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**A history of the present: A Foucauldian genealogy of
early years pedagogy in Ireland**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education

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**A history of the present: A Foucauldian genealogy of
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By:

Thérèse Farrell

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Abstract

This research presents a genealogical account of how power has shaped early childhood pedagogy in the Republic of Ireland. Using a Foucauldian lens, the research traces the genealogy of pedagogy for young children from the 18th century to the present day. In doing so, it describes the history of the present discourse of early years pedagogy. While the research is framed from an Irish perspective, it contributes to the global discourse on pedagogy by reimagining pedagogy through a local lens.

The research design weaves practices of self and interludes throughout the narrative to deconstruct Foucauldian thinking and contest regimes of truth within the early childhood canon of knowledge. The unfolding of various types and sources of power, including sovereign, disciplinary, biopower, and the micro-physics of power leads to the various constructions of the child within particular *épistèmes*. These images of the child include the Romantic Child; the State Child; the Catholic Child; the Neoliberal Child; the Global Child, and the Policy Child. This research argues that the positioning of children in this way impacts the construction of pedagogy. The interplay of power within societal, economic, cultural, religious, and political movements in Irish society also contributes to the development of early years pedagogy and these movements are delineated throughout the research.

The research creates a new genealogy of early years pedagogy specific to the Irish landscape. The findings can be applied to other contexts, however. A significant contribution to knowledge that emanates from this research is that power has produced and continues to produce early years pedagogy. While each *épistème* differed in terms of the cultural, societal, religious, political, and economic movements in Irish life, this research argues that a framework of pedagogical development emerged in the 18th century and the same pattern continues to produce early years pedagogy today. As such, Karr's maxim, *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*, could be applied to the genealogy of the construction of early years pedagogy from an Irish perspective.

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Chapter 1

Knowledge is made for cutting

Curators of museums have an important role, making decisions about what to preserve, what to display, what to put into storage, and what to discard. With great care and attention to detail, they acquire objects of interest, plan, organise, and display these objects in a way that will engage the intended audience. In fact, the word curator comes from the Latin *curare*, which means 'to take care'. Curators, as people of the present, shape the stories of people from the past. History is shaped by the people of the present; curators, historians, researchers, who have a shared goal to preserve it. As a researcher, I seek to do more than preserve; I want to move beyond mere preservation of facts. I aim to rethink and reinterpret history to provide new thinking about the ways in which power has shaped early years pedagogy from an Irish perspective.

Bloch (2013) maintains that history is open to a number of interpretations and should not be presented merely as a linear, evolutionary historical passing of time that remains uncontested and unchallenged. Foucault (1971/1984) suggests:

The traditional devices for constructing a comprehensive view of history and for retracing the past as a patient and continuous development must be systematically dismantled ... Necessarily, we must dismiss those tendencies that encourage the consoling play of recognitions. Knowledge, even under the banner of history, does not depend on 'rediscovery' and it emphatically excludes 'the rediscovery of ourselves.' History becomes 'effective' to the degree that it introduces discontinuity into our very being as it divides our emotions, dramatizes our instincts, multiplies our body and sets it against itself. 'Effective' history deprives the self of the reassuring stability of life and nature, and it does not permit itself to be transported by a voiceless obstinacy toward a millennial ending. It will uproot its traditional foundations and relentlessly disrupt its pretended continuity. This is because knowledge is not made for understanding; it is made for cutting (p.88).

Like the curator of the museum, in this research, I am a curator of knowledge. I intend to deconstruct, reposition, rework, and cut knowledge to piece it back together to tell a new story about early years pedagogy. Just like the curator, I will do this with great care and attention to detail. Based on Bloch's (2013) suggestion, I do not want to present a linear account of historical events, but rather a new interpretation, a reframing of history in the present. Like the curator, the historian resurrects the past in the present as well as creating an archive. Popkewitz (2013) argues that an archive records what is to be remembered or forgotten about a particular culture or passage of time. As I am a curator of knowledge in this research, not just an archivist, I can reconstruct it to offer new and alternative ways of thinking about early years pedagogy.

In thinking about historical work, the challenge emerges as only traces exist from the past. It is from these traces that history can be written, but only in the present, even when the historian seeks to critically understand the past. The problem with writing, as Foucault names it, the *history of the present* (Foucault, 1979, p. 31), is how these traces of history are connected as ways of thinking about and bringing about change. Popkewitz (2013) offers a possible approach to overcome this challenge. He examines two different historical styles of reason; one is historicism, or how social and cultural phenomena are determined by history, tracing the processes of the transcendental subject through the practices in which the traces of the past are given an analytical and temporal order to show development (Popkewitz, 2013). The second historical style of reason, according to Popkewitz (2013), is historicizing, which he describes as the cultural history, genealogy and history of the present. Historicizing decentres the subject and as such engages 'the complex intersections that produce principles that govern what is thought, talked about, seen and felt in the making of the subject' (p.15);

by stepping back from the subject, a new version of the story will be revealed. As my research engages with both historicism and historicizing, a rethinking and reimagining of history will emerge.

Reimagining the past

Popkewitz (2013) maintains that the humanism of historicism is connected with the emergence of *consciousness* as a historical principle, considering the ordering, classifying and thinking through concepts that enable the individual to analytically order the world and the qualities of self into the system. Popkewitz (2013) argues that 'consciousness is where knowledge generated about events and their processes have an autonomy and authority to prescribe processes of change' (p.6). Consciousness has the capacity to actively promote change. The inclusion of self and self-reflection is considered as *the homeless mind*, a phrase coined by Berger and the title of Berger, Kellner and Berger 's book (1974), to denote how it becomes possible to order and analyse the individual life and lived experience through abstract terms. Popkewitz (2013) illuminates the argument further by providing an example of a 'homeless' term, for instance, viewing the child as a 'learner'. This term, he argues, universalises the qualities and characteristics of the child and has little thought or regard for the child's cultural, historic or social context. Abstract, or homeless, notions have no historical location, social or cultural specificity; yet these terms are used readily within social, cultural and historical spaces.

The consciousness embodied in the homeless mind mirrors the self-reflective practice embodied in historicism...Consciousness as a particular ordering of self-reflection produces history as a chronology of the social individual that are separate from nature but which the mind reflects on to order the present and to make judgement and action possible for change (Popkewitz, 2013, pp.6-7).

Foucault refers to this as a particular *épistème*, which I will analyse further later. However, an important distinction in relation to consciousness is that it is a particular ordering of self-reflection, where self-reflection can bring about change. My research seeks to be historically and culturally consciousness, and the inclusion of the self, my history, and my positionality will shape my research.

Positionality

Having worked as an early years teacher in a primary school for almost a decade, I am relatively new to the position of Lecturer in Early Childhood Education at Dublin City University. I brought to this role a deep understanding of curriculum, pedagogy, and experience of working with young children. I have a range of research interests from play, curriculum and pedagogy to children's rights and agency. I began the doctoral journey to build on these experiences and to deepen my expertise. When submitting my original research proposal, I planned on eliciting children's perspectives of their early school experiences in Ireland. I was interested in their experiences and their perspectives, in order to better understand their social worlds. I was excited about the research and felt that it would be an important opportunity for children to be listened to. I had sought children's perspectives on aspects of their play that I provided for them and I reflected on this as part of my Masters research (Dunphy & Farrell, 2011). I submitted my doctoral proposal and had begun work on the literature review. As part of my planned research, I had developed a theoretical frame wherein I positioned my research. I was adopting a Vygotskian socio-cultural perspective to frame my research. I was very familiar with Vygotskian theories (Vygotsky, 1978) and approaches to early childhood education and felt comfortable with my proposal. My supervisor, however, made this comment during a supervision back in

September 2015: 'the much-used (and mis-used) ZPD also begs questions about who defines what those 'zones' are, and what is the nature of agency and control within those zones' (E. Wood, personal communication, 24th September, 2015). This challenged my thinking.

This comment is constructive and could easily have been discussed in a meaningful way within my original proposal. It was not so much the comment itself, but the realisation that I, as a Lecturer of Early Childhood Education, had never stopped to consider what the 'zones' were, nor the nature of agency and control within them. This troubled me greatly, as I realised that I taught my undergraduate and postgraduate students the same material that I received as a trainee teacher (although paradoxically, I told them that the best type of teacher is not always mirrored by how you have been taught!). I felt a minor crisis of confidence; was I not the competent teacher that I thought I was? With these uncomfortable shifts in thinking within me, I reviewed my research proposal in a new light. My first reaction was; who am I to 'give' a voice to children? Is this not something that they possess already? I thought deeply about how children were positioned in classrooms and in society in general. Do children only have opportunities to speak when invited by an adult? I was concerned about the power dynamics between teachers and adults and I started to review how power circulates the classroom, early years texts, and early years discourses. I wanted to unravel this notion of power and understand where it began. Was it always present? I was now conscious of how power permeates the zone of proximal development. How had I never noticed this previously? I thus started to retrace the roots of power and how it has impacted on the ways in which we teach young children in Ireland.

When considering the impact of power on early years pedagogy, I was mindful that power as a concept often positions itself within a poststructural paradigm. Poststructuralism as a movement began in the 1960s and its influence has been wide reaching across a range of disciplines, including social sciences. Williams (2014) believes 'this influence is controversial because poststructuralism is often seen as a dissenting position', highlighting the two key criticisms of poststructuralism as 'first, that it is wilfully and irretrievably difficult; secondly that it takes on positions that are marginal, inconsistent and impossible to maintain' (p.1). While cognisant of the potential controversies of adopting a poststructural lens, I realised that many early years researchers have utilised this paradigm, including Jones, Osgood, Urban, Holmes, & MacLure (2014); Lenz-Taguchi (2010) and MacNaughton (2005) amongst others, to offer new insights into aspects of early years education. Oftentimes, the danger of applying poststructuralism is that it aims to deconstruct early childhood education within a pessimistic, nihilistic discourse (Jones, Osgood, Urban, Holmes, & MacLure, 2014) and not necessarily to offer a reconstruction. While I aimed to contest or reimagine aspects of early years discourse, such as ZPD, I realised I did not wish to deconstruct early childhood education in its entirety.

MacNaughton (2005) identifies the purpose of engaging with the political discourse within this paradigm is to 'create greater social justice and equity' (p.2), which is a more balanced position than a dissenting one, and can create new knowledge. While reflecting on my own positionality and the paradigm in which my research is situated, it occurred to me that my resistance to label my research mirrored Foucault's refusal to be labelled. Foucault (1966) berates 'English speaking readers and half-witted 'commentators'' about persisting in labelling him as a 'structuralist', arguing that he 'had been unable to get into their tiny minds

that I have used none of the methods, concepts, or key terms that characterize structural analysis' (p.xv). He continues by requesting that:

I should be grateful if a more serious public would free me from a connection that certainly does me honour, but I have not deserved. There may well be similarities between the works of the structuralists and my own work. It would hardly behove me, of all people, to claim that my discourse is independent of conditions and rules of which I am very largely unaware, and which determine other work that is being done today. But it is only too easy to avoid the trouble of analysing such work by giving it an admittedly impressive-sounding, but inaccurate label (p.xv).

By averting the tendency to label my own positionality in favour of allowing the research question to guide the research, the research will move within and between particular spaces, discourse and paradigms. I want to avoid the pitfalls of polarisation and present a well-balanced perspective. The aim of my research is to contribute to the growing contemporary discourse on early years pedagogy, more specifically on how power has constructed pedagogy from an Irish perspective. The significance of this research is twofold; firstly, the reimagining of the powerful discourse that has been passed on as the early childhood *tradition* and secondly, the contribution to contemporary discourse on pedagogy and its position in the early childhood canon.

Problematising pedagogy

Western traditions present a story of early childhood pedagogy that continues to be inspired by Rousseau (1762); Pestalozzi (1900) and Vygotsky (1978), amongst others. Based on the legacy of Western ideology, a somewhat shared position on how young children learn has emerged, such as young children learning through exploration and play, through active engagement, and with the support of an adult. A progressive system of education is presented where the child is viewed as active in their learning and the role of the teacher is to build on the child's previous tenets of knowledge and provide a stimulating learning environment that

supports rich first-hand experiences and authentic learning (Government of Ireland (GoI), 1999a; National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), 2009). In the Republic of Ireland, the history of early childhood pedagogy is often presented as a consistent story wherein the traditions, ideology and pedagogy of early childhood education form a shared belief. Although the traditions and ideology of early childhood education are often presented as a shared understanding, my research will argue that this is not the case. Yet, this knowledge base constitutes a dominant western narrative that has also been applied in non-western countries (Chen, Li, & Wang, 2017; Chopra, 2012; Nyland & Alfayez, 2012; Vargas-Barón, 2016). Hence, it has become a *regime of truth* which is rarely contested or questioned (the Foucauldian conceptualisation of *regime of truth* will be discussed later in this chapter). This research aims to move beyond taken-for-granted assumptions and consider the impact of the cultural, social and political contexts, as well as how those contexts have shaped what is currently perceived as the history of early years education. By deconstructing these preconceived assumptions, I will offer new insights into how early years pedagogy has been constructed. The history of early years pedagogy lays the foundation for current pedagogy as contemporary early years curricula and frameworks are built upon these historical perspectives. In other words, present pedagogy is shaped by the past. In the Republic of Ireland, current pedagogy for young children is based on a canon of knowledge that to some extent is largely unchallenged and uncontested.

The introduction of *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (NCCA, 2009) in Ireland sparked a discourse on curriculum and pedagogy. *Aistear* is the curriculum framework for children from birth to six in Ireland. It describes learning and development through interconnected themes and offers guidelines for adults to help them plan for enjoyable and

challenging learning experiences, so that all children can grow and develop as competent and confident learners (NCCA, 2009). *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009), defines pedagogy as ‘all the practitioner’s actions or work in supporting children’s learning and development. It infers a negotiated, respectful and reflective learning experience for all involved, in *Aistear*, the terms ‘pedagogy’ and ‘practice’ are used interchangeably’ (p. 56). This mirrors the broad definition of the term ‘pedagogy’ and how ‘pedagogy’ and ‘curriculum’ are often used interchangeably and appear indistinguishable. Interestingly, the focus in *Aistear* is on the practitioner and their actions to support the child. As *Aistear* is a government-led initiative, it has been influential in shifting the focus towards the role of the adult in children’s learning, in addition to the pedagogic roles that practitioners should fulfil. While *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009) offers a broad definition of pedagogy, it fails to problematise pedagogy from an Irish perspective or contest the pedagogic roles of practitioners.

Since 2009, there has been a continuing debate amongst policy makers, researchers and leaders of early years education in Ireland about pedagogy and the contexts for young children’s learning. Alongside this problematisation, the NCCA are currently reviewing the *Primary School Curriculum* (PSC) (GoI, 1999a) which is offered to four, five and six-year olds in infant classes in primary schools. Traditionally in Ireland, children start formal schooling (Junior Infants) when they are four years old, so children in infant classes in primary schools fall under the remit of early years education (Department of Education and Skills (DES), 2014). One of the current debates in Ireland is the positioning of *Aistear*, because as it stands, this framework does not have mandatory status. While teachers and educators working with children from birth to six are encouraged to adopt the framework, it is currently not a requirement. Furthermore, teachers are required to receive training on the curriculum

framework outside of school time. Having worked as an *Aistear* tutor for many years, part of my role was to support parents, teachers and educators on how they could implement the framework in their particular setting. During this role, I was often met with resistance, as the positioning of the framework holds such a vulnerable status. As part of the review of the Primary School Curriculum (GoI, 1999a), the Primary Language Curriculum was redeveloped in 2015 and the Mathematics Curriculum is currently under review. This curriculum review has further ignited the debate regarding appropriate pedagogies on how young children learn. I now sense a certain shift within policy developments in Ireland that leads me to contend that 'pedagogy' may be positioned to replace 'curriculum'. This research is timely in this sense as it contributes to the discourse on how pedagogy has been shaped by power, by context, by societal, political and economic movements, and framed within particular historical epochs.

As an early years teacher, I have always been deeply interested in pedagogy, in how children learn, and the most suitable environments for teaching and learning. I believe that as a nation, we have a habit of looking to other countries for models of best practice; to view other policies and curricula as more advanced than our own. We tend to view international models of early years curricula with rose-tinted glasses, assuming they represent best practice while neglecting to contest and debate these models. The development of *Aistear*, for instance, is rooted in the work of Te Whāriki (Blaklock, 2017; Buchanan, 2013; Lee, Carr, Soutar, & Mitchell, 2013) in New Zealand. While considering another early years approach offers a particular lens through which to view pedagogy, Ireland failed to consider any of the drawbacks of this approach (Blaklock, 2010), and it is difficult to divorce early childhood education approaches from their socio-political and cultural-historical contexts. This research

will explore how power, in all its sources and forms, has shaped pedagogy from historical, cultural, economic, and political perspectives. In doing so, this research will offer new insights into pedagogy from an Irish perspective. This story is important as it begins the journey of my doctoral research and demonstrates how my thinking has progressed over time. A critical component of my research design is how I position myself within the research. The inclusion of the self, which will be discussed further, is an important aspect of my research, as the journey of this research demonstrates how I have challenged my thinking and moved beyond the boundaries of what I thought was possible. While considering pedagogy and its development over time, I turned to Foucault to explore some of these concepts from a genealogical perspective.

Research question

The question framing this research is: **How has power shaped the genealogy of early childhood pedagogy from an Irish perspective?** In crafting this research question, I have already problematised the term 'pedagogy', the next step is to deconstruct the term genealogy and finally to focus on power, which will be analysed in Chapter 2. While reflecting on the research question, I considered many different conceptual and theoretical frameworks that could support the interrogation of the research question. When thinking about pedagogy, I thought about developing a theoretical framework underpinned by key ideologies in the early years while tracing the development of pedagogy chronologically over time. I also contemplated developing a systematic framework that traced the development of pedagogy in the Irish context while simultaneously comparing this to international contexts. However, after careful consideration, I decided that while the development of pedagogy is at the core of this research, it is framed by the key concepts of genealogy and power. It occurred to me

that both concepts echo Foucauldian thinking and so I decided to use these and other Foucauldian concepts (which will be detailed further in Chapter 2) for my conceptual framework.

In framing the research question, Foucault's (1982) conception of the word 'how' is also adhered to: 'How', not in the sense of 'How does it manifest itself?' but 'By what means is it exercised?' and 'What happens when individuals exert (as they say) power over others?' (pp.785-786). Alongside the Foucauldian interpretation of the word 'how', it is crucial to unpack the term 'genealogy' and how it differs from the use of 'archaeology' in Foucauldian terms. Foucault (1972) uses the term 'archaeology' to describe his approach to writing history. Archaeology is the process of examining the discursive orders and traces that remain of the past. Archaeology positions history as a means for understanding how particular structures and processes have shaped the present epoch. Foucault adopts archaeology as a method of analysis in his earlier works, prior to *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1979), uncovering traces of the past which are pieced back together to tell a story. Foucault uses this approach in many of his works, including *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972). Garland (2014) maintains that for Foucault 'each historical era and each 'archaeological stratum' there was...a distinctive epistemological structure – an *épistème* – that governed how thinkers would think, how statements were made, and how discourse was formed' (p.369). Unlike the curator of the museum, the role of the archaeologist is more than tracing the stories of the past, but, rather an 'excavation of specific discourses from each of these historical periods thus appears like so many archaeological strata, each layered atop the other, each one displaying its own distinct pattern and structure' (Garland, 2014, p.370). Akin to an

archaeologist unearthing a new finding, each layer of the archaeological strata unfolds to reveal a new discourse.

Discipline and Punish (Foucault, 1979) represents Foucault's move from archaeology to genealogy and it remained the dominant paradigm of analysis for Foucault's later work. Prado (1995) claims that genealogy derived from Foucault's previous tenet of archaeology, and both tenets overlap. The intersection of archaeology and genealogy illuminates the similarities between the two, in that Foucault, through them, retells the histories of institutions, disciplines and practice and in doing so, Foucault troubles the discourse. Garland (2014), however, distinguishes the two tenets of analysis as:

Archaeology wants to show structural order, structural differences and the discontinuities that mark off the present from its past. Genealogy seeks instead to show 'descent' and 'emergence' and how the contingencies of these processes continue to shape the present (p.371).

Foucault (1971/84) himself furthers the distinction clarifying the meanings of 'descent' and 'emergence':

The search for descent is not the erecting of foundations: on the contrary, it disturbs what was previously thought immobile; it fragments what was thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined consistent with itself (p.82).

Rather than focusing on the foundations of a concept, which archaeology tends to do, genealogy traces the disordered and often arbitrary lines wherein the past has become the present. It is more than tracing the roots of a concept; genealogy problematises the present by unfolding the power relation upon which the concept was built. Genealogy seeks to trace the emergence of discourse and, unlike archaeology, how these processes continue to shape the present, in order to write a 'history of the present' (Foucault, 1979, p. 31). Genealogy, as Foucault (1971/1984) describes it, is 'situated within the articulation of the body and history.

Its task is to expose a body totally imprinted by history and the process of history's destruction of the body' (p.83), thus highlighting the centrality of the body, or the self, in historical analysis.

Ball (2013) argues that histories are both a way of demonstrating uncertainty and contingency and that the absolutes are historical vehicles for the construction of the ontology of the present. Following on from Nietzsche's work, Foucault's genealogy refuses to accept the concept of a singular interpretation of the past; rather genealogical work involves:

...making visible a singularity at places where there is a temptation to invoke a historical constant, an immediate anthropological trait, or obviousness which imposes itself uniformly on all (1971/84, p. 76).

Archaeology, on the other hand, is concerned with the level at which differences and similarities are determined; a level at which where things are simply organised to produce manageable forms of knowledge. The stakes are much higher for genealogy, however (Ball, 2013). Unlike archaeology, which is concerned with origins, genealogy deals with the same tenets of knowledge and culture, but Foucault (1971/84) describes it as a level where the basis of what is true and false come to be distinguished via mechanisms of power. Genealogy positions the process of descent and emergence as the consequence of the mechanisms of power and complex power struggles (Garland, 2014). Viewing power in this way implies that contemporary thinking has been shaped by complex power dynamics and mechanisms of power. The analysis of these power relations from a political, economic, social and cultural position will be explored in greater depth in Chapter 2 and will remain embedded throughout the research, as Foucault remarked in an interview with Kritzman (1988) "genealogy 'seeks

to re-establish the various systems of subjection: not the anticipatory power of meaning but the hazardous play of dominations'' (p. 83).

Research design

One of the challenges of using genealogy as a tool of analysis is the design, structure and presentation of the research. In writing a genealogy, the more conventional format of research presentation is obsolete. Rather the writing unfolds 'like a game that invariably goes beyond its own rules and transgresses its limits' (Foucault, 1998, p.206). And so, many questions relating to the structure, theoretical framework and methodology emerged for me. How can I, as a genealogist, appear, in what Foucault describes as the order of things? How will I reveal my epistemological and ontological assumptions in the discursive context about which I am writing? My research journey has not followed the well-travelled path of an empirical study where I can gather data and present my findings. I did not have a 'write up' stage; rather I am continuously negotiating the layers and micro-layers of meanings that my research uncovers. I spent many weeks, indeed months, trying to overcome this challenge. And while I realised that my writing would unfold to tell its own story, I realised I needed some mechanism to present my research, my story of how I engaged with Foucault's complex ideas.

I struggled with the non-conventional route that my study would take. On EdD weekends, colleagues would ask, 'Have you finished your literature review?', 'Have you got your ethical approval?', 'When are you collecting data?', 'How are you presenting your data?' I failed to answer any of these questions and while my colleagues were progressing chronologically

through their research projects, I felt lost in a sea of old history books and Foucault. I found this process difficult, as I felt my progress was slow as I trawled my way through the literature. To overcome this struggle, I decided to read other early years researchers who were writing from alternative lenses. I read a number of works applying poststructural ideas within early childhood education spaces, including MacNaughton (2005) and Lenz Taguchi (2010). The objective of these texts is how to establish knowledge in early childhood education that sustains ethical, democratic practices with children every day and that recognises the political processes and effects of privileging one form of knowledge of children and of early childhood education over another. In doing so, these texts invite reflection on why particular knowledge and discourses dominate the canon of early childhood education. For example, who selects this knowledge? and for whose benefit? MacNaughton (2005) and Lenz Taguchi (2010) invite reflection on the politics of knowledge in early childhood education, to contest theories and discourses and to move beyond the theory/practice binary divide. Moving away from the structure, and somewhat security, of a theoretical framework is no easy feat, but as there is no recognised Foucauldian 'theory' (let alone methodology), it would be unsuitable to force Foucauldian ideology into a structuralist framework. Rather, Foucault interrogated the boundaries of disciplines (Mills, 2010), and in problematising them, he left them open to change and interpretation. While this research may be considered a somewhat unconventional approach, I realised I needed to create a map to plot the key concepts of the research and to guide my journey.

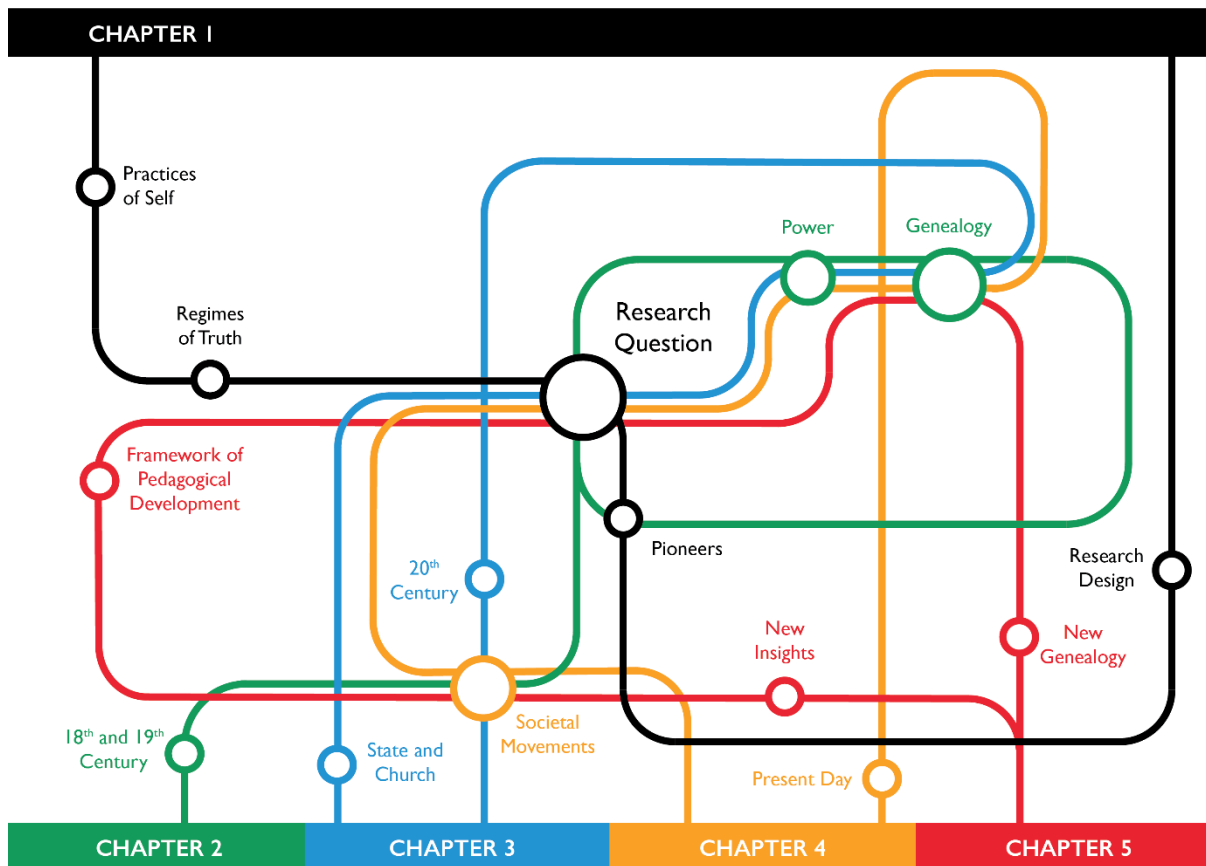
Mapping the research

Armed with my research question, the next stage in my research journey was to map my research. Like any arduous journey, there were a number of twists and turns, and while some

parts of the journey were smooth and steady, other parts were more challenging and difficult. Like any tourist on a journey, I planned to stop, have a break, take some photographs and absorb the view. Although my destination is unknown, the journey was easier having a map to navigate through the demanding terrain. By mapping out a series of stopping points I planned my journey while appreciating the final destination as an unknown. Like most tourists, I took photographs of the vistas to capture significant moments and snapshots of my journey. Each picture helps to paint the story of my journey.

When mapping my research, I began with a simple line drawing, with a series of lines protruding. While looking at this map, I realised it was inadequate as it did not reflect the connections within and between stops. It only resembled a simple pathway through the theory and the literature. My next iteration used a series of Venn diagrams to capture my journey. While this iteration did capture the links and connections between my points, it failed to capture the complexity of my research. After a series of further iterations, I created the map below (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Research map



The roadmap of this research mirrors the complexities of a busy underground map. There are many stations that will be revisited from a variety of routes or perspectives. Each line represents a chapter of my research and at the centre of each line and at the heart of the research lies the research question: How has power shaped the genealogy of early years pedagogy in Ireland? Chapter 1 sets the scene for the research. It contests the canon of knowledge and regimes of truth upon which early childhood is predicated, specifically the contributions of the so-called pioneers. This chapter also presents the research question, research design, and approach. A key element of this chapter is the presentation of practices of self via the interludes. Chapter 2 presents the genealogical account of how power has

shaped pedagogy in the 18th and 19th centuries which led to the concept of the Romantic Child. Chapter 3 continues the genealogy and outlines the social, cultural, economic and religious movements of the 20th century and how power within and between these movements impacted pedagogy for young children. Chapter 4 continues in a similar vein, as it presents the genealogy of the present day. Finally, Chapter 5 outlines how this research is a new genealogy and creates new insights into how power has produced pedagogy. It presents the *Framework of Pedagogical Development* as a significant contribution to knowledge. At the heart of this map lies the research question, from which the framing of the thesis stemmed, thus the map acts as a guide to structure my research and aid my journey.

