Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Early Years
An International Journal of Research and Development

ISSN: 0957-5146 (Print) 1472-4421 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ceye20

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To cite this article: Karen McInnes , Justine Howard , Gareth Miles & Kevin Crowley (2011) Differences in practitioners' understanding of play and how this influences pedagogy and children's perceptions of play, Early Years, 31:2, 121-133, DOI: 10.1080/09575146.2011.572870

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2011.572870

Published online: 17 May 2011.

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Early Years
Vol. 31, No. 2, July 2011, 121–133

Differences in practitioners' understanding of play and how this influences pedagogy and children's perceptions of play

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This paper presents research that examines the links between practitioners' understanding of play and its relationship to learning, their pedagogic interactions with children and children's own perceptions of their play. Previous research has shown a mismatch between practitioners' understanding of play and their practice. This research identifies how differences in understanding of play, especially the role of the adult, by practitioners in two unrelated settings are associated with variation in pedagogic interactions emphasising choice and control. Furthermore, it is argued that these differences are reflected in differences in children's use of the cue of adult presence as a defining feature of play and not-play activities.

Keywords: play; playfulness; pedagogy; interactions; children's perceptions

Introduction

Play is considered fundamental to early years development and education. It is believed to be critical for how young children learn and underpins curriculum guidance across the UK (e.g. Department for Education and Skills 2007; Welsh Assembly Government 2008a; NCCA 2009; Learning and Teaching Scotland 2010). It is suggested that early years practitioners should engage in a pedagogy that facilitates play and learning. However, previous research has shown that there is a discrepancy between practitioners' beliefs about play and how they implement these in practice (Bennett et al. 1997; Moyleset al. 2001). Whilst acknowledging the centrality of play in early years practice, a recent paper has questioned the place of pedagogy in early years education as it has been shown that early years practitioners do not tend to engage in discussion relating to pedagogy (Stephen 2010b). In view of this there has been a call for further research looking at play, learning and pedagogy (Stephen 2010a). The research presented here is part of a larger study looking at playful practice and learning in the early years. This particular study was concerned with practitioners' understanding of play and learning, how this might influence their pedagogical interactions with children and how children differentiate between play and not-play activities.

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ISSN 0957-5146 print/ISSN 1472-4421 online
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DOI: 10.1080/09575146.2011.572870
http://www.informaworld.com

Pedagogy and play

Pedagogy, or 'the art of teaching', in early years settings takes many forms, from formal programmes involving direct instruction to practices based on free play. However, it has been argued that direct engagement with pedagogy is lacking in early years education (Moyles et al. 2001; Stephen 2010b) as, when examining their practice, practitioners tend to focus on children's behaviour rather than analysing their own. Bernstein (1996) proposed two useful constructs for viewing pedagogy: classification and framing. Classification refers to the degree of boundary maintenance between subjects: when subjects are clearly defined then classification is strong, and when subjects are merged then boundaries are weak. Framing refers to the relationship between teacher and pupil and the degree of control between them. If framing is strong, then control rests with the teacher whereas if framing is weak control rests with the child. Using these constructs, different styles of pedagogy can be defined. Where classification and framing are both strong the pedagogy is described as visible whereas when both are weak the pedagogy is described as invisible. Traditionally, the observable pedagogy in early years settings, with its emphasis on child centredness and play, is an invisible one with weak framing. However, these concepts of child centredness and play are problematic for practitioners in terms of definition and demonstrating effectiveness. Play, in particular, has proved difficult to define with definitions being variously based on category, criteria or continuum (Pellegrini 1991; Piaget 1951; Rubin et al. 1983). In addition, these definitions have been founded on adult perceptions of the observable act of play (Howard 2002). Consequently, failure to reach an agreed definition of play, coupled with methodological weaknesses found in studies on play, has resulted in a lack of evidence to support the relationship between play and learning (BERA 2003; Smith 2010).

Research into effective pedagogy shows that effective settings do not just rely on child-centred practice; they use a combination of adult-led and child-led activities in keeping with a style of framing which is neither strong nor weak (Siraj-Blatchford et al. 2002; Walsh et al. 2006). Furthermore, effective pedagogic interactions are based on shared problem-solving with the use of open questions, sustained shared thinking (Siraj-Blatchford et al. 2002), and possibility thinking (Chappell et al. 2008), which forms the basis of dialogic teaching (Alexander 2004). Alongside this, curriculum guidance across the UK states that effective practice should be delivered through play (e.g. Department for Education and Skills 2007; Welsh Assembly Government 2008b). Whilst practitioners understand and agree with this, many admit to a lack of knowledge regarding play and how play relates to pedagogy and therefore the reality of practice is somewhat different, with a mismatch between what practitioners say and what they do.

