



‘Quilting’ with the Mosaic approach: smooth and striated spaces in early childhood research

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ABSTRACT: This article re-examines material from empirical studies carried out within a participatory paradigm involving the Mosaic approach (Clark, 2017), a particular visual, participatory approach, originally developed to research with young children their perspectives of their early childhood institutions. The work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) has been a catalyst for exploring alternative ways of thinking about how young children make sense of the material world in which they are immersed. This article focuses on their concept of quilting through exploring the notions of smooth and striated spaces. These concepts are applied at the meta and micro level. Firstly how might ‘quilting’ with the Mosaic approach create both smooth or open-ended spaces for improvisation and striated or prescribed spaces within the research process? Secondly at a micro level, what might the concepts of smooth and striated space combined with a participatory approach, open up about the material and pedagogical environment in early childhood?

Keywords: *Mosaic approach, listening, improvisation, materiality*

Introduction

What might happen if working with visual, participatory methods are combined with relational materialist theories? What new understandings might emerge about early childhood research and early childhood environments? This article is the opportunity to re-examine material from empirical studies carried out within a participatory paradigm

involving the Mosaic approach (Clark, 2017) with new theoretical insights. This visual, participatory approach was first developed by the author and colleague Peter Moss (Clark and Moss, 2001; Clark and Moss, 2005) to research with young children about their perspectives of early childhood education and care (ECEC). The Mosaic approach adopts a craft metaphor, bringing together different research tools to enable children and adults to co-create a series of artefacts to explore views and experiences about specific places. The work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and their text, *A Thousand Plateaus* has been a catalyst for exploring alternative ways of thinking about how young children make sense of the material world in which they are immersed. The concept of quilting is explored as a metaphor associated with craft, the hand-made and artefacts of value to bring a relational, materialist lens to thinking about research with young children. What can happen when the process of early childhood research is considered as 'quilting', the researchers and participants as quilt-makers and the artefacts produced as quilts? This draws attention to the materiality of the process, children and adults working with a range of media to explore their experiences and in so doing produce research artefacts that are complex multi-layered assemblages of the human and non-human as well as being material objects in themselves.

These concepts are applied at the meta and micro level. Firstly at a meta level how might 'quilting' with the Mosaic approach create both smooth or open-ended spaces for improvisation and striated or prescribed spaces within the research process? Here the case is made for the importance of both smooth and striated elements for exploring young children's perspectives of their early childhood environments. Each element offers possibilities and also restrictions. It is in bringing the smooth and striated together that offers rich possibilities for research. Secondly at a micro level, what might the concepts of smooth and striated space combined with a participatory approach, open up about the material and pedagogical environment in early childhood?

There is a precedence for this type of re-examining- Allison James and Alan Prout discuss such theoretical revisiting in relation to the 'new paradigm' of childhood studies (James and Prout, 2015). Sumsion (2014) describes a sequence of theoretical reinterpreting whilst researching the lives of infants in early childhood education and care. It is a way of giving empirical work a new frame and seeing what possible themes emerge. This is a recognition that as Jackson and Mazzei (2012) comment data are 'always partial, incomplete and in a process of re-telling and re-membering' (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. ix). This process emphasises the place of slow research (for example, Clark, 2010b; Millei and Rautio, 2017) taking time to look again and is in keeping with Berg and Seeber's call for the Slow movement to research academia (2016).

Material world in focus

Since first writing about the Listening to Young Children study (Clark and Moss, 2001) there has been a ‘material turn’ in the theoretical lenses that have been applied to the field of childhood studies and early childhood (for example Olsson, 2009; Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Hultman and Taguchi, 2010; Lenz Taguchi, 2011; Myers, 2014; Hansen, Hansen & Kristensen, 2017; Clark and Nordtømme, 2019). Olsson (2009) in applying theoretical perspectives drawn from Deleuze and Guattari has been among those to open up different ways of thinking about how human and non-human are entangled together in early childhood environments. As Dahlberg and Moss (2009) comment: ‘In this milieu other children, pedagogues and objects play the roles of openers or closers of doors, guardians of thresholds, connectors or disconnectors of zones; they act as navigators.’ (Dahlberg and Moss, 2009, p. xxii).

This refocusing emphasizes how materials live in the world and are connectors or meeting places as Kind (2014) explains: ‘Materials are not immutable, passive or lifeless until the moment we do something to them: they participate in our early childhood projects. They live, speak, gesture and call to us’ (Kind, 2014, p. 865). Children, adults, objects, lighting and weather join together with more abstract elements such as policies and regulations to form complex webs or assemblages.