Interludes

Alongside the research map, another key element of this research is the inclusion of practices of self. As this research aims to reconceptualise dominant discourses in early childhood education alongside the inclusion of self, I researched others in the field of early childhood education whose work had a similar goal. I was inspired by the work of Katherine Evans (2015) as she disrupts dominant conceptualisations of the term 'readiness' in the context of early childhood education. Moving away from concepts that have previously sat alongside 'readiness', such as predefined goals and outcomes, Evans (2015) explores the possibility of thinking with a complex logic in order to generate new ideas, understandings and practices, arguing that 'readiness' is part of an open-ended *becoming*, rather than a predefined state of *being*. Evans (2015) draws on the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to reconceptualise the idea of 'readiness', arguing that is not predicated on a set of predetermined goals, skills and outcomes; rather, it is who and what children *become*. The concepts of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) are complex and while reading Evans' work, I drew parallels with my own engagement

with Foucault. While deconstructing complex concepts, Evans weaves interludes of her own experiences into the discussion. Not only do these interludes illuminate her argument, they also provide a sense of structure to the work and in doing so Evans (2015) manages to go beyond the theory/practice binary divide. She presents complex, difficult concepts in a fluid way by drawing on her own experiences as an early childhood teacher (Evans, 2015, p.34) and weaving the theory and the practice seamlessly into her writing. I was drawn to Evans' work, as I had previously encountered the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) on the process of *becoming* in relation to the concept of 'body without organs' (BwO). I found it challenging; I struggled to identify how or where these concepts would fit in the greater scheme of early childhood education. Yet, Evans (2015) manages to deconstruct these complex ideas and embody them within the self and the early years paradigm. As my research aims to do something similar, namely, to move beyond the theory/practice binary by deconstructing theory and weaving my own self into the analysis, I will structure my research in a similar way by incorporating interludes into the discussion to illuminate the complex theoretical concepts. I decided to present the interludes in italics to weave my practices of self within the research and to deconstruct Foucauldian ideology. Although I am not conducting a conventional study, finding a pathway through the theory and constructing a design that complements my research question enabled me to proceed on my research journey.

Approach

In genealogical analysis, knowledge and truth exist but only as they relate to specific situations, thereby embedding the genealogical perspective in relational forms of discourse (Tamboukou & Ball, 2003). Foucault utilises genealogy, but refrained from framing genealogy within any theoretical system or paradigm; rather, his genealogical work moves beyond

existing systems and structures. Lincoln and Denzin (2005) maintain that methodology is continually being contested and the boundaries of methodology are being stretched. The privileging of self in the research design realises that recognising the self can contribute to new and deeper understandings. Two recognised approaches to methodology that privilege the self are narrative and autoethnography. The narrative approach invites researchers to think about and share their experiences, their stories. Drawing on Dewey's emphasis on lived experience (Dewey, 1970; Dewey and McDermott, 1981), narrative inquiry was first used almost three decades ago by Connelly and Clandinin (1990) who realised its importance as an approach to research because it focused on how lived lives impact on educational experiences. Autoethnography involves writing about the personal and its relationship with the cultural (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). Autoethnographers include cultural components of personal experiences, positioning themselves, and continually contesting and resisting what they see (Hamilton, Smith & Worthington, 2008).

Hamilton, Smith and Worthington (2008) distinguish between narrative and autoethnography, arguing that narrative focuses on a look at the story of self, whereas autoethnography is a look at the self within a larger context. The key distinction is the larger context, awareness of the bigger picture, and the cultural, social and political context. Considering that my research aims to include the genealogy and the cultural context, the approach that best fits my research is autoethnography. As Foucault (1971/1984) argues:

Genealogy does not pretend to go back in time to restore an unbroken continuity that operates beyond the dispersion of forgotten things; its duty is not to demonstrate that the past actively exists in the present, that it continues secretly to animate the present, having imposed a predetermined form on all its vicissitudes. Genealogy does not resemble the evolution of a species and does not map the destiny of a people. On the contrary, to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the

minute deviations – or conversely, the complete reversals - the errors, the false appraisals and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us; it is to discover that truth or being does not lie at the root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents (p.81).

Genealogy is rooted in context; in the cultural, social, political spaces both from the past and the present. As my research seeks to explore how power has shaped genealogy, alongside my own reflections, the most fitting approach to do so is autoethnography.

Autoethnography

Autoethnography, by its very nature, is both autobiographical and at the same time ethnographical. The ethnographic component of this approach distinguishes it from other narrative-oriented methodologies, such as a memoir or an autobiography. Autoethnography can be defined as ‘autobiographies that self-consciously explore the interplay of the introspective, personally engaged with self with cultural descriptions mediated through language, history, and ethnographic explanation’ (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 742). While this definition prioritises the autobiographical, it emphasises the importance of linking the personal to the cultural. This definition of autoethnography is radically different from what Heider (1975) proposed when he first discussed the approach. When referring to the ‘auto’, or ‘self’ in the term, he originally deemed this to be the informant self, rather than the ethnographer self. Since the 1970s, a wide range of social science researchers have adopted and adapted this approach, with different emphases. Ellis and Bochner (2000) maintain that autoethnographers vary in their emphasis on ‘the research process (graphy), on culture (ethno) and on self (auto)’ (p. 740). Some researchers emphasise the ethnographic process; others focus more so on the cultural interpretation, while others highlight the self-narrative. While each of these components have a particular focus, I argue that all three elements need

to be considered for the approach to be effective. Autoethnography needs to be ethnographical in its methodological design; cultural in its interpretation, and autobiographical in its presentation.

Autoethnography is considered to be a provocative approach to thinking and writing about the social sciences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Ellis, 2004; Ellis & Bochner, 2000 & Lincoln & Denzin, 2005). The writing of self into autoethnography can appear on the surface as telling 'my story' to better understand my social world, but Denzin (2003) maintains that these 'stories' have the potential to be 'reflective, critical, multimedia tales and tellings' (p.26) which can invert binaries between individual/social, body/mind, and lived experience and theory. Autoethnography has been heavily criticised in the past for favouring the 'story' over the inclusion of a theoretical framework, for being insufficiently analytical, and too aesthetic, emotional, and therapeutic (Ellis, 2009; Holt, 2003). Autoethnographers are also criticised for not engaging in rigorous fieldwork; for over-relying on personal experience and for being self-obsessed navel-gazers (Madison, 2006). Holt (2003) describes this methodology as a passing fad, and while this approach verges on the self-indulgent, I argue that knowledge in autoethnography is generated from particular lived experiences within a particular space and time. Poststructural autoethnography acknowledges that the body 'is a site for production of knowledge, feelings, emotions and history' (Probyn, 2003, p. 290). In this way, bodies themselves are engaging with, reinterpreting, and generating new theory. Although the ontological perspective and the personal story are privileged because the body and the mind are sources of knowledge, theoretical or critical frameworks are not abandoned. This privileging of the self (auto) as I engage with the research process (graphy) on aspects of

culture (ethno) is deeply embedded in the research and this embedding of self within the research will be discussed in greater depth later.

I previously positioned this research (pp.6-7) as moving within and between lenses and paradigms. Viewing autoethnography from a poststructuralist lens rationalises the inclusion of self into the research. Gannon (2006) argues that in troubling positivist research, poststructural theories justifies the inclusion of the personal into research, so that lived experiences are represented in and by autoethnography. Gannon (2006) continues, arguing 'autoethnography – attending as it does to incomplete, interpersonal, embodied lived experiences - might be considered as inherently poststructuralist', and she argues for an 'explicit and disruptive poststructural autoethnography, for deconstructive textual practices that represent and trouble the self at the same time' (p. 477). Poststructuralism troubles the discourse of assumed humanist notions of the subject as capable of self-knowledge. From a poststructuralist perspective, representing and troubling the self simultaneously offers this research the inclusion of self into the research.

The role of autoethnography in poststructural theory

From a postmodern perspective, there is no one way to capture experience, rather perspectives can be gathered to analyse perceived notions of reality (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999; Gannon, 2006; MacNaughton, 2005). There is a certain paradoxical nature when considering the role of autoethnography and poststructuralism. It arises based on the assumption that in autoethnographic research the subject can speak for themselves. Gannon (2006) argues that poststructuralism disrupts this presumption, maintaining that in poststructural autoethnography, the writing writes the writer as a complex subject in a world

where knowledge can only exist as tentative and situated. While Foucault did not engage with autoethnographic research per se, I argue that his later work provides a wider discursive context for projects such as mine, which aim to write the self. Foucault traces the personal writing through the classical and early Christian time as a reflexive technology of the self (Gannon, 2006). It can be argued, therefore, that autoethnography is not a particularly new methodology but that in considering the self 'as something to write about, a theme or object of the writing activity....is one of the most ancient Western traditions' (Foucault, 1997, p.233). In Foucault's work, writing, and in particular self-writing, can be viewed as a technology for the production of particular subjects (Gannon, 2006). Foucault (1997) disrupts the discourse of self-writing by tracking an inversion in these technologies of self from classical Greek times when 'knowledge of oneself appeared as the consequence of the care of the self' and modern times when 'knowledge of oneself constitutes the fundamental principle' (p.228). In tracing these two Foucauldian notions of 'care of the self' (*epimeleia heautou*) and to 'know the self' (*gnothi seauton*), writing becomes the subject in the art of living, and not just a self-reflective, philosophical look at oneself, rather an approach to producing particular selves. Foucault's consideration to writing as a *technology of the self* has significant implications for thinking about and using the 'writing the self' approach by poststructural writers. Denzin (2014) argues that in using autoethnographic writing within a poststructural framework, writing tends to revert back to the ancient notion to care for the self while simultaneously engaging in a reflexive way with the past, present and future. Poststructural autoethnography emphasises discontinuities, divisions and inconsistencies (Denzin, 2014). The notions of 'care of the self' and 'know the self' are deeply imbued in this research and so viewing autoethnography from a poststructuralist paradigm offers this research a platform to present a seemingly linear story alongside, as Denzin (2014) refers to as, the complex discursive nature of selves.

Genealogy and autoethnography

While genealogy and autoethnography draw on different theoretical paradigms and traditions, Tamboukou and Ball (2003) identify the meeting points between genealogy and ethnography, and I will argue that the same dictums can be held for genealogy and autoethnography. They argue that both 'genealogy and ethnography introduce scepticism about the universal dogmas of truth, objectivity, and interrogate the supposed interconnections between reason, knowledge progress and freedom' (Tamboukou & Ball, 2003, p. 4). Both genealogy and (auto) ethnography have the potential to disturb the notion of truth, or as Foucault (1975) would describe it as, a 'regime of truth' (p.131). A further intersection between the two is that both focus on the micro-operations, or as Foucault (1979) defined it, the 'micro-physics of power' (p. 26). In analysing the micro-physics of power, genealogy opens a doorway for the possibility of political resistance. The concepts of 'power' and 'resistance' are key themes that continue to emerge and re-emerge over the course of this genealogy. In particular, Chapter 4 explores the interplay between the micro-physics of power; resistance, marketisation, governmentality, and neoliberalism.

As there is no defined structure with genealogy, there are no limitations; Tamboukou and Ball (2003) maintain that the partiality of genealogy and ethnography makes it possible for previously unconsidered connections to occur. I argue that the same consideration can be said of the possibilities of genealogy and autoethnography. As there are no structured frameworks, no fixed boundaries, no rules, by adopting genealogy alongside autoethnography, I believe it has the potential to transgress closed theoretical and methodological systems and can create something new. Genealogy is not concerned with

whom or what of power; rather its main interest is the *how* of power. Tamboukou and Ball (2003) argue that genealogy focuses upon the relations and forces of power connected to discursive practices. This research focuses on how power exists within historical, political and social sites wherein power, truth and knowledge are interrelated and form pedagogy.

Practices of self

After his analyses of power, especially modern pastoral power, a focus on the *subject* began to emanate from Foucault's work. For Foucault, the move towards the subject emerged as a result of his prior analyses of power, rather than any specific concern with the subject per se. Doran (2015) maintains that 'it arose from his mundane observations that contemporary resistances often seemed to be directed against forms of pastoral power' (p.145). The emergence of resistance as the antithesis to power forced Foucault to re-think forms of power and to analyse the subject upon whom power-resistance relations were imposed. Foucault came to the realisation that he needed to analyse both parts of the subject and power relationship; the practices of the self alongside practices of power. In re-thinking power-resistance relations, Foucault's (1998) work began to consider the 'one over whom power is exercised... a person who acts' (p. 220) the practices of self.

Foucault's focus on the practices of the self led to the emergence of a new philosophical anthropology. Demenchonok (2018) maintains that Foucault's later works focus 'on the immanent constitution of the subject and 'practices of the self' as practices of the self-transformation of the subject' (p.221). In his lecture series, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Foucault outlines the practices of self:

Epimeleia heautou is care of oneself, attending to oneself, being concerned about oneself, etcetera. You will no doubt say that in order to study the relations between the subject and truth it is a bit paradoxical and rather artificial to select this notion of *epimeleia heautou*, to which the historiography of philosophy has not attached much importance hitherto. It is somewhat paradoxical and artificial to select this notion when everyone knows, says, and repeats, and has done so for a long time, that the question of the subject (the question of knowledge of the subject, of the subject's knowledge of himself) was originally posed in a very different expression and a very different precept: the famous Delphic prescription of *gnothi seauton* ('know yourself') (Foucault, 2005, pp.2-3).

For Foucault, the *epimeleia heautou*, or 'care of the self' is the foundation for *gnothi seauton*, 'know yourself', which were significant principles outlined in philosophical mantras throughout the Greek, Hellenistic and Roman cultures (Demenchonok, 2018). Moreover, these key principles became fundamental aspects of Foucault's later work; 'the *epimeleia heautou* (the care of the self) is indeed the justificatory framework, ground, and foundation for the imperative 'know yourself'' (2005, p.8). Foucault emphasises the criticality of practices of self, maintaining that 'you must attend to yourself, you must not forget yourself, you must take care of yourself' (2005, p.5).

The embedding of self so deeply in my research is premised on this Foucauldian ideology. My research seeks to explore how power has shaped the genealogy of early years pedagogy in Ireland by embodying both genealogy and autoethnography. This question emerged based on my ontological and epistemological positionality. I did not plan to research this topic; it emerged as my thinking and my knowledge has deepened along my research journey. Besley (2015) argues that the term 'culture of self' implies the need to locate the question of self within a network of social practices and values framed within a historical period. The interplay of self within the social, political, and economic constructs of a particular time-frame is critical as practices and relations change over time and are characterised very differently in different

eras. For Foucault, human nature is continuously evolving and as such, there is no definitive theory that can be applied across all cultures and time. He argues that 'all my analyses are directed against the idea of universal necessities in human existence. They show the arbitrariness of institutions and show which space of freedom we still can enjoy and how changes can still be made' (Foucault, 1988, p. 11). The inclusion of self in this research acknowledges the network of social practices and values of a specific epoch. This research aims to do more than acknowledge social practices and values, it aims to challenge, contest and examine some of the shared understandings of early childhood pedagogy that have emerged over time, including discourses and regimes of truth. The inclusion of self, or varying practices of self (*gnothi seauton*), will be interwoven throughout this analysis.

Regime of truth

In *Archaeology of Knowledge*, MacNaughton (2005) exemplifies this Foucauldian ideology in the field of early childhood studies:

There is a body of thinking and writing about children and childhood that could be found in early childhood textbooks, observations taken by early childhood educators, lectures in university courses for early childhood educators, parent newsletters and early childhood conferences in different societies (p.20).

This body of thinking produces a particular lens through which to view children and their lived experiences. Moreover, it creates a particular regime of truth in relation to early childhood education. Cohen (2008) maintains that the regime of truth for early childhood education provides a lens to understand 'how some discourses operate and network together to reinforce a particular powerful world view' (p.7). This powerful discourse determines the ways we perceive children and childhood. MacNaughton (2005) continues this argument stating, 'the field of early childhood education studies has grown through developing sets of

truths about the normal and desirable way to be a child and an early childhood educator that are sanctioned and systematised by government (and) by professional associations' (pp.29-30). A canon of knowledge on young children and their lives has emerged and is often presented as a shared understanding, a shared consensus - a regime of truth.

The regime of truth in early childhood pedagogy is rooted in centuries of beliefs, tradition, ideology and thinking. A key issue for the development for pedagogy in the early years is that, from its origins, early childhood education wanted and needed a general politics of truth. This research demonstrates how a coming together of a diverse blend of theories from interdisciplinary perspectives were adapted, stretched, and woven together to construct the 'general politics' (Foucault, 1975, p.131) of early childhood pedagogy. Challenging and contesting this regime of truth is no easy feat. Finding a starting point was difficult, however, given the impact of the realisation that I had never questioned Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, I wanted to revisit the pioneers of early childhood education and explore how power shaped their contributions and their sustained influence and legacy over time. I decided to begin my genealogical analysis with the pioneers, however, when I sourced early childhood education history books, I found it difficult to identify which pioneers to select. Whose voices would I privilege in my research? I selected a range of texts that focused on the pioneers and the history of early years education. Taking into consideration my research question and context, the first book I selected to analyse was written from an Irish perspective. There is only one comprehensive book written about the development of early years education from an Irish perspective, *The Development of Infant Education in Ireland, 1838-1948* (O'Connor, 2010). While my research focuses deeply on the development of early years pedagogy in the Irish landscape, the trends and movements in Ireland often mirror international shifts, so I chose American and English publications to acknowledge this. The

second book I selected was *Early Childhood Education Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (Krogh & Slentz, 2001). Both authors are professors at the Western Washington University, and present an American perspective. Finally, I selected *Early Childhood Education History, Philosophy and Experience* (Nutbrown, Clough & Selbie, 2008). This book is authored by professors at the University of Sheffield, Manchester Metropolitan University, and a Lecturer at Plymouth University, representing an English perspective. All three books I chose for analysis are available to early childhood education students at Dublin City University.

I was mindful of the role of the curator when analysing the historical accounts as I wanted to present this data in a careful manner. I mapped the three perspectives together for comparative purposes. One of the advantages of this type of analysis is that it offers a snapshot of all three perspectives simultaneously. While this did prove useful for analysis, I was concerned that pigeon-holing pioneers into boxes could be viewed as diminishing their contributions. While completing the *Analysis of historical texts that feature the Key Pioneers of ECE* (Table 1, pp.33-39), I was also mindful that this approach could be deemed to be quite structuralist. However, as I argued earlier, this research moves within spaces, discourses and paradigms guided by the research question and I deemed the inclusion of this analysis critical to provide a starting point for the genealogy. To avoid making value judgements, I represented in *Table 1* only what was presented in the actual text. The subsequent analysis of the early years regime of truth will be the starting point for my genealogy.

Table 1: Analysis of historical texts that feature the *Key Pioneers* of ECE

Book Pioneer	The Development of Infant Education in Ireland, 1838-1948 (O'Connor, 2010)	Early Childhood Education Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow (Krogh and Slentz, 2001)	Early Childhood Education History, Philosophy and Experience (Nutbrown, Clough & Selbie, 2008)
Socrates (469 BC-399 BC) Athens	Not included	Not included	Teaching through the learner's questions
John Comenius Jan Amos Komensky (1592-1670) Czech Republic Key publication: <i>School of Infancy</i> (1630)	Positioned as one of the great educators of infant education	Pulled early childhood education out of the Middle Ages He realised that young children understand knowledge better if it relates to their own lives. Importance of learning in a concrete way (before abstract)	Father of modern education Education should not be limited to school but is part of life Regardless of social class, all children should receive education Education should be through, natural and enjoyable (not rote)
John Locke (1632-1704) England Key publication: <i>Some Thoughts Concerning Education</i> (1693)	Image of child as <i>tabula rasa</i> (blank slate)	Locke's ideas on early education represented new ways of looking at children. Children should be positively reinforced for good behaviour Education for children of upper/middle class (not lower class)	Not included

<p>Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)</p> <p>Switzerland</p> <p>Key publication: <i>Émile</i> (1762)</p>	<p>Positioned as the pioneer of modern education</p>	<p>An influential force for egalitarianism and progressive father of modern education</p> <p>Teacher as guide only, child as free and good, education should come from all the senses Education for children of upper /middle class (not lower class)</p>	<p>Known for his work on developmental psychology and implications for education</p> <p>Development of <i>Émile</i> in a natural setting</p>
<p>Johann H. Pestalozzi (1746-1827)</p> <p>Switzerland</p> <p>Key publication: <i>How Gertrude Teaches Her Children</i> (1802)</p>	<p>Pioneer of child-centred ideas, children constructing own knowledge, role of nature</p>	<p>Sensitive to the needs of poorer classes, child needs liberty and obedience, Natural education, freedom and sensory learning</p>	<p>Form of instruction in line with nature</p> <p>Children should learn through activity and be free to pursue own interests, observation, whole child and education key to improving social conditions</p>
<p>Robert Owen (1771-1858)</p> <p>Wales</p> <p>Key publication: <i>A New View of Society</i> (1812/1927)</p>	<p>Established a successful infant school at New Lanark, England in 1816</p>	<p>Not included</p>	<p>Limited the working hours of children in the mills (Factory Act, 1819)</p> <p>Strongly opposed corporal punishment in schools and rewarded cleanliness and good conduct</p> <p>Insisted teachers treated pupils well</p>
<p>Friedrick Froebel (1782-1852)</p> <p>Germany</p> <p>Key publication: <i>The Education of Man</i> (1826)</p>	<p>Father of the infant school</p> <p>Importance of play</p>	<p>Established the kinder (children) garten (garden) schools, age appropriate concrete materials need to be developed, gifts and occupations – directed, structured form of play</p>	<p>He trained elementary school teachers</p> <p>He opened the first Kindergarten in 1837</p> <p>He believed to stimulate learning through well directed play activities: gifts (play activities) and occupations (activities)</p>

<p>Richard Lovell Edgeworth (1744-1817) England</p>	<p>Establishment of an elementary school in Edgeworthstown, Ireland</p> <p>Publication: <i>Practical Education</i> (1798)</p>	Not included	Not included
<p>Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849) Ireland</p>	<p>Documenting observations of children's learning</p> <p>Publication: <i>Practical Education</i> (1798)</p>	Not included	Not included
<p>John H. Synge (1788-1845) Ireland</p> <p>Publication: <i>A Biographical Sketch of the Struggles of Pestalozzi to Establish his System</i> (1815)</p>	<p>Established first Pestalozzian elementary school in 1815</p>	Not included	Not included
<p>Samuel Wilderspin (1792-1866) Ireland</p>	<p>Founded the Model Infants' School in Dublin in 1824</p>	Not included	Not included
<p>Eleonore Heerwart (1835-1911) Germany</p>	<p>Introduction of Kindergarten activities into Ireland</p> <p>Publication: <i>Funfzig Jahre im Dienste Froebels</i> (1906)</p>	Not included	Not included
<p>Charles Dickens (1812-1870) England</p>	Not included	Not included	<p>His ideas about education of the poor stem from a view of crime prevention. He became involved in Ragged Schools from 1843 and drew on social issues and the effects of poverty on children through his novels and in his letters.</p>

<p>Charlotte Mason (1842-1923)</p> <p>Northern Ireland</p>	Not included	Not included	<p>Promoted education for girls and for women</p> <p>Promoted education in home</p> <p>Articles on education became known as a child's Bill of Rights</p>
<p>Sigmund Freud (1856-1936)</p> <p>Czech Republic Key publication: <i>The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud</i>, 24 vols (1953-64)</p>	Not included	Not included	<p>Father of psychoanalysis</p> <p>Theory on infantile sexuality (Oedipus complex) can interpret the behaviour of young children</p>
<p>Rachel McMillan (1859-1917)</p> <p>Margaret McMillan (1860-1931)</p> <p>England</p> <p>Key publications: <i>Child Labour and the Half Time System</i> (1896) <i>Early Childhood</i> (1900) <i>The Nursery School</i> (1919)</p>	Not included	Not included	<p>Political campaigners and health workers, they developed nursey provision for children of poor families as a means of promoting healthier lives.</p> <p>1906: Schools Meals Act hungry children could not learn</p> <p>1908: McMillan sisters opened first school clinic and a night camp where children living in slums could wash and wear clean clothes.</p> <p>1914: Open Air Nursery School</p>
<p>John Dewey (1859-1952)</p> <p>United States</p> <p>Key publication: <i>Experience and Education</i> (1897)</p>	Acknowledged the basic child centred Froebelian focus but believed that the child learned most from practical involvement with other children	<p>Responsible for the demise of Froebel's kindergarten movement</p> <p>Children could play with Froebel's blocks freely</p> <p>Democratic classrooms</p>	<p>Progressive educator</p> <p>Focus on child centred pedagogy and democracy</p> <p>Role of teacher was to ensure that children's projects were realisable and support where needed</p>

<p>Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)</p> <p>Austria</p> <p>Key publication: <i>The Study of Man</i> (1947)</p>	Not included	Not included	<p>Education as an art – creative, progressive, social and individual.</p> <p>Teaching and learning mean taking ones place in world.</p> <p>Steiner-Waldorf Kindergartens (natural materials)</p>
<p>Maria Montessori (1870-1952)</p> <p>Italy</p> <p>Key publications: <i>Dr Montessori's Own Handbook</i> (1914) <i>The Absorbent Mind</i> (1964) <i>The Montessori Method</i> (1964)</p>	A number of references made but no substantial commentary	<p>Wanted to help those who were deemed “idiot” children</p> <p>Role of structured play with materials, real tools for real work</p>	<p>Medical doctor who worked with children with learning difficulties.</p> <p>Montessori Method based on her philosophy: multi-age grouping, prepared environment, observation, work centres, teaching method, daily schedule, assessment, learning styles.</p> <p>Human tendencies: to act, explore, to create through repetition, concentration and imagination.</p>
<p>Timothy Corcoran (1872-1943)</p> <p>Ireland</p>	Helped to form the modern Irish School system	Not included	Not included
<p>Arnold Gesell (1880-1961)</p> <p>America</p>	Not included	<p>Image of child was similar to that of a tree, seeds of adulthood are present from birth</p> <p>Thinking was based on the idea of unfolding (maturation). He presented ages and stages to aspects of growth</p>	Not included

<p>Alexander Sutherland (A.S.) Neill (1883 - 1973)</p> <p>Scotland</p>	<p>Not included</p>	<p>Not included</p>	<p>Progressive educator, founder of Summerhill School.</p> <p>Freedom of the child and resistance of oppressive routines and regimes.</p>
<p>Susan Isaacs (1885-1948)</p> <p>England</p> <p>Key publications: <i>Intellectual Growth in Young Children</i> (1930) <i>Social Development of Young Children</i> (1933)</p>	<p>Progressive educator</p> <p>Focus on informal activities, social development and individual difference</p> <p>Malting House</p>	<p>Not included</p>	<p>Observed young children's behaviour</p> <p>Malting House had an experimental philosophy with no fixed curriculum, emphasis on individual development and joy in discovery.</p>
<p>Louis Christian Schiller (1895-1976)</p> <p>England</p>	<p>Not included</p>	<p>Not included</p>	<p>Promoted child-centred teaching</p> <p>Advocate for education and the arts in the early years</p>
<p>Jean Piaget (1896-1980)</p> <p>Switzerland</p> <p>Key Publication: <i>The Psychology of the Child</i> (1969)</p>	<p>Not included</p>	<p>Revolutionary genius</p> <p>Observed and interviewed children about cognitive development</p> <p>Origins of human knowledge: genetic epistemology</p> <p>Constructivism</p> <p>Early development: maturation. Physical experience, transmission and equilibration (assimilation and accommodation)</p>	<p>Cognitive stages of development in children</p> <p>Learners assimilate and accommodate new knowledge</p> <p>Observed and analysed children's egocentric behaviour</p> <p>Learning as a process of moving through different stages:</p> <p>Sensory motor stage: 0-2 Preoperational stage: 2-7 Concrete operational: 7-12 Formal Operational: 12-adult</p>

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) Russia Publication: <i>Mind in Society</i> (1980) <i>Thought and Language</i> (1934/1962)	Not included	Sociocultural approach Importance of social interaction Importance of language in development Zone of Proximal Development & Scaffolding	Learning as a social activity Young children learning through interaction with other children and adults Zone of Proximal Development
Donald Woods Winnicott (1918-1971) England	Not included	Not included	Developed concepts such as 'holding environment', 'transitional object' and 'good enough mother' Published extensively on parent-child relationships
Erik Erikson (1902-1994) Germany	Not included	Not included	Development took place in stages (extended Freud's 5 stages to 8) Identity became stronger over time
Carl Rogers (1902-1987) America	Not included	Not included	Self-actualisation of the human Advocated facilitated learning Relationships are key
Burrhus Frederic (B.F.) Skinner (1904-1990) America	Not included	Not included	Radical behaviourism which involved training people using a stimulus response technique Breaking of behaviour into small learning steps
Robin Tanner (1904-1988) England	Not included	Not included	Teachers and children should study natural things Arts and craft, music and poetry should be central

Fracture, discontinuity and uncertainty

From a historical perspective, it is clear from Table 1 that the body of knowledge that exists within the canon of early childhood education is very often claimed or assumed. Moreover, from an Irish perspective, it is rarely critically contested as to its contemporary relevance or its impact on how young children and their educators are positioned. The disparity within the table reflects the lack of agreement and consensus within early childhood education. This disparity relates not only to the identities of the pioneers themselves, but also to their differing perspectives, philosophies and ideologies. Rather than a shared or collective understanding of early years pedagogy and all that it entails, what exists is a fractured story of the past and how this past continues to shape the uncertain future of early years pedagogy in Ireland to the present day.