Studies have repeatedly shown that practitioners are not comfortable with play, child-led activities and allowing children choice (King 1978; Cleave and Brown 1989; Bennett et al. 1997; Pascal 1990). Traditionally, practitioners have been advised not to interfere in children's play and studies have shown that generally play activities have been left to children (Sylva et al. 1980; Wood et al. 1980). However, more recently, practitioner involvement in play activities has been increasing, although the quality of this involvement is questionable, with evidence that practitioners are more concerned with managing and monitoring than with playing with children and supporting their development (Johnson et al. 2005; Garrick

et al. 2010; Howard 2010). Variability in pedagogic interactions with children has also been shown with adults tending to use closed questions and statements and very few open questions (Clark 1988; Siraj-Blatchford and Manni 2008). This evidence would indicate that in relation to the construct of framing, a traditional early years play-based pedagogy results in weak framing whilst an effective pedagogy utilises mixed framing. However, in reality, a lack of understanding of play, combined with a mistrust of child-led activities and reluctance to give children choice and control, results in an overreliance on adult-led activities with adults having control and choice, reflecting strong framing.

Pedagogy and playfulness

The research presented here is based on an alternative conceptualisation of play. As previously stated, many definitions of play are based on an adult view of the observable act of play; however, this does not get to the heart of playfulness and the characteristics that support development. It is proposed that it is the playful approach and attitude that is taken to an activity, rather than the play act itself, which is beneficial for learning. In order to conceptualise play in this way it is necessary to define play from the perspective of children. Contrary to previous thinking it has been shown that young children can distinguish between play and not-play activities and do so according to cues (Wing 1995; Keating et al. 2000; Howard et al. 2003). The cues children use are environmental, such as location of an activity and adult involvement, and emotional, such as choice and voluntary nature of the activity, and this enables children to map activities on a play-work continuum.

Cue use is based on the idea of perceiving cues from the environment and is derived from the ecological approach to perception and the theory of affordances (Gibson 1979; Gibson and Pick 2000). This theory proposes that what is perceived when looking at objects is not their dimensions or properties but their affordances: what they can provide or offer. The work of Kytta (2002, 2004) on different physical environments and what they can afford for play shows that, for example, smooth surfaces afford cycling and running whereas a shelter affords hiding or peace and quiet. However, affordances can be extended to social and emotional affordances: for example, the interactions and emotional closeness afforded to an infant during feeding time with mother (Good 2007; McArthur and Baron 1983). The affordances offered within a given situation are also embedded within the functional context and frame of reference of the situation. That is, affordances are constrained by what is happening, who is participating and previous experiences of similar situations.

Building upon this idea it has been suggested that children in different types of settings use cues differently and that this changes as children develop. Therefore, children who are in more play-oriented and less structured settings blur the distinctions between play and not-play and are less likely to engage in systematic cue use whilst children in more teacher-directed and structured settings are more likely to have a clearer cue distinction between play and not-play activities (Howard et al. 2003; Karrby 1989). It may be argued that the type of early years setting experienced by children is, in part, determined by practitioners' understanding of play (Bennett et al. 1997).

In addition, a small number of studies and current ongoing research suggest that manipulating the cues children use to define play, to create playful and formal practice conditions, impacts on performance, behaviour and learning (Thomas et al.

2006; Radcliffe 2007; McInnes et al. 2009). Children who practise a task under playful practice conditions (on the floor, adult nearby, choice) show superior performance and behaviours conducive to learning compared with children in a formal practice condition (at a table, adult present, no choice). They are also more likely to rate the playful practice condition as play, and the formal practice condition as not-play, indicating differences in the perception of practice conditions according to cue manipulation. Furthermore, the cue of adult presence has been shown to be particularly important, with children in many settings showing enhanced performance and behaviour when an adult is nearby, rather than present, during an activity (McInnes et al. 2010).

