Listening to Children: Using ECERS –R and Mosaic Approach to Improve Learning Environments

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The challenge

• Teachers from the 12th kindergarten in the city of Volos, ask us to help them to improve their class.
The idea

ECERS-R

MOSAIC APPROACH
The aims of the study

How ECERS-R reflect to children’s views and ideas about their classroom?

To improve the learning environment of the this kindergarten
A Brief Introduction to “The Mosaic Approach”

Clark and Moss (2001) present both a framework for listening and suggest the Mosaic Approach to listening to younger children. The framework for listening is:

• **Multi-method**: recognizes the different languages or voices of children

• **Participatory**: treats children as experts and agents in their own lives

• **Reflexive**: includes children, practitioners and parents in reflecting on meanings and addresses the question of interpretation

• **Adaptable**: can be applied to a variety of early childhood institutions

• **Focused** on children’s lived experiences: looking at lives rather than knowledge gained or care received

• **Embedded** into practice: a framework for listening which has the potential to be both used as an evaluative tool and to become embedded into early years practice
Two stages

- Within this framework, Clark and Moss suggest a two-staged Mosaic Approach:
  - **Stage One:** Children and adults gather documentation and practitioners and parents reflect on what they think life is like for the child(ren)
  - **Stage two:** Piecing together information for dialogue, reflection and interpretation and practitioners and parents listen to the child(ren’s) own perspectives

- Clark and Moss (2001) Listening to Young Children The Mosaic Approach
Mosaic Approach

- Observation
- Child Interviews
- Photo books
- Tours
- Map making
- Practitioners’ interviews
- Slide shows
- Review
Research development

• Pre- measurement with ECERS-R
• Mosaic approach
• Review of the data collected and proposals for improvement arising both from ECERS-R and children views and proposals
• Implementation
• Post- measurement with ECERS-R
Pre-measurement with (ECERS-R)

• results

1= space and furnishing, 2= personal care, 3= language - reasoning, 4= activities
5= interaction, 6= program, 7= parent and stuff, 8= overall average
Mosaic approach step by step

1. Observations during free play activities
2. Conversation with children
3. Children draw their favorite place
4. Children take photos of their favorite places, and make a tour with the researcher to them
5. They create a map with their photos (magic map).
6. Interviews with the children
7. Slide show with their photos and photos from other schools.
8. They draw their class in the way that they wish
9. Make proposals
Οι ζωγραφιές των παιδιών δείχνουν τον αγαπημένο τους χώρο
Magic map!
Magic map!
Interviews

Which is your favorite place in your classroom?

What you would like your teacher to do when you play?

What your teacher does when you play?

Why you prefer to be there?

Do you think that there is something new, that you would like to have in your classroom?

Do you want to change anything?
Interviews

- What your teacher do, when you play?
  - Talking to the other teachers
- What you would like your teachers to do when you play;
  - To play with us sometimes...
- Do you want to change anything in your classroom?
  - The castle! It’s beside of teachers office, and the teachers all the time ask us to be quiet.
What children would like to have in their classroom:
music play area
Sandbox..
Easel ..
According to the results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What they want</th>
<th>What they don’t want</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music play area</td>
<td>Don’t be bothered in computer area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eazel</td>
<td>Have more space for puzzles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle has to change place</td>
<td>Drama play area seems to have no interest for them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play with their teachers</td>
<td>NO interest for science and book area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Τραμπάλα</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Flowers in the school garden</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>More toys</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>More free space</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Work station area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Να διαχωρίζεται ο χώρος από το κουκλόσπιτο</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ECERS-R</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mosaic Approach</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The furniture limited children space to move</td>
<td>They need more free space</td>
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<tr>
<td>The was no room to run</td>
<td>They want work station, easel, sandbox</td>
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<tr>
<td>work station</td>
<td>Feel uncomfortable when they are making puzzles, or play to the computer as the other children annoy them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand /water</td>
<td>Want from they teacher to play with them more frequently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easel</td>
<td>Seesaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The spaces who are designed to be used by 2 children had to be protected from the other children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More interaction with the teacher</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ECERS-R

- Cozy area
- Access to music material
- Book case— εναλλαγή βιβλίων – ήσυχη γωνιά
- Activities areas has to
- Overloaded selves /no storage

Mosaic approach

- They want have privacy in the Castle
- Music activities area
- New books at the library and a quiet place to “read”
- Separate place for puppet house
Key Decisions

Places to KEEP

Places to expand

Places to add

Places to change
Let’s see some changes......
We separate the puppet house area (*role play*)
We changed place in the computer area
We changed the place of the castle
The book area
We put out of the class the tables
Work station
Easel
fully loaded selves/storage
Cozy area
Post interviews

• All children agreed that their school is now better. During their short interviews said:

• «...now we can have lunch, work in the tables having a lot of space», «....I like painting at easel, as before I couldn't do that ...»

• Teachers were exited that they managed to change their learning environment without spending any money, and to improve their class.

• The 2 pre school teachers now have to co-operate, because they have to share the tables, so they found a way to manage their time efficiently.
Post-measurement with (ECERS-R)

• Results

1= space and furnishing, 2= personal care, 3=language -reasoning, 4= activities
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Pre & post measure with ECERS-R

Comparison of 2 measurements

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Comparison of total ECER’s score

- 3.4
- 4.1
Conclusions

Children ideas reflected to ECERS -R items which rated low

Both children and ECERS-R indicated many things **in common** which needed change

The changes at the 2\textsuperscript{nd} measurement affected the 1\textsuperscript{st} subscale and the the 3\textsuperscript{rd} one.

We had better score in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} measurement, although there are some more changes to be in the school garden.
Children were happy as many of their desires became true.

Teachers, can do better their job, as they have more play activity areas, more free space, can manage efficiently their material.
Thank you!

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