My first observation of the analysis was the preferential inclusion of some of the so-called pioneers over others. In total, 32 pioneers are identified and discussed in the three texts, although this list is by no means exhaustive. It is interesting to note that of the 32, 25 are male and seven are female. In reading about the lives and works of all 32, I was struck by the range of backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, and professions that they represented. For instance, I was curious to learn the number of pioneers who had difficult, arduous childhoods (e.g. Froebel, Pestalozzi, Rousseau, Piaget, Isaacs), or how they had to overcome great adversity to achieve success (e.g. the McMillan sisters, Montessori, Vygotsky). I wondered if their challenging and often unhappy upbringings inspired their interest and contributions to the early years of childhood and some to focus specifically on pedagogy. Of the 32 pioneers, only six are included in all three texts, namely Komensky, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Dewey, and Montessori. I questioned if this represents a shared consensus within early childhood

education or merely a coincidence? This preferential inclusion of some pioneers, to the exclusion of others, leads to a certain theoretical hierarchy within early childhood education. This privileging of some pioneers over others leads me to question if each particular epoch takes from the past what it needs to order the present. The need for early childhood education to utilise knowledge to order the present reminds me of Foucault's (1966) opening observations in *The Order of Things*:

What if empirical knowledge, at a given time and in a given culture, did possess a well-defined regularity? If the very possibility of recording facts, of allowing oneself to be convinced by them, if even this was not at the mercy of chance? If errors (and truths), the practice of old beliefs, including not only genuine discoveries, but also the most naïve notions, obeyed at a given moment, the laws of a certain code of knowledge? If, in short, the history of non-formal knowledge had itself a system?
(ix-x)

As a system, early childhood education has recorded historical facts and has subsequently allowed itself to be convinced by them, even though Table 1 illustrates that this is at least serendipitous. This non-formal knowledge has developed a system of early childhood education and represents Western roots and traditions.

The Western tradition of early childhood education is captured in Table 1 by the American and English perspective. From an American perspective, only one pioneer (of American nationality) is included that is not presented in any other, namely Gesell. Aside from the six shared pioneers, with the exception of Locke, Piaget, and Vygotsky, the American position has little regard for any of the other European pioneers. Aside from a brief and somewhat abridged version of Montessori's contribution to the field, this American perspective of pioneers does not include any women. Not only is this antiquated, it also ignores the significant contribution that female pioneers have made to the development of early

childhood education. It seems to me that we may have lost sight of the cultural-historical contexts within which these pioneers were writing. From a genealogical position, it is interesting to note the particular challenges that each pioneer addressed in particular eras. For instance, the McMillian sisters were political campaigners and health workers, so they developed nursery provision for poorer families to promote healthier lives (Nutbrown, Clough and Selbie, 2008). The specific cultural-historical context, or as Foucault would refer to as *épistème*, led the McMillian sisters to lead the School Meals Act in 1906, closely followed by the school clinic and the open-air nursery. The McMillian sisters, like all the pioneers, were responding to the cultural, political climate of a particular era, yet this is rarely examined or even acknowledged in contemporary times. In terms of genealogy, by tracing the contributions of the pioneers while recognising their social, cultural and political contexts, it allows me to question their continued influence within contemporary contexts and discourses. The concept of *épistème* will be returned to later, but it seems to me that the commitment to the pioneers does not acknowledge the *épistème* in which those ideas were generated, yet fabricates coherence.

From an English perspective, 13 pioneers were included who were not presented in any other texts (eight of whom were English). I challenge the inclusion of many of these *pioneers*, for instance; while Charles Dickens is a well renowned novelist, I struggle to see how he can be referred to as 'a pioneer for early childhood education'. I argue that the same can be said for, Freud, Neill, Erikson, Rogers, Skinner and Tanner. While their works contribute to the body of knowledge on a number of disciplines, including psychology, psychotherapy, education, and the arts, I dispute that they can be referred to as early childhood education pioneers, as Nutbrown, Clough and Selbie (2008) suggest. For instance, in relation to B.F. Skinner, the

authors note that his key contribution to early childhood education is that 'his key ideas have been applied to programmes for bringing up children, training animals and classroom control' (Nutbrown, Clough & Selbie, 2008, p. 67). The authors recognise that Skinner's work was controversial, and although I recognise that some of his theories on behaviourism have been influential in education, I question their inclusion of him as a pioneer of early childhood education. Rather, it is more the case of looking at what has been taken from the so-called pioneers and deconstructing how their thinking has been welded into particular views of early childhood education at particular times. Alongside a contestation of those that are included in Table 1, it is also critical to question who has been excluded from the table and to delineate how this may have impacted on the development of early childhood education. Nutbrown, Clough and Selbie (2008), for example, fail to recognise a fellow Englishman, John Locke, whose ideas on early childhood education 'represented new ways of looking at children and formed the basis for much of what we think and do today' (Krogh and Slentz, 2001, p.48). The disparity of disciplines and theories amongst the pioneers from Western traditions reflects the fracture, discontinuity and uncertainty within early childhood education. A further interesting note on the Western analysis is that none of the texts reflect any Eastern ideology or thinking, thereby laying the foundations for the dominant Euro-American perspective that has subsequently influenced early childhood education systems globally.

From an Irish perspective, there are six pioneers that are not included in any other representation (four of Irish origins and two Irish natives). The Irish historical analysis neglected all the developmental psychologists, although the analysis includes discussion of a contemporary epoch (1948). While this book was published in 2010, it does not present the foundations to the development of the 1971 curriculum nor the formulation of the *Revised*

Primary School Curriculum (Gol, 1999a) or *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (NCCA, 2009). While there are a number of other historical authors who present the development of Irish education (e.g. Coolahan, 1972, 1981, 1995; Coolahan, McGuinness, Drudy and Hyland, 2017; Coolahan and O'Donovan, 2009; Hegarty & Kelly, 2017; Kelly, 2011; Walsh, 2005, 2007, 2016, amongst others), this analysis not been comprehensively advanced from an early years perspective past 1948. The genealogy of this will be presented in Chapter 4.

In spite of this debate about who is considered to be a 'pioneer', early childhood education, as a collective body, used the pioneers as a platform to develop a semblance of consensus on theory and practice. This *shared understanding* is problematic, as it represents the eclectic range of perspectives, professions and disciplines that the pioneers represent. This analysis highlights, for instance, how the pioneers held different images of the child, which were shaped by the societal norms and understandings during each particular *épistème*. As such, this advice is particular to that period and should not be part of the current shared understanding without contestation. This research argues that not only is there no consensus within early childhood education, there is an actual dissensus in terms of how children are viewed and how they learn and develop. It is transparent from a historical lens that the assumed coherence of this body of understanding on early childhood education is a fabrication. Rather, what does exist is a fractured, uncertain canon of knowledge that is open to deconstruction, reimagining and reinterpretation.

Privileging the past

The body of knowledge generated by Table 1 highlights how pedagogy is a somewhat neglected aspect of the work of the pioneers. Many of these so-called pioneers represented a diverse range of professions, from doctors to health workers and from zoologists to psychologists, yet they are perceived as pioneers of early childhood education; many specifically as pioneers of pedagogy. For those that did discuss pedagogy, perspectives varied greatly, with particular areas of pedagogy in dispute, for instance, the role of adult involvement in young children's learning and development. In terms of my own *gnothi seauton* (know yourself) as an early years teacher in a primary school and as a Lecturer of Early Childhood Education, I am deeply interested in pedagogy and the ways in which young children learn and develop. Moreover, pedagogy has come to assume a more central role in light of increasing government policy interventions, which will be discussed at both national and international levels in further detail in Chapter 4.

This research focuses on the genealogy of early years pedagogy and presents the somewhat absent perspective from Table 1. While at first glance, Table 1 may present a general consensus of the early childhood pioneers, this analysis illustrates how this is a disparate body of knowledge. Each historical perspective presents one interpretation of history, an interpretation that is bound by social, political, economic and cultural contexts which will be critiqued further in Chapter 2. A significant shift in the history of early childhood education is that the early 20th century turned to developmental psychologists in this time of fracture, discontinuity and uncertainty to provide structure, order and stability. Furthermore, the scientific rationale and structures offered by developmental psychology melded with the shift towards shared responsibilities between the family and the state for the upbringing of

children. A key turning point in the history of early childhood education was that developmental psychology became its theoretical foundation. Surprisingly, from the analysis above, there is one notable absence, Jerome Bruner (1915-2016). His contribution to the genealogy of pedagogy, along with the other developmental psychologists, will be analysed in Chapter 3.

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault (1966) advises that he wishes to present, side by side, a number of elements, the knowledge of living beings; the knowledge of the laws of language and the knowledge of economic facts and to relate these to the philosophical discourse that was contemporary during that time period. In a similar way, I aim to present the knowledge of pioneers and knowledge of the developmental psychologists and contemporary practice and policy in Ireland and relate this to the philosophical discourse of each era within the Irish early childhood education context. This analysis provides a starting point for my research journey as I am choosing to select the pioneers based on my own *gnothi seauton* and experiences of early childhood education alongside those that have developed early years pedagogy from an Irish perspective. However, this analysis goes beyond a mere starting point and portrays a certain privileging of the past. From an Irish perspective, with regards to early years pedagogy, we have tended to focus on the past while dis-servicing the present and failing to look to the future. This research contests theory and ideology that have shaped pedagogy, both from the past and the present, to reimagine early years pedagogy for the future. Foucault (1971/1984) suggests that knowledge is not made for understanding but for cutting. Like the curator in the museum, I will thus cut this knowledge carefully to present a new story about early years pedagogy.

Conclusion

Chapter 1 presents a discursive account of the key tenets framing this research. This chapter justifies the movement of this research within and between paradigms and discusses how the design of the research is framed by Foucauldian concepts. The aim of this research is not to present a Foucauldian analysis of early years pedagogy per se; rather, the purpose is to use a Foucauldian lens to demonstrate how power, in all its sources and forms, has produced early years pedagogy within the Irish context. Foucault (1966) resists the 'inaccurate label' (p.xiv) that is often associated with him and his work. In a similar vein, I too resist to label this research as a Foucauldian study; rather, this research adopts Foucauldian concepts, ideology and thinking to analyse the research question. Chapter 1 outlines the interplay of the Foucauldian interpretations of genealogy and practices of self and how these concepts frame the research. This chapter also conceptualises the Foucauldian notion of regimes of truth and how this led to a certain privileging of the past, in particular, the influence of the so-called early childhood pioneers. By problematising pedagogy and contesting the positioning of the pioneers, this chapter paves the pathway for a new genealogy and reconceptualisation of early years pedagogy and constructions of children, vis-à-vis the mechanism of power. The conceptual framework and design of this study emerged from the research question; How has power shaped the genealogy of early childhood pedagogy from an Irish perspective? As Foucault (1971/1984) reminds us, knowledge is made for cutting (p.88), and the following chapters continue to cut knowledge to retell a new story of early years pedagogy from an Irish perspective.

Chapter 2

Foucault?...too complex...don't use him!

Genealogy as a form of analysis seeks to show the emergence and descent of a particular concept and delineate how these processes continue to shape the present (as described on p.11). Chapter 2 presents the genealogy of early childhood pedagogy in the 18th and 19th centuries in Ireland vis-à-vis the mechanisms of power. While reflecting on my research question 'How has power shaped the genealogy of early childhood pedagogy from an Irish perspective?' I realise that although I have given due consideration to the concepts of pedagogy (pp.7-10) and genealogy (pp.10-12), I also need to unpack the complexities of power in Foucauldian terms. Gkoutzioulis (2018) cautions against misappropriating Foucault's notions of power, arguing; 'the complexities of his (Foucault's) thought, describing how he developed his notion(s) of power and their effects' (p.88) need to be revealed. The unveiling of the interplay of power, pedagogy and practices of self is presented in the discursive genealogy of this chapter.

While Chapter 1 outlines the significance of both practices of self within the research, this chapter begins with a series of interludes to position the research and to outline my epistemological and ontological assumptions. The opening sequence of this chapter outlines my practices of self as it begins with my own early childhood memories, and to a certain degree, my genealogy. This section describes how my earliest ideas about pedagogy were formed based on my own childhood experiences. I brought many of these experiences forward to my own teaching career when I worked with young children and these formative experiences helped to shape my understanding of pedagogy. These opening interludes also explore the challenges I faced when grappling with issues of power within the classroom and

power vis-à-vis the development of pedagogy. These interludes focus on my understanding of the term 'pedagogy' and the conceptualisation of power in Foucauldian terms. Both pedagogy and issues of power are key components of my research question and the opening part of this chapter deconstructs both concepts and frames them in terms of the research. The latter part of Chapter 2 analyses the connection between power, knowledge and truth and presents the genealogy of the so-called pioneers from the Irish perspective (as presented in Table 1 pp.33-39). This chapter explores how power within political, economic, religious and societal movements shaped the genealogy of early years pedagogy. It also identifies the influence of European counterparts on the development of pedagogy within the Irish context. This chapter also argues that young Irish children were imagined as the 'Romantic Child' in the late 18th and 19th centuries. It begins, however, with my own practices of self, my *gnothi seauton*.

Interlude: Gnothi seauton

Growing up in the rural terrain of the Irish countryside certainly had its advantages. As a young child, I loved engaging in outdoor play and adventure and I have very fond memories of making mud pies, creating dens and building huts in the woodlands near my home. While outdoors, I enjoyed engaging in role play and I have vivid memories of pretending to be the café owner; the mother and the school teacher. One of my earliest memories is of me 'teaching' my sister and brother, I remember making them sit on two buckets outside and I had a twig (chalk) in my hand, teaching them the days of the week. From that day on, I knew I wanted to become a teacher. What I didn't realise then was the impact of these formative early years experiences, not only did they shape my childhood but also my teacher identity.

Very early on in my teaching career, I realised I particularly enjoyed teaching young children. Traditionally in Ireland, children start school when they are four years of age. A class teacher generally has 30 young children in their class with no other adult support. To cater for this, I created a rota of structured play activities, wherein children played in small groups and changed activities every day. I was very confident in my pedagogy and when other teachers in my school favoured more formal, didactic teaching approaches, I was happy in the knowledge that I had a child-centred approach to my teaching. One day while playing with a small group of children in my class, a young boy, Daniel, asked me “Why do I have to play in the sand tray? I don’t like it here!” I was unable to answer him. I had no justification for making him play with something he really didn’t enjoy (when I talked to him about this, he said he didn’t like the feel of sand and that it got stuck under his fingernails). This single comment altered my thinking. I had been so confident in my pedagogy; I hadn’t considered consulting the children in my practice. To develop my pedagogy further, I decided to complete a Masters in Education, specialising in early childhood education. I engaged in research that focused on children’s perspectives of play. The inclusion of children’s views into my classroom provision deeply enhanced my pedagogy and I reflected on the strengths and challenges of this (Dunphy & Farrell, 2011). The timing of this research coincided with the introduction of ‘Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework’ (NCCA, 2009) and I collaborated with the NCCA to develop a number of podcasts and resources to support other teachers in the inclusion of a play pedagogy in an early years classroom.

Having taught in an early years classroom for almost a decade, I moved to a lecturing position where I was responsible for the planning, delivery and assessment of early childhood education modules at undergraduate and postgraduate initial teacher education

programmes. While planning these courses, alongside this research, I began to question; whose theories did I value and implement, and, more importantly, why? As I considered this, an uncomfortable shift developed within me, as I realised that I had never deeply reflected on early years pedagogy. I merely planned for learning experiences that others deemed to be important and valuable. For instance, I followed the early years curriculum and theories relating to pedagogy closely, without considering how and when they were developed and the impact that this might have on the children. I failed to challenge how the body of knowledge regarding early years pedagogy was created.

Interlude: Foucault?...too complex...don't use him!

As an undergraduate and postgraduate student of early childhood education, I had never previously encountered Foucault's works or engaged with Foucauldian thinking. This is not too surprising as there are very few early years texts that discuss 'épistèmes', 'archaeology of knowledge', or indeed 'sovereign and disciplinary power'. This may be because these ideas are considered to be too radical or complex, or perhaps, the potential for Foucauldian thinking can often be underutilised in early childhood education. On my first day of the EdD programme, I attended a guest lecture by Professor Donald Gillies. I was enthused at the prospect of my first lecture and eagerly awaited my journey on the programme to begin. I listened attentively to the lecture, trying to deconstruct some of the theory and relate it to my life as an early years lecturer. After the lecture many people commented on how clearly and logically the content was presented and how it had illuminated Foucauldian thinking in a coherent way. Feeling a little inadequate and somewhat lost, I recorded one observation in my shiny new reflective journal:

'Foucault?...too complex...don't use him!' (Reflective Journal, 18/10/13).

Although my first encounter with Foucault's work was not a positive one, throughout my engagement in the doctoral programme, Foucauldian ideology and thinking kept emerging and re-emerging. I included tokenistic comments every so often in my papers, merely dipping my toe in the Foucauldian pool of knowledge. While attempting to deconstruct Foucault's (1979) 'Discipline and Punish', a graphic, violent depiction of a torture scene resonated with me. In failing to comprehend how this scene might have significance in my particular field of inquiry, I closed the book and recorded in my journal:

'Ask Tommy (one of the librarians who works in my university) if he has Foucault for beginners!' (Reflective Journal, 10/7/15).

He did, and so began the next stage of my journey. Simultaneously, I was crafting my proposed research plan and I could sense an uncomfortable shift within me. Suddenly my original idea for my research, to elicit young children's voices, seemed inappropriate. I started to consider: Who am I to 'give' a voice to young children? Do young children not possess this already? (pp.4-5). It occurred to me that as I was engaging in Foucauldian ideas, they were shaping my own thinking. In engaging in dialogue with my supervisor about some of these struggles, she advised me to go back into a classroom and, in light of my new thinking, make some observations as these reflections may guide my research.

Interlude: Power is everywhere

I visited a number of classrooms over the following weeks. I decided to observe the classrooms both with and without the children. At first glance, I thought that there seemed to be little difference in the few short years since I had left teaching. The space was clean, bright and colourful. The walls displayed samples of children's drawings and mark making. On closer observation, I realised that although physically the classroom seemed the same, for me it

wasn't anymore. I had changed. Why were the tables positioned in such a way? Why were the children's names displayed on the back of their chairs? Could the children not choose to sit wherever they wanted? Coat hooks, pencils, stationery...everything was labelled. All of these strategies I had employed myself to organise the classroom and to ensure that each child had a 'space' within the room, somewhere to store their lunches and stationery; hang their coat and so on. In creating what I thought was an organised classroom space, it suddenly appeared to me as overly structured and controlled.

I was shocked by my reaction to the classroom. Was I not the competent teacher that I thought I was? Had I imposed my ideas about 'order' on the children? And is this how I encourage my student teachers to prepare and plan for an early years classroom? And with that thought the bell rang...

When the children came into the classroom my anxiousness deepened. I observed the teacher organising the children into spaces, the types of strategies that I utilised myself. Children sitting in circles; at desks; walking in straight lines. Children having to raise their hand if they wished to speak, to drink, or go to the bathroom.

In that moment, everything changed. Everything I observed, everything I noted seemed infused with and by power. Power illuminated the physical classroom space and all the interactions that took place within it. I simply recorded in my journal:

'Power is everywhere!' (Reflective Journal, 20/11/15)

It occurred to me that this reflection echoed Foucauldian thinking. On another visit to a classroom, where my primary role was to observe a student teacher, I noted the power of language. The student teacher is a conscientious, diligent student. When speaking with him

after I had observed a lesson he had taught, he asked me 'How can I control the children better?' I was taken aback by the language he was using and how it too was also defined by power. After the visit, I waited outside the Principal's (head teacher) door to thank him for hosting the student teacher. As I was waiting for him to return to the office, a member of staff asked me 'Are you looking for the Master?' It occurred to me that power and power dynamics infuse all interactions within a school setting, not only between adults and children, but also amongst adults and children themselves. That evening I recorded in my journal:

'Power fills a classroom space; it transcends both the physical and the metaphysical. It is embedded within the classroom, often subliminally. Power occupies space, time, language, actions and interactions. Its place within an early years classroom is often largely hidden and unrecognised' (Reflective Journal, 4/12/15).

The purpose of sharing this narrative journey is to not only illuminate my ontological perspective, but also to position my research. Foucault (1979) referred to the layers of power that exist within an institution as the 'micro-physics of power' (p. 26) arguing that power is permeating at the micro level all the time. Not only does power permeate at the micro level, it also exists at the macro level and in analysing both, I aim to interpret how power has shaped the genealogy of early childhood pedagogy in Ireland.

Interlude: Discipline and Punish

In the opening sequence of 'Discipline and Punish', Foucault (1979) depicts a violent torture scene from 1757, wherein a prisoner was condemned to death for committing regicide. The scene is graphic, brutal and difficult to read. The scene describes how the prisoner is quartered by four horses wherein each limb of the prisoner is attached to the four horses. As the horses were unable to quarter him, two more horses were added to complete the task. They too failed to kill the prisoner and the executioner had to start the process by cutting the body at the

thighs and armpits so that the horses could remove the limbs. On my first reading of this scene, I was horrified by the violent depiction of torture. I also failed to see how the concepts of torture, discipline, punishment and prisons could relate to education and particularly early childhood education so I closed the book and noted in my journal:

'Discipline and Punish: The birth of the prison...very violent...this text does not relate to early childhood education in any way!' (Reflective Journal, 30/11/15).

Almost a year later, while attempting to comprehend complex Foucauldian thinking such as archaeology and genealogy, I decided to read the book again. My next effort at reading Discipline and Punish (Foucault, 1979) was slightly more successful (in that I was able to move beyond the first chapter). Moving beyond the introductory scene, Foucault compares the rules of prison life in 1830s with the torture that prisoners had previously faced. He outlines a prisoner's day according to blocks of time. Time allocated to sleep, work, eat and so on. Less than a century later, Foucault argues that the treatment of prisoners is so radically different. It has moved from a public execution to a timetable (p.7). There are many significant changes alluded to, but Foucault focuses his attention on the abolishment of torture as a public spectacle. The punishment becomes a hidden part of the punitive process and it is the certainty of being punished, rather than the spectacle of public punishment, which must discourage crime. Foucault (1979) argues that within a few short decades the system had changed 'the disappearance of the tortured, dismembered, amputated body, symbolically branded on face or shoulder, exposed alive or dead to public view. The body as the major target of penal repression disappeared' (p. 8). I noted in my journal:

'For Foucault, the purpose of the book is to present the history of the prison in terms of the present. For me, this book is the production of a new history (on prisons) or genealogies. In troubling the discourse on prisons, Foucault is presenting, a new understanding, a new genealogy, a new history. By applying the same analysis to early childhood pedagogy, I too will be able to create a new knowledge' (Reflective Journal, 16/11/16).

My experiences with *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1979) deepened my understanding of genealogy. Lemeke (2002) argues that the failure of the prison system produced delinquency as an unintended effect. The institutionalisation of the prison in the 19th century had an unforeseen effect, as from about the 1830s onward, there was an immediate re-utilisation of this effect and the delinquent milieu came to be re-utilised for diverse political and economic ends (Lemeke, 2002). In his genealogy of the prison, Foucault considers the political, social and cultural influences on the prison system. I cannot separate the genealogy of early childhood pedagogy in Ireland from the social, political, religious and economic constructs of that particular *épistème*. Ball (2013) maintains that genealogies are histories of things that are supposed to have no history, in particular, genealogy focuses on the histories of modalities of power. Ball (2013) extends his argument further, maintaining that genealogy has the power to reject the philosophical and epistemological foundation upon which Western society was formed as it seeks to create a new history. In this guise, genealogy can be interpreted as a somewhat dangerous, threatening activity, as it has the potential to shake the pillars upon which Western thinking and ideology was constructed (Ball, 2013). From an Irish perspective, the history of early childhood pedagogy has remained a largely uncontested, unchallenged series of events. The commitment to child-centred approaches denied the role of adults other than as 'facilitators' of learning. As such, I argue, the history of early childhood pedagogy within the Irish context can often be presented as what Ball (2013) refers to as the 'optics of truth' (p.101). My research challenges this optics of truth by analysing the genealogy of how power, both at a micro and macro level, has shaped this genealogy. This chapter deconstructs the Foucauldian conceptualisation of power, in varying sources and forms, and unravels how power has shaped pedagogy.

Power

In interpreting power, I previously perceived power as something that was beyond my control. For instance, structures such as classroom spaces and sizes were imposed on me from the outside, by governmental, hierarchical or societal structures. Viewing power in this way presupposes that power is not within an individual's control; it is something that is imposed on individuals by external forces. This interpretation of power assumes the position that power is produced and controlled by outsiders, by societal structures and is largely out of an individual's control. However, Lenz-Taguchi (2010) argues that this thinking needs to be transposed, maintaining that rather than viewing power as being 'owned' by those in hierarchical positions in society, power is constructed collectively through discursive practices and meaning-making; 'Power is produced and performed by all of us –collectively- in every little thing we do' (Lenz-Taguchi, 2010, p.25). Rather than viewing power as a peripheral force, power is an intrinsic, internal part of each individual.

Power as repressive or productive?

If I accept this notion that power is a constant, ever-present force that is produced and exercised by each individual, power must, therefore, have the potential to dominate, dictate, influence and control. Quite often these are perceived to be negative and restrictive traits, however, these qualities also have the potential to be productive, if viewed in a different light.

When speaking about repressive power, Foucault (1975) comments:

In defining the effects of power as repression, one adopts a purely juridical conception of such power, one identifies power with a law that says no; power is taken, above all, as carrying the force of a prohibition. Now, I believe that this is wholly negative, narrow, skeletal conception of power, one that has been curiously widespread. If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say so, so you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on

us as a force that says no; it also traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse (p.120).

In essence, power has the potential to be productive, to incite discourse or knowledge or to develop new thinking. Foucault continues by offering advice on how to negotiate power: 'do not concentrate the study of the punitive mechanisms on their 'repressive' effects alone, on their 'punishment' aspects alone, but situate them in a whole series of their possible positive effects, even if these seem marginal at first.' (p.123). This genealogy positions power with a similar lens, that power has the potential to be both repressive and productive. When power is perceived as a dominant force, it can be restrictive, confining and negative. When viewed in this limited light, power can be misconstrued as having only a negative impact. When viewed in totality, power can have a positive influence and has the potential to produce discourse, create knowledge and enable new thinking.

From a post-modern perspective, Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (1999) argue that power has become far more diverse and pervasive. They maintain that 'power is exercised not only by the sovereign but by many others...everyone is not only affected by power, but also to some extent exercises it; we are governed, but also govern ourselves and may govern others' (1999, p.29).

This argument highlights how sovereign power is often distinct, visible, and easy to detect. Foucault was concerned not only with sovereign power, but also disciplinary power. Foucault (1979) maintains that 'discipline makes individuals; it is the specific technique of power that regards individuals both as objects and instruments of its exercise' (p.170). In other words, disciplinary power often achieves its effects by the subject embodying power and in doing so self-governing.

Interlude: Disciplinary power in modern Irish society

While driving along the motorway one day, I was thinking about the distinction between sovereign and disciplinary power. I noticed an inoperative speed camera along the road. It is common practice in Ireland for gardaí (police) to install defunct cameras on motorways to monitor motorists' speed. The majority of these cameras are not functioning normally, but in installing the cameras, the gardaí are demonstrating their disciplinary power over motorists and motorists tend to slow down. In doing so, the motorists are governing themselves, rather than being governed by the gardaí. Whether the speed cameras are functioning (or not) is irrelevant. What is relevant is that the presence of the camera (the object) affects the behaviour of motorists (the subjects).

Not only does this type of disciplinary power echo Bentham's conceptualisation of the panopticon in the late 18th-century, it highlights how dangerous disciplinary power is, precisely because it is difficult to identify. Unlike sovereign power, which is obvious and visible, disciplinary power is often hidden and invisible. This realisation brought issues such as governmentality, self-governing, and an awareness of disciplinary power to the fore. As I aim to trace the genealogy of early years pedagogy, it is critical to use these lenses to critique it. In a similar way to the inoperative cameras on Irish motorways, early years teachers have come to govern themselves as a result of government intervention, production of policy frameworks, and increased guidance and corresponding inspections for the sector. These issues will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 4.

Interlude: Las Meninas

When interrogating the Foucauldian conceptualisations of sovereign and disciplinary power, I was struck by the opening sequence of 'The Order of Things' (Foucault, 1966). It depicts a

lengthy discussion of Diego Velázquez's painting Las Meninas (The Maids of Honour), in 1656, and its complex composition (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: *Las Meninas* (The Maids of Honour) by Diego Velázquez



The painting raises questions about existence and illusion and it creates an uncertain relationship between the viewer and the figures on the canvas. On first viewing of the painting, I was unsure whether I was a character in the painting, the painter himself, or merely a

spectator. This was partly due to the structure of the painting and in particular the position of the mirror. The mirror depicts the reflection of the King and Queen of Spain (Philip IV and Mariana) and at first glance they appear to be standing on the viewer's side of the picture facing the central characters in the scene. The central character of the painting is of their young daughter, Margaret Theresa, but even though the King and Queen are only viewed as a reflection in the mirror, they are positioned centrally in the painting, both in terms of social standing and in composition. When viewing the painting, I am unsure whether the ruling couple is standing next to me viewing the scene, or if I am interpreting the scene through their eyes.