It has been suggested that utilising a concept of play based on children's perceptions that highlights playfulness as an approach and attitude to an activity may be helpful to practitioners in their understanding of play (Howard and McInnes 2010). It should enable practitioners to more fully understand play and their role in children's play and encourage them to co-construct play activities that afford children choice and control and that enable mixed framing. Furthermore, as suggested by Howard et al. (2003), in settings where effective co-construction is achieved during play activities, children should be less likely to hold the cue of adult presence in relation to play and therefore see a greater range of activities as play.

The study

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study, which is part of a larger study looking at playful practice and learning, examined practitioners' understanding of play and learning in two English Foundation Stage settings where there was a commitment to a play-based approach to learning. A photographic sorting task (Howard 2002) was used to determine that in setting A children did not use the cue of adult presence to differentiate play and not-play activities and that in setting B children did use this cue. Prior studies showed that children had used the cues differently in their previous Foundation Stage settings (McInnes 2010). The study also looked at pedagogic interactions in the two settings and results from this part of the study will be reported more fully in a future paper. It was hypothesised that differences in practitioners' understanding of play would be associated with differences in pedagogic interactions. It was also hypothesised that this might be linked with differences in children's use of the cue of adult presence as an indicator of play or not-play situations in the two settings.

Methodology

Design

This study was a qualitative study using observational and interview methodology. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with practitioners and observation and audio-recording of children and practitioners took place in the classroom.

Sample

This was a small-scale exploratory study and the sample consisted of three practitioners in each setting: two teachers and a teaching assistant. The sample of chil-

dren consisted of four children in each setting: two boys and two girls from setting A who did not hold the cue of adult presence to make play and not-play distinctions and two boys and two girls from setting B who did hold the cue of adult presence. Consent was gained from practitioners, parents and children to conduct the study. The practitioners were part of a much larger study and informed consent had been gained from all participants throughout this larger study. At each stage of the study there was a full discussion of the findings and their implication for practice. The nature and purpose of the next stage of the study was then discussed. For the purposes of this particular study the comparative nature of the potential findings was discussed prior to the study commencing and the results were discussed with practitioners. The findings from this study have been used by practitioners in the settings to inform development of their pedagogic practice.

Test materials

Observations of children and practitioners were conducted using an observation schedule adapted from Sylva et al. (1980). This is a target child observation technique which enables recording of language and social interactions over a set time period and during different types of activities. Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview schedule adapted from Bennett et al. (1997), with questions being grouped according to the following themes: background of interviewee, theoretical knowledge, planning, adult role and practice.

Audio recording of children's interactions with practitioners and other children was achieved using a Diasonic Linear PCM voice recorder (DDR-5300) with microphone. This is a lightweight discrete device that allows flexibility of children's movement whilst at the same time capturing high-quality audio footage.

Procedures

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with practitioners using the adapted interview schedule. The data obtained from the interviews were transcribed and the grouping themes for the questions asked during the interviews were used as a starting point for analysis. Each child was audio recorded for one morning and one afternoon session on different days. Time was given at the start of each session for the child to become accustomed to wearing the Diasonic recorder and therefore an hour and a half of the morning session and an hour of the afternoon session was transcribed and analysed. Collection of data over these time periods ensured that a range of groupings, activities, curriculum areas and adult–child interactions were sampled. Language categories, such as open and closed questions, used for analysing dialogue were based on categorisations used in the ORACLE study (Galton et al. 1999). Categorisations were not made in isolation but were based on the context in which an utterance was made. In order to observe discretely, the stance of non-participant observer was taken (Coolican 2004). The adapted observation schedule was used to conduct narrative observations, which allowed transcribed data to be analysed with reference to the classroom context.

Results: interviews

The questions were grouped into the following themes: background of interviewee, theoretical knowledge, planning, adult role and practice, and these provided the framework for the analysis of the interview data.

Background of interviewees

The practitioners in setting A had between four and nine years of experience working with children from birth to secondary age. They had worked in a variety of settings and both teachers were trained to work with three- to five-year-old children. Qualifications ranged from NVQ level 2 to degree level. In setting B all the practitioners had worked in the same school and between them had between two months and 19 years of experience. Their qualifications ranged from NVQ level 3 to degree level. Only one teacher in setting B was trained to work with the three to five age range, the other was qualified to work with older primary children.