As Bradley, Sumsion, Stratigos and Elwick (2012) describe in their Australian study of infants in daycare: ‘The assemblage connects a variety of heterogeneous elements, human and non-human, animate and inanimate, including highchairs, bottles, researchers, technologies, ideas, regulations, food, gravity and our attempts to enunciate and engage with mealtime.’ (Bradley, Sumsion, Stratigos and Elwick, 2012, p. 141). Bradley and colleagues emphasise that it is the relations between the elements that creates an assemblage. These temporary bringing together of lines can lead to what Deleuze and Guattari identify as ‘lines of flight’ (Adkins, 2015, p. 120). Assemblages are open to the unexpected.

Quilting in qualitative research

The metaphor of quilting has been adopted over several decades for conceptualising qualitative research (Wolcott, 1995; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Denzin and Lincoln bring together the role of quilt maker with that of a bricoleur to think about a qualitative researcher:

The product of the interpretative bricoleur’s labor is a complex, quiltlike bricolage, a reflexive collage or montage- a set of fluid, interconnected images and representations. This interpretative structure is like a quilt, a performative text, a

sequence of representations connecting the parts to the whole” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p. 6).

Here a quiltlike bricolage is a ‘fluid’ bringing together of perspectives and also paradigms. This links to Lévi-Strauss’s (1962) description of bricolage as a way of combining and recombining a closed set of materials to come up with new ideas (Lévi-Strauss, 1962). This adds to examples within the disciplines of art and design and visual culture where textiles have been applied as a metaphor for thinking about thinking: ‘the textile offers an articulate structure for the exploration of dense theoretical thinking... we are shown how textiles can – in many different ways- communicate thinking that extends far beyond the physical reality of cloth’. (Hemmings, 2012, p. 122). The tactile, sensory process of quilting appears again in the work of Deleuze and Guattari, whose philosophical approaches appear to have had a particular resonance for exploring relational materialist thinking (Myers, 2014).

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) introduce the metaphor of quilting alongside other technological and mathematical models for exploring thinking. Quilts are made in numerous different forms, many following rigid designs that are painstakingly followed. However, Deleuze and Guattari are referring here to a freestyle model that they liken to a ‘crazy quilt’. Each piece is different- it has a randomness to the design and as Deleuze and Guattari describe it is a form of patchwork with “uniquely rhythmic values distinct from the harmonies of embroidery (in particular ‘crazy’ patchwork, which fits together pieces of varying size, shape, and color, and plays on the texture of the fabrics.” (1987, p. 554) Lenz Taguchi (2010), refers to Deleuze and Guattari’s metaphor in her hybrid early childhood research: “It was like working a quilt, a patchwork of different pieces of text on fabric with different patterns that are laid out to connect to each other *in different and infinitely possible ways*”. (Lenz Taguchi, 2010, p. 145) (italics added)

Crazy quilts included left over scraps of material. Hooks (2015) describes in detail her grandmother’s quilting (hooks, 2015). Sometimes, offcuts from when a dress was first cut out were added into a freestyle pattern and many years later the same material, now faded, was introduced when the clothes were no longer wearable. Quilts in this way can make timelines visible in ‘different and infinitely possible ways’ influenced by the fragments pieced together and the makers. Extending the idea of a crazy quilt, Deleuze and Guattari (1987, pp. 551-555) point out that patchwork contains both

- striated space- tightly prescribed in the form of the woven fabric with its warp and weft - with a fixed top and bottom, with two elements vertical and horizontal that intertwine
- smooth space- like felt-with no separation of threads where the fibres are entangled by rolling back and forth. Felt is in structure infinite, open and unlimited in every direction. Without top or bottom or centre.

A smooth space or nomad space gives freedom in which to act in unconstrained or unscripted ways (Hansen, Hansen and Kristensen, 2017) and can give rise to nomadic thinking. Olsson describes how ‘this thinking not only deconstructs codes and habits but actually connects them together in new and unexpected ways.’ (2009, p. 25). A striated or sedentary space comes with a pre-defined narrative but as in the history of the quilt, as Deleuze and Guattari describe, there is a relationship between the striated and the smooth.

