

# ECEC THE NORDIC WAY 26-27 March 2019, Oslo

*Hey, what's the teacher's role?*

Improving Learning and Teaching through  
Professional Development

*© Iram Siraj*

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Along with other studies The Effective Pre-school, Primary & Secondary Education study (UK 1997-2015) has shown that a high quality early education can be supportive in terms of children's learning and development in the long term. Quality is however a contested concept....

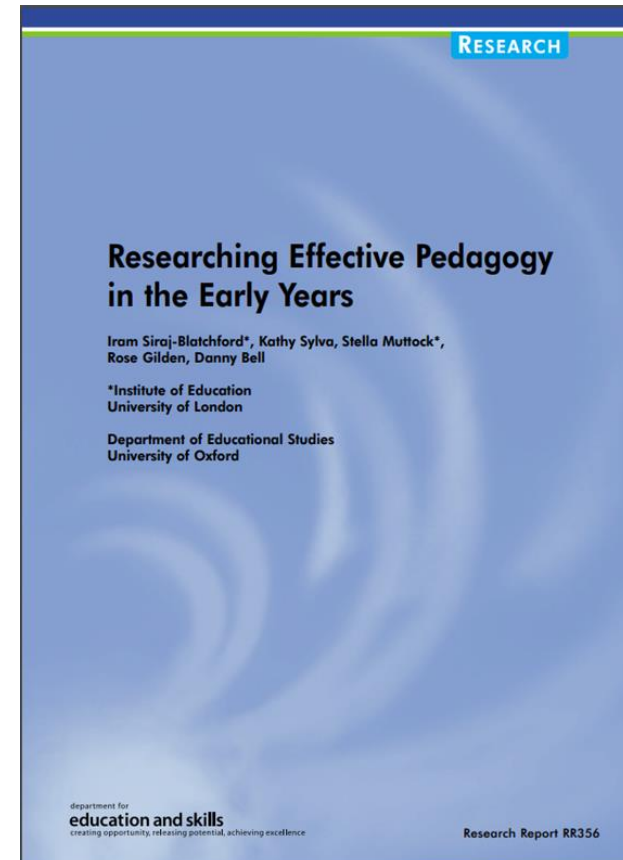
The research confirms the importance of early experiences and the powerful combination and interactions of home, pre-school and school in improving children's social skills, self-regulation, well-being, literacy and numeracy.

In our research we identified what excellent quality looks like (as defined by value-added to children's development), and we developed tools which assist researchers, policy makers and educators to identify, implement and improve services for young children's learning.

Above all our work recognises child agency in their learning and makes explicit the adult role through her ***relational and intentional*** pedagogy. Play is a vehicle for learning but not the only thing the pedagogue relies on.

## Quality: Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years (REPEY) study (Siraj-Blatchford et al 2002)

- Adults have warm, responsive relationships with children
- High quality interactions including SST
- Setting has clear educational goals and planning
- Staff have recognised early years qualifications
- Trained teachers are amongst the staff
- Parents are supported in involvement in children's learning



# Curriculum, Leadership and Interactional Quality Rating Scales (CLIQRS) [www.ucl-ioe-press.com](http://www.ucl-ioe-press.com)

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## ECERS-E: The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Curricular Extension to ECERS-R

Kathy Sylva, with Siraj-Blatchford  
and Branda Taggart



## Assessing Quality in EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Well-being  
(SSTEWS) Scale for 2–5-year-olds provision



Iram Siraj, Denise Kingston & Edward Melhuish  
Foreword by Kathy Sylva

Includes  
PHOTOCOPIABLE  
resources

## Movement Environment Rating Scale (MOVERS) for 2–6-year-olds provision

Improving physical development through  
movement and physical activity



Carol Archer and Iram Siraj  
Foreword by Anthony Okely

Includes  
PHOTOCOPIABLE  
resources

## AN EXAMPLE - From SSTEW scale - Sub-scale 4: Supporting learning and critical thinking

### Item 10: Encouraging SST through storytelling, sharing books, singing and rhymes

#### Inadequate

1

1.1 Very little individual interaction during story/book time, singing or rhymes.

1.2 Staff involvement with stories, books, singing or rhymes is limited to whole group time.

#### Minimal

3

3.1 Staff respond to children asking for stories, books, singing or rhymes by helping them recall stories, locate and read books, singing with or engaging in rhyming, and word play as appropriate.