The analysis of this painting highlights for me the effects of illusionary and real power. At first glance, the central character of the young girl appears to be the focal point. However, on closer inspection of the painting, this illusion is shattered and it is in fact the ruling couple who take the central place. Not only does the painting illustrate what is real and what is illusionary, it also represents for me the complex nature of power. The picture depicts many layers of power and whether the ruling couple or their young daughter are in a position of power remains unclear. The painting can also be interpreted as an analogy for what Foucault described as sovereign and disciplinary power. Sovereign power is often visible and easy to identify; in the case of the painting, the young girl holding court in the centre of the picture represents sovereign power. Disciplinary power, on the other hand, is subtler and can be difficult to detect. On first viewing of this painting, it would be easy to miss the influential couple's reflection in the mirror. They represent disciplinary power, which can be more difficult to recognise, but which is just as significant. I argue that both the ruling couple and the daughter are both governed by and exercise power. As such, the power dynamics within this

painting echo Foucauldian thinking and demonstrate the layering, or as Foucault (1979) describes it, as the 'micro-physics of power' (p. 26). Foucault (1979) describes the micro-physics of power as power being exercised, rather than being possessed. 'Power is not exercised simply as an obligation or a prohibition on those who 'do not have it'; it invests them, is transmitted by them and through them; it exerts pressure upon them, just as they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them' (Foucault, 1979, p.27). Power is all consuming, it is not a privilege or a right, nor is it acquired or preserved, rather power is ever present.

From a Foucauldian perspective, disciplinary power is neither inherently corrupt nor is it negative. Ransom (1997) supports this view, arguing that disciplinary power 'shapes individuals....individuals are trained or moulded to serve the needs of power' (p. 37). Power relations, therefore, are multiple and complex and involve each individual as both an object of and subject to power. Foucault did not claim that human nature needed to be emancipated through the diminution of social constraints, such as sovereign power; rather, he maintained that the subject or individual is constructed through power relations (MacNaughton, 2005). This thinking challenges the Enlightenment belief that power dismantles the individual while knowledge generates freedom and will set an individual free. Foucault (1979) believes that disciplinary power works in a number of different ways, but at the root of disciplinary power lies knowledge, truth and discourse. The concepts of 'knowledge', 'truth' and 'discourse' are closely related and linked to the concept of power. Foucault argues that we have lacked conceptual tools for opposing the operation of power because of the failure to develop a clear conceptualisation of how power operates outside the conventional sovereignty model (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999). As we are inscribed in power, because we are constituted

by power relations, Foucault maintains that we cannot challenge power from outside, pretending that we are acting upon power; rather, power should be exposed from within. Foucault (1979) maintains that power should be viewed in a broad sense, arguing not to focus on the repressive effects of power alone, but to view these in light of the potential positive outcomes, no matter how small they are. This research interprets power in a similar way and will explore both the repressive and productive elements of power and how they have shaped early years pedagogy.

Power and knowledge

Velázquez's painting (see Figure 2) also represents Foucault's (1966) central idea throughout *The Order of Things*; all epochs of history have particular epistemological assumptions associated with them, for instance, discourse. Throughout the course of the book, Foucault develops the idea, or knowledge, and argues that over a period of time conditions of discourse change, from one *épistème* to another. This concept is illustrated in Chapter 1 in the critique of the early childhood pioneers. Their work was constructed within a specific time frame, within a particular social, cultural and political context, thus producing a particular discourse within that *épistème*. Foucault (1979) suggests that we should abandon the tradition that assumes that knowledge can only exist where power relations have been suspended or that the renunciation of power is a prerequisite of knowledge. Rather, he argues 'we should admit... that power produces knowledge' (p.27). Power and knowledge are directly linked; one cannot exist without the other; there is no power relation without the correlative field of knowledge, nor is there any knowledge that does not constitute power relations. Foucault (1979) proposes that power-knowledge relations should be analysed, not in relation to the subject of knowledge, but rather the interrelationship between power and knowledge. The

processes and struggles that exist in power-knowledge relations have the potential to create new knowledge and understanding.

The notion of temporality, of how power exists within the parameters of a certain era and within the confines of a particular time, will have a significant impact on my analysis. I want to move beyond a particular set of truths, or as Foucault would describe it, a 'regime of truth' (as described earlier pp.25-27), that produces a body of knowledge. I will consider the particular context of that time; the political, social landscape and how power shaped early childhood pedagogy within that *épistème*. From a poststructural perspective, MacNaughton (2005) argues that you cannot strip truth of its politics, as truth itself is a political fiction. MacNaughton (2005) furthers this argument, stating that this notion of a political fiction challenges beliefs that have previously dominated Western thinking since the European Enlightenment (late 1600s to mid-1700s) contesting the notion that one single truth exists. The poststructuralist position on truth opposes the possibility for an objective truth to exist in a social, political world and that no one single universal truth exists to explain social phenomena. By deconstructing the political and social contexts of the genealogy of early childhood pedagogy, this research contests some of the taken-for-granted assumptions and views them through a Foucauldian lens.

Power, knowledge and truth

The Foucauldian concepts of power, truth and knowledge are inextricably linked and the interplay between the three underpins the post-structural notion that a single truth does not exist. Rather, what does exist is a particular version of truth, within a given context and space in time. Foucault (1975) argues that truth is to be understood as a:

system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statements. 'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with the systems of power that produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extent it – a 'regime' of truth (p.132).

In other words, truth cannot be separated from power. It is a cyclical process which involves how power is produced and sustained and the effect it has on other truths. Foucault (1975) maintains that truth is not outside power or lacking in power and as such, it cannot be separated from power. In order to critically analyse the regime of truth in early years education, it is essential to ascertain how power impacts on truths. Foucault (1975) expressed his ideas on truth, stating that: 'truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power' (p.131). This statement describes how every society has a regime of truth, a general politics of truth (p.24) which is the foundation of that particular society, i.e. what that society deems to be acceptable and what is recognised to be true.

If early childhood teachers are viewed as a particular group of people with shared interests and beliefs and a general politics of truth, it can be argued that early childhood education has a particular discourse and set of truths. The regime of truth presented in Chapter 1 (Table 1, pp.33-39) encompasses the set of beliefs and ideas in relation to early years education. It developed over a period of time and its roots are embedded in historical traditions and ideology. One of the aims of this research is to invite reflection on the power-knowledge system of early childhood education. In doing so, this research reinterprets and reimagines the ideological and historical traditions of early childhood education. To reinterpret and to reimagine history, this research adopts a Foucauldian lens to unlock the power-knowledge and truth systems of early childhood education. Ball (2013) maintains that the point is not to

make sense of history in the present but to make it unacceptable by 'questioning the history that enfolds us as a violent imposition of the truth' (p. 87). A single history does not exist. History is open to interpretation and reinterpretation. History needs to be viewed from a variety of different perspectives and understood through different lenses. By drawing on the genealogical roots of early childhood pedagogy, I am in a position to better understand the present perspective, but also to understand how this learning could impact on the future of early childhood education. Ball (2015) argues that to write the history of the present 'we must address the general politics of truth within our neoliberal society and the types of discourse which it accepts' and assume the position as true (p.113). This study will unravel the layers of power that underpin these systems and in doing so I hope to reveal a new *truth*, or a new story of early childhood pedagogy.

Interlude: Early years student

As a student, a comprehensive knowledge of the historical perspective of early childhood education was emphasised. Chapter 1 presents an analysis of the so-called pioneers in the field (Table 1, pp.33-39) and subsequent analysis). O'Connor (2010) argues that the child-centred thinking and progressive approaches to early childhood education in Ireland originated with the philosophies of these so-called pioneers; maintaining, 'these influences and agendas bore on philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, economics, politics and religion, all of which in their different ways, and in different times, influences what policymakers could prescribe and what practitioners could do' (p.1). Among the key pioneers of the 18th and 19th centuries who were contributing to the new thinking about philosophy and pedagogy of education and the ways in which young children learn were Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Froebel. Their contributions to education in the 18th and 19th centuries were unprecedented and framed

Irish curriculum and policy for young children. Coolahan (1984) recognises the perennial value of Edgeworth's system of education and maintains that it was a beginning point for early childhood education in Ireland. O'Connor (2010) claims that Edgeworth's place in the evolution of early years pedagogy is significant as his ideas were to be reflected in the early endeavours of the National Board of Education in Ireland (Coolahan, 1983). I was led to believe that Edgeworth, through Rousseau, shaped early years pedagogy, education and research in Ireland from its conception, therefore this is where the genealogy of early years pedagogy begins.

School and schooling

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Irish education system was deeply influenced by our European counterparts (Coolahan, 1984; O'Connor, 2010; Walsh, 2007, 2016). Coolahan (1984) maintains that it was during this period, in the wake of the profound societal changes associated with the Agricultural, Industrial and French Revolutions, the challenges of education for all children arose. The Romantic Movement, which was established towards the end of the late 18th century and peaked in the mid-19th century, was a particularly significant period as it framed the discourse of early childhood education within Ireland. Cranston (1994) interprets the romanticism of this movement as a product of modernity, beginning with the Age of Reason, and in part as a reaction against that Age. The Romantic Movement, established as a reaction to Enlightenment thinking, viewed education as a path towards righteousness, where the emphasis was placed on the value of knowledge and school-based skills (Menhennet, 1981). In contrast, the Romantics valued childhood as an important stage in a child's life. This movement shook the very core of European thinking as it recognised and valued the innate goodness and innocence of childhood (Coolahan, 1984). While this epoch

did rattle the foundation of European thought, this era was also one of optimism, as the potential of education brought hopes of progress, change, and a new era of civilisation. This European influence impacted the notion of child-centred pedagogies in Ireland. A key pioneer in Ireland at that time for the education of young children was Richard Lovell Edgeworth (1744-1817). This was primarily due to the publication of the influential text *Practical Education* in 1798, with his daughter Maria, the first of its kind in Ireland, and the opening of an elementary school in Edgeworthstown (O'Connor, 2010). Given the influence of Catholicism in Ireland, it is significant to note that Edgeworth's school was a non-denominational, co-educational school. The influence for Edgeworth's school was not borne from Church or State, but as a result of the interplay of mechanisms of power within his relationship with Rousseau.

European influence

Given the prevailing European political context of the late 18th century with its ongoing Revolution, France as a nation was in turmoil, seeking change. The publication of *Émile* (Rousseau, 1762) was a critical point in the genealogy of the history of education. This treatise had a powerful impact and influence on the philosophy of education. *Émile* was initially viewed as a highly controversial publication, given the political context at the time. It was subsequently banned due to Rousseau's opposition to traditional religious views. While *Émile* had an important influence on the development of early childhood education, it is crucial to view Rousseau's contribution to curriculum and pedagogy in totality. As a student of early years education, Rousseau was positioned as the patriarch of pedagogy and philosophy for young children. As such, I have always viewed his contribution to the emergence of pedagogy as a *truth*. One of the key messages of *Émile* was that childhood has its own place within the

scheme of human life. Rousseau (1762) provides a clear account of, as Foucault would describe it, the order of things. In this ordering, or positioning, it is apparent that childhood holds a particular space within the structure of mankind:

Mankind has its place in the sequence of things; childhood has its place in the sequence of human life; the man must be treated as a man and the child as a child. Give each his place, and keep him there (Rousseau, 1762, p.57).

This philosophy outlines the hierarchical structures of mankind. According to Rousseau, not only do all citizens have a specific place within the structures of mankind, children should be treated as such and stay within the constraints of childhood. A sense of space and place seems to dominate Rousseau's thinking and educational philosophy; in doing so, he outlines the power structures that exist between adult and child. This concept reminded me once again of the central figure in Figure 2, *Las Meninas*, as the portrait depicts a child, but always becoming an adult, whether through her courtly attire, her manner, or through child labour as a contribution to the household economy.

The powerful influence that Rousseau had on Edgeworth is evidenced in Edgeworth's *Memoirs* where he recollected that Rousseau's *Émile* 'had made a great impression upon my young mind' (Edgeworth & Edgeworth, 1969, p.177). Unlike Rousseau himself, when Edgeworth's eldest son Richard was just three years old, he reared him according to the philosophies outlined in Rousseau's *Émile*. While *Émile* was only a blueprint for how to teach a young child, Edgeworth decided to educate his own child according to the principles espoused by *Émile*, such was the influence Rousseau had over Edgeworth:

I steadily pursued it for several years, notwithstanding the opposition with which I was embarrassed by my friends and relations, and the ridicule by which I became immediately assailed on all quarters. I dressed my son without stockings; with his arms bare...I succeeded in making him remarkably hardy: he had all the virtues of a child bred in the hut of a savage (p.178).

For the next five years, the body and mind of his son 'were to be left as much as possible to the education of nature and of accident' (p.178). Even though his approach to teaching his son was met with opposition, and caused him embarrassment, he pursued, and in 1771 Edgeworth took his son on a visit to Paris to meet Rousseau. Rousseau and the young boy spent some time together and Rousseau found him to be 'a boy of abilities, which have been well cultivated' (p.258), however, Rousseau criticised the young boy's traits of national feeling and believed he would be easily led by his companions. The doomed meeting in France began the derision of the relationship between Rousseau and Edgeworth, and to some extent, the power that Rousseau exerted over Edgeworth also diminished. The meeting had a significantly negative impact on Edgeworth, who later acknowledged that the principles of education as espoused by Rousseau had not been a success in the education of the young child. While Edgeworth concedes that the young boy was 'bold, free, fearless, generous; he had a ready and keen use of all his senses, and of his judgement', however, 'he was not disposed to obey: his exertions generally arose from his own will' (p.179). Edgeworth admits his 'deep regret' at being 'dazzled by the eloquence of Rousseau' (p.274). He warns other parents against the error of his ways having listened to the advice of someone who had no experience in the management of children, or any influence over his pupils (p.175).

The imaginary pupil *Émile* symbolises the educational journey from birth to manhood and offers guidance to tutors on how the young boy should be educated. Interestingly, however, the pupil *Émile* is an orphan. As France was in a state of chaos, Rousseau's *Émile* represented how order could be restored, at least in education. This illustrates a further *épistème*, as Rousseau's dossier reflects how control could be reconstructed, in a time of political and

social turmoil. *Émile* was a response to the social, cultural and political upheaval at that time. It seems to me that *Émile* is a metaphor for the ideal and idealised journey from childhood to manhood. Yet, viewing *Émile* from a contemporary Foucauldian lens uncovers some of the damaging ideology entrenched within it.

Interlude: Duped by Rousseau!

Having studied Rousseau in my early childhood education studies, he was always presented as the father of early years education (O'Connor, 2010). He paved the pathway for the recognition of the child as pure, good and innocent and the importance of childhood in the state of mankind. He was also directly responsible for influencing Edgeworth, one of the first Irish educators to consider early years education. As an early years lecturer, I have followed a similar path and have tended to present Rousseau in the same vein as how I have been taught. In doing so, I too am responsible for the hierarchical positioning of Rousseau for my students. My first time to engage with 'Émile' (Rousseau, 1762) and 'Practical Education' (Edgeworth & Edgeworth, 1798) was for this research. Imagine my dismay when I realised that Rousseau sent his own children to an orphanage! Émile never existed, it was merely a fantasy. A fantasy that Edgeworth foolheartedly followed, to the detriment of his own son. Without considering the impact of the social context and the political turmoil that France was in, Edgeworth blindly followed Rousseau. Like Edgeworth, I too have been blindly following Rousseau, not challenging and contesting his theories. Furthermore, I had failed to realise that if he did not practice his educational beliefs on his own child...how much did he really believe in them? No wonder so many of his ideas were rejected! While the notion of the child as innocent, good and pure still shapes early years thinking to this day, the fact that Rousseau's own children were cared for in an orphanage is not dwelt upon. Other philosophies of Rousseau did not

stand the test of time, for instance his position on a young child's language development. I was dismayed to read that Rousseau believed that a child's vocabulary should 'be limited; it is very undesirable that he should have more words than ideas, that he should be able to say more than he thinks' (1762, p. 53). This is quite an adverse, contradictory philosophy. I feel like I have been duped by Rousseau and by the uncritical promotion of his ideology and thinking within the early childhood education canon.

While the relationship between Rousseau and Edgeworth fell into disrepair, Rousseau's influence on Edgeworth's philosophy, pedagogy and writings shaped the beginning of the education of young children in Ireland. Edgeworth had a child-centred philosophy on early childhood education. He aimed to identify approaches that were best suited to the teaching of young children and to test a range of methods and reflect on them to develop them further. Edgeworth (1798) believed that the 'art of education should be considered as an experimental science' (p. 724). This type of education reflected the scientific approach advocated by the Enlightenment movement at that time, constructing a developmental image of the child. Edgeworth developed a practice whereby he observed the children, recorded his observations, and in doing so tested their educational ideas and theories. This type of scientific, experimental approach to education was reflected in his school. These pedagogical concepts of how young children learned were incorporated at the beginning of the National Board of Education (1831) in Ireland.

Power shaping genealogy

The early 19th century was a significant era for the emergence of early years pedagogy as Ireland continued to be influenced by the trends in Europe. Following the influence of

Rousseau in Ireland, the next *pioneer* to contribute to the emergence was Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827). Many of the ideas espoused by Rousseau came to fruition in his work, with Pestalozzi himself recognising the impact that *Émile* had on his thinking and philosophy; 'my visionary and highly speculative mind was enthusiastically seized by this visionary and highly speculative book' (Pestalozzi, 1900, p.xvi). While Rousseau focused his attention on the education of one child, Pestalozzi concerned himself with pedagogy and how the curriculum was organised for large numbers of children in institutional settings (Rusk, 1967). This pedagogy transformed early years teaching and learning from an Irish perspective and it had a profound impact on John H. Synge (1788-1845) and Samuel Wilderspin (1792-1866). As Synge was the first Irishman to study in Pestalozzi's school in Yverdon, he was directly influenced by Pestalozzi himself (O'Connor, 2010). In the early part of the 19th century, Synge was dismayed with the system of education in Ireland. While travelling throughout Europe (McCann, 1966), he visited Pestalozzi's school and was so inspired by what he witnessed there, he wanted to 'bring home as much as possible of what appeared to be so intrinsically valued' (Synge, 2017, p.xv). He attempted to recreate a similar school in Ireland; he established the first Pestalozzian elementary school on his family estate in County Wicklow. Similarly, to Edgeworth's school, power influenced the elite few who attended the school. This minority group of children were in a privileged position to attend this school and there they followed Pestalozzi's pedagogical ideas of education.

Pestalozzi describes these pedagogical ideas and how these were in consonance with the laws of nature in his dossier *Gertrude Teaches her Children* (Pestalozzi, 1900), which was first published in 1801. This dossier describes how the child's essence and goodness slowly unfolded and developed both cognitively and intellectually by adopting nature's path (Green,

1969). Alongside the importance Pestalozzi placed on art and nature, he proposed that the key to educational instruction is the ability to shape children's learning in accordance with the order of nature (Synge, 2017). Synge adopted a similar philosophy in Ireland and his students engaged in a lot of outdoor activities, working on the land as well as classroom instruction (O'Connor, 2010). A comparison can be made between Rousseau's and Edgeworth's relationship, as a similar power dynamic was evident in Synge's relationship with Pestalozzi. The Pestalozzian School that Synge developed on his land only remained open for 30 years, which was twice as long as Edgeworth's school had its doors open (O'Connor, 2010). Both of these schools had a deep impact on the pedagogy and education of young children in Ireland. In the early part of the 19th century, the schools founded by Edgeworth and Synge only accommodated a small number of children (Coolahan, 1984). The schools were a prime example of how disciplinary power shaped early childhood education in Ireland, as only those children of wealthy families and landowners could afford to attend. This hierarchical approach to education formed a two-tier society in Ireland, where only the wealthy were educated and the poor were left uneducated. It was not until 1831, with the creation of Board of National Education and the provision of mass schooling, that the majority of children were afforded the opportunity to receive any formal education.

Similar to Rousseau, Pestalozzi (1900) criticised educational instruction, maintaining that artificial methods of schooling focused on order and structure, rather than the slow sequences of nature representing the natural or biological development of the child. Pestalozzi (1900), like Synge, valued the mother's role in a child's education, maintaining that a mother could help her child to distinguish between right and wrong and in doing so, ensure that a child remains pure. Pestalozzi (1900) maintained that schooling should be a natural

progression from home life. He criticised schools that failed to consider the impact of the home environment on the child's education, maintaining that 'school instruction that fails to include the full spirit education demands, and that ignores the circumstances in the home in their entirety, is little more than a method for shrivelling up our generation' (Pestalozzi, 1801, p. 35). Similar to Pestalozzi, Synge regarded a mother's love as the foundation of education. He noted that it was the responsibility of all teachers to study the ways in which a good mother trained her children (O'Connor, 2010). This laid the foundations for teaching being and becoming an extension of mothering, thus a feminised domain. Many of Pestalozzi's educational ideologies stemmed from his formative experiences in Stans, where he managed an orphanage. Pestalozzi (1900) outlined his teaching approach:

I was obliged to give the children instruction, alone, and without help, I learned the art of teaching many together; and since I had no other means but loud speaking the idea of making the learners draw, write, and work at the same time, was naturally developed (pp.16-17).

The teaching style favoured by Pestalozzi in Stans promoted children's active engagement in their learning. Pestalozzi, like other Enlightenment thinkers, valued the role of observation and first-hand experiences in children's learning and development. Although Pestalozzi favoured what can be perceived as child-centred approaches to education, his ideologies are heavily imbued with power. For instance, the notion of apperception assumes the position that children learn in stages, from the concrete to the abstract, implying that children learn in a linear manner, lacking capacity for independent abstract thinking (Pestalozzi, 1900). The concept of stages in a model of learning is imbued with power as this concept suggests that learning occurs in separate phases and children must remain within these particular confines. Not only is this positioning of children contrary to child-centred ideology, it also presents a

deficit model of children who are unable to engage in abstract thinking. When describing his style of teaching, while working with children in Stans, Pestalozzi (1900) observed that:

It quickly developed in the children a consciousness of hitherto unknown power, and particularly a general sense of beauty and order. They felt their own power, and the tediousness of the ordinary school-tone vanished like a ghost from my rooms. They wished, tried, preserved, succeeded and they laughed. Their tone was not that of learners, it was the tone of unknown powers awakened from sleep; of a heart and mind exalted with the feeling of what these powers could and would lead them to (p.17).

In this observation, Pestalozzi explicitly refers to a child's *unknown power*, wherein a child who is provided with this approach of teaching realises his or her potential. This philosophy is centred on the notion of empowering children, thereby, elevating the position of children and acknowledging their agency. Throughout *Gertrude Teaches her Children* (Pestalozzi, 1900), there is a myriad of references to power, although Pestalozzi uses the term 'power' to refer to a child's competency or capability. On first glance, this positioning of power appears productive as it seems to favour the child. However, as the pendulum of power favours the most knowledgeable and competent, surely it swings in favour of the adult? As Pestalozzi equates power with competence, does this infer that power always lies in the hands of the adult? This thinking aligns with the scientific nature of development psychology that emerged in the 20th century and will be further analysed in Chapter 3. Power shaped the genealogy of early childhood pedagogy in the early 19th century and the mechanisms of power during this *épistème* were strongly imbued with the concept of freedom.

Freedom and power

Baudrillard (2007) critiques Foucault's amorphous concept of power, arguing that it is used too broadly. Golob (2015) contests this criticism of Foucault, reminding us that Foucault (1982) describes the interrelationship between power relations and freedom as:

[P]ower relations are possible only insofar as the subjects are free. If one of them were at another's disposal and became his thing, an object on which he could wreak boundless and limitless violence, there wouldn't be any relations of power. Thus, in order for power relations to come into play, there must be at least a certain degree of freedom on both sides... 'The other' (the one on whom power is exercised) [is] thoroughly recognized and maintained to the very end as a person who acts; and that, faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, and possible inventions may open up (Foucault, 1982, p. 789).

For Foucault (1982), individual or collective subjects are subjected to a range of possibilities, of which, they comprehend themselves. For power relations to endure, there needs to be a certain extent of freedom from both parties. Golob (2015) continues by presenting the two interrelated conditions on Foucault's power; 'First, it only affects free subjects, i.e., those whose behaviour is not fully determined by it. Second, it does so by reconfiguring the possibility space, i.e., the necessarily undetermined field of choice in which such agents operate' (p.676). The concepts of power and freedom governed the relationship between Rousseau and Edgeworth. According to Rousseau, children should be kept within the confines of childhood; they will not be given the means or the opportunity to move beyond this. This ideology is laden with and by power. Rousseau explicitly addresses the concept of power, arguing that:

There is only one man who gets his own way—he who can get it single-handed; therefore freedom, not power, is the greatest good. That man is truly free who desires what he is able to perform, and does what he desires. This is my fundamental maxim. Apply it to childhood, and all the rules of education spring from it (Rousseau, 1762, p.62).

This comment suggests that freedom, not power, is the greatest good. Yet, can freedom exist without power? Rousseau (1762) describes that the one who is single handed and does what he desires is the one who is truly free. He suggests applying this philosophy to childhood so that the rules of education can stem from this. This statement appears somewhat contradictory, as the one that is single handed is the one whom power favours. In other

words, the one who is free to do as he desires possess the power. As such, freedom and power cannot be separated. Even the language that Rousseau employs is deeply infused with power. All the *rules* of education are hence bound by power. Rousseau (1762) outlines rules or maxims for tutors to support a child's educational journey, arguing that 'the spirit of these rules is to give children more real liberty and less power' (pp.46-47). While Rousseau's works are laden with references to an explicit type of power, it is only when these works are analysed with a Foucauldian lens that the vestiges of disciplinary power unfold.

Foucault (1982) reminds us of his goal when analysing power dynamics, his objective being to create a new genealogy of the different processes wherein human beings are made subjects:

What has been the goal of my work during the last twenty years. It has not been to analyse the phenomena of power, nor to elaborate the foundations of such an analysis. My objective, instead, has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects (p.777).

After his negative encounter with Rousseau and the adverse consequences to his son's education, Edgeworth thought deeply about the importance of the teacher to a young child's education. O'Connor (2010) maintains that 'in Edgeworthian education the teacher was expected to produce rational, benevolent and wise adults' (p. 38) and so children were viewed as the 'becoming adult'. Therefore, the responsibility and expectation was on the teacher to create compassionate, smart children who would listen to and obey their teachers. As a consequence of Edgeworth's encounter with Rousseau, Edgeworthian education was fuelled with the belief that the young child was immature and naïve and the role of the teacher was paramount. This differed significantly from Rousseau's belief that 'nature' was the only resource needed for effective learning (Bailey, 2000, p.78). For Rousseau, 'nature' referred to a child's abilities and powers. For Rousseau, self-activity, as opposed to teacher-directed

activities, was the key to effective learning. Having experienced Rousseau's approach to education, Edgeworth emphasised the importance of the adult's contribution in the child's development. Interestingly, Edgeworth's mantra echoed Locke's image of the child as a *tabula rasa* or blank slate (Moseley, 2007), who had 'to learn the customs and ways' (p.xi) of the world he was born into. The idea reflected Enlightenment thinking of that time, but it was the power dynamics of the relationship between Rousseau and Edgeworth that influenced the positioning of young children in Irish society.

As Rousseau and Edgeworth both valued childhood as an important stage in the structure of mankind, they elevated the status to a certain extent. However, by positioning children as vulnerable, innocent beings, I believe they were also responsible for some of the deficit ways of viewing children. The Romantics' positioning of children viewed children as sensitive and vulnerable and in doing so they presented children as helpless, dependent beings. This perspective of children impacted on how children and childhood were perceived. The discourse on children and childhood is reflected in the ways young children were educated at that time and impacted on the emergence of early childhood pedagogy in Ireland.

Interlude: Freedom and power

While reading the original text of the so-called pioneers of early years education, I was struck by how the concepts of freedom and power underpinned the aphorisms. When describing his philosophy of teaching, Pestalozzi (1969) claims that young children are malleable, maintaining that 'you must bend your children in the direction they must go almost before they know the difference between right and left' (p.34). This notion is laden with power and demonstrates how the teacher manipulates the child from a young age in the direction that

the teacher, or the teacher as a representative of the socio-cultural position within society, perceives to be suitable. In other words, the teacher's role is to lay down the pathway and the role of the child is to follow it. This analogy clearly defines the power imbalance between teacher and child and represents a repressive type of power. Interestingly, Rousseau (1762) comments on how man is born free and yet everywhere is in chains, whereas Pestalozzi (1969) remarks that for every man who is struck in chains, a hundred men lay them on themselves. These comments reflect how both freedom and power are inextricably linked. Often, chains are imposed on us by another, yet often these chains are imposed upon ourselves.

Emergence of early childhood education

In 1831, the Board of National Education was established, which Coolahan (1983) refers to as 'a landmark in the history of Irish education' (p.35), whereas O'Connor (2010) claims that early childhood education was not conceptualised in Ireland prior to 1837. A key moment in the genealogy of early years pedagogy was in 1837, when the Board of Education invited Samuel Wilderspin to introduce his system of early education in Ireland (INTO,1995a). Wilderspin, who was described as 'self-styled originator of the Infant School System and the founder of a countrywide network of infant schools' (McCann, 1966, p.188) in Britain. From the outset of the conception of early years education in Ireland, pedagogy was laden with and by power dynamics, as the dominant hold that Britain had over the island of Ireland shaped the pedagogy for young Irish children. The curriculum and pedagogical approaches for young children were developed by an Englishman. Wilderspin proceeded to nominate his daughter, Sarah Anne, and her fiancé Thomas Young, as teaching staff for the first Model Infant School in Ireland, which opened in Marlborough Street on March 5, 1838 (O'Connor, 2010), thus exerting his power and influence over the development of early childhood education in

Ireland. Wilderspin managed his school in similar ways to those implemented in Spitalfields, where the curriculum focused on mathematics, history and geography, accompanied by rhymes, songs and playground games (McCann, 1966). Under the leadership and guidance of Wilderspin and Young, the Model Infant School had a renowned reputation by the end of the 1840s and schools of a similar model were established throughout the country (INTO, 1995a). The National Board of Education invited Wilderspin (1832) to prepare a programme of practical approaches for teaching young children, entitled *The Infant System for developing the Intellectual and Moral Powers of all Children from One to Seven*. The opening chapter of the book begins with a somewhat autobiographical account of Wilderspin's life, followed closely by Chapter 2 'Juvenile Delinquency' (pp. 19-37); Chapter 3 'Causes of Early Crime' (pp.37-55) and Chapter 4 presents a 'Remedy for Existing Evils' (pp.55-75). While the latter part of the book focuses on some principles of infant education, it is telling that the opening sequence focuses on delinquency; early crime and existing evils (in one to seven-year olds!). At first glance, this may appear shocking; however, considering the power dynamics of the social, economic, political, religious and cultural context of that time; it is none too surprising.