Quilting with the Mosaic approach

When developing the Mosaic approach, the metaphor of a mosaic was chosen in order to convey the idea of children piecing together an image of their lives made from many small pieces (Clark, 2017, p.34). The craft of making was important here. Each piece or tile in the mosaic can be seen as fragments constructed from a range of research tools and by different participants. The pieces may take the form, for example, of photographs, dialogue from an informal interview, children’s drawings and observations. The approach aims to be both multimethod and polyvocal (Figure 1). The Mosaic approach was originally developed as a research framework in the UK for including young children’s perspectives in the evaluation of early childhood services (Clark and Moss, 2001). It emerged as part of a ‘listening to children’ discourse, in which listening is ‘understood as a pedagogy and a way of researching life, a culture and an ethic, a continuous process and relationship’ (Moss, Clark and Kjørholt, 2005, p. 13).

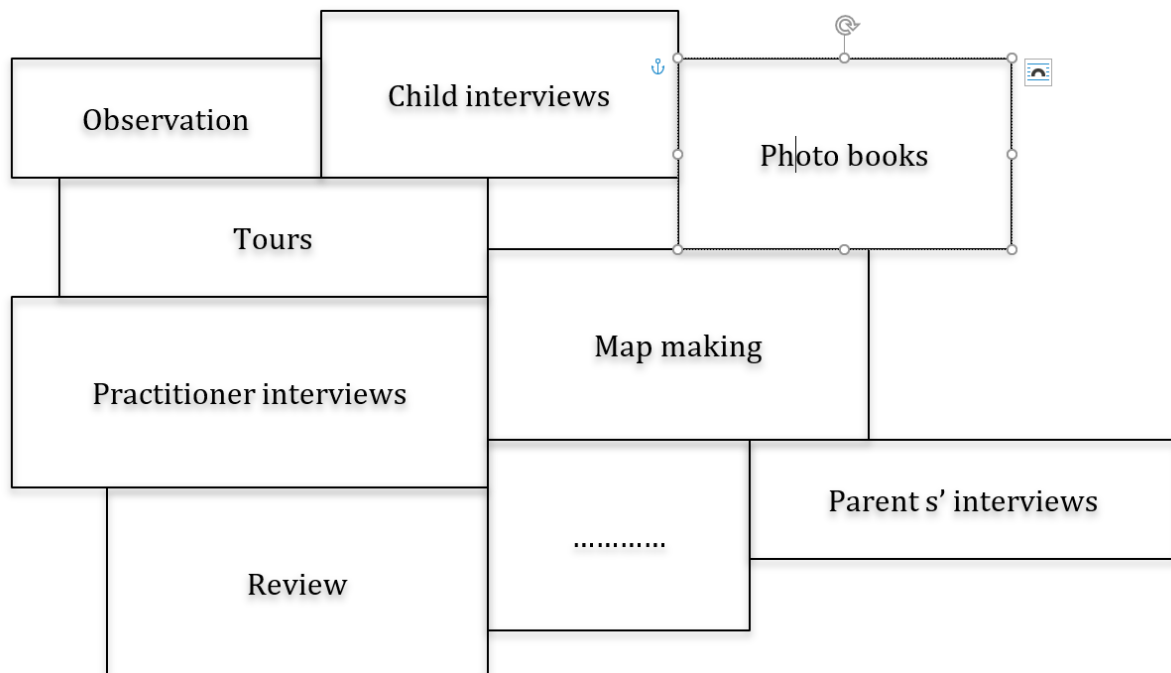


FIGURE 1 A diagram to show a range of research tools in the Mosaic approach

The metaphor of ‘mosaic’ of different pieces helped to emphasise the importance of a range of different modes of expression for young children to explore their views and experiences. However, metaphors can constrain as well as liberate ideas. There are disadvantages to adopting such a metaphor: “The name ‘mosaic may also suggest a fixed pattern, cemented down. The intention, however, was to convey a bringing together of pieces by participants rather than something static, a moving mosaic perhaps...or a kaleidoscope...rearranging patterns of moving parts ” (Clark, 2017, pp.72-73).

New theories offer the opportunities for researchers to work with different metaphors for reanalysing their data and in so doing opening up new avenues for thinking about both the process of research with young children and day to day lives in ECEC. The following sections make the case for applying the concept of quilting to working with the Mosaic approach at both a meta and micro level in order to demonstrate the value of creating smooth and striated spaces for young children to explore their early childhood environments. This process draws attention to the central roles of materials, in terms of the research artefacts made and the entangled relationships between human and non-human that emerge.