Theoretical knowledge

The NVQ level 2 practitioner had received no theoretical input on play or learning. The NVQ level 3 practitioner and the teachers across the two settings individually reported that they had received very little theoretical input on play. Whilst they had received training on what children learnt through play they did not feel they had received input that enabled them to have a theoretical understanding of play. They felt that the focus of their theoretical knowledge had been on how children learn and on theorists such as Piaget and Vygotsky: 'We looked at theorists such as Vygotsky and Piaget but that's not play as such, more like theories of learning' (teacher). They all believed that children learned best through play but there were differences in their understanding of how this could be achieved. In setting A practitioners felt that the process of active playing was important as well as the fact that play provided an emotional climate which facilitated learning. In setting B practitioners were more focused on specific physical and creative activities to facilitate play and on the need for an adult-identified purpose for play.

Planning

In setting A practitioners planned for play, both inside and outside, focused around the six Foundation Stage areas of learning (Department for Education and Skills 2007). A range of adult-led and child-led activities were provided during activity time, small-group time and whole-class time. Practitioners felt that there were more opportunities for play during activity and small-group time than in whole-class time and expected that children would recognise this. In setting B a range of adult-led and child-led activities were provided but adult-led activities took precedence. In addition, practitioners felt that assessment and small-group times interfered with play as the need to assess often influenced where children could play. This also reduced choice; as one practitioner stated: 'we don't plan for play we plan for what we want them to get out of an activity'.

Adult role

In setting A the adult role was viewed as a multi-faceted role involving observation, resourcing, modelling, questioning and playing with children. It was acknowledged that knowing when to intervene in children's play was difficult and needed considerable expertise and skill. Observation of children's play and determining the purpose of intervention was critical and practitioners recognised that sometimes they got it wrong: 'Sometimes I play alongside them, sometimes they don't want me beside them and they move away, that's okay.' Practitioners were also asked about terminology they used for play and this was viewed as an area fraught with difficulty. 'Play' was a word that was used although it was defined in terms of the learning inherent in a play situation so that children and parents saw the value in play activities. Other words used were: 'choices', 'learning' and 'doing'.

In setting B there were differences in opinion regarding the adult role. Some practitioners thought they should be involved in play, but felt that the constraints of planning and assessment prevented this. Another view was that the adult should be more focused on learning than on facilitating play. All practitioners felt that observing children's play was important but that they should wait to be invited into children's play. Consequently, there was an awareness that this did not occur often. Knowing when to intervene in children's play was determined by observation but this was usually in response to a management issue 'when children's play becomes silly or dangerous'. When asked about terminology used in relation to children's play, there was agreement that the term 'play' was not used. Words commonly used were: 'planning', 'work', 'busy' and 'learning'.

Practice

Practitioners were asked what was going well in their play practice, what the constraints were and what they would like to develop. In setting A, practitioners were pleased with children's opportunities and ability to make choices, their engagement with activities and the provision available both inside and outside. Two constraints were identified: the external pressure for more adult-led activities, especially as the year progressed, and a lack of time to prepare for play activities. Areas for development were: more time for play; developing higher-order questioning skills and knowledge of play therapy.

In setting B practitioners were also pleased with the provision both inside and outside. They were pleased with the learning children were engaged in and the adherence to class rules. They identified many constraints on practice such as the curriculum, external targets, observation and a lack of time. Overall they concluded 'we can't be playful' although one insightful comment was that their own beliefs about play held them back: 'we need to value play more than work'. However, when discussing areas for development all practitioners were aware of, and wanted opportunities to develop, their understanding of play and of how play could be put into practice.

Results: pedagogic interactions

In this part of the study, four children in each setting were studied. Across the larger study a total of 155 children were studied and this had enabled significant dif-

ferences in cue use by children in the different settings to be identified using chi-square. This test is used to determine whether two categorical variables are related. In this study it was used to show whether there was an association between initiation of interaction or type of question asked and setting. Initiation of utterances and the use of open and closed questions, when analysed within the contextual setting and complete linguistic exchange, may be used as an indicator of who has choice and control during classroom interactions. These elements of pedagogic interaction in relation to whole-class time (when the class gathered as a whole group with a practitioner), small-group time (when a small group of children gathered with a practitioner) and activity time (when a child has free choice of an activity and practitioners may or may not interact in the activity) are discussed below.

Initiation of interactions

Generally, practitioners initiated utterances during whole-class times. In both settings, initiation of interactions varied between practitioners and children during activity time but there were generally more reasons why practitioners initiated interactions in setting A than setting B. In setting A, practitioners asked where children were going, what they were doing and why they were doing something. They also told children what they were doing. In setting B, practitioners only tended to initiate interactions to ask where children were going and what they were doing. At small-group times there were differences between the two settings in this aspect of language use, and these differences are displayed in Table 1.