The Great Famine

While the Model School opened in 1838, the first programme of infant education was published in 1840, and so, to a certain extent, early childhood pedagogy emerged during this period, which tellingly also happened to be one of the gravest epochs of modern-day history for Ireland. While Britain was experiencing the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution, Ireland's experience was a bleak period of mass starvation, death, disease and mass emigration caused by The Great Famine between 1845 and 1849, which led to the deaths of

one million people and the emigration of a further two million. In 1840, eight and a half million people lived in Ireland and by 1860 there were only four and a half million remaining (Central Statistics Office (CSO), 2019). O'Gráda (1995) contends that while 'Ireland had been a fully-fledged member of the United Kingdom since 1801. The Famine is thus a reminder of how unevenly the benefits of the Industrial Revolution had diffused by the 1840s' (p.2). Over these few short years, Ireland's population diminished drastically and it had detrimental effects for all aspects of Irish life, some of which are still evidenced today.

To comprehend some of the impact of the Great Famine on Irish society, it is important to recognise the context of Irish society in that era. Ireland was governed by a British administration in Dublin Castle and, through colonisation, was part of the United Kingdom. Prior to this period, Kelly (2013) maintains that Ireland was predominantly an agricultural society where Catholic tenants tended to the land of affluent Protestant landlords. There was little or no industry evidenced in Ireland at that time and Irish economy and society was built on agriculture. The potato blight of 1846 brought devastation to Irish life and crippled the nation. O'Gráda (1995) contends that alongside the mass emigration and starvation, the malnourished travelled to urban areas in search of food, bringing contagious diseases to larger cities. From a socio-economic position, the greatest impact of the famine was the change in landed property and farms (Kelly, 2013). Farms became larger to try to be sustainable and produce an income and while wealthy landlords mostly remained in London, Ireland faced high levels of unemployment, poor housing conditions and poverty. This land-restructuring also contributed to the decline in Gaeilge (Irish language), 'as a result of the death and mass emigration of the poorer populations from the West of Ireland, where Irish speakers were more numerous... (there was) ...a depopulation of Irish-speaking areas'

(Falc'her-Poyroux, 2014, p.40). The rural areas of Ireland, where Irish language tended to be more prevalent, suffered a 'dislocation of their traditional communities, a fragmentation of their identities, and ultimately from a sense of loss of their grounding' (Falc'her-Poyroux, 2014, p.40). And so, the Irish language began to decline.

A further effect of the famine on Irish society was on religion, as prior to the famine, the vast majority of Irish citizens were Catholic and a minority of Protestants (CSO, 2019). While the famine had devastating effects on Irish life, religion held a stronger focus in everyday life and the Irish clergy began to hold a prominent position in Irish society (Kelly, 2013). The Catholic hierarchy in Irish life led to tensions and conflict between both religions and the famine intensified the anti-British sentiments that already existed. The impact of these movements will be presented in Chapter 3, but their roots stem from the aftermath of the Great Famine and the long-term consequence for Ireland's emergence as a nation state.

The impact of the Great Famine on early years pedagogy is witnessed in Wilderspin's publication. The post-famine construction of the Irish child was a poverty-stricken delinquent (Wilderspin, 1832) that had existing evils. The powerful hold of the Catholic Church in Ireland is evidenced in this construction of the young child and this shaped pedagogy for young children in Ireland. The continuing impact of the hold of the Catholic Church will be further explored in Chapter 3. Thus, from the bleakest epoch of modern-day history in Ireland, a period of cultural, economic, linguistic and political disruption, early years pedagogy emerged.

Descent of early childhood pedagogy

For much of the 19th century, early years pedagogy involved young children being placed in overcrowded conditions where they engaged in rote-learning and were often instructed in galleries where the conditions were unsuitable (INTO, 1995a). This type of mass education was widespread across Europe in the 19th century, as Zinkina, Korotayev and Andreev (2016) argue, ‘despite major historic and social differences almost every country of Western Europe introduced an innovative idea of mass education, which later evolved to a compulsory general education’ (p.63). A further challenge alongside the difficult social, cultural and economic climate of that period was the lack of training for teachers (Coolahan, 1981; O’Connor, 2010). In the aftermath of the famine, the *Royal Commission of Inquiry into Primary Education* (1870) investigated and reported on primary education in Ireland. They outlined their role as:

We the Commissioners appointed by your Majesty on the 14th January, 1868, to inquire into the nature and extent of the instruction afforded by the several institutions established in Ireland for the purpose of elementary or primary education, and to report as the measures which can be adopted for extending more generally to the people of Ireland the benefits of such education, humbly submit the following report (p.15).

One outcome that emerged from the report was the Powis Commission (1870), which established a ‘payment-by-results scheme’ (Royal Commission of Inquiry into Primary Education, 1870), wherein infant children were taught by the First Book (which was established by the National Board) and were examined annually in reading, writing and arithmetic. This was the first attempt at codifying a curriculum for young children and established the curriculum as a text conveying what must be taught and learned. The move also positioned reading, writing and arithmetic as the core content for the curriculum, thus valuing these subjects over all others. For each child who successfully passed the examinations (once they had attended school) the corresponding fees were added to the

teacher's salary (O'Connor, 2010). For example, four to six-year old children were expected to recall all the letters of the alphabet, and spell and read words of two letters (INTO, 1995b; O'Connor, 2010). In attempting to combat the lack of teacher training, the Commission incentivised teachers focusing on young children's reading, writing and arithmetic only. While this payment by-results scheme did reduce levels of illiteracy, teachers' predominant pedagogical approaches involved didactic teaching methods and rote-learning only (INTO, 1995b; O'Connor, 2010; Walsh, 2016). The introduction of the scheme shifted the pedagogical focus of teachers and teaching. The scheme signified a move towards more formal, didactic pedagogical styles over the more holistic child-centred approaches of the previous century that were described earlier (p.65).

The movement away from mass education of young children towards the return of a more child-centred holistic approach to early years pedagogy was advocated in Ireland by Eleonore Heerwart and Miss Stephens. Heerwart (1835-1911) was the first person to introduce Kindergarten activities into Ireland as she had trained in Germany under Luise Froebel (Friedrick Froebel's second wife) (O'Connor, 2010). After leaving Germany, she worked in Manchester for a period before moving to Dublin in October 1862 (O'Connor, 2010). She advocated a Froebelian philosophy and pedagogy and she established private schools in Dublin underpinned by this philosophy (O'Connor, 2010). In a lecture on the kindergarten system, Heerwart (n.d.) was critical of the instruction of young children that she had witnessed in Dublin, 'It is quite true that each nation has educated her children to a certain standard...how is it, then, that in all Christian lands...children are still neglected?' (pp.4-5).

To combat the neglect of young children's pedagogy, Heerwart (n.d.) recommends a Froebelian approach to young children's education:

But let us hear what Friedrich Froebel, the founder of the Kindergarten, says "Let us learn," he says, "from the gentle hints of children." First, "let us learn" means that the children should teach us, and we should be the learners. This places the children at once in a different position from that which they are supposed by most people to occupy" (p.6)... "in play the child is active, happy and healthy. Play must therefore be considered by us of importance. We must supply time, materials, and space; but this is not all we can do for the child: it also longs for guidance and companionship in play (p.19).

The seeds of the Froebelian approach to young children's education were thus planted in Ireland as a counterbalance to rote learning and didactic instruction. The headmistress of the Model Infants School in Marlborough Street, Miss Stephens, continued to develop Froebelian pedagogies in Ireland, in particular after her visits to kindergarten classes in England in 1881 (INTO, 1995b; O'Connor, 2010). While pockets of Froebelian approaches emerged, specifically in the Model school and private schools, overall young children continued to experience rote-learning in overcrowded conditions. In 1897, a Commission on Manual and Practical Instruction (CMPI), was established to investigate educational issues and determine what should be included in the education system (Walsh, 2016). The *Sixty-fourth Report of the Commissioners* (1897) identifies that 'in 1888 only 34.7% of teachers were trained and by 1897 this figure had increased to 46.2%' (Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, 1897, p.32). This increase showed an improvement in qualification levels and the report also outlines the percentage of infants who had successfully passed the annual reading, writing and arithmetic exams as 92.8% (1897, p.33). These improvements may be directly linked to the qualification levels of teachers, but I suspect that it was more closely aligned with the rote-learning approaches and the payment by-results scheme. However, the head inspector of the report, A. Purser, recommended:

Kindergarten is not at present any part of the ordinary school course; but object and information lessons are regularly given, and in larger schools lead up to an advanced course of elementary science, for which a very fine collection of apparatus is provided. It is much to be desired that there should be as great an interest in school matters in Ireland as in Germany, and that school-work should be carried on with the same zeal, intelligence and thoroughness (1897, p.74).

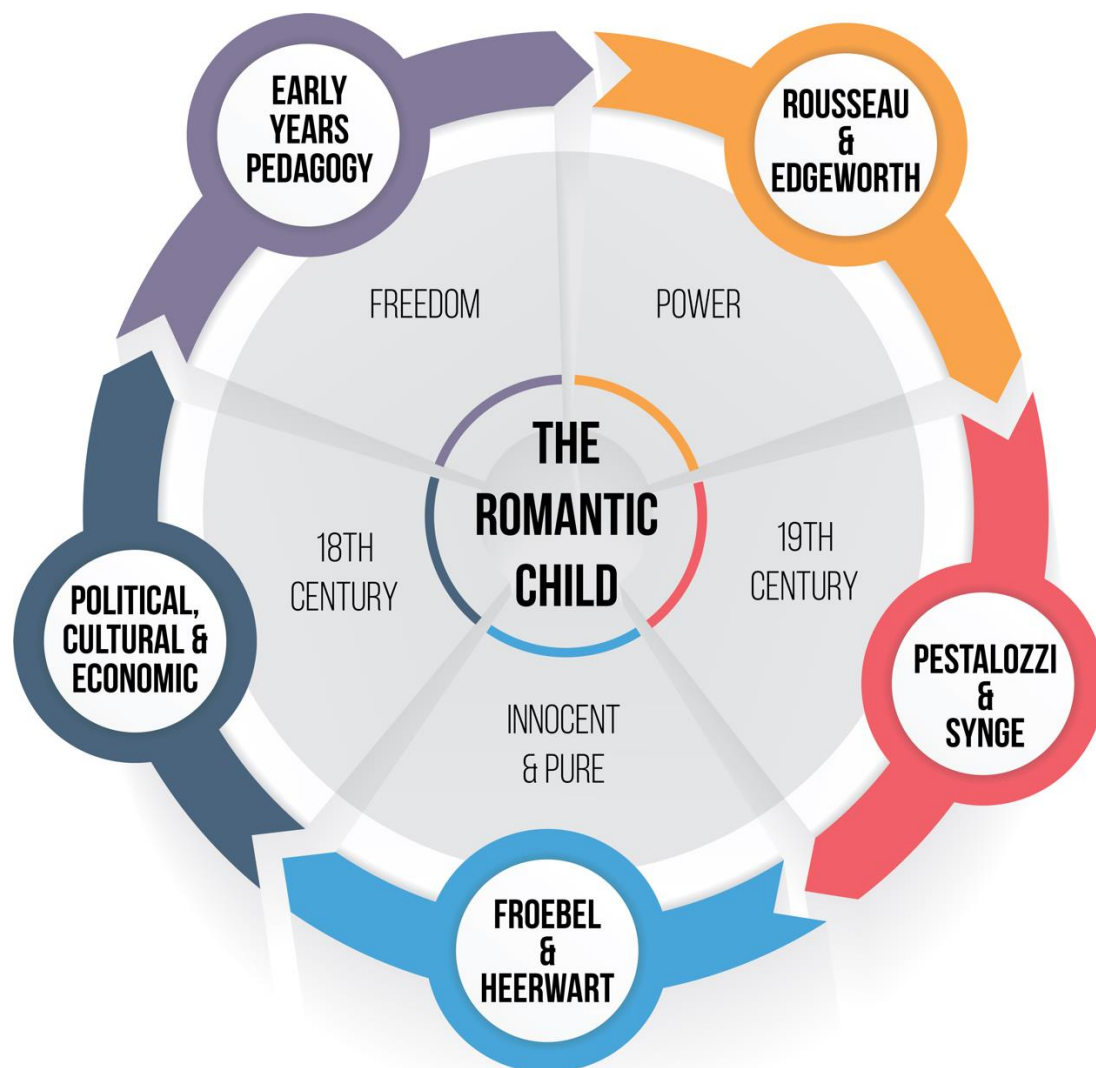
The report (1897) recommended that early childhood education should be given more prominence and advocated that a Froebelian system of education should be implemented. This shift led to radical changes in the Irish education system in the 20th century and continued the influence of our European counterparts in Ireland. By the close of the 19th century, and after a spell of deep cultural, social and economic austerity, a wave of unrest emerged in Irish society. Walsh (2007) maintains that this was in response to the ‘agrarian situation...(and) widespread social problems, such as poor housing and healthcare’ (p.128). This unrest also emerged due to the power relations between British rule, the Catholic Church, and the formation of the Free State. The subsequent impact on early years pedagogy will be revealed in Chapter 3.

Conclusion

Chapter 2 traces the genealogy of early childhood pedagogy in the late 18th and 19th centuries in Ireland, alongside a deep examination of *gnóthi seauton*. This analysis explores the interrelationship between three key Foucauldian concepts; namely, truth, knowledge, and power, and how these concepts impact early years pedagogy. This chapter argues that power in its various sources and forms: disciplinary, sovereign, repressive productive and the micro-physics of power, produced early years pedagogy for young children in Ireland during this epoch. A significant facet of sovereign power that emerges from this *épistème* is the influence of Europe on pedagogical developments in Ireland, as demonstrated by the power exerted by

our European counterparts over Irish pedagogues. The movements of the *épistème* presented in Chapter 2 led to a particular construction of young children, which I argue fits the Romantic Construction of the Child, as detailed in Figure 3.

Figure 3. *The Romantic Construction of the Child*



This image depicts the construction of the Romantic View of the Child in the 18th and 19th centuries in Ireland. This image evolved due to the power exerted by Rousseau over Edgeworth, Pestalozzi over Synge, and Froebel over Heerwart. This led to children being viewed as inherently innocent, naturally good and pure. This positioning of children has, I believe, had detrimental effects for young children and subsequent pedagogy, as children

were positioned as helpless beings that needed the support of a competent other. The positioning of children and childhood during this *épistème* had a significant impact on the development of pedagogy in the 20th century. By the latter stage of the 19th century, Ireland remained in political, social, cultural and economic uncertainty following the gravest period in Irish modern-day history, the Great Famine. This led to a certain descent in early years pedagogy, with the payment-by-results scheme, mass education and rote learning. Ireland was ripe for change at the beginning of the 20th century and these changes, political, economic, cultural, and social, as well as pedagogical developments, will be explored in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

Power produces, it produces reality

The opening years of the 20th century signified political, social, economic and cultural movements, and unrest both internationally and in Ireland. Given the circumstances in which Ireland achieved political freedom in the 1920s, a number of political and cultural organisations were united on emphasising Ireland's distinct uniqueness as a 26-county Free State. This new independent thinking underpinned the newly established Department of Education, as its aim was to 'work with all its might for the strengthening of the national fibre by giving language, history, music and tradition of Ireland their natural place in the life of Irish schools' (DoE, 1925, p.6). This statement illuminates the sovereign power held by the State at that time and this thinking impacted curriculum development. The formation of the Free State was the first opportunity for the newly formed Department of Education to develop a curriculum for young children in Ireland. This chapter presents a genealogical account of how different forms and sources of power shaped curriculum and subsequent early childhood pedagogy in Ireland from the 1900s to the 1970s.

Whyte (2011) argues that the difficult and complex relationship between British authorities and the Catholic Church, which had dominated most of the 18th century, was replaced by a more united, pragmatic church-state union in independent Ireland in the 20th century. For this political reason, in addition to economic factors, the State positioned the Catholic Church as the pivotal sovereign power at that time. As such, curriculum development was imbued with the political climate of this era, along with the dominant hold of the Catholic Church in education. Walsh (2016) maintains that amid this patriotic fervour, the focus on educational policies was to highlight the differences between pre-and-post independent regimes, wherein

the post-independent policies focus on the Irish language and Catholic religion as the main features of this new, distinct identity. The driving force behind this movement was Professor Timothy Corcoran, a Jesuit priest and Professor of Education (O'Connor, 2014). According to Corcoran, 'there is one educable period at which the habit of using fluent Irish as a true vernacular can be acquired...that one period may be called the pre-primary, or the infant period from 3 to 7 years of age' (Corcoran, 1923a, pp.26-27). Corcoran (1923a) continues by stating that 'the goal is not the mere power to use the Irish language in ordinary life and business. It is rather the thoroughly developed habit of using that power' (p.26).

Interlude: Corcoran and Foucault

While reflecting on Corcoran's quote and the links between language and power, it is interesting to note how the concept of power, and the power associated with the Irish language, shaped ideology and thinking. While considering the work of Corcoran (1923b) and the power he associated with teaching, or as he referred to it, teaching power, parallels can be drawn between Corcoran and Foucault, who maintained that:

Power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations (Foucault, 1976, pp.334-335).

The teaching power of the opening epochs of the 20th century was exercised from innumerable points in Ireland, most notably, the Church and State. Power was evident in the interplay between both, while Corcoran, as a political figure representing both institutions, was at the centre of this interplay. As this evidence suggests, Corcoran almost single-handedly determined the curriculum for all young children in Ireland, especially infant children in primary schools. A prominent figure with a prominent political position and ideology

influenced the curriculum for all young children in Ireland. In a debate on human nature with Chomsky in 1971, Foucault stated:

...the real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize the workings of institutions that appear to be both neutral and independent, to criticize and attack them in such a manner that the political violence that has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight against them (as cited in Chomsky, 2006, p.41).

Schooling in 20th century Ireland was not neutral, egalitarian, nor independent, especially for infant children. It was imbued with power dynamics that infiltrated culture and society at that time. Foucault suggests attacking institutions, such as schools, to unmask the political ideology that lies beneath. This sentiment reminded me once again of Ball's (2013) work who maintains that the point is not to make sense of history in the present, but to make it unacceptable by 'questioning the history that enfolds us as a violent imposition of the truth' (p.87). Interestingly, both Foucault and Ball's remarks focus on the political violence and violent impositions that need to be unveiled to fight against these forces. For me, 20th century Ireland demonstrates a covert violence towards children via infant pedagogy, as will be described in this chapter. Previous generations of ideology, curriculum and thinking, as outlined in Chapter 2, were cast aside in order for education to fulfil the needs of the Church and the State. In Ireland, teaching became a position of power and strength, and a representation of the ideals of Church and State. For young children, power and pedagogy merged in that power shaped both the content of what young children learned and the ways in which they were positioned within society. This regime of power and truth had detrimental effects for young children in Ireland.

Power producing pedagogy

On Corcoran's (1923a) advice, the state established infant language schools, which pre-school children attended four days per week. The curriculum for these schools had very little reading, no writing, and English had 'no place' whatsoever (Corcoran, 1923a, p.27). Corcoran (1923a) maintains that Irish language should be the sole aim of the school; 'language first, last, and all the time' (p.30). This didactic, repressive approach to young children's education was diametrically opposed to the active engagement and discovery-based approach offered by Edgeworth (as described on p.57). While commenting on young children acquiring Irish language during what Corcoran (1923a) referred to as the infant period (3-7 years), he believed, 'only the lively native speaker should teach there' (in infant schools) (p.27). In presenting this advice, Corcoran (1923a) exerted his power over early years pedagogy and shifted the ways in which infant Irish children were constructed. Children were now merely viewed as a vehicle for *becoming* future Irish citizens and the child-centred approach from the previous century (p.57) was lost. Walsh (2016) maintains that the programme introduced in 1922 was radically different to the previous one and was framed along nationalist lines, with less interest in children's abilities and interests. Akenson (1975) maintains that the 'shocker' in this new curriculum was that Irish was used as the medium of instruction in infant classes (p.44). Little consideration was given to the best pedagogical approaches for teaching young children; rather, it was for the good of the State, and subsequently the child, that young children were instructed in Irish. The sovereign power and control exhibited by the State and the Church directly impacted the curriculum and pedagogy for young children in Ireland. This reconceptualization of children, childhoods, curriculum, and pedagogy posed significant challenges for teachers.

One such challenge for teachers was their own standards and competency in Irish language. O'Connor (2014) maintains that the State ensured that native Irish speakers were provided with places in Catholic teacher training colleges and entry requirements were adapted to accommodate those that spoke the Irish language. In fact, the Department of Education reports that 40% of the total number of vacancies to the Catholic teacher training college was reserved for students from the Fíor-Ghaeltacht (authentic Irish-speaking districts) and a further 40% of the places were reserved for fluent speakers of Irish (Department of Education, Report for 1933-34, p.11). By adjusting the entry requirements into teacher training colleges, the State, in collusion with the Church, allocated 80% of places to native or fluent Irish speakers. This decision ensured that the State's mission to preserve the national language and culture was catered for and highlights the sovereign power exerted by State and Church.

Resisting pedagogy

Foucault (1975) maintains that 'where there is power, there is resistance' (pp.95-96) and while the interplay between the Church and State produced the curriculum for young children, teachers began to resist the pedagogical approaches to the curriculum and the ways in which the State exerted its power. This was largely due to the fact that teachers themselves did not have the language to deliver the curriculum, nor had children the language to comprehend it. Coolahan (1981) ascertains that during this period 'out of a lay teaching force of 12,000, less than one-third was competent to teach Irish' (p.48). Despite attending repeated Irish language courses during the summers of 1922 and 1923, teachers protested the dominance of Irish language in schools. This resistance, and teachers' dissatisfaction, culminated after the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) congress in 1924. Teachers

wrote to the Minister for Education urging the Department to review the curriculum and adapt pedagogy accordingly (INTO, 1995b).

In 1926, the Second National Conference convened and the Irish National Teachers Organisation expressed their concern and discontent at the huge burden placed on teachers, especially in infant classes, having to teach through the medium of Irish. O'Connor (2010) identifies the main purpose of this conference was to express approval of the national programme and its suitability for attaining the aim of the government. However, the evidence submitted by members of the INTO to the clergy in attendance highlighted the reality of the situation and the difficulty of delivering the curriculum solely through Irish, in particular for infant classes. Despite these pleas for reform, Corcoran's evidence (1923a, 1923b, 1924, 1925, 1927, 1929a, 1929b & 1930) outweighed the concerns about the low standards of Irish held by teachers and children and he insisted that the National Programme was successfully implemented in many infant classes and schools. The pedagogical resistance of teachers did have some impact, however, as during the 1926 Second National Conference, there was a minor mitigation in State policy and the teaching of English was permissible for one hour per day. Foucault (1975) challenges the notion that power is only wielded by those in governmental or hierarchical positions of society, viewing it instead as ubiquitous and dispersed. Power imbues all actions and interaction and the power relations between Irish teachers and the State is evidenced by the change in policy, as the challenge and resistance came from within. Given the prominent position that Irish language was afforded, this was a significant change for teachers and young children, but did not preclude an outcomes-based curriculum.

Seeds of an outcomes-based pedagogy

The 1922 curriculum for young children was underpinned by a strictly rigid, Roman Catholic philosophy of education as outlined by the State and Church. Corcoran's theories on 'infant education were inflexibly traditional, with religious teaching permeating all areas of instruction' (O'Connor, 2010, p.192). The interplay between Church and State shaped the curriculum for young children, as the curriculum was a structured, didactic programme that was predicated on the importance of Irish language and teachings of the Church. During this era, Ireland was in a state of upheaval and following the War of Independence, the curriculum reflected the Gaelicisation that was embedded within the State's political, economic and cultural policies. In line with State policy of Gaelicisation, de Valera, as Head of State, and the new Fianna Fáil government, reintroduced the 1922 programme in 1934 (Coolahan, 1984). Emphasis was placed on outcomes and results rather than on the learning process, as de Valera maintained, 'I am less interested in the teacher's method of teaching than I am in the results he achieves, and the test I would apply would be the test of an examination'. (De Valera, Dáil Eireann Proceedings, 1941, Col. 1097). This mantra shaped early years pedagogy as the power exerted by de Valera as Head of State formed the basis of a results-based practice. In the eyes of the State, the result was to develop young children as fluent Irish speakers; in the eyes of the Church, the outcome was to develop young children as devout, moral, religious beings.

The power relations that existed throughout this epoch between the Church and State as governing bodies, and teachers and children as individuals, are complex. They involve individuals as both an object of and subject to power. As we are inscribed in power, because we are constituted by power relations, Foucault (1979) maintains that we cannot challenge

power from outside, pretending that we are acting upon power. Rather, as individuals we have the capacity to challenge power from within, just as teachers did when they resisted the dominance of the Irish language. While teachers attempted to resist the pedagogical changes of the implementation of the curriculum, their protests were largely ignored. The interplay of power between Church and State constructed children as beings born with original sin, who are corrupt in nature and need to be shaped by the teachings of the State and the Church.

Children as corrupt

Corcoran, in keeping with Roman Catholic traditions, viewed each child as corrupt in nature, as every child is born with original sin and, as humans, our nature is to gravitate towards wrongdoing. This sentiment also echoes Wilderspin's (1832) publication on delinquency, crime, and existing evils in infant children (as discussed on p.80). The Church teaches that with the presence of a soul, our minds can be elevated to higher things and our actions can do good. This doctrinal philosophy underpinned the Roman Catholic Church and the State and was embedded in early years pedagogy. Corcoran (1930) reprimanded teachers who looked to other philosophies of education beyond the remit of the Church, as he held that the greatest role of the teacher is to carry out the Christian education of Catholic children.

Corcoran (1930) outlines the Catholic philosophy of education as:

The school chapel, the classroom altar will be the powerhouse of Catholic education within the Catholic school. Power will be transmitted from the centre of energy over the closely textured cable of Religious instruction – dogmatic, moral, historical, scriptural, liturgical. It will be distributed in various ways, according to subjects, according to types of education, according to the age and outlook of students. But for the realisation of Catholic education the power of Catholic truth, supernatural in its whole content, must penetrate every branch of study (p.210).

The emphasis on early years pedagogy in early 20th-century Ireland was the *classroom altar*.

The power of the Catholic Church seeped through every classroom and infant classroom in

Ireland. It did more than seep; in Corcoran's own words, it penetrated every subject, every content, and every school in Ireland. The Catholic Church had an unquestionable, formidable position within Irish culture and society and as such, it controlled the content and form of education for children in Ireland.

In exerting his powerful influence as Professor of Education and priest, Corcoran shifted the ways in which children and pedagogy were constructed. Corcoran represented the powerful coupling of Church and State ideology and rejected the previous constructions of the child as innocent and pure (as presented earlier on p.87). He rebuked 'Rousseau and his tribe of followers' (1925, p. 347) as Rousseau constructed children as innocent and naturally good. This positioning of children conflicted with the teachings of the Church. Throughout the 1920s Corcoran systematically denounced the early childhood pioneers that had influenced the pedagogy of young children in Ireland (pp.72-75) as their constructions of young children differed from the theological philosophy of the Church. In 1924, Corcoran criticised Montessori and argued that if Montessori's approaches and methods, which he described as 'poisoned sources' (p.522), were to be implemented, Irish education would 'be miserable' (p.522). The onslaught on the pioneers continued, and in 1927, he berated Pestalozzi's contributions to early childhood pedagogy, arguing that his 'methods of elementary education was almost inconceivably absurd' (p. 173). Corcoran (1927) diminished Pestalozzi's philosophy, referring to it as 'an absurd programme' and 'absurd methods' attributing Pestalozzi's time in Yverdon as 'an appalling description from the pen of Pestalozzi himself' (p.175). In 1929, Corcoran also castigated Froebelian thinking, declaring it was 'warped by utterly false philosophy of education, and reduced to absurdity by his (Froebel's) futile

mysticism concerning the nature of the child' (p.120). He continues the annihilation of Froebelian philosophy, stating:

...the writings of Froebel and the commentaries of his admirers are by no means always safe material for use in Catholic Training Colleges. On occasion even leading officials in Froebelian organisations are eager to press his moral teachings on others, regardless of their complete falsity (Corcoran, 1929b, p.120).

For Corcoran, and for the Catholic Church, the writings of Froebel and other pioneers were not safe for use in Catholic teacher training colleges, nor in Catholic schools. Corcoran systematically positions their philosophies as morally false and corrupt. The interplay of the power dynamics of the shifting perspectives between those of the pioneers and the Church and State positions children as corrupt in nature. The role of education was thus to become a 'classroom altar' to save children from sin.

Modern pedagogy

Alongside the castigation of the so-called pioneers, Corcoran also attacked modern pedagogy and the use of the new materials they recommended (1929a). He warns of the dangers of modern methods and modern materials. For instance, while discussing active engagement with concrete materials, Corcoran (1929a) contends that 'pupils are never allowed to merely play with the apparatus...the very notion is held intolerable; any such tendency is peremptorily checked' (p.183). He advises that pupils be given very limited freedom, as this 'wrecks character formation in the child' (Corcoran, 1929a, p. 184). Corcoran did not agree with the progressive, active, playful approach, as advised by the pioneers; rather he favoured a didactic, formal approach, where the focus was on education through the Catholic religion and Irish language.