Meta level: striated and smooth spaces

The research process as quilting

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) use textile production including weaving, felting, embroidery and quilting as one of their models for thinking about different kinds of space (1987, p. 551-555). As Adkins points out Deleuze and Guattari appear ‘less interested in the pure difference between the smooth and striated than they are [in] the interaction between the two’ (231). Working with the Mosaic approach can be understood as a research process that involves a bringing together of the ordered and the open, the striated and smooth just as the act of quilting or making a quilt or patchwork involves the bringing together of both types of space.

Starting with striated spaces, the research relationships have been bounded by the aims and research questions given to individual studies. The first three studies carried out using the Mosaic approach (Clark and Moss, 2001, 2005 and Clark, 2010a) each centred on exploring young children’s views and experiences of their early childhood environments. The initial questions to children began with ‘Can you show me what is important here?’ Careful consideration was given to choosing the phraseology, for example whether to use the word important or favourite as each word appeared to steer children in a particular direction. ‘Favourite’ indicated the researcher’s interest in positive factors whereas ‘important’ appeared to open up the possibility of children discussing both positive and negative features of their environment. Whatever precise word was chosen the direction of the research was set by the researcher and as such could be seen

in Deleuze and Guattari's terms as a sedentary or striated space. However much the intention of the researcher was to be led by the children the starting line or frame was given to the children. The focus provided the initial script for the study.

However, the research process can also be seen to create smooth spaces where young children have freedom to move beyond the lines, to 'disrupt' the direction of research and lead to unexpected results. One example of this occurred in the Spaces to Play study (Clark and Moss, 2005) that set out to involve young children in changes to their outdoor play space. Jim who was three years old at the time enthusiastically engaged with taking photographs of what was important to him in the outdoor space at his nursery. However he 'subverted' the adult focus of the study by running inside and taking a photograph of the toilets. When Jim came to choosing the images he wanted to put in his book about the outdoor play space he chose his photograph of the toilets again to be in this selection and he chose to place this photograph on his book's cover. His mother explained later how toilets and toilet training were a major preoccupation for Jim. He had confidently disrupted the adult focus of the study. This is an indication that the smooth and striated can sit alongside and within each other. It is not a simple binary: 'No sooner do we note a simple opposition between the two kinds of space then we must indicate a much more complex difference by virtue of which the successive terms of the oppositions fail to coincide entirely.' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.552).

Working with the Mosaic approach starts with a particular identified group of research tools. (see Figure 1). Starting with observation, the tools include interviewing, child-led tours, photo-books and mapmaking (for example Dali and Stephenson, 2010; Randall, 2012; Mercieca and Mercieca, 2014; Clark, 2017). These tools provide the 'weft threads' in the weaving. They give the frame. However, the intention has been to suggest these tools as a starting point rather than compulsory elements. The empty square in Figure 1 indicates that this is an open-ended design. There is the possibility of new and different tools being added depending on such factors as the research focus and the preferred ways of communicating of the children involved. Merewether and Fleet (2014) describe adapting the Mosaic approach in a study of young children's perspectives of their outdoor play area in Australia (Clark, 2017, pp. 146-151). Jane, the researcher chose to add a drawing tool, so children had the opportunity to draw their important play spaces. Only a minority of the children in the study chose to draw but this activity 'played to the strengths' of one of the children in particular and this tool together with her photographs became the main focus of her interactions with Jane. (Merewether and Fleet, 2014, p. 910; Clark, 2017, p. 150).

Engaging with specific research tools in the Mosaic approach can contain both formalised and improvised elements. Within the frame children can open out the research encounter into a smooth space, for nomadic on the move thinking. Engaging with photography has particular potential here by focusing on what Kind (2013) has described as 'lively

entanglements' that can form between 'child-adult-camera-photograph and the movements of materials.' (Kind, 2013, p.434). Myers (2014) account of her engaged in-the-moment learning with young children and cameras extends this idea of improvisation. This is combined with the need for some initial instruction in terms of how to operate a camera and how, for example to review digital images. The level of instruction necessary to familiarise children with the technology will depend on the prior experience children bring to working with this adaptable tool. This more formal teaching element sits alongside the informal.