3.2 Staff invite children (individually or in small groups) to join them to sing, engage in word and rhyme play, or tell stories or read books.

3.3 Staff engage children in choosing songs, rhymes, stories or books and ask them about their choices.

3.4 Staff show that they know the children's preferred books, stories, songs or rhymes\*.



## Good

5

5.1 Staff encourage the children to hold and 'read' books or retell familiar stories including their own 'stories', sing songs or join in with rhymes and word games.

5.2 Staff use props/puppets/the children themselves to support storytelling, engagement with songs or rhymes.

5.3 Children are given access to props and puppets to support retelling stories and use in free play.

5.4 Staff sing and engage in rhyming and word play while playing and interacting with the children during other activities.

## Excellent

7

7.1 Staff use factual books to support children's understanding of concepts\*.

7.2 Staff engage children with stories, singing etc. They support anticipation of familiar words, actions etc, make comments, evaluate stories/songs etc, and ask a few simple open-ended questions\*.

7.3 Staff encourage children to make links between the story, book, song or rhyme and their previous experiences.

# Current research using CLIQRS

- Baseline measure: ECERS-E and SSTEWS (some studies child measures) QIS, REEL & FEEL, Australia; URLEY & SEED in UK
- Training and control groups are matched
- Training group receives bespoke Professional Development on areas identified by ECERS-E and SSTEWS
- Repeated measures: ECERS- E and SSTEWS all settings and child assessment measures pre- and post-

***Results show gains in teacher competence, knowledge, indoor and outdoor quality and child learning in the intervention groups.***

# Example study - Fostering Effective Early Learning (FEEL) study – NSW, Australia

## Project Overview

1. Implement an evidence-based **Professional Development (PD) intervention**
2. Evaluate intervention effects on services' educational practices and programming
3. Design a cluster Random Controlled Trial (RCT) in 90 centres to evaluate this intervention on **educational quality** and **children's short- and longer-term outcomes** in literacy, numeracy, self-regulation and social development

	Intervention <sup>?</sup>	Control <sup>?</sup>
Number of centres <sup>?</sup>	38 (677 children) <sup>?</sup>	45 (669 children) <sup>?</sup>
# of preschool rooms <sup>?</sup>	39 <sup>?</sup>	54 <sup>?</sup>
Geographic Location <sup>?</sup>	18 regional, 20 metro <sup>?</sup>	18 regional, 27 metro <sup>?</sup>
Service Type <sup>?</sup>	28 LDC, 10 preschool <sup>?</sup>	31 LDC, 14 preschool <sup>?</sup>



# FEEL study - **intervention Evaluation Approach**

## **Centre-Level (Direct effect)**

### **Environment Rating Scales**

- Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Extension (ECERS-E)
- Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Well-being (SSTEWS) Scale

## **Child-Level (Indirect effect)**

### **Language Development**

- Verbal Comprehension (DAS sub-scale)
- EYT Expressive Vocabulary

### **Number Concept Development**

- Early Number Concepts (DAS sub-scale)
- Preschool Early Numeracy Scale

# FEEL study - **Environmental Ratings**

Involves one-day fly-on-the-wall observations of structural and process quality by a highly trained and reliable observer, using two scales

## **SSTEW**

1. Building trust, confidence and independence
2. Social and emotional well-being
3. Supporting and extending language and communication
4. Supporting learning and critical thinking
5. Assessing learning and language

Siraj, Kingston and Melhuish (2015)