Interlude: Schools as prisons

For much of the opening decades of the 20th century, schools were restrictive, antagonistic institutions, where both the teachers and the curriculum offered to young children were controlled by the State and the Church. The control exerted by the State and Church echoes Foucault's (1979) sentiments when he declares that schools serve the same social functions as prisons and mental institutions - to define, classify, control, and regulate people. Much like a prison, schools in early 20th century Ireland defined, classified, controlled and regulated young children and their lives. In doing so, schools became a pawn for the ideologies of State and Church. From the formation of the Free State and an independent Republic of Ireland, the power held by the Catholic Church was reflected in the philosophy of education for all children in Ireland. For Foucault (1982), the art of government signals the historical emergence of particular types of rule. To govern, in this sense, is 'to structure the possible field of action of others' (Foucault, 2010, p. 341), including the way in which 'the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed' (Foucault, 2010, p. 341). From the beginnings of the 20th century and the formation of the new government in Ireland, it is apparent that the government directed not only the conduct of schools, but also the curriculum and pedagogy. With this new government, a new type of governance emerged. Given the fragmented system of early childhood education and care that exists in Ireland today (as is presented in Chapter 4), it is my belief that the origins of this fracturing stems from the birth of the government. This sentiment echoes the title of Foucault's 'birth of the prison' (as discussed on p.54) and it seems to me that the birth of our government emulated the birth of the prison, with its restrictions, barriers and lack of freedom for young children in Irish classrooms.

Infecting Irish children in Irish classrooms

The State and Church formed a formidable partnership in 20th century Ireland. This coupling penetrated all aspects of life, specifically the education of young children. The rejection of progressive pedagogy and the descent of the work and influence of the pioneers emerged, as they did not reflect the image of the child as perceived by Church and State. While the battle for early childhood pedagogy was being fought elsewhere, including Europe and America, the philosophies of education were described as infecting the philosophy needed for Irish children in Irish classrooms (Corcoran, 1930). Corcoran's dogmatic beliefs demonstrate how power shaped and influenced pedagogy and curriculum for young children in Ireland for the following decades. O'Connor (2004) believes that Corcoran's antagonism towards the more progressive pioneers of early childhood education is one of the reasons that the structures established in 1900, which advocated for a child-centred curriculum, were not reflected in the schools programmes of the Irish Free State. The Irish language revival created a barrier to the development of progressive early years pedagogy in Ireland. Corcoran's thinking reflected Irish society in the opening decades of the 20th century, he consistently deconstructed and contested the enlightened, progressive thinking of our European and American comrades. The era of looking to our European counterparts for guidance and inspiration for early years pedagogy, as presented in Chapter 2, was eradicated. Paradoxically, the introduction of the Free State had a detrimental effect on early years curriculum, wherein children lacked freedom in schools and schools were more akin to prisons.

With the condemnation of the so-called pioneers of early childhood education and the curriculum for young children having been determined by the Church and the State, early years pedagogy was in a precarious position at the very time that provision was being

expanded. Dissatisfaction with the content, approach, and method of education provided by primary schools was being raised in many forums (INTO, 1985). However, the power imposed by the State and the Church dismantled the construction of the child as an innocent, good being, and what remained was the image of a child as immature and malleable. It seems to me that perhaps the Church and the State feared children's potential and colluded together to ensure that children would remain governed by them, and in doing so, the Church and State preserved their construction of the next generation of Irish citizens.

Children as *tabula rasa*

In the decades following independence, the Irish government developed a parochial, insular approach to children's learning and development. The State and the Church continued to dominate the education system. At a macro level, the State exercised its sovereign power by retaining control over the curriculum with its nationalistic focus. At a micro level, the Catholic Church maintained its disciplinary power by controlling schools through the management and ownership of schools. This positioning of children suppressed the developments from the previous century and echoed the 17th century where Locke presented the image of the child as *tabula rasa* or blank slate (Moseley, 2007). This level of power and control determined what and how young children learned. Walsh (2005) maintains that 'the 1948 programme aspired to give children a vernacular command of Irish with the intention that Irish would become the sole language of the infant school as early as possible' (p. 261). Aside from the focus on Irish language and religion, there was little evidence of other types of learning or other content knowledge and little regard for the children as individuals (DoE, 1948). As such, the curriculum for young children was narrow and rigid and was the vehicle for the promotion of the government's political, cultural and nationalistic objectives. Walsh (2005) argues that:

there was a strong emphasis on didactic teaching and punishment, emanating from the belief in the doctrine of original sin. There is much evidence from this period that school life was often difficult and joyless for the child (p. 263).

The cyclical nature of didactic teaching and punishment determined young children's joyless experiences of learning. The Irish State and Church positioned young children in the 20th century as *tabula rasa* or malleable clay. Corcoran's legacy continued to exercise power over pedagogy, as children were perceived as learners that needed to be shaped and moulded by the educated adult, which echoes the Catholic belief of forming or moulding the child (DoE, 1948). The progressive movements of the late 18th and 19th centuries were suppressed. What remained was an image of the child as powerless, burdened with original sin, and the Church, State, and adults as all-powerful beings and entities. Not only is power infused and distributed around the child, but also within the child in terms of their subjugation.

Interlude: Children as docile bodies

While thinking about the construction of an Irish child during this epoch, it echoes Foucault's description of the soldier from the early seventeenth century:

Let us take the ideal figure of the soldier as it was still seen in the early seventeenth century. To begin with, the soldier was someone who could be recognized from afar; he bore certain signs: the natural signs of his strength and his courage, the marks, too, of his pride; his body was the blazon of his strength and valour; and although it is true that he had to learn the profession of arms little by little - generally in actual fighting - movements like marching and attitudes like the bearing of the head belonged for the most part to a bodily rhetoric of honour; 'The signs for recognizing those most suited to this profession are a lively, alert manner, an erect head, a taut stomach, broad shoulders, long arms, strong fingers, a small belly, thick thighs, slender legs and dry feet, because a man of such a figure could not fail to be agile and strong (Foucault, 1979, p. 135).

In the 17th century, the ideal figure of the soldier was someone who was brave and proud. Their ability to be recognised had little to do with their ability to fight; rather the soldier could

be recognised from afar by their movements - their posture, their ability to march and their attitudes. The 17th century soldier had to be selected due to the merits that they possessed. In a similar way, the late 19th century Irish child was distinct and easily recognisable by their posture, attitude and demeanour in Irish classrooms. In Foucault's image of the soldier, the late 18th century brought about a change, in that the soldier is now something that can be formed and constructed. Unlike the 17th century soldier that existed in its own right, the 18th century soldier can be created:

By the late eighteenth century, the soldier has become something that can be made; out of a formless clay, an inapt body, the machine required can be constructed; posture is gradually corrected; a calculated constraint runs slowly through each part of the body, mastering it, making it pliable, ready at all times, turning silently into the automatism of habit; in short, one has 'got rid of the peasant' and given him 'the air of a soldier*' (ordinance of 20 March 1764). Recruits become accustomed to 'holding their heads high and erect; to standing upright, without bending the back, to sticking out the belly, throwing out the chest and throwing back the shoulders; and, to help them acquire the habit, they are given this position while standing against a wall in such a way that the heels, the thighs, the waist and the shoulders touch it, as also do the backs of the hands, as one turns the arms outwards, without moving them away from the body. . . Likewise, they will be taught never to fix their eyes on the ground, but to look straight at those they pass . . . to remain motionless until the order is given, without moving the head, the hands or the feet. . . lastly to march with a bold step, with knee and ham taut, on the points of the feet, which should face outwards' (ordinance of 20 March 1764) (Foucault, 1979, pp. 135-136).*

The 18th century soldier did not need to exist as the soldier can be formed, he can be taught to stand, to march, and to respond to orders. Just like the late 18th century image of the soldier, young children in the 20th century did not need to exist, as they were moulded and shaped by the sovereign and disciplinary power exerted on them by the State and the Church. The way in which the State exercised control over young children demonstrates what Foucault referred to as governmentality, which will be discussed in Chapter 4.

A function of governmentality is how the nation is best controlled. The sovereign power exhibited by the Irish State and Church controlled not only the curricula for young children, but the training of teachers and the language in which the children were instructed. By shaping children in this way, young children resembled Foucault's 18th century image of a soldier - a body that was moulded and shaped from a formless, inept body to standing upright. Just like the soldier learning to stand upright, to march in unison, and to remain motionless until an order is given, young children in Ireland learned how to behave and how to function in a classroom. The uncontested power of the Church permeated children's social and cultural spaces, thus reinforcing disciplinary power. Although the State had achieved political freedom and independence in the 1920s, it positioned children as docile bodies:

A body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved...A 'political anatomy', which was also a 'mechanics of power, was being born; it defined how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines. Thus discipline produces subjected and practised bodies, docile bodies (Foucault, 1979, p. 135).

The discipline exhibited by the newly formed government constructs children as docile bodies. In fact, the Irish government created docile bodies, a function of governmentality and a form of disciplinary power. The child, or the docile body, is being shaped and trained, just like the soldier. The image of political anatomy is an important one, and Foucault (1979) argues that 'the invention of this new political anatomy must not be seen as a sudden discovery... they were at work ...in primary schools...' (p.138). In other words, primary schools as an institution promote a particular form of societal order, as children's bodies are controlled by others; by the teachers working with them, and in turn the government who control the teachers. The positioning of young children as docile bodies dominates the early childhood pedagogy of the

1922 and 1948 curricula, wherein children were perceived as something to be moulded out of achromatic, dull, malleable clay.

Post-war construction of the child

Post-war Ireland was at an economic, political and societal standstill. Ireland missed out on the post-war European economic boom, with living standards stagnating and thousands of people emigrating. One of the main reasons for Ireland's omission from the boom was due to the legacy of de Valera's economic policies from the 1930s. One such policy was the protectionist policy, which was devised to protect Irish agricultural produce, to develop native industry and to move away from our over-dependence on Britain. However, the policy introduced tariffs on imported goods (mainly from Britain) and led to unilateral trade restrictions, causing severe damage to the Irish economy (Neary & Ó Gráda, 1991). In this period of economic instability and uncertainty, Irish pedagogues turned to the stability and the scientific rationale of developmental psychology. This shift in thinking occurred both national and internationally, as Bloch (1992) argues that the scientific approach to child development generated early childhood pedagogies is directly linked to the field's desire to be considered professional at that time:

In an effort to be scientific and professional, early childhood education professors appeared to emulate child psychology, varying in the constancy of their attention to early childhood education and pedagogy issues (Bloch, 1992, p.15).

Early years pedagogy thus became a vehicle for the professionalisation of the sector in order to provide much needed stability. The focus of pedagogy was not on the child per se, rather, on the clinical, scientific data that developmental psychology could deliver. Developmental psychology also provides a framework for regulating families, children, and child-rearing practices as the influence of the state extended into the private lives of children via

welfarism. This regulation of children and their families will be described in greater detail in relation to governmentality, governance and neoliberalism in Chapter 4.

The *Revised Programme for Infants 1948* endeavoured to present new ways of thinking about young children's learning and development. Ideologically, this curriculum shifted thinking away from the prescriptive, dogmatic curriculum of the 1920s and attempted to offer a new construction of the child as a learner. This construction was influenced by developmental psychology, which viewed learning as centred on the child. Yet this ideology and programme for infants was more rhetoric than reality. Indeed, Walsh (2016) maintains that the programme was merely an ideological framework and the 1922 curriculum framed in 1922 remained the predominant pedagogy for the following 50 years in Ireland. Hence, the conceptualisation of the child as learner remained one that 'needed to be filled with knowledge, to be moulded into perfection by strict discipline and the amassing of vast quantities of factual data' (Walsh, 2016, p. 6). O'Connor (2010) concludes that 'it is clear that the policy of the Irish Free State government set up in 1922 was to use schools and especially the infant classes as the main weapon in the fight for the restoration of the Irish language' (p.222). The Irish Free State continued to force the burden of the restoration of the Irish language and culture on infant teachers.

The national aim to produce native Irish speakers throughout the 26 counties of the Irish State was never realised. The time dedicated to the language meant that young children experienced a narrow curriculum during the first half of the 20th century. The curriculum was controlled by the State and devised from a political and nationalistic standpoint, where the influence of the Church and the State governed what and how young children learned. It was

not until the curriculum was reformed in 1971 that the influence of developmental psychologists was discernible (DoE, 1971a and 1971b).

Curriculum reform

The curriculum programme framed in 1922 remained the official curriculum of the school system until 1971, with only some changes implemented over the 50-year span. There were many societal, cultural and political factors that predicted a shift in ideology and reform in curriculum and pedagogy, from that of the 1922 programme to the 1971 curriculum. Most notably, Ireland's aspiration to join the European Economic Community increased economic inflation, the age of free post-primary education, and the prospect of equality of educational opportunity (Hyland, 2014). Alongside these hierarchical moves towards reform, there was also a demand from teachers as they argued, 'we feel that Government should show more courage and vision in its approach to education, and that progress has been hindered' (INTO, 1947, p.7). This call for reform was presented alongside teachers' plans for education, as they found the current education system 'defective in its almost complete absence of provision for educational research, and its failure to keep teachers in touch with educational thought in other lands' (INTO, 1947, p.13). This statement highlights teachers' resistance to the education system and curriculum and it also alludes to Government movement towards looking beyond our isle for educational research and philosophy.

Teachers demanded reform and pursued this agenda with the Government, arguing, 'there must be a reform of our educational system if we are to survive as a nation' (INTO, 1947, p.15). Interestingly, teachers' plans for a reformed education system remained imbued with the doctrines of the Catholic Church, as teachers maintained that the plan must meet 'the

needs of our children and of the country they live in but also with the enduring principles of Christian philosophy' (INTO, 1947, p.4). This move by teachers to transform the education system, but to ensure it was underpinned by religious philosophy, demonstrates how disciplinary power was at work and how teachers were self-governing. After decades of curriculum and pedagogy being imbued with the doctrines of the Catholic Church, teachers, while resisting the curriculum and the education system, were now demanding that the religious principles and philosophy be maintained. Foucault (1979) argues that:

Traditionally, power was what was seen, what was shown and what was manifested...Disciplinary power, on the other hand, is exercised through its invisibility; at the same time it imposes on those whom it subjects a principle of compulsory visibility. In discipline, it is the subjects who have to be seen. Their visibility assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. It is this fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection. And the examination is the technique by which power, instead of emitting the signs of its potency, instead of imposing its mark on its subjects, holds them in a mechanism of objectification. In this space of domination, disciplinary power manifests its potency, essentially by arranging objects. The examination is, as it were, the ceremony of this objectification (p.187).

Disciplinary power, although exercised through its invisibility, imposes upon those who have visibility. The disciplinary power exercised by teachers during the epoch of curriculum reform unmask its potency by assuring the hold of power by the State and Church. This demand by teachers, alongside economic changes, forced the government to revise the curriculum.

This movement was shortly followed by the introduction of *Notes for Teachers* in 1951, which indicated a return to the more child-centred curriculum of the earlier years of the previous century. Teachers of infant classes were asked to recognise that individual differences should be recognised and catered for (Walsh, 2016) as *Notes for Teachers* stated:

The purpose of the infant school is to provide for young children the environment opportunities and activities most favourable to their full development. Infant

teaching if it is to be successful, must be based on the young child's instinctive urge to play, to talk, to imitate, to manipulate materials, to make and do things (Department of Education, 1951, p.3).

These small notes gave an insight into the major curriculum reform that was to occur over the following decade and, for the first time in decades, children's intrinsic motivation to play, talk and active learning was foregrounded. The Irish economy continued to be prosperous during the 1960s and this supported more investment and resources for schools. Ireland's accession to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1969 forced a major review of curriculum and pedagogy by the State.

Momentum continues

The 1960s witnessed an era of rapid economic and social change and development. Fleming and Harford (2014) refer to the 1960s as a 'decade of transformation that emerged following a period of inertia and insularity in Irish education, ...(and) is widely regarded by scholars as representing a paradigm shift in education policy' (p.635). A key reason for this shift, O'Sullivan (1992) argues, is that prior to this period 'the sociology of educational discourse, particularly as a cultural product' has been ignored (pp.423-444). The INTO (1996) reasons 'cultural nationalism ceased to be the dominant ideology' (p.14) during the 1960s, leading to the realisation that the education system needed radical reform. Hyland (2014) supports this position, asserting that the changes in economic and cultural life in the 1960s affected the education system.

Walsh (2005) argues that the radical reform of the Primary School Curriculum was in tandem with the latest thinking about children, particularly child development. The alignment of the education system with the needs of an expanding economy (Coolahan, 1984; Walsh, 2005)

was both revolutionary and necessary. There was growing public interest in education and it was positioned as a means of mobility to access Europe and beyond. Many reports influenced the redevelopment of the education system in Ireland, for instance, the *Investment in Education* (Department of Education, 1965), *Curriculum Improvement and Education Development* (OECD, 1966), and the *OECD Report* (1969). In relation to the *Investment in Education* (1965) report, O'Connor (2014) outlines its defining impact on the genealogy of education, 'to the extent that its publication in 1965 marks what in retrospect was a clear turning point distinguishing the first half-century of Irish independence from the second' (p.193). The INTO (1996) highlights with the publication of these reports 'the climate was ripe for a radical reappraisal of the primary curriculum' (p.14) which included 4-7-year olds, but did not cater for children younger than four years of age.

A report published by the OECD recognised the failings of the education system, stating that 'Ireland is faced with the necessity to carry out a thorough reform of its educational system' (OECD, 1969, p.47). This comment acted as a catalyst for review, when the State realised that our education system was not of the same standard as our European counterparts and that reform was necessary if our education system, and subsequently our citizens, could be comparable to European standards. The Department of Education (1967) noted that the curriculum:

...tends to treat children as if they were identical, environment as if it were irrelevant, and subject content as if it were easily defined. Its greatest fault, perhaps, is that it fails to look on education as a trail of discovery, enrichment and understanding for the growing child, and sees it instead as a logical structure containing conveniently differentiated parts which may be imposed by adults on children (p.40).

This statement acknowledges not only the unsuitability of the former curriculum, but it also alludes to the disciplinary power embedded within the curriculum, both in terms of content and the relationship between the teachers and children.

The introduction of *Notes for Teachers* was shortly followed by *Circular 11/60*, giving infant teachers the choice between using Irish as a medium of instruction and having it as a subject only (Department of Education, 1960). This move signified the State relinquishing its power in relation to the Irish language and a realisation on the part of the Government that to gain accession to the European Community, and for the Irish education system to be comparable with its European counterparts, Irish children needed to be competent and confident in the English language. When speaking of the art of governing, Foucault (2010) claims:

Basically, when the problem of government arises in the Imperial epoch as not only a problem of the government of the city, but also of the government of the entire Empire, and when this imperial government is in the hands of a sovereign whose wisdom is an absolutely fundamental element of political action, then the all-powerful sovereign will need to have at his disposal *a logos*, a reason, a rational way of saying and thinking things. But to support and establish his discourse he will need the discourse of someone else as guide and guarantee, someone who will inevitably be weaker than him and who, if necessary will have to take the risk of turning to him and telling him what injustice he has committed. The discourse of the weak telling of the injustice of the strong is an indispensable condition for the strong to be able to govern in accordance with the discourse of human reason (p.136).

The power exerted on curriculum and pedagogy by the Irish Government positioned them as the all-powerful sovereign, but to establish discourses, the Government needs the support of someone weaker, in this case teachers. The discourse of the weak (teachers) speaking out against the injustice of the education system to the strong (government) is, Foucault argues, an indispensable condition for the strong to be able to govern within the discourse of human reason. In 1967, the curriculum was thus reviewed to reflect the coming of a new age, a more modern Ireland as part of a wider European community. A new curriculum was formally

introduced in primary schools in 1971 and teachers received two substantial handbooks, *Curaclam na Bunscoile, Cuid 1*, and *Curaclam na Bunscoile, Cuid 2* (The Primary School Curriculum, Books 1 and 2), in which the principles and practice of the new curriculum were outlined.

Relinquishing control?

Although the 11/60 circular presented teachers with a choice of having Irish as the medium of instruction or as a subject, the title of the 1971 curriculum in Irish illuminates how the disciplinary power exerted by the government was still evident. By giving the entire curriculum a title in Irish, subliminal disciplinary power is still exercised by the government invisibly. While Irish was still a predominant focus of the 1971 curriculum, the curriculum represented a significant ideological shift for early years pedagogy. Walsh (2016) maintains the curriculum was a:

...radical departure in ideological position, content and methodology from its predecessor...as it represented a seismic shift in state policy and attitude towards education of children...It was underpinned by the ideology of child-centred education, offering a wide range of subjects and encouraging discovery learning methods (p.8).

Given that the ideology of Pestalozzi and others had been so forcefully rejected (as presented earlier on p.97), this new approach to child-centred education predominantly drew on developmental psychology (Department of Education, 1971a and 1971b). Walsh (2016) extends his argument further, identifying the primary reason for the seismic shift in ideology as 'while the core subjects of English, Irish, mathematics and religion remained, the relative focus on these subjects altered, with a greater emphasis placed on the English language' (p.8), subjects such as social and environmental studies, physical education, art and craft, and music were also included. I believe this movement creates a new assemblage, including

developmental psychology combined with subject-centred teaching and some acknowledgement of child-centred approaches. This curriculum reform emphasised a move towards a broader educational system for the emerging construct of the global child.

The global child

The principles of the 1971 curriculum reflected Ireland's move towards becoming part of the European community. The curriculum espoused its educational values as 'primarily about the kind of fully realised human being that each child has the potential to become. Such an approach to education can equip children for life, for citizenship of the nation or of Europe and in the process, for work' (INTO, 1996, pp.3-4). In doing so, it reflected a more European, globalised construction of the child. The focus was not so much on the child as a vehicle for Irish language and culture; rather, the emphasis was on the child being equipped with the skills needed to join a wider, more global community and workforce. The 1971 curriculum was closely followed by Ireland's accession into the European Economic Community (1st January 1973). O'Donoghue and Hartford (2011) maintain that the central role played by the Catholic Church in primary school pedagogy was beginning to lessen as a new wave of politicians began to assert their role in education policy and the focus had shifted towards globalisation and on preparing Irish children to be part of a European community. From a Foucauldian perspective, the introduction of the 1971 curriculum may have had less pedagogical influence from the Catholic Church, but early childhood pedagogy was still controlled by the State and schools continued to be managed and controlled by the Church. The interplay of new discourses of subjectivity and globalisation are evidenced by this shift.

Alongside the ambition of the global child, the principles underpinning *Curaclam na Bunscoile* 1971 gave due recognition to the learning process rather than the product to be learned (INTO, 1995b, p.32). From a pedagogical perspective, 'all knowledge and experiences are organised and made meaningful' for young children (Department of Education, 1971a, p.19). Both the principles and content of the 1971 curriculum 'were greatly influenced by the work of Piaget' (INTO, 1995b, p. 14). It was evident, that in the post-war era and the ambition to become part of the European community, the 1971 curriculum was greatly influenced by Piagetian thinking as it offered structure, stability and scientific thinking (Ginsburg & Opper, 1979) in an era of significant ideological change.

Interlude: The order of things

While reflecting on the need to create stability and order, I recalled a passage in Foucault's 'The Order of Things' (1966). When describing his inspiration for the book, Foucault recounts his experiences of the writer Jorge Luis Borges. In response to Wilkins' proposed universal language based on a classification system, Borges described an example of an alternate taxonomy of animals, taken from a Chinese encyclopaedia, to illustrate the arbitrariness and cultural specificity to attempt to categorise language. While reading the taxonomy of animals, which were categorized by: (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) suckling pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs and so on, Foucault laughed in wonderment of the taxonomy (Foucault, 1966). He was lured into the charm of a system of thought (the classification of animals), breaking up all the ordered surfaces of existing things. While Foucault (1966) concedes that each of these strange categories can be assigned a precise meaning, some of them involve elements of the fantastical alongside those that are real. In a similar way, I too aim to break up all the ordered existing tenants of early years pedagogy. As

early years pedagogues, we have often been charmed into a system of reason, a regime of truth, a particular order of things. Historically, the early childhood pioneers, including Montessori and Froebel, all have their orthodoxies and systems of thought, which represent an order of things, in which some form of control of children's minds and bodies was implicit. Like Foucault, they were lured by the stability and certainty that each regime offered. In searching for this stability in mid-20th century Ireland, we turned to developmental psychologists. In a period of deep depression, uncertainty and instability, early childhood pedagogues turned to developmental psychologists for stability, structure and certainty. This movement and shift in thinking created a post-war construction of the child as the scientific rationale aligned with post-war modernism. Developmental psychology thus had the appeal of normalisation and a particular order of things. Foucault (1979) argues that central to the processes of classification is the concept of normalisation as a standard that unifies practice, or indeed pedagogy. Foucault (1979) continues by maintaining that 'normalisation becomes one of the great instruments of power at the end of the classical age' (p.184) and I argue normalisation became a key tenet of the Irish education system for the latter part of the 20th century.

Ideological shifts

In her Foucauldian analysis of the application of Piaget's theory in primary school practice, Walkerdine (1984) views the production of the truth of developmental psychology as specific to a set of educational practices that are *normalising* in that they constitute 'a mode of observation and surveillance and production of children' (p. 195). As such, Walkerdine (1984) argues that primary education becomes a form of covert reproduction under liberal reform

and it is the scientific claims to *truth* that were so effective in producing practices that were otherwise castigated from both left and right as 'ideological'. The construction of the child as part of a European and global community, alongside the influences of developmental psychologists, resulted in ideological shifts in the 1971 curriculum, both in terms of content and pedagogy. This discourse enacts power over local cultures and practices and is evidenced by the pedagogical framing of *Curaclam na Bunscoile* in 1971. This curriculum development reflected Piagetian thinking which focused on exploration, discovery and the use of concrete materials. Piaget (1953, 1973) was concerned with developmental activity, and in the actions and interactions of each individual child with the world. The inclusion of Piagetian ideology mirrored the international trend, as Cunningham (2006) argues, that there was 'a distinctive shift in teacher-child relationships over that historical period and some illustration of the contribution made to this by psychological theory, epitomised in the towering figure of Piaget and in his focus on the individual learner' (p.15). Indeed, the 1971 curriculum was underpinned by constructivist theory and positioned children as individuals who construct their own knowledge from their actions and interactions with different environments. One of the most notable shifts was the emphasis on the English language. Given the power with which the Irish language was imbued in the opening decades of the 20th century, Irish was now referred to as a second language, as most schools in Ireland had become English medium schools. This marked a move from a position where English had 'no place' whatsoever in the curriculum (Corcoran, 1923a, p.27) in the earlier decades of the 20th century, to a point where English, for the majority of schools, was the primary language and a designated curriculum subject. This move signified a key ideological shift. This 'dramatic change' (INTO, 1985/6, p.6) signified the loosening of the powerful grip that the State had over early years curriculum and pedagogy heretofore and a repositioning of the relationship between local and national State

bodies. The new curriculum 'presented a well-defined programme in Irish' but 'clearly there was no expectation that Irish would be the sole language of the infant child' (INTO, 1985/6, p.6). Rather, the intention of this new curriculum was a child-centred approach to children's learning, as opposed to the subject-centred approach that existed previously. For the first time in decades, the child, as opposed to the Church or the State, was placed at the centre of their learning. This move signified a shift in the pendulum of power, as it moved from the powerful coupling of the Church and State in favour of the child. However, the Church and State continued to exert disciplinary power over young children in terms of its normalising, observation and surveillance of young children.

A further significant change in the 1971 curriculum was a reiteration of a more contemporary perspective of play which reflected the ideologies of developmental psychologists. For young children in infant classes, the curriculum recommended that learning was to be organised around play activities (Department of Education, 1971a and 1971b). The potential of play to enhance the child's cognitive, social, linguistic, creative, and physical development was to be exploited (Gol, 1999a). In the 1971 curriculum, play had a specific conceptualisation as a context for curriculum delivery, including language (both Irish and English), Mathematics, Visual Arts, Music, and Nature studies. The curriculum did not recognise children's agency as players; rather it viewed play as a mode through which to deliver the curriculum. This move positioned play as a structured approach to support children's cognitive development, rather than recognise the value of play in its own right. While the 1971 curriculum aimed to be child-centred and offered a wider range of subjects to young children, much like Rousseau's *Émile*, it was more of a blueprint than a reality. While these ideological shifts symbolised changes in dynamics in power relations between local, national and international agendas, young

children continued to experience a structured, didactic approach to learning, which focused on outcomes and the need to construct children for a rapidly changing Irish society. One further ideological shift that impacted on the genealogy of early years pedagogy is the influence of neoliberalism.

The influence of neoliberalism on early childhood pedagogy

Piagetian influences are implicitly evident in the 1971 curriculum as developmental psychology became the new tenet of knowledge for early childhood education as part of a national and international agenda (Cunningham, 2006). It became the new *truth* and paved the pathway for a new conceptualisation of the child. This conception was predicated on a scientific construction of the child, of children and childhoods. Ball (2017) argues:

late modern pedagogy involves a move from 'reading' the child as a surface, to a depth psychology whereby the child is measured and known through the techniques of testing – uncovering the truth of the child. We find ability or intelligence, as an effect or articulation of the norm, produced at the heart of schooling, the very point at which teaching could articulate a form of knowledge (p.17).

Ball (2017) continues by questioning if this type of pedagogy is a pedagogy at all? The 1971 curriculum espoused principles such as the full and harmonious development of the child, with due allowances made for individual differences, the central importance of activity and guided-discovery learning through activities related to the child's environment. While the curriculum appeared to adopt a child-centred approach to teaching and learning, the State later admitted its role in education as 'part of its overall concern to achieve economic prosperity, social well-being and a good quality of life' (Department of Education and Skills (DES), 1995, p.6). Subsequently, the State, once again, positions itself as the dominant force in early childhood curriculum and pedagogy, as its primary goal was to achieve economic prosperity. In doing so, the State exhibits its sovereign power over young children's learning

as the emphasis shifted from the early 20th century, where the predominant goal was to revive the Irish language and culture, to the 1970s where the goal was to adapt the education system so as to build human capital in order to build economic capital. The State later conceded that this was its intention:

The development of the education and skills of people is as important a source of wealth as the accumulation of more traditional forms of capital. National and international bodies have identified the central role of education and training as one of the critical sources of economic and social well-being in modern society. This is the logical outcome of the increasing centrality of knowledge and skills in shaping economic organisation and national competitiveness (DES, 1995, p.6).

