

### **2017: Dr Penny Lawrence - University of Roehampton**

Penny is Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies. She has extensive experience of research, teaching, training, and practice in early childhood, and has worked with students at vocational, professional development, undergraduate, and postgraduate level. She has worked for the BBC as Producer for CBeebies Channel, run the video documentation centre of the municipal infant-toddler centres and schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, and consulted for 20 years at the Pen Green Centre for Children and their Families, UK. Her main areas of expertise are in observation and documentation and qualitative research with young children including using video to explore children's lived experiences. Penny led the Early Years Research Centre at the University of Winchester and is a member of the University of Roehampton Research Centre.

The UCET Scholarship (August 2017) supported meetings at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (UNIMORE) with Professor Annamaria Contini, doctoral student Lorenzo Manera and Doctor Chiara Bertolini regarding the teaching of dialogue in the Faculty of Education. We discussed understanding dialogue through metaphors, a current new direction in research. There is no discrete introduction into understanding what dialogue actually is. This underlines the gap in research and androgogy in my area. I was invited to participate in their research group (MANI) on metaphors and narrative in educational contexts.

I also met with former colleagues, Paola Cagliari, Director of Municipal Preschools Reggio Emilia and Pedagogista, Claudia Giudici, conducting research into teachers' professional development. Our discussion focussed on the initial understanding of dialogue and how it is embedded into teacher education. Once more, there is no discrete introduction into understanding what dialogue actually is. This further underlines the gap in research and androgogy in my area.

In addition to these meetings I conducted document research at the Loris Malaguzzi International Centre. This included the current workshops and exhibitions and new video documentation of dialogue in digital languages including children's own animations.

#### Outcomes

The research informed my presentation at the European Early Childhood Education Research Association Conference 2017. My paper was Highly Commended by the Scientific Committee of EECERA. As a result of my commendation I was invited to meet one of the EECERA board, Júlia Formosinho who proposed an EECERA Journal article and Research Monograph publication that she is overseeing for Taylor and Francis in 2018-19. She gave me extensive feedback that was very valuable. Júlia also invited me to join a Special Interest Research Group focussed on participation and praxis. This will support the impact of the research in practice.

The research will also inform my presentations at the Oxford Ethnography and Education Conference 11-13<sup>th</sup> September and the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain workshop (6 -8<sup>th</sup> October 2017).

These meetings and the document research have enabled planning for research informed teaching about dialogical observation at undergraduate and masters programmes in Early Childhood Studies at the University of Roehampton, particularly modules which I convene and teach on: 'Babies and Toddlers 2', 'Play, Representation and Creativity', 'Play Thinking and Communication'.

The UCET scholarship assisted me with accommodation and subsistence for two days of meetings and local travel. For this I allowed £325. I have claimed £312.94.