## **ECERS-E**

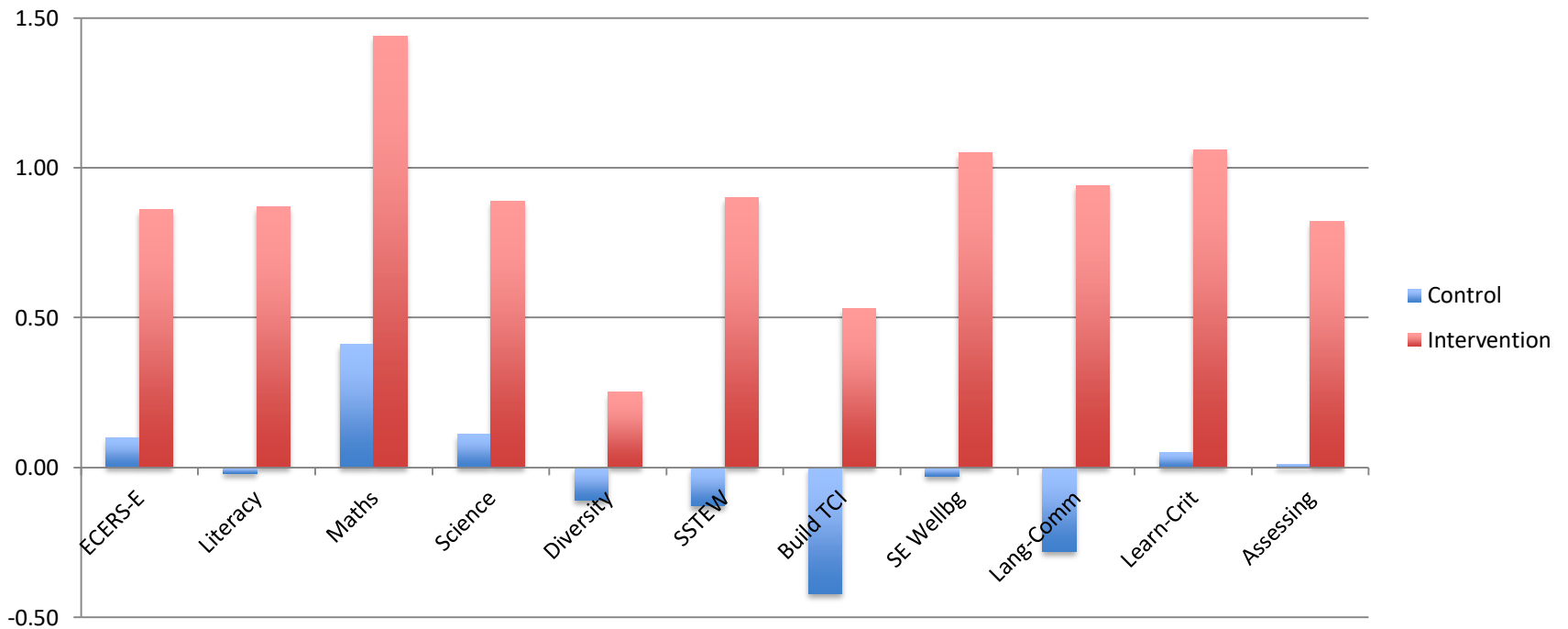
1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Science and Environment
4. Diversity

Sylva, Siraj-Blatchford & Taggart  
(2003)

# Areas identified for PD

- High quality interactions & SST
- Talk/language & early literacy in home and pre-school
- Self-regulation & life readiness
- Concept development (in maths and science)
- Pedagogical leadership
- Tools for reflection trial/error

# RESULTS: Improved Quality: Environmental Ratings (ITT)



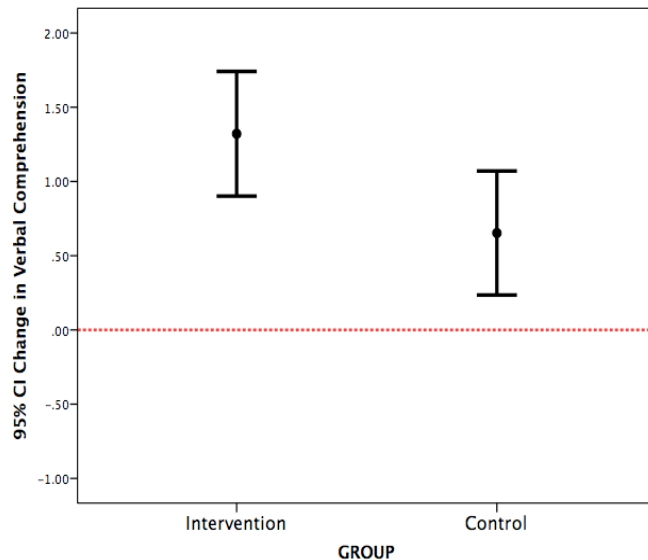
# FEEL study – Intervention Evaluation Results:

## Environmental Ratings

	Control			Intervention		
Scale	Baseline	Post-Test	Change	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Change
<b>ECERS-E</b>	<b>3.09</b> (0.94)	<b>3.19</b> (1.12)	<b>+0.10</b>	<b>3.17</b> (1.03)	<b>4.03</b> (1.25)	<b>+0.86*</b>
Literacy	3.81(1.12)	3.79(1.17)	-0.02	3.89(1.05)	4.76(1.21)	<b>+0.87*</b>
Mathematics	2.83(1.20)	3.24(1.57)	+0.41	2.87(1.17)	4.31(1.66)	<b>+1.44*</b>
Science	3.08(1.18)	3.19(1.24)	+0.11	3.19(1.36)	4.08(1.64)	<b>+0.89*</b>
Diversity	2.65(1.02)	2.54(1.01)	-0.11	2.74(1.27)	2.99(1.04)	+0.25
<b>SSTEWE</b>	<b>3.96</b> (1.25)	<b>3.83</b> (1.28)	<b>-0.13</b>	<b>4.00</b> (1.21)	<b>4.90</b> (1.36)	<b>+0.90*</b>
Building Trust, Conf, Indep	4.89(1.30)	4.47(1.44)	-0.42	5.03(1.14)	5.56(1.25)	<b>+0.53*</b>
S-E Well-Being	4.09(1.70)	4.06(1.60)	-0.03	4.10(1.70)	5.15(1.66)	<b>+1.05*</b>
Language-Comm	4.44(1.34)	4.16(1.53)	-0.28	4.49(1.24)	5.43(1.32)	<b>+0.94*</b>
Learn-Critical Thinking	2.98(1.38)	3.03(1.31)	+0.05	3.08(1.40)	4.25(1.61)	<b>+1.06*</b>
Assess Learning & lang	3.40(1.48)	3.41(1.37)	+0.01	3.28(1.50)	4.10(1.66)	<b>+0.82*</b>

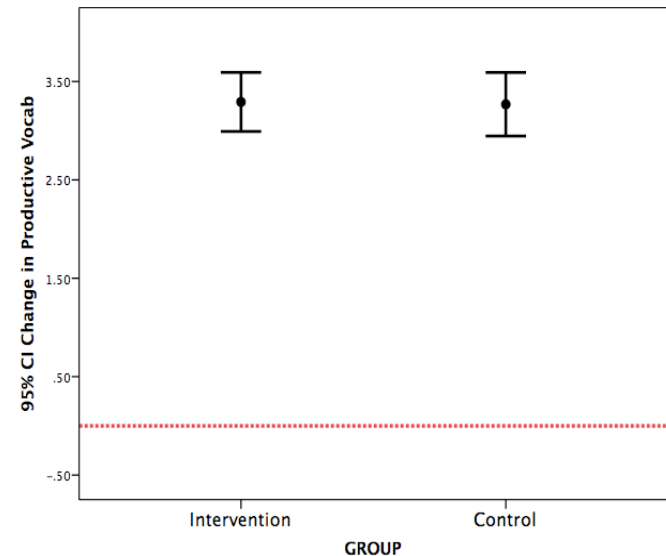


# FEEL study - Intervention Evaluation Results: Improved Child Learning



## Verbal comprehension

- There was a significant effect of the PD on verbal comprehension (102%)