Within the frame of the Mosaic approach children found ways of improvising. This was seen for example in the choice to document imaginary worlds as important places. Jim, in the Space to Play study (Clark and Moss, 2005; Clark, 2017) worked with the camera to make visible his imaginary world. He took detailed close up photographs of each section of the colourful caterpillar-shaped play tunnel in the outdoor play space. He named each photograph, 'the red carriage', 'the green carriage' and the 'blue carriage' based on the Thomas the Tank engine stories: 'It was not until Jim sat down to talk about his photographs that the full extent of the personalised meanings he had given to the outdoor space became clear.' (Clark, 2017, p. 90). Jules, in the Living Spaces study (Clark, 2010a) chose to take a close up image of a glue stick on a shiny tablecloth in the nursery class. When asked about his photograph he explained: 'It's a boat on the water.' The camera in this way becomes an object to think with in a similar way to how Pacini-Ketchabaw and colleagues demonstrate how material such as charcoal, clay and paint can shape ideas (Pacini-Ketchabaw et al, 2017).

The research examples discussed here also draw attention to time as an important feature of quilting with the Mosaic approach. Time is a factor in the choice of a multimethod approach that gives young children the opportunity to work with several different research methods and to revisit the artefacts produced. The choice of making space for multiple voices including parents and practitioners also has a temporal dimension. This form of listening with the Mosaic approach creates 'slow knowledge' (Orr, 1996; Clark, 2010b; Clark, in press). The process is time consuming just as a handmade quilt by its very nature symbolises an investment of time that adds to its value.

Research artefacts as quilts

Mapmaking has developed as one of the most complex research tools in the Mosaic approach (Clark, 2011) that may provide the opportunity for a smooth space for nomadic thinking. Mapmaking in the Mosaic approach is intended to be an open space for children to script themselves either individually or with their peers. Children can think with photography, drawing and text to explore what does it mean to be in particular place. The maps can be understood as quilts of great complexity, a layered collage that can become the catalyst for multiple conversations and exchanges. The different modes of expression in the form of drawing, photographs and writing add fragments to the quilt. The aim is to

create an opportunity for new constructions to emerge. This is in contrast to the focus of a 'striated' map that would concentrate for example on depicting the geographical relationship between places.

The following is an example of a map produced by a group of young children in the Living Space study (Clark, 2010a):

The dinner line

A group of 5 year olds in the Living Spaces study meet to construct a map together of their school. Having chosen which of their photographs they wanted to add to the map the children began to add drawings and text to the map. One of the drawings depicted a table at one end of a rectangle. Two figures stood behind the table with large spoons. The rest of the rectangle was filled with a long line that ran along the length of the drawing. When asked about the drawing, one of the boys, Alex explained 'It's the line' where his class waited at lunchtime (see Clark, 2010a, pp. 63-64).



FIGURE 2 Detail of a map showing the dinner hall in Clark (2010a) *Transforming children's spaces: children's and adults' participation in designing learning environments*. P.64. London, England: Routledge.

In setting out to attempt to facilitate an open space for children to 'think what they think' this way of working led to an exploration of a striated space within the school. Lunchtime in this English primary school was a carefully regimented element of the children's day, a controlled space in school experienced as waiting. Following Bradley and colleagues (2012) and their Deleuzian analysis of infant mealtimes, the lunch hour can be seen as an event in which the table, spoons, 'dinner ladies', rules and children form an assemblage. The dinner hall, its sounds and smells becomes a central player. The map of the school deconstructed the school and then connected the parts together in unexpected ways leading to 'lines of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.9). The map as research artefact

can be understood here as a quilt of fragments, pieces overlaid using different media that acquired status within the research process in a similar way to the status given to quilts within the communities in which they are constructed. They can be seen to contain an investment of time and can contain stories.

The following example indicates the status that can be given to young children's maps within a research process.

The school council meeting

One of the case study schools in the Living Spaces study was given funding for the redesign of the school grounds. The school council, composed of two children from each class from 5 to 11 year olds, met to discuss possible changes. Maps made by children in the nursery and reception classes were brought to this meeting to act as a catalyst for the discussion. Previously these maps had been displayed in the school hall and were part of whole school discussion about changes to the site. The school council members discussed and made notes based on their analysis of the maps.

