy, Jacky Tyrie, Jane Waters-Davies, Sarah Chicken, and Jennifer Clement present their qualitative research to explore how early childhood education teachers in Wales understand and implement children's participation. The results indicate that the opinions of practitioners regarding participation are varied and context-specific. Through their findings, they concluded that although the Welsh Government is committed to children's rights, this does not necessarily guarantee that this 'child first' concept is implemented in practice.

In the fourth chapter of the second part, Angela Rekers highlights that children's relationships with peers, teachers, environment, and tools are key to their participation in institutional practices. They weigh how the children's motivation-oriented activities and participation shape their self-image as a valued/or less valued member of the learning community. The study also



highlights some findings by which “challenging behavior” can be reformulated into an “ambitious, capable learners” approach.

John Eleri reports on the challenges of the discourse of ability groups within the classroom in early childhood education about inclusion, participation, and interaction. This chapter reports on an interview research study that asked twenty-four 5- to 6-year-old children about their opinions regarding the grouping practices used in their primary school environment. The results show that the children preferred the formation of groups based on friendship, and it was also revealed that they are aware of the group formation habits that can be observed in their environment and that the grouping practices cause marginalization and difficult feelings for some of their peers.

In the final chapter of the book, Jane Waters-Davies, and Natalie Macdonald revealed that the skills of experienced early childhood carers are also limited in the case of capable children. For this purpose it is useful to introduce the „threshold” concept, which enables a new and previously unattainable way of thinking.

The book ends with a chapter titled Index, which contains the keywords of early childhood education and the studies in the book, as well as lists the pages on which the related studies can be read.

Overall, the structure of the book creates a transparent and organized appearance. Last but not least, the book *Inclusive Pedagogies for Early Childhood Education*, edited by Carmel Conn and Alison Murphy, is a gap-filling collection that reports on the situation, possibilities, and future development possibilities of early childhood education from several approaches through numerous theoretical and empirical types of research.

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