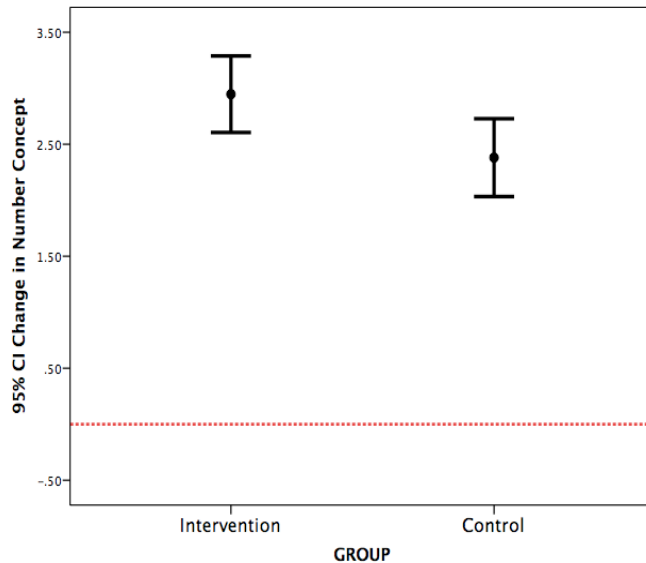


## Expressive vocabulary

- There was no significant effect of the PD on expressive vocabulary

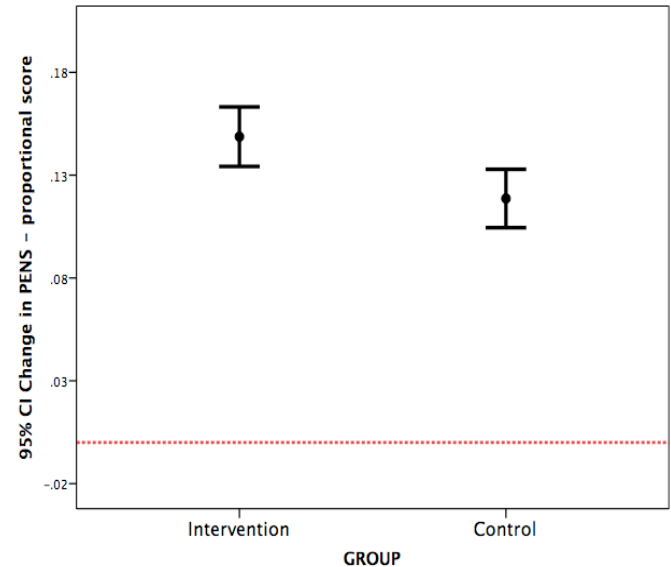
# Fostering Effective Early Learning (FEEL) study

## Intervention Evaluation Results: Child Assessments



### Number Concepts

- There was a significant effect of the PD on early number concepts (23%)



### Preschool Early Numeracy

- There was a significant effect of the PD on early numeracy (28%)

# Fostering Effective Early Learning (FEEL) study

## Intervention Evaluation Results: Educator Perceptions

**Personal growth:** shifts in personal pedagogy, philosophical and attitudinal shifts; renewed sense of purpose; increased confidence and motivation; more goal oriented in practice

**Improved pedagogy and practice:** increased use of Sustained Shared Thinking (SST); use of more open-ended questioning to extend children and small groups; increased awareness of the important role of high quality interactions

**Increased awareness and understanding:** better understanding of the educational and socio-emotional needs of children; deeper understanding of the role of the educator in the lives of children and families

## **FEEL study - Intervention Evaluation Results: Impact on Pedagogical Leadership**

Approaches to Sharing of Information	Changes to Practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Informal daily discussion (88%)</li><li>• Professional development through online platform (58%)</li><li>• Staff meetings (40%)</li><li>• Mentoring of staff (28%)</li><li>• Modelling of teaching practices (24%)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reflective practice (35%)</li><li>• Improved pedagogy (27%)</li><li>• Increased use of Sustained Shared Thinking (SST) pedagogy (19%)</li><li>• Increased support for children's self-regulation (18%)</li><li>• Improved planning and use of the reflection and planning tool (17%)</li><li>• Science and critical thinking (17%)</li></ul>

# FEEL study - Intervention Evaluation Results: Supports & Challenges

Perceived Supports	Challenges to Practice Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approachability, professionalism and passion of facilitators (70%)</li><li>• Having additional staff attend (51%)</li><li>• Access to scales/assessment tools (45%)</li><li>• Inclusion of illustrative practice examples (45%)</li><li>• Supportive staff and management (45%)</li><li>• Collaborative goals and vision (42%)</li><li>• Networking with other services (33%)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Time (66%)</li><li>• Difficulties accessing online (54%)</li><li>• Staff management and team characteristics (49%)</li><li>• Staff resistance (29%)</li><li>• Staff presence/part-time work (29%)</li><li>• Difficulty sharing with staff who did not attend PD (26%)</li><li>• Irregular or too short staff meetings (20%)</li></ul>



## Fostering Effective Early Learning (FEEL) study

### Intervention Evaluation Results: Impact on Pedagogical Leadership

*“Our educators now have a deeper understanding of what "High Quality" is, and why it is so important; what areas we should really focus our energy into; and what strategies can be used to support and assess them. This has allowed them to be far more effective and confident advocates and practitioners for our children and families.”*

*(Educational Leader and Assistant Director).*

# Thank you!

**Any questions? E-mail me! ☺**

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