Spending time engaging with material produced by three- and four-year-olds in the school community reversed the hierarchy of knowledge which is embedded in most schools. The maps and photographs produced by the nursery and reception class provided the means to cross pedagogical boundaries and enabled children of different ages to co-construct meanings. (see Clark, 2010a: 182)

The research artefacts in this example of the school council meeting were taken seriously by older children within the school. The maps can be seen to have affect (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.xv; Adkins, 2015, p. 153) and to increase the power of the youngest children in their institution.

Researchers and research participants as quilt-makers

This reflection on the research process at a meta level ends by briefly considering the role of children and researchers as quilt makers and in particular the temporal dimension to this quilting. Listening to young children using a multi-method approach requires time. There is the necessity to step back and slow down. This change of pace is also necessary as a revisiting of the research material with children is embedded in the process: "The documentation... is then subject to review, reflection, discussion and interpretation by children and adults in a process of participant meaning making." (Moss, 2010, p. xi). Cook and Hess (2007) discuss this change of pace in their own research with children and visual methods: "This repeated engagement with the children slowed down the adult journey to deciding upon meanings. It gave time to think about what a child was saying, to listen again or differently, and offered the potential for new interpretations." (Cook and Hess, 2007, p. 42)

Children and adults as 'quilters' are producing together research artefacts that can be valued for the experiences they share at a local level and more widely. Revisiting the

material, sometimes several years later as was the case in the Living Spaces study could be interpreted as giving children the opportunity to add more fragments, sometimes as if from the same cloth but more faded- their reflections on what it had felt like to be in a particular place. This revisiting is an indication of the intended open-endedness to the research process working with the Mosaic approach, not seeking to focus on initial responses but to create the opportunities for deeper meaning-making to take place. Within the frame of the research approach, both smooth and striated space can exist.

Micro level: smooth and striated spaces

Turning to the micro level what can applying Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of smooth and striated spaces reveal about young children's encounters with early childhood environments? A relational materialist lens here is applied to revisiting two encounters from the Living Spaces study (Clark, 2010a): the 'scratchy carpet and the 'comfy chair'.

The scratchy carpet

Jules, age four took me on a tour of his nursery in response to my request 'can you show me what is important here?'. Having led me around the outdoor space Jules took me inside the nursery unit. He took me first to the cloakroom and the toilets and then to the carpeted area where his peers were sitting. He walked over to the carpeted area- 'the mat'. He explained quietly: "This is where we cross our arms and cross our legs.". Later Jules and a group of his peers described this to me as 'The scratchy carpet'. (see Clark, 2010a, p. 58)

Jules took a photograph of the carpeted area. A third of the image is taken up with carpet squares in red and green. Sitting around the edge of the carpet are a class of children- most are hidden from view as is the teacher- the circle goes out of the edge of the photograph. The children are sitting cross legged. A couple of the children catch the eye of the photographer and are gazing in an absent minded way towards the camera. Sitting around the edge of the circle are two adults who are sitting on child-sized chairs. One is wearing a headscarf. There are display boards on the walls above the circle and a frieze of numbers on coloured card.

Jules and the scratchy carpet can be understood as an assemblage (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) composed of a child photographer- peers- adults- carpet- policies. They are entangled. Several strands in this assemblage are made up of the education policies and practices that established Circle time and the more embedded practice in early childhood in the UK of 'sitting on the carpet'- or mat, historically one of the hallmarks of not being in school at a desk but being 'free' to sit on the floor.

Each morning and afternoon began with a class discussion and learning activity, with the children sitting in a circle on a carpeted area of the nursery classroom. This could

take forty minutes so it was one of the areas of the classroom with which the children became familiar from their first day at nursery. (Clark, 2010a, p. 50)

The assemblage also contains policy documents at the time about the Foundation Stage curriculum (QCA, 2000). There is an intra-action happening between each of these visible and invisible elements. Within this assemblage is a striated space. Jules' comment: 'This is where we cross our arms and cross our legs' draws attention to what is expected of the children here. It is a place of control where power is exerted and the carpet plays a central role. The label 'the scratchy carpet' emphasises this is an uncomfortable part of the classroom: the feel of the carpet- on bare skin. Jules' phrase is an indication of the embodied experience of being in this place. This includes the haptic quality of being there especially when you are small and spend more of your time in contact with the surfaces. This close contact is different from the felt experience of the adults. There appears in this encounter to be a hierarchy of felt experience- from the child-level scratchy carpet, to the child-sized chair that the teaching assistants were sitting on to the hidden from view teacher's cushioned chair. The seating arrangements embody the power relations within the space. This encounter with the carpet demonstrates the influence or 'affect' of this piece of furnishing, showing the power it exerts in this space. Jones (2013) is similarly drawn to the importance of the carpet in an educational environment for young children in the UK: 'Taking these images across to the carpet I begin to consider how it might become a 'pedagogically charged space' (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 22) where different relations and sensations could be activated so as to encourage rather than deflect learning. I wonder what possible assemblages could occur where bodies, minds and carpet are intertwined, where sensations between the child and the carpet become a constituent of learning and understanding.' (Jones, 2013, p. 608.)