Ball (2017) refers to this as a type of neoliberal pedagogy and maintains that in doing so 'the classroom has been brought back into a direct and very visible relation to docility and productivity and security. The classroom door has been forced open once more to enable the tying of the school every more directly to the accumulation of capital' (p.23). From the introduction of the 1971 curriculum, the classroom has been brought back into a direct relation to docility (as described earlier on pp.102-105) as the classroom became the context for the accumulation of capital and economic success.

The fruits of this neoliberal pedagogy were evidenced by the 1974 curriculum survey by the INTO. This was the first attempt of evaluating the 1971 curriculum and teachers recognised that 'changing circumstances in a changing world make new demands on educational systems' (INTO, 1974, p.23). Teachers were displeased with these changing circumstances and changing systems, however, as the children's results, apart from English, did not reflect the normalisation and outcomes teachers expected:

The subjective opinion of teachers is that Irish has disimproved in every subdivision except in Irish reading. The disimprovement is very marked in Irish spelling.

Understanding of mathematical concepts shows a great improvement whereas 'memorisation of number facts' shows a marked disimprovement (INTO, 1974, p.11).

This movement exemplifies a shift in discourse away from a measurement of policy as the means by which teachers and children become *knowable*. In other words, the comprehension of facts and the retention of figures became the new measurement by which children (and teachers) were deemed successful. Teachers believed the Irish language suffered as a consequence of the new curriculum and children's ability for rote memorisation also deteriorated. However, teachers had a resolution for this problem, that 'children should have more supervision and discipline than they appear to get' (INTO, 1974, p.8). This sentiment echoes Foucauldian thinking as issues of surveillance, panopticism, and discipline are brought to the fore. This cyclical process is a continuation of what went before but in a different form. The pull of tradition appeared to be stronger than the push for globalisation and modernisation. Disciplinary power is evidenced in teachers' governing of classrooms, increased surveillance and increased discipline. As teachers were disappointed by the decline in Irish, paradoxically, the solution was not to adapt the pedagogy from rote learning and memorisation of facts; rather to increase classroom discipline and surveillance. Foucault (1979) positioned teachers as judges of normalisation when he claimed:

The judges of normality are present everywhere. We are in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge, the social worker-judge; it is on them that the universal reign of the normative is based; and each individual, wherever he may find himself, subjects to it his body, his gestures, his behavior [*sic*], his aptitudes, his achievements (p.304).

Curriculum in Ireland hence became imbued with issues of normalisation, surveillance and discipline within a culture of neoliberal pedagogy. The positioning power of norms and normalisation within developmental psychology continues to have its own effects on producing normalised childhoods and docile bodies.

Conclusion

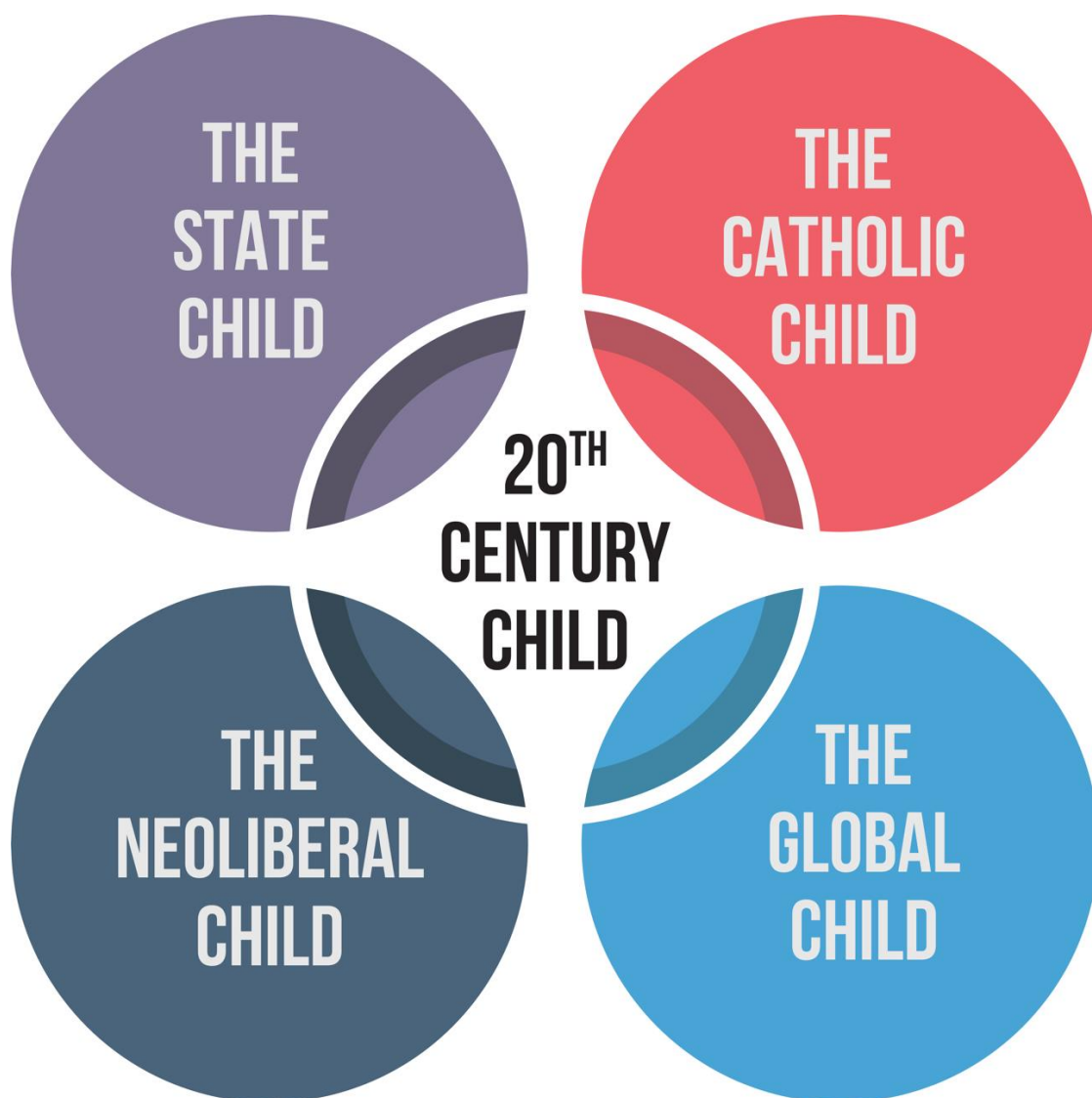
Chapter 3 presents the genealogy of early years pedagogy from the 1900s to 1970s. This *épistème* reflects continuity and change as a dialectical process within the education system. The turn of the 20th century witnessed the formation of the new Irish education system, bringing new forms of knowledge and power. Foucault (1972) comments on education systems:

Education may well be, as of right, the instrument whereby every individual, in a society like our own, can gain access to any kind of discourse. But we well know that in its distribution, in what it permits and in what it prevents, it follows the well-trodden battle-lines of social conflict. Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it (p.227).

The Irish education system in the 20th century was a political means of both maintaining and modifying the appropriation of discourse. The discourse of the opening decades of the 20th century consisted of an Irish language revival and the preservation of Irish language and culture, ideologies which infiltrated the Irish education system. Infant children were specifically targeted by the State as a beacon of hope for the Gaelic revival. Young children were, as Foucault (1979) describes, ‘political puppets’ (p.136). The latter part of the 20th century appropriated a discourse of normalisation, globalisation and neoliberal influences on the economy and education. This discourse impacts on the content of the curriculum and pedagogical approaches for young children. This chapter demonstrates how power, in all its sources and forms, produced early years pedagogy from the 1900s to 1970s in Ireland and how schools, curriculum, and pedagogy in 20th century Ireland were neither neutral nor independent. In an era of immense change for Ireland, the struggle for continuity alongside

the push for change created competing discourses. Change and continuity as key concepts in a dialectical process, i.e. the emergence and descent of pedagogy, are evidenced in Ireland in this period and will be further delineated in Chapter 4. These societal movements led to a particular construction of Irish children. Throughout this epoch, children were constructed as the State Child, the Catholic Child, the Neoliberal Child, and the Global Child, as Figure 4 portrays.

Figure 4: The Construction of the Child in the 20th Century



As this image depicts, the 20th century witnessed multiple constructions of the child, all of which contrasted with the previous construction of the *Romantic Child*. From the outset of the 20th century, the child was predominantly viewed as a vehicle for the promotion of political, cultural, religious and nationalistic objectives of the newly formed State. As such, the child was viewed as the State Child, a means for reviving the Irish culture and language, with little attention to individual needs or interests. Alongside this sovereign power exerted by the State and the Church, via the influence of Corcoran, the classroom became an altar and children were viewed as moral, devout beings who were to be taught in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church. This positioning of children in these ways led to the construction of the Catholic Child. During this period there was a strong emphasis on didactic teaching, which resulted in joyless experiences for young children in schools. Child-centred pedagogy suffered, as it was not premised on the needs of young children; rather, pedagogy was formed based on the needs of State and Church. The focus on the Irish language and the preservation of cultural heritage remained the predominant feature of the early years curriculum until the 1960s. It was only when the State realised the weaknesses of the curriculum, and the subsequent injustices that young children had to endure, that the government decided to reform the curriculum. The subsequent curriculum in 1971 aimed to address the previous failings; however, the focus of the government was on globalisation, marketisation and economic prosperity and this discourse manifested itself in the construction of the child as the Neoliberal Child. During the 1960s, with Ireland's accession into the European Community and the OECD, along with the resistance to the curriculum, there was a need to educate children for a global world, therefore the construction of the Global Child was created.

Throughout the 20th century, the Irish State, together with the Church, governed the curriculum and the pedagogical framing of curricula for young children. Foucault (2010) believes that 'governing properly will mean that one is able to govern by utilizing two resources. First phobos (fear). Those who govern must make fear reign over those who are governed, and they will do this by demonstrating their strength' (p.273). While teachers did demonstrate some resistance to 20th-century pedagogy for young children, the Irish government demonstrated its sovereign power and total control over early years pedagogy. In establishing its strength, the government produced early years pedagogy, and in doing so, power produced reality for young children in Ireland. As Foucault (1979) maintains, 'power produces, it produces reality' (p.194).

Chapter 4

A history of the present

Ireland's insularity since the formation of the Free State began to subside in the 1970s by virtue of Ireland's accession to the EU and the shifting focus of the government to create a modern workforce for a modern Ireland. There was a growing public interest in the education system, and a need to align the education system with the needs of an economy that was growing exponentially (Walsh, 2005). On the basis of the OECD's recommendation 'to carry out a thorough reform of its educational system' (OECD, 1969, p.47), the 1971 curriculum was reviewed. As part of the review, teachers were surveyed on the success of the implementation of the curriculum and how it could be improved or reformed (INTO, 1974). Other societal, economic and political factors led to the reappraisal of the curriculum, such as the women's movement, pluralism, and the economic climate. This chapter presents a discursive account of the interplay of power within these movements and how it shaped curriculum and pedagogy for young children in Ireland from the 1970s to present day.

After the review of the 1971 curriculum, the 1990s witnessed an economic boom. This impacted on the education system, with the interplay of a changing Ireland, marketisation, governmentality, and neoliberalism. The State and Church continued to present a united front and a shared agenda, although this chapter describes the shift from the Church's dominant position of power to that of a more disciplinary nature. These shifts influenced early years pedagogy and subsequently shaped the revised *Primary School Curriculum* (GoI, 1999a) and *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009). This chapter analyses these movements using a Foucauldian lens and in doing so, it presents a *history of the present* early years pedagogy in Ireland.

Interlude: A history of the present

This research traces the genealogy of how power shapes early years pedagogy. This research stems from my interest in how particular societal, political, governmental and economic discourses shape early years pedagogy in particular épistèmes. Foucault explains in an interview in 1984, 'I set out from a problem expressed in the terms current today and I try to work out its genealogy. Genealogy means that I begin my analysis from a question posed in the present' (Kritzman, 1988, p. 262). I realise that I need to unveil the genealogy of early years pedagogy in order to reveal my question posed in the present. In doing so, I will present what Foucault refers to as the 'history of the present'.

The phrase 'history of the present' appears in the final line of the opening chapter of 'Discipline and Punish' (Foucault, 1979, p. 31). In this chapter, Foucault (1979) views the modern prison as part of the 'political technology of the body' (p.24), not in terms of recalling penal history, but by observing prisoner revolts that were occurring in contemporary times. Foucault's concern with prison revolts was not about whether prisons were too primitive or strict; what concerned him was the prison's 'materiality as an instrument and vector of power' (p.30). This conceptualisation provoked Foucault to write a genealogy of the birth of the modern prison, with its political technology of the body. Moreover, he revealed the technologies of power-knowledge that were more obvious in the prison setting than in other settings, but which could be applied to other institutions. Why write a history of the prison? he asks. "Simply because I am interested in the past? No, if one means that by writing a history of the past in terms of the present. Yes, if one means writing the history of the present' (Foucault, 1979, p.31). Discipline and Punish is thus presented to the reader as a 'history of the present'. Foucault does not elaborate on the term further within the text (or elsewhere), but my understanding

of the term is how the analysis of the prison differs from a historical analysis; the term hence implies a genealogical account of the prison. The term infers the shift in Foucault's self-understanding with which he was engaged at the same time, namely from archaeology to genealogy (as discussed earlier, pp.12-15). For Foucault the term 'history of the present' involves a discursive presentation of the genealogy of the birth of the modern-day prison. For me, the term 'history of the present' involves a discursive presentation of the genealogy of early years pedagogy from an Irish perspective.

Aftermath of the 1971 curriculum

The 1971 curriculum was a radical departure from its predecessors and aimed to return to the child-centred, heuristic and discovery-learning ideals of the 1900 Revised Programme. The two main aims of the 1971 curriculum were; 'to enable the child to live a full life as a child and; to equip him to avail himself of further education so that he may go on to live a full and useful life as an adult in society' (Department of Education, 1971a, p. 12). The underlying goal of the curriculum was to prepare young children for adult life in a changing Irish society. Coolahan (1981) argues that the move to position the child at the centre of their learning experiences was a progressive departure from the practice of the previous half-century. Walsh (2005) outlines an implicit tenet of the 1971 curriculum, which was the recognition of childhood as a distinct period of human development. While the aim of the 1971 curriculum was a child-centred approach to children's learning and while recognising the importance of children and childhoods, I argue that this aim was not realised and the goals underpinning the 1971 curriculum were more an ideology than a reality.

The INTO (1974) reported on a survey of teachers' attitudes towards the 1971 curriculum. The results gave the first indication that the curriculum did not live up to expectations. Although all teachers had reportedly attended some in-service training on the new curriculum, the majority of teachers stated that the 1971 curriculum was only 'moderately' implemented in their classroom (INTO, 1974, p.18) and teachers also exhibited a lack of confidence on teaching new subjects. The report concludes that 'this is an area which should give cause for concern, for although a high percentage of teachers are teaching the subjects, a low percentage of them feel they are teaching them satisfactorily' (INTO, 1974, p.17). The report outlines obstacles that prevented a satisfactory implementation of the 1971 curriculum, including widespread high pupil/teacher ratios and the continued failure to meet teachers' needs for continuing professional development on what was perceived as an ambitious programme. While the report acknowledges teachers' dissatisfaction at attainment in Irish language (INTO, 1974), one positive outcome that emerged from the report, from teachers' perspectives, was the pedagogical approaches framing the 1971 curriculum.

The implementation of the 1971 curriculum resulted in a significant increase in child-centred pedagogies, as over 90% of teachers reported an increase in children's active participation (INTO, 1974). There was also a significant increase in discovery methods and project work (INTO, 1974). Most teachers reported that the new curriculum had positively impacted their job satisfaction (INTO, 1974) and perhaps one of the contributing factors of this was the new approaches to supporting young children's learning, although one of the weaknesses of the report (which it acknowledges) was that it failed to discover whether this positive response translated into classroom practice. The framing of the 1971 curriculum signified a move away from a predominant focus on language and religion towards pedagogy. This move also

problematizes the continuing discourse between continuity and change in relation to early years pedagogy. This is the first sign of the diminishing hold of the Church over curriculum and pedagogy for young children. The pull of tradition that was evidenced throughout the previous 70 years or so was now being surpassed by the push for change, influenced by modernisation and globalisation. The move also indicated a shift in the power from the insular focus of the previous curriculum on the creation of Irish citizens emulating Irish culture and values to a focus on the approaches best suited to support young children's learning.

Focus on quality and governance

Key concepts that shaped the formation of early years pedagogy and policy through the 1980s and 1990s include quality, effectiveness, governance, and capitalisation. These dominant discourses emerged from the publication of a government policy, the *White Paper on Educational Development* in 1980 (DES, 1980) and were aligned with dominant discourses from an international perspective (Brooker, 2005; Conley, 2002; McLachlan & Arrow, 2011). The *White Paper* recognises some of the problems and failings of the 1971 curriculum, such as 'high pupil-teacher ratios and poorly designed classrooms for the new methodologies' (DES, 1980, p. 392). While a number of concerns arose with the implementation of the 1971 curriculum, it did raise awareness of the role of early years pedagogy (Walsh, 2005). Coolahan (1981) maintains that the emphasis placed on child-centred philosophy and pedagogy that emerged from the 1971 curriculum and the *White Paper* instigated the removal of corporal punishment from schools, which he maintains 'was used widely in schools at this time' (p.180). In 1982, the Minister for Education, in pursuance of the Government's commitment to abolish corporal punishment in schools, and following consultations with representatives of Teacher and Managerial Organisations, issued Circular 9/82 (DES, 1982), which amended

Rule 130 to abolish the use of corporal punishment in schools. Gerschoff (2017) presents figures from 2016, identifying that globally 'corporal punishment is legally prohibited in schools in 128 countries and allowed in 69' (p.225). In 2016, corporal punishment is still legally permissible in primary schools in the United States and Australia (Gerschoff, 2017); in contrast, it has been banned in Ireland since 1982. This move demonstrates a significant shift in power between the State, Church, teachers, and young children. While schools in Ireland were still controlled by the State and Church throughout the 1980s, corporal punishment, which often led to schooling being an arduous and joyless time for young children (Walsh, 2005), was now forbidden.

Teachers were instructed to treat children with 'kindness combined with firmness and should aim at governing them through their affections and reason and not by harshness and severity' (DES, 1982). Interestingly, with the announcement of the eradication of corporal punishment and the focus on children being treated with kindness, affection and reason, a new form of governing children emerged. In terms of sovereign power, it appeared that as corporal punishment was banned from schools, children would experience a pedagogy of affection, warmth and kindness, yet, disciplinary power is evidenced by the introduction of the concept of governance. In a way, corporal punishment was replaced by a mode of governing children. As early years policy intensified in Ireland, so too did the concepts of quality, governing and governance of children. It emerged strongly from the *White Paper* in 1980 and the Circular in 1982. From this analysis, I argue that from an Irish perspective, these concepts are intertwined. While these government policies reported that new changes would promote quality pedagogy in the early years, they simultaneously advocated the governance of young

children and the work of teachers within policy documentation, which will be discussed further in this chapter.

Interlude: Revisiting *Discipline and Punish*

Throughout the 1970s, Foucault recognised that his model of disciplinary power was insufficient on some level (Zamora & Behrent, 2016). This realisation came about as Foucault attempted to explain Soviet history, as he wanted to go beyond his understanding of power as previously outlined in 'Discipline and Punish' (Foucault, 1979). In his 1976 Collège de France lectures, Foucault introduces the concept of 'biopower' as a 'new non-disciplinary technology of power that intervenes on the level of population rather than individuals...in order to regularize biological processes and thereby impact birth and death rates...so as to improve the overall productivity and security of society' (Zamora & Behrent, 2016, p. 19). This interpretation of power provides Foucault the platform to explain Soviet history, as he argues that the State plays an active role in the disciplining of knowledge. In 'Discipline and Punish', Foucault presents his genealogy of the modern prison, wherein he presents 'disciplinary' power, which individualises subjects to self-govern, normalise behaviour, and regulate their movements.

Foucault began to question one of the key ideological tenets upon which 'Discipline and Punish' was predicated, that 'discipline is political modernity's signal trait' (Zamora and Behrent, 2016, p.40). Foucault distinguishes between biopower and the two earlier forms of power, namely, sovereign and disciplinary power (as discussed earlier, pp.58-62). In doing so, Foucault redefines his previous conceptualisation of power as outlined in 'Discipline and Punish', arguing that the archetypical form of power is not discipline, which governs

individuals, but rather a less intrusive technique of population management, which he refers to as 'biopower' in his series of lectures at College de France in 1975-76. Biopower signifies the emergence of 'nondisciplinary' (Foucault, 2004, p.215) technologies of power. Where discipline governs 'the multiplicity of men' biopower administers the 'mass as a whole', accumulated into a population (Foucault, 2004, p.216). Unlike discipline, biopower is not concerned with the conduct of the individual, but with the population as a whole. Foucault acknowledges that discipline and biopower overlap and that biopower does not eradicate disciplinary power; rather, biopower envelops disciplinary power. In his articulation of biopower, Foucault opens himself to the political and economic liberalisation of France in the 1970s.

During his 1978 lecture series, Foucault emphasises the interrelationship between biopower and liberalism, which Zamora and Behrent (2016) claim weakens Foucault's notion that discipline was merely enveloped by biopower. By claiming that economic liberalism is an archetypical form of biopower, contrary to his work in 'Discipline and Punish', modern forms of power must give ample room for freedom. This is a somewhat paradoxical notion; since economic liberalisation is not primarily concerned with individuals, it offers greater potential for individual freedom (Zamora & Behrent, 2016). This was a significant manoeuvre away from the ideologies presented in 'Discipline and Punish' and a recognition of the role of biopower and liberty's place in the modern economy of power (Zamora & Behrent, 2016). Biopower can be described as having power over other bodies, and in doing so, controlling the mass population. It is strongly linked to the concepts of governance, governmentality, and neoliberalism, which have shaped early years pedagogy into what it is today.

Women's movement

Apart from the ban on corporal punishment in primary schools, a further societal change that impacted significantly on young children's pedagogy during the 1980s was the evolution of the women's movement, as it instigated a discourse on early years pedagogy and care. The genealogy of the women's movement in Ireland emerged from the opening decades of the 20th century. For instance, the 1922 Constitution did not specifically address the concept of equality before the law, although certain fundamental human rights were assured to every citizen (INTO, 1980). Some issues, such as the right to vote without distinction of sex (Article 14), were addressed in the 1922 Constitution; however, this did not prohibit discrimination on the grounds of gender or marital status (INTO, 1980). From 1st October 1934 to 30th June 1958, any female teacher in the national school system had to resign on marriage and no married woman was accepted into the system (INTO, 1980). The sovereign power associated with this move positions women within Irish society as homemakers. This positioning of women's roles thus had future implications for early childhood pedagogy. One significant implication of the marriage ban was the implicit assumption in Irish society that early childhood education and care is 'women's work' and best suited to women. This assumption echoes international perspectives (Allen, 2017; Barkham, 2008; Ferree, 2018), as Trouvé-Finding (2005) ascertains that in England and France during the late 19th and early 20th century, teaching young children was perceived 'as a woman's job' (p.483). This positioning of women is still evidenced in Ireland, as Pobal (2017/2018) reveals that 98% of staff working with young children are female. Pobal (2017/2018) continues stating that the 2% of males working with young children 'is consistent with the gender breakdown of the early years sector workforce in Europe (2-3% are male), but well below the 10% recommended level in order to combat gender stereotyping (European Commission, 2013)' (p.74).

During the ban, many women resisted this law and worked as primary school teachers, although they did not always receive pay for their employment (INTO, 1980). This resistance to the sovereign power exerted by the State sparked a wave of awareness of the women's movement and the inequalities that existed within national, state, and government organisations. In response to the government's proposal to introduce the marriage ban, the INTO attempted to resist this position at Congress in 1932, stating:

The proposed legislation requiring women to retire on marriage deserves condemnation whether regarded from the educational, ethical or economic standpoints and should be dropped. The rule cuts across the constitutional and social rights of women teachers and is bound to react harmfully on the schools and the status of the profession and will ultimately have the effect of seriously lowering the standard of education in rural areas. The attention of the Bishops should be drawn to this proposed regulation (INTO, 1932, p.3).

While the INTO endeavoured to resist the legislation and condemned the proposal, their resistance proved futile and the marriage ban was imposed for over two decades. While the INTO did aim to resist the power exerted by the State in implementing this law, it is important to note, that in its condemnation of the legislation, the INTO sought advice and guidance from the Bishops and the Church, thus continuing to reinforce the disciplinary power that the Church exerted over State policy and legislation.

The INTO maintained an intermittent campaign against the marriage ban as other issues within the profession emerged, such as unemployment and pay cuts. In the late 1940s, the protests intensified, and in 1953 the Department of Education temporarily lifted the ban due to a shortage of teachers. In 1955, the marriage ban was raised at the Irish Trade Union Congress for the first time and an overwhelming majority (65-25) voted for the immediate

removal of the ban (O'Leary, 1987). This condemnation of the marriage ban caused a significant furore in the Department of Education and resulted in the repeal of the ban by the Minister of Education, Jack Lynch, in June 1958 (O'Leary, 1987). The weak attempts by the INTO to repeal the ban was in marked contrast to its militant stance on pay cuts and demonstrates the acceptance of sovereign power and the deep belief in patriarchal values in the 1930s. O'Leary (1987) maintains that the marriage ban did not lead to any significant economic saving for the government; rather, it led to increased expenditure during a time of economic cutbacks. While the resistance to the marriage ban by the INTO was largely futile, it still successfully managed to repeal the ban before secondary teachers, bankers, and other professions, and long before the feminist movement in Ireland.

While the marriage ban was lifted in 1958, its effect on early years pedagogy remained for decades to follow. The genealogy of the women's movement in Ireland impacted the ways in which early childhood education and pedagogy was and continues to be perceived. It was viewed as women's work, more suited to the characteristics of women, and when the demand for childcare outside the home emerged in the 1980s, the service was dependent on women.

Societal developments

The 1980s witnessed a dramatic shift in the development of early childhood education in Ireland. One of the principle reasons for this shift was the women's movement, which was characterised by the demand for equality in terms of education and employment and the increased number of women in the workforce. This societal movement led to the increased demand for child-care outside of the home and beyond the extended family (INTO, 1991). Urbanisation resulted in families living in cities and towns away from the extended family and

this led to an increased demand for a range of pre-school provisions. These societal developments instigated a discourse on early years pedagogy and care (Mhic Mhathúna & Taylor, 2012). In response to these developments, the INTO published a lecture by Ruth Drakes, entitled *Developments in Early Childhood Education*, in 1982. This was a progressive move by the INTO considering its feeble attempts to repeal the marriage ban. In her lecture, Drakes (1982) recognised the societal shifts that led to the increased focus on early years pedagogy. She maintained that:

Alongside all these comparatively recent movements there is the traditional and continuing child-centred education movement, firmly rooted in the schools themselves, associated with active methods of learning and informal methods of teaching geared to the needs and interests of the individual child. This movement extends through nursery and infant education and into the best of primary schooling (Drakes, 1982, p. 3).

Along with the focus on child-centred, active education, Drakes (1982) identifies outstanding infant schools as those that focus on the 'quality of relationship between teachers and children' and a pedagogy of 'play, talk and individual learning' (p. 4). This publication prompted a discourse on the characteristics of effective early years pedagogy.

Other societal movements that contributed to this discourse on effective early years pedagogy throughout the 1980s included the debate at government level on the age of entry into primary school (INTO, 1984), and the public debate on the impact of changing family conditions on early childhood education and care (INTO, 1983). The INTO also recognises the importance of early years for the development of the child and the key role of the teacher in providing what it perceived as effective pedagogy:

The role of the teacher is no longer that of a dispenser of information in a haze of chalk-dust. She is a leader, a guide whose function it is to help her children to think for themselves and to progress from one discovery to another and from concrete examples to general principles and abstract reasoning (INTO, 1983, pp. 38-39).

The role of the teacher had progressed from 'chalk and talk' pedagogy; the discernible role of the early years teacher was now to guide children towards independent thinking and to lead children's learning. The disciplinary power evidenced by this statement from the INTO was that infant teachers should be female. While the women's movement had evolved to a certain position in Irish society, the message from the INTO was that infant teaching is a woman's profession. This belief from the teachers' union positioned young children and female teachers in particular ways. It assumed that female teachers are best suited to teaching children in early years classrooms and thus continued the trend for early childhood education to be viewed as women's work. The disciplinary power evidenced by the union and associated policy documents (INTO, 1983) predetermined the workforce of early years teachers and impacted pedagogy and curriculum developments for young children in Ireland.

