

Symposium Set B2, The Bradbury Zone (Classroom space 1 – presentation, creative activity and discussion)

VOICES FROM PARTNERSHIP RESEARCH: REFLECTIONS ON METHODOLOGICAL LEARNINGS

Reggio Emilia as a Participatory Methodological Framework: Working Dialogically with Teachers in Wales,

Abstract: Participatory research with teachers is often presented as democratic yet constrained by accountability pressures that reproduce hierarchy (Koutselini, 2008; Parsons, 2021). This methodological session repositions principles of the Reggio Emilia approach as a framework for participatory research with adults (Cagliari et al., 2016; Rinaldi, 2021), asking how such principles can be operationalised with teachers and what conditions shape participation. Drawing on a year-long collaborative enquiry with primary teachers in Wales, the session examines how *progettazione* (iterative design), *reciprocal formazione* (co-constructed professional learning) and *confronto* (dialogic exchange) informed the design, ethics and conduct of research encounters (Giamminuti et al., 2024). Dialogic workshops, supported by multimodal and symbolic languages, generated spaces for uncertainty, affect and professional tension to surface (Kara, 2020). Findings show participation as continually negotiated rather than achieved, shaped by time constraints, institutional norms and dominant talk-based practices (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005). The session contributes an emergent Reggio-inspired relational methodological framework, positioning participation as slow, dialogic and ethically attentive work within structurally constrained systems. The session will include a group activity led by Debi Keyte-Hartland using creative methodologies, inviting participants to explore “**What do young children’s participative rights look or feel like?**”

Keywords:

1. Participatory research
2. Reggio Emilia approach
3. Teacher professional learning
4. Dialogic methodology

References

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CHAired BY: Dr Kevin Smith, Cardiff University

Kevin is a Reader in Education specialising in curriculum studies, theory and theorising in the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University. His research interests primarily focus on critical/radical approaches to education and reconceptualist approaches to curriculum theory. His research involves both quantitative and qualitative approaches to understanding the various dimensions of education, curriculum and pedagogy, and he particularly enjoys working with educators in investigating educational questions, problems and phenomena through narrative and autobiographical methods.

Facilitators



Dr Patrizio De Rossi, University of the West of England

Patrizio is a research associate whose research interests include active play and physical literacy, and children and young people's participation in education. He is passionate about co-production in research.



Debi Keyte-Hartland, Artist-researcher-consultant

Debi is an international arts-educator and early years pedagogical consultant. Debi is interested in Reggio Emilian teachings and perspectives and offers a range of professional learning and development opportunities.