A chi-squared test indicated that there was a significant association between setting and who initiates the interaction during small-group time ($\chi^2 = 13.543$, df = 1, $p < 0.01$). Table 1 indicates that in setting A children were more likely to initiate the interaction and in setting B practitioners were more likely to initiate the interaction.

Open and closed questions

There were differences in open and closed questions asked between the two settings and the results are presented in Table 2.

A chi-squared test indicated that there was a significant association between setting and open questions asked during activity time ($\chi^2 = 12.690$, df = 1, $p < 0.01$). Practitioners in setting A were more likely to ask open questions during activity time than practitioners in setting B. There was also a significant association between setting and closed questions asked during small-group time and activity time ($\chi^2 = 8.631$, df = 1, $p < 0.01$) and ($\chi^2 = 9.785$, df = 1, $p < 0.01$) respectively. Practitioners in setting B were more likely to ask closed questions during both types of activities than practitioners in setting A.

Language concerned with control and choice

Who initiates language and the use of closed and open questions can be used as an indicator of the level of control and choice afforded to children by adults. From the findings already described it would appear that children in setting A are afforded more choice and control than children in setting B. Further analysis of language use in relation to choice and control seemed to confirm this. Children in setting A were given choice and control over when they started and finished activities, indicated by

Table 1. Total adult and child initiations during small group time in settings A and B.

	Initiation of interaction		
	Adult	Child	Total
Setting A	1	7	8
Setting B	15	2	17
Total	16	9	25

utterances such as 'I'm going inside now, I'm cold', whereas children in setting B had to ask to change activities. In addition, when beginning activity time, children in setting A were given choice over whether or not they wanted to go to an activity through statements such as, 'if you would like to go to the cafe, off you go'. In setting B children were often allowed to choose where to go but were then told what to do when they got there; for example, 'I want you to build something', placing control with the adult.

Discussion

According to previous research (e.g. Karrby 1989; Wing 1995; Howard 2002) children differentiate between play and not-play situations according to cues. One of the cues that has been found to be crucial in making this distinction is the cue of adult presence (McInnes et al. 2010). Children in the two settings in this study differed in their use of this cue; children in setting A tended not to use the cue of adult presence to differentiate between play and not-play situations and children in setting B did. In this study, practitioners from these two settings, where a play-based approach to learning was valued, were interviewed to determine their understanding of play and its relationship to learning. In addition, pedagogic interactions between practitioners and children were examined to see if there was any relationship between practitioners' understanding of play and how they interacted with children. Further examination of the results focused on whether these differences could be linked to differences in how the children in the two settings used the cue of adult presence.

From the interview data it was apparent that there was a range of experience and qualifications amongst the staff in the two settings. However, one commonality was that staff reported having received no training on the theory of play, as has been found in other studies (Pascal 1990; Bennett et al. 1997), although they had received training on the theory of learning. Curriculum guidance for the early years states that children learn through play but without knowledge and understanding of both of these concepts practitioners can be confused. This confusion seemed apparent from the interview data from practitioners in setting B. In setting A practitioners were aware of the value of play and how children learn through play and had worked out how to implement this in practice by providing a range of activities and varying their own role with children. In setting B practitioners were also aware of the value of play but were unsure of how this might work in practice. This led to a situation where the focus was on adult-led activities and where adults were unsure of their role in play. Consequently they did not tend to participate in play activities, thereby reinforcing the association between adult presence and not-play activities. This confusion and resultant impact on practice has been shown in other studies (Bennett et al. 1997; Sylva et al. 1980; Wood et al. 1980; Walsh et al. 2010).

Table 2. Percentages of utterancs which were open or closed questions asked during small group time and activity time in settings A and B.

	Open questions		Closed questions	
	Small-group time	Activity time	Small-group time	Activity time
Setting A	10	18	32	26
Setting B	1	5	67	42

As Spielberger and McLane (2002) found, practitioners hold a range of beliefs concerning the adult role. In setting A, practitioners realised that it was a multifaceted role and that they did not always get it right when it came to intervening in play activities. They also knew that they needed to balance adult-led and child-led activities and that children needed choice and control in activities. They saw themselves not only as teachers with a didactic role but also as play partners who facilitated learning through play – they co-constructed activities with children. In setting B there was confusion regarding practitioners' role in relation to play. They felt that the adult role involved giving children a purpose for learning through play, modelling play and supporting play; however, this did not extend to them joining in as play partners, as has been found in other studies (Garrick et al. 2010; Howard 2010). They would join in if asked, but children did not see them in this role and therefore would not ask them to join in. These differences in practice in relation to the adult role could be viewed as contributing to the use of the cue of adult presence as a feature differentiating play from not-play activities.