The 'comfy chair'

Paul, four years old, was one of the quietest children in the nursery. He took part in a short interview, one of the tools in the Mosaic approach. When I asked him "where is your favourite place inside?" he replied:

'Sitting on the chairs when you've hurt yourself.'

There was a specific bright yellow plastic child-sized chair just inside the classroom door from the playground. Here, observation had shown children were brought when they had fallen over in the playground. This chair was photographed and included in a photo book by one of the children. The explanation was 'this is the comfy chair'. (see Clark, 2010a, p. 75-76).

The 'comfy chair' can be understood as part of an assemblage composed of: child photographer-speech-chair-playground-adult-first aid policy- physical affection- and the intra-action between each of these elements or lines. Paul's words are part of this assemblage. The phrase, 'comfy chair' that emerged from the group conveys the embodied experience. 'The comfy chair'- is a chair- you don't need to sit on the floor and you don't

need to cross your arms and legs. It is not rough or scratchy. It has a smooth surface. But it is also where you are comforted- the chair gives comfort as well as care given by the teacher or teaching assistant who tends to the playground injury.

The carpet and chair assemblages draw attention to their affect in this environment. Young children's photographs, talking and moving have played an important part in answering Murriss's question when conducting a relational materialist analysis: what matter matters here? (Murriss, 2016, p.62). The impact of the carpet and the chair on what happens in this space go far beyond their physical attributes. Working with participatory, visual methods can be one way to enable young children to identify what elements of their everyday lives in early childhood environments hold power. Their views and experiences are an important part of bringing together the human and non-human.

Conclusion

Quilting as a conceptual choice, informed by relational materialist theories, has opened up new possibilities for revisiting research data from studies involving the Mosaic approach. Documentation created through working with the Mosaic approach can be seen as open-ended 'assemblages of the human and non-human' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). The participatory elements maintain the status of children's perspectives within these assemblages thus making a possible bridge between participatory research and relational materialist theories. Such documentation can draw attention to both the inter-action and 'intra-action' between children, adults, places and objects and in so doing open up for further debate these complex relationships that constitute early childhood (Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Jones, 2013; Murriss, 2016). These possible lines of flight are both pedagogical and methodological. In raising the question 'what matter matters here?' new possibilities may emerge about the lived experience of being in an early childhood environment. It is a challenge to an increasingly measured and instrumentalist approach to ECE that privileges the neatly quantified above alternative narratives about learning (Bradbury, 2019).

Lines of methodological flight continue to emerge. This article has begun to explore how the Mosaic approach can be understood as assemblage that may lead to nomadic thinking whilst bringing together both striated and smooth spaces. There is the danger in a research approach that the more structured spaces can also become constrained, tied down or tick boxed. This returns to the relationship between the smooth and striated:

In every move towards a becoming that an assemblage makes there is a countervailing tendency towards stratification. Conversely every stratification is riddled with lines of flight seeking to escape stratification. Every assemblage is a complex combination of these two tendencies. There are dangers with too closely

identifying with either tendency, but these are dangers that must be risked in order to create something new. (Adkins, 2015, p.158-159)

When working with the Mosaic approach it can contain both elements- the striated space of using a particular tool but also the possibility of creating smooth space where children and adults can construct together patterns or maps of enormous complexity. This is cartography rather than a sticker book kind of formulaic decalcomania as Deleuze and Guattari discuss (1987, p. 12-14; Adkins, 2015, p. 231-232). Cartography is a skilled process that takes time and requires patience, both qualities of which appear increasingly to be in short supply in education and research contexts that privilege the easily measured. This points to the need in early childhood studies and beyond to celebrate complexity and to value slow knowledge. One way to do this may be to accept assemblages as a form of research results where data is entangled, bringing together the relationships between human and non-human. Skill and patience is then required to create the opportunities for children and adults to reflect and revisit such artefacts over time.

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