This was further reinforced through practitioners pedagogic interactions with children. Initiation of interactions and use of open and closed questions may be used as an indicator of choice and control during interactions. There were differences in initiation of interactions during small-group times between the two settings, with children more likely to initiate interactions in setting A and practitioners more likely to initiate interactions in setting B. There were also differences in the use of open and closed questions between the two settings. In setting A, practitioners were more likely to ask open questions than closed questions during small-group times and activity times, and in setting B practitioners were more likely to ask closed questions than open questions during these times. Further examination of language concerned with choice and control in the two settings indicated that children in setting A were more likely to be afforded opportunities to exercise choice and control than children in setting B. Overall, the level of choice and control afforded to children in setting A appeared to indicate a style of framing that was mixed: a balance of control between practitioners and children, whereas in setting B it appeared that choice and control rested more firmly with the adults, indicating a style of framing which was strong.

One final point in relation to differences in understanding of play and learning, and how this might impact on practice and children's perceptions of play, is the terminology used in the two settings, particularly the use, or not, of the word 'play'. In both settings a variety of terms were used to indicate play including: 'planning', 'learning', 'busy' and 'doing'. The word 'choices' was used in setting A, confirming the practitioners' commitment to affording children choice and control during activities. The word 'play' was only used in setting A and the word 'work' was only used in setting B. This difference in terminology used could be fundamental in shaping children's understandings of play. It has been argued that using this bipolar construct of work and play is unhelpful and that work may be playful and play

may feel like work (Schwartzman 1978). However, language is powerful and parents, in particular, may have certain expectations regarding play, work and education (Moyles 1989). In an attempt to avoid undervaluing children's activity some practitioners have avoided using the word 'play', preferring to use the word 'work' for all activities. However, if children do not hear the word 'play' used in an educational context, but hear it in other contexts such as the home, it could further reinforce their view that play is an activity children engage in but not adults.

Utilising the theory of affordances discussed earlier, the experiences children are offered, how these are offered and how practitioners interact with children seem likely to affect children's perceptions of play. The types of play activities children are offered, whether or not practitioners interact with children during play activities and the language they use when interacting with children during different activities may all influence the development of cues and affordances in relation to play. In settings where practitioners interact in a range of activities and afford children choice and control then children may be less likely to use the cue of adult presence to differentiate between play and not-play activities. In those settings where practitioners focus on adult-led activities and afford children minimal choice and control then children may be more likely to use the cue of adult presence to differentiate between play and not-play activities.

Conclusion

This study indicates that differences between practitioners' understandings of play and its relationship to learning may be associated with differences in their pedagogic interactions with children, and in children's use of the cue of adult presence to differentiate between play and not-play activities. Practitioners in setting A seemed to have developed a clear understanding of play and their role in play with children. They planned for a range of adult-led and child-led activities, participated with children in all their activities and engaged in pedagogic interactions that afforded children choice and control indicating a style of framing that was mixed. By contrast, practitioners in setting B had not yet developed a clear understanding of play and how they should approach their role in children's play. Whilst they planned for a range of adult-led and child-led activities they generally participated in adult-led activities, leaving child-led activities to children. They also tended to engage more in pedagogic interactions where choice and control rested with the adult, indicating a strong style of framing. It may be hypothesised that these differences in practice may have influenced whether or not children used the cue of adult presence to differentiate between play and not-play activities.

A pedagogy that is founded on a clear understanding of both play and learning, their relationship to one another and the role of the practitioner in facilitating play and learning would appear beneficial. It is suggested that using children's perceptions of play as a basis for understanding may be helpful to practitioners (Howard and McInnes 2010). It is also suggested that engaging in a pedagogy that uses a style of framing which is neither strong nor weak and co-constructing activities with children, which affords them choice and control, may also be beneficial to children's learning and development. Children may then be less likely to develop and use the cue of adult presence to differentiate between play and not-play activities. If children are able to do this, they are likely to approach more activities in a playful manner which, as previous research shows, can improve performance and result in behaviours that facilitate learning.

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