Policy shaping curriculum

The societal movements during the 1980s prompted an expansion of policy developments pertaining to the early years (INTO, 1983; 1984; 1985). The rapid succession and intensification of policies in the early 1980s demonstrates the sovereign power held by the union in determining the curriculum for young children. For instance, the 1983 report lists challenges and concerns with implementing the curriculum in an infant classroom, such as teachers' perceptions of curriculum; educating parents; haphazard pre-school provision; inadequacies of the curriculum; structure of the school day, and isolation of the infant teacher (INTO, 1983). The report continued by stating that a new 'structured scheme for language and mathematics is clearly needed' (INTO, 1983, p.39), thus restabilising the powerful dominant role of the Irish language in the infant curriculum. The 1980s witnessed an intensification of

policy intervention into all areas of early childhood education, including, curriculum, pedagogy, and workforce. Yet, the disciplinary power exerted by the Irish language remained. The report (INTO, 1983) highlights the need for a structured scheme for language and maths specifically. This was closely followed by a 1985 report on Irish language, which berated the State's management of the language and blamed the State for its decline:

It would appear that the State's leadership role in relation to the language has decreased significantly in recent years. The present policies are perceived by many to be neutral and passive and there is a reluctance to engage actively in the preservation of the language. If Irish is to survive beyond the present generation the State can no longer rely on mere rhetoric and symbolic gesture, but must evolve a definite policy which takes account of the major changes which have occurred in the nature and structure of Irish society over the past twenty years. (INTO, 1985, p.3)

The INTO recognises the role of teachers, particularly infant teachers, in preserving and cultivating the Irish language since the foundation of the State. Since the end of the 19th century, teachers have been actively engaged in the language movement in terms of the restoration and development of the language and making it a compulsory subject in school in 1922. However, teachers' dissatisfaction with the Irish curriculum grew and is evidenced by a major survey undertaken by the INTO. The findings of the survey indicated that 'over 80% of teachers considered that the results obtained were not commensurate with the amount of time spent teaching Irish' and 'over 70% believed that the expectations of the prescribed syllabus could not be achieved within the time available' (INTO, 1985, p.2). While Irish language was a discrete subject of the curriculum, alongside the informal use of the language throughout the day, the clear majority of teachers were dissatisfied with the time allocated for the language and children's competency in the language. The report also raised the question whether the curriculum or teaching methods were effective and if the curriculum would benefit from a revision (INTO, 1985). Kelly (2002) argues that the national aim to

produce Irish speakers was never realised and that most children left primary school with only basic levels of Irish, even though they had spent many years learning the language.

The INTO shifted this responsibility towards the State arguing that 'due to the lack of support for the language outside the school pupils tend to perceive Irish exclusively as a school subject' (INTO, 1985, p. 6). They urged the State and public to actively support their mission to continue the restoration and cultivation of the Irish language. This move demonstrates how power compels subjects to self-govern. After decades of government initiatives to restore Irish language, the pendulum of power shifted towards teachers as they demanded that the Irish State and society support the language (INTO, 1985), thus embodying the mission of the State. This signifies what Foucault referred to as 'biopower'. While acknowledging that discipline and biopower overlap, biopower signifies the emergence of 'nondisciplinary' (Foucault, 1976, p.215) technologies of power. Unlike discipline, biopower is not concerned with the conduct of the individual, but with the whole population. Where discipline governs 'the multiplicity of men', biopower administers the 'mass as a whole', accumulated into a population (Foucault, 1976, p.216). The power associated with the Irish language shifted from sovereign to disciplinary and then to biopower throughout the 20th century.

The ebbs and flows of the political, social and economic climate of 1980s Ireland resulted in the country experiencing economic austerity. After an irresponsible and damaging budget by the Irish government in 1977, which included the abolition of car tax and borrowing large sums of money, alongside a global economic downturn, the 1980s was one of the bleakest epochs in the State's history (Hogan, 2010). While the economy suffered an economic depression with high rates of unemployment and mass emigration, the 1980s propelled early

years pedagogy into the modern era. In terms of momentous landmarks for early childhood education, the 1980s proved to be a significant era, with the intersection of the abolition of corporal punishment, the progression of the women's movement, and the focus on early years curriculum and pedagogy.

Interlude: Resistance

The concept of governmentality and the resistance it creates dominates much of Foucault's thinking and writing during the 1980s. Zamora and Behrent (2016) claim that 'the agent of this resistance... has no clear economic basis, but is defined, rather, by the position it occupies in relation to various forms of power' (p.67). Since the 1960s, subjectivity, individuality and identity became political problems for Foucault. Moreover, a primary concern for him at that time was the distribution of wealth within an economy. However, Foucault's focus shifted later towards the distribution of power towards power relations and in his 1978 lecture he argued that an economy should not relate to the production and distribution of wealth; rather, what is needed is an economy that focuses on power relations. What concerned him was resistance to the everyday forms of power that are evidenced in everyday life. Foucault challenges all forms of power, maintaining we must fight for the 'destabilization of mechanism of power' and resist any forms of power that aim to standardise individuals and their behaviours (Zamora & Behrent, 2016).

'Maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are but to refuse who we are' (Foucault, 1982, p.785). In refusing not what we are but who we are, Foucault's suggestion encourages a liberalisation of oneself from modes of power and a resistance to neoliberal practices. Pignatelli (1993) suggests that this refusal is a 'moving outside of, resisting, averting

these gridded, measured spaces or, at least, diluting their power – is an ethical (as well as political matter)’ (p. 173). This liberation can be deemed as somewhat resisting or refusing neoliberal modes of practice. Ball (2015) argues that subjectivity is a key site of political struggle in the contexts of neoliberalisation and neoliberal governmentality:

...in neoliberal economies, sites of government and points of contact are also sites for the possibility of refusal. However, the starting point for a politics of refusal is the site of subjectivity. It is a struggle over and against what it is we have become, what it is that we do not want to be (p. 1143).

The liberation of oneself from neoliberal modes of practice can be empowering. By analysing what it is we have become, we are in a better position to understand not only what we do not want to be, but also what we actually want to become. The concepts of resistance and refusal are closely linked to the genealogy of early years pedagogy.

Resisting ‘progressive’ pedagogy

From its inception, the 1971 curriculum was predicated on its child-centred, progressive ideology. Initially, it was perceived as a ‘welcome change from the stagnation and strict control of more than forty years’ as it represented ‘revolutionary changes, both in content and method... primary schools of Ireland are now committed to a ‘progressive’ curriculum, well in line with the most advanced educational theory and practice’ (Murphy, 1972, p.199).

While the 1971 curriculum was a progressive one, Walsh (2016) maintains that this was more rhetoric than reality and that teachers still favoured more formal, didactic pedagogical styles.

While the curriculum did embody revolutionary changes for early years pedagogy, within a year of its implementation it was criticised for its ideological positionality. Murphy (1972) denounced its ideology based on the era of Enlightenment, without any critique of the ideology, stating; ‘based on deductions from an ideology which harks back to the

philosophical teachings of *Le siècle de lumières* - an ideology which has been accepted by educationists far too uncritically' (Murphy, 1972, p.200). He rebuked Rousseau's *Émile* as a romantic but purely theoretical approach to education and criticised how 'the pedagogical pioneers - Pestalozzi, Herbart, Froebel, Montessori and Dewey ...were all fervent disciples of the master' (Murphy, 1972, p. 201). The ideologies and thinking espoused by Rousseau and the pioneers shaped the 1971 curriculum with little, if any, critique, analysis or contextualisation. It is difficult to comprehend how a book published by Rousseau in 1762 about an imagined child, *Émile*, during political upheaval in France, could so deeply impact the 1971 curriculum in an independent Ireland, with little or no interrogation, over two centuries later. The ideologies of Rousseau and his followers were deeply embedded into the 1971 curriculum and presented as a progressive curriculum. Such was the power attributed to Rousseau and *Émile* by those searching for a rationale for a child-centred education.

The INTO (1988) also acknowledges, what it referred to as 'the ideological criticisms of the 1971 Primary School Curriculum' (p.11). The report describes how progressive pedagogy was perceived in the curriculum as:

1. The downgrading of the teacher's importance by a 'child-centred' approach
2. The threat to traditional disciplines of study arising from a so called 'integrated curriculum'
3. A neglect of the authority of tradition (INTO, 1988, p.15).

'Progressive' pedagogy was recognised as negative, as it 'downgraded' the role of teachers and disrupted the sovereign power held by Irish tradition. Furthermore, the progressive philosophy espoused by the 1971 curriculum drew significant critique, as its origins were founded in the ideologies of European pioneers dating back centuries. The sovereign power

exerted by the pioneers since the 18th century continued to influence and dominate early years pedagogy, but was now being met with resistance.

The 1971 curriculum, with its progressive pedagogical approaches, was confronted with resistance from Murphy (1972) and the INTO (1988), amongst others. This resistance culminated in the decision to revise the 1971 curriculum only a mere decade and a half after its inception. In 1986 the Education Committee decided to review the curriculum due to 'the lack of large-scale research into it, and evaluation of, the 1971 curriculum' (INTO, 1988, p. 4). While the 1980s progressed early years pedagogy into a modern era, paradoxically, there was a strong resistance to what was perceived as 'progressive pedagogy' as presented by the *pioneers* of early childhood education. The dominance exerted by the early childhood pioneers, which prevailed in Ireland since the 18th century (as presented on p.91), was being challenged and contested. This resistance meant that a new theoretical framework was needed to underpin the revised curriculum to fulfil policy goals. Ireland's experience, although at a local level, reflects the broader, global narrative of incorporating early childhood education into education policy based on discourses of human capital and neoliberalism (Calder, 2015; Campbell, Smith & Alexander; 2017; Miller & Hevey, 2012). The work of the pioneers did not complement the increasing demands for economic justification for investment in a non-compulsory stage of education. The OECD (2018) positions early childhood education as the foundation for future citizens and economic stability. Moss (2017) reflects on the dominant discourse of early childhood education as a 'story of quality and high returns, which has spread from its local origins in the favourable environment provided by a global regime of neoliberalism' (p.11). This global narrative of early childhood pedagogy can be understood through the local lens of the Irish context.

Ever-changing Ireland

Following the poor economic climate of the 1980s, Ireland was considered to have high levels of poverty, unemployment, and inflation until the mid-1990s (Hogan, 2010). The Irish economy expanded exponentially between the mid-1990s until 2000, in a period which was referred to as the Celtic Tiger (McAleese, 2000). This economic inflation impacted the social, cultural and economic landscape of Irish society (Murphy, 2014). In a short space of time, Ireland moved into a dynamic, multi-cultural, multi-lingual society (Fischer, 2016) while the education system appeared to be frozen in time. The curriculum review was a crucial step in recognising and acknowledging this ever-changing Ireland and a new pluralistic society. The genealogy of the revision of the 1971 curriculum to the implementation of the *Revised Primary School Curriculum* (Gol, 1999a), tells the story of the interplay between neoliberalism; the Church and State; socio-cultural theory and sovereign and disciplinary forms of power. The following discursive account is by no means exhaustive; rather, it presents events and policy analysis that are of particular interest to highlight the ways in which emergent discourses on early years pedagogy were constructed.

Although there were many movements within the 1980s to progress early years pedagogy, a particularly significant move was the call for the review of the 1971 curriculum. A Primary Committee was established in 1984 with responsibility for issuing a discussion paper, entitled *Primary Education* (DES, 1985). This was shortly followed by the *Report of the Review Body on the Primary Curriculum* (DES, 1990). These reports represented the perspectives of teachers, management, inspectors, and represented a comprehensive analysis of the curriculum. The

INTO (1996) maintain that during this period there was an 'atmosphere of retrenchment and regression' (p.13). This was partly due to the many challenges and constraints that teachers experienced when teaching young children, such as 'many principals being unfamiliar with the ideals and practicalities involved, in-service and resourcing were totally inadequate, classes of 45-50 pupils were commonplace and the inspectors continued to evaluate teachers on classical instructional techniques' (INTO, 1996, p.14). This created difficult working conditions for teachers and impeded their ability to focus on pedagogy. A further challenge to early years pedagogy was the shift in power play that was beginning to determine the educational agenda.

The layers of what Foucault refers to as biopower, which increasingly dominated international education agendas, were beginning to encroach on educational ideology in Ireland. Issues such as 'efficiency, cost effectiveness, competitiveness and productivity, accountability, value for money, and an undue emphasis on basic skills were dominating educational thinking in many countries' (INTO, 1996, p.13) and began to seep into the Irish agenda. The two-way power shift that dominated international agendas involved the concentration of curriculum policy and control at government level and the correlating devolution of responsibility for the delivery of curriculum and pedagogy at a localised level; the school and the teacher. The INTO (1996) maintains:

Accountability became the mechanism by which both forces were to converge. Powerful undercurrents also emerged as a result of the proposed devolvement of curriculum functions and authority to outside curricular agencies. It was not always clear at the time whose agenda was being served (p.13).

Issues such as accountability, efficiency, cost effectiveness and marketisation were a dominant force in the economic climate of Irish society from the mid-1980s through to the

1990s. These concepts transformed the Irish economic climate into the Celtic Tiger era and it was envisaged that they could also transform the Irish education system. The INTO noted the powerful undercurrents that were at play as the proposed redevelopment of the curriculum was transferred to outside agencies, for which the union felt that the curriculum revision was no longer within their control and they bemoaned the lack of clarity around whose agenda was being served (INTO, 1996).

The *Report of the Review Body on the Primary Curriculum* (DES, 1990) advocates the underlying principles and philosophy of the 1971 curriculum. However, the report recognises that the curriculum 'requires revision and reformulation in its aims, scope and content, in the manner in which it is implemented and in the way pupil progress is assessed and recorded, and the way the overall effectiveness of the system is evaluated' (p.8). The report led to the establishment of the Primary Committees of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) in November 1991. Walsh (2005) maintains that following this report, a lengthy consultation process occurred, resulting in the introduction of the revised Primary School Curriculum (GoI, 1999a). This era of curriculum change, unlike its predecessor, was not to be a radical shift; rather its aim was to revise, refine and update the curriculum and ensure the revised curriculum was 'solidly embedded in the philosophy, principles and spirit of the 1971 curriculum. This evolutionary approach marks a first ever in the history of the Irish primary school curriculum' (INTO, 1996, pp.10-11). This evolutionary approach mirrored Ireland's success within Europe and elevated the need and demand for a high-quality education system that would cater for the needs of children in a modern world. The INTO recognised that the revised curriculum needed to acknowledge that:

Ireland's evolving status within Europe continues to create new demands on education. A broadly-based curriculum which takes account of an inclusive understanding of knowledge as well as recognising children's capacity to learn will best prepare them for life and for work (INTO, 1996, p.i).

Ireland's emerging place within the European community generated a need for an education system which would develop children as active citizens contributing to the economic success of the nation. The task of developing this high-quality education system was given to the NCCA, a statutory body of the Department of Education and Skills (DES), who would be responsible for developing the revised curriculum. Much like the 1920s, the sovereign power exerted by the State continued to ensure full control of the curriculum revision in line with the State's vision. This movement signified one form of governmentality that influenced early years pedagogy.

Governmentality

In his studies on governmentality, Foucault (2010), combines the microphysics of power alongside with the macro-political question of the state. Foucault is concerned not only with the power relations of the government or state, but how power relations have historically shaped the government or state without being diminished by it. Foucault's discourse of governmentality also shows that neoliberalism is not the end point; rather, a transformation of politics that restructures power relations in society. Lemke (2002) reasons that within contemporary society, what we witness is not a reduction of state sovereignty, but a displacement from formal to informal techniques of government and the appearance of new actors on the scene of government, indicating fundamental transformations in government and a new relationship between state and civil society actors. Ball (2015) makes an

importance distinction about governmentality, arguing that it is not only the point of application of power, but also the vehicle through which power traverses.

Foucault once describes the term governmentality as an 'ugly word' (cited in Ball, 2013, p.120). For Foucault, the art of government signals the historical emergence of particular types of rule (Davies & Bansel, 2007; Foucault, 1975, 1982; Peters, 2008). 'Governmentality' is broader and more diverse than those powers that are held by the state. To govern, in this sense, is 'to structure the possible field of action of others' (Foucault, 1982, p. 790), including the way in which 'the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed' (Foucault, 1982, p. 790). Davies and Bansel (2007) maintain that this occurs through the imposition of new discourses and structures, through which subjects will take themselves up as the newly appropriated subjects of the new social order. Lemke (2002) suggests that the concept of governmentality construes neoliberalism not just as ideological rhetoric, but as a political endeavour to create a social reality that it suggests already exists. This social reality is identifiable not only by the individual, but as collective bodies and institutions. Neoliberalism as a form of governmentality first emerged in the 1970s in response to some of the more progressive positions being taken in education (Davies & Bansel, 2007). In response to democracies being viewed as ungovernable, systems were established to ensure that citizens could be made more governable. Davies and Allen (1996) argue that forms of governmentality were first installed in schools and the public service. The establishment of the NCCA to control curricular developments is one instance of this; others include the governance of early childhood education and marketisation.

Governance

Ball (2008) maintains that the shift from government to governance can be interpreted as a shift from a unitary state to governance achieved by networks implying governance. This includes all sectors, public, private, and voluntary, in action to solve specific problems faced by the community. Neuman (2010) argues that governance is a crucial element of early childhood education systems due to the need to determine whether services offered are consistent and to help to promote policy consistency across governmental agencies. The fragmented approach to the early childhood education system that exists in Ireland today has unfolded over a period of time. Two decades ago, the *White Paper* on early childhood education noted the lack of coordination:

Section 2.2 outlined the involvement of a number of Government Departments in the early childhood area and noted that as many as eleven Departments are involved in the childcare area. The large number of State Departments involved, and the close linkages and overlaps between education and childcare, would suggest that coordination of effort between the various Departments and agencies should be a key element of provision. However, lack of coordination has been identified by the National Forum for Early Childhood Education, among others, as a significant problem inhibiting the development of adequate systems of early education and childcare (DES, 1995, p.28).

As 11 departments are involved in the education and care of Ireland's youngest children, the responsibility for shaping pedagogy and care is manoeuvred from one department to the next. The lack of a coordinated approach to early childhood education and care produces a fractured system. As power is dispersed amongst so many government departments, the establishment of a systemic, rigorous approach to researching and developing effective pedagogy for young children is challenging. Ireland was part of the global narrative and wider reform in early childhood education and Irish policy drew on international trends of powerful government funded research on 'effectiveness', where effectiveness intertwines the

economic and educational rationale for investment. The influence on Irish early years curriculum, policy and pedagogy of two key reports, *Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years* (REPEY) (Siraj-Blatchford, Sylva, Muttock, Gilden & Bell, 2002), and the *Effective Provision of Pre-School Education* [EPPE] Project (Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford & Taggart, 2004) is a significant instance of this emerging disciplinary power. The influence of both studies reached beyond their original policy-driven remit and influenced the policy landscape in Ireland, notably its focus on early years pedagogy.

Focus on pedagogy

Pedagogy for young children does not develop in a vacuum; it is shaped by wider societal constructs, such as political, economic, social and religious influences. It is interesting to trace the genealogy of the term 'pedagogy' and when it first appeared in Irish research and literature. REPEY (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002) and EPPE (Sylva et al., 2004) are two significant research reports that magnified the discourse in early years pedagogy on an international scale. These reports were funded by the UK Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) and selected findings of this longitudinal research have been used to inform government policies. As such, the studies have garnered power outside of their original contexts, which is consistent with the neoliberal move towards policy intensification and the need to justify investment in human capital to build economic capital.

The fusion in the reports between educational and economic effectiveness was evidenced in Irish policy developments. For example, REPEY (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002) defines pedagogy as 'the practice (or the art, the science or the craft) of teaching but in the early years any adequate conception of educative practice must be wide enough to include the provision of

learning environments for play and exploration' (p.27). The report directly influenced *Aistear*, *The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (NCCA, 2009), as it models its definition of pedagogy on that of REPEY. *Aistear* describes pedagogy as 'all the practitioner's actions or work in supporting children's learning and development. It infers a negotiated, respectful and reflective learning experience for all involved. In *Aistear*, the terms 'pedagogy' and 'practice' are used interchangeably' (NCCA, 2009, p.56). This broad definition of pedagogy implies that pedagogy is all the practitioner's actions and interactions with the children. The mirroring of language from REPEY (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002) to *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009) demonstrates the sovereign hold the reports had on the Irish policy landscape and was used to move pedagogy from a relatively marginalised position in Irish policy, to, at least in aspiration, holding a prominent position within educational policy (Kernan, 2007).

It is interesting to note the genealogy of the term 'pedagogy' as the importance of pedagogy was highlighted over two decades prior to the publication of *Aistear* in 1986. In 1986, the INTO published a report on issues in infant education in primary schools. The Education Committee decided to 'examine some of the curricular and pedagogic issues' (p.1) as they pertained to infant education in Ireland. The report highlights how the concept of individual difference had become more widely accepted since the 1960s and this thinking impacted pedagogy (INTO, 1985/6). The report noted that the 1971 curriculum was a radical departure from that of its predecessor, primarily due to the ideological and methodological framing of the curriculum with a particular focus on 'a more active and heuristic approach to pedagogy' (INTO, 1985/66, p.2). The REPEY (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002) and EPPE (Sylva et al., 2004) reports favoured teachers taking on a more interactionist role to counter the established play-based, non-interventionist ideology, and to foreground directing pedagogy toward achieving

the goals in ECE frameworks. In a similar vein, *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009) also promotes the interventionist role of the adult in play. While the 1971 curriculum may not have defined the term 'pedagogy', its meaning was implicit in the curriculum. Since 1986, the term 'pedagogy' has been explicitly expressed in early years reports, frameworks and policy documents. Since *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009) is the first early years framework to define the term 'pedagogy', from an Irish perspective, this is the conceptualisation of pedagogy that underpins my research.

Marketisation

A key policy document that foregrounded the importance of early years pedagogy was the White Paper on early childhood education entitled *Ready to Learn* (Gol, 1999b). This was a landmark moment for the landscape of early childhood education as its aim was to support the development and educational achievement of children through high-quality early education (Gol, 1999b). At the outset of the paper the aim appeared to place the child at the centre of the education process, the paper stated its mission as:

The Department of Education and Science's mission is to support the development of a high-quality education system which will enable individuals to develop to their full potential as persons and to participate fully as citizens in Ireland's social and economic development (Gol, 1999b, p.8)

The focus on early years education shifted from pedagogy to the development of children as citizens who could contribute to the social and economic development of the country. The focus in policy documentation propelled the neoliberal agenda, with its focus now on effectiveness and high quality in early years pedagogy. For instance, the paper further outlines the significant economic and societal benefits accruing to investment in education:

Research has shown that the rate of return is greatest at lower levels of education. Returns may be in the form of increased economic growth: better educated workers

yield higher productivity...the OECD noted that the growth in human capital ... is estimated to have contributed 0.8 percentage points to the average growth rate of Ireland between 1960 and 1985 (Gol, 1999b, p.14).

While the aim of the paper was to support children's development through high-quality education, the focus on the paper was on growth in human capital, return of investment, and measurable savings on government expenditure, as improved levels of education lead to reductions in costs associated with unemployment, crime and healthcare (Gol, 1999b). The intersection of the concepts of 'quality' and 'high-quality' emerged at this point. The sovereign power associated with this landmark paper on early childhood education was that it coincided with the release of the revised *Primary School Curriculum* (Gol, 1999a). This paper thus directly impacted on the type of pedagogy that young children experienced in early years classrooms.

The disciplinary power embedded in this movement is the interplay of policy and curriculum formation in relation to pedagogy, alongside the economic boom. The publication of the *White Paper* on early childhood education and the revised primary school curriculum both occurred in 1999 alongside what McAleese (2000) refers to as an 'amazing turnaround' in the 1999 Economic Survey for Ireland (p.46). McAleese (2000) maintains that since 1994, 'the unofficial birth date of the 'Celtic Tiger', growth has proceeded at an historically unprecedented 8.6 per cent per year' (p.46). The decade long progress of the 1980s led to exponential economic growth during the 1990s (Hogan, 2010) with a supply of qualified entrants into the labour market, an increase of women into the workforce, and a high return of emigrants moving back to Ireland for employment. McAleese (2000) claims that 'the marked change in the direction and effectiveness of fiscal policy in the late 1980s was critical

to Ireland's subsequent economic success' (p.49). These fiscal policies triggered the economic boom through a combination of a low-tax economy, generating new business, and ensuring cost-competitiveness (Bergin, Gerald, Kearney & O'Sullivan, 2011). The economic boom was reflected in the educational ideologies of the White Paper and the Primary School Curriculum in 1999. The 1999 curriculum aimed to incorporate current educational thinking and the most effective pedagogical practices. It represents a process of revision that is both evolutionary and developmental. It is designed to cater for the needs of children in the modern world' (Gol, 1999a, p.6). While the revised curriculum embedded 'effective pedagogical practices', its purpose for doing so was to prepare children for the 'modern world', thus contributing to the State's neoliberal agenda. This local lens is a microcosm of the global narrative of early childhood pedagogy, as issues such as marketisation, governance and the neoliberal agenda were at play in the international landscape, such as England (Moss, 2014), Australia (Press & Woodrow, 2005) as well as in the United States and Taiwan (Brown, Lan & In-Jeong, 2015).

Revised Primary School Curriculum

Given the political, economic and social climate when the revised *Primary School Curriculum* (Gol, 1999a) was introduced, a key aim of the curriculum was to prepare children for the modern world. Since the 1971 curriculum, 'there has been a combination of educational, economic, social and cultural developments in Irish society: these developments have been taken into account in this revision' (Gol, 1999a, p.2). A curriculum incorporates the social, political and economic constructs of a society as well as encapsulating the societal values of that era. Unlike the former curriculum, the 1999 revision was titled in English; however, the sovereign power was still embedded in how the Irish language continued to impact curriculum

and pedagogy. The *Primary School Curriculum* reflects the complex, power-imbued relationship that exists between the Irish and English languages. The curriculum states that:

An appropriate experience of both languages has an important contribution to make to the development of the child's cultural awareness and sense of cultural identity. Psychologically, historically and linguistically, an experience of both languages is the right of every Irish child (Gol, 1999a, p.43).

While the revised curriculum aims to include both languages as part of an Irish child's right, this statement fails to recognise or consider how to categorise an Irish child in an ever-changing, pluralistic society. While the revised curriculum acknowledges the multi-cultural, multi-lingual Irish society, it continued to recognise the centrality and dominance of the heritage of the Church:

The curriculum has a particular responsibility in promoting tolerance and respect for diversity in both the school and the community. Children come from a diversity of cultural, religious, social, environmental and ethnic backgrounds, and these engender their own beliefs, values, and aspirations. The curriculum acknowledges the centrality of the Christian heritage and tradition in the Irish experience and the Christian identity shared by the majority of Irish people. It equally recognises the diversity of beliefs, values and aspirations of all religious and cultural groups in society (Gol, 1999a, p.28).

So, while there was a tolerance and respect for diverse social, cultural and religious backgrounds, the hold of the Catholic Church remained. The Church was still positioned as central to the Irish culture, heritage, and traditions that are shared by most Irish people. This ideology segregated Irish people, as it assumed that most Irish people held similar beliefs to that of the Catholic Church. While children of all faiths and cultures were welcomed into Irish schools, the vast majority of them were still managed by the Catholic Church (Farren, 1995). There continued to be no separation from Church and State. The dominant hold of the Church echoed developments in other European contexts, including Portugal, Britain and France (Madeira, 2006) as well as Scotland (Coll & Davis, 2007). The Church continued to exert its power over schools and families and children of different faiths were not catered for (Farren,

1995). This led to resistance by the parental body of Irish society and they were responsible for establishing the first *Educate Together* primary school in 1978. These schools have a child-centred, multi-denominational ethos, where children of all religious beliefs and none are catered for (Educate Together, 2019). Educate Together schools are State-funded, but are managed by a patron body and responded to society's need for an education system that was separate from the Church. Presently, there are 84 Educate Together primary schools in Ireland. This movement was followed by the establishment of Community National schools (CNS) in 2008, of which there are now 12. These are also multi-denominational and managed by the Education and Training Boards (CNS, 2019). These schools represent the first time parents had a choice of how their child(ren) were educated. While all religious beliefs and none are valued and respected in these schools, they are separate from the teachings of the Church. This movement signifies the relinquishing of the control and sovereign power that was held by the Church since the formation of the education system. While the majority of Irish children are currently educated in faith-based schools, Educate Together and Community National schools provide parents with a choice.

Foucault (1979) argues that the classroom door has been forced open to 'enable the tying of the school ever more directly to the accumulation of capital' (p.221). The state of governance of early childhood education with the interplay of issues such as governmentality and marketisation shaped the underpinning mission of the revised curriculum. The school gate was tied very closely with the accumulation of capital, both human and economic. Ball (2017) refers to this type of pedagogy as 'neoliberal pedagogy', arguing that 'the classroom has been brought back into a very direct and very visible relation to docility and productivity and security' (p.23). This image of docility echoes the post-war construction of the Irish child (as

discussed earlier, pp.105-107) and reinforces the cyclical nature of the genealogy of early years pedagogy as it unfolded in Ireland. While the revised curriculum embodied neoliberal forms of pedagogy, the resistance of the pedagogy advocated by the early childhood pioneers meant that a new theoretical or conceptual framework was required to underpin the revised 1999 curriculum.

Socio-cultural theory

The revised primary curriculum 'incorporates current educational thinking and the most effective pedagogical practices' (Gol, 1999a, p.vi). A key document that underpinned the revised *Primary School Curriculum* (Gol, 1999a) was the INTO union perspective on early childhood education which was submitted to the National Forum for Early Childhood Education in 1998. The INTO demonstrates its powerful sovereign position by outlining 'effective pedagogy' in this document, which was embedded into the curriculum the following year. The discourse of pedagogy includes terms such as 'high-quality' (Gol, 1999a) and 'effective pedagogy' (Gol, 1999a), moving away from the ideological tenets of the pioneers and towards the language of neo-liberalism and marketisation. This document informed the ideology for a 'high-quality' education system: 'Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky, among others provide the basis for developing a high-quality education system for very young children. The main theoretical stance, governing infant education at primary level, stresses the uniqueness of each individual child' (p.4). The document shifted the focus from the Piagetian theory which had dominated the 1971 curriculum to Vygotskian ideology:

The core of Piaget's thinking lies in his insistence that children actively construct their knowledge of the world by acting on and interacting with objects in time and space. By actively engaging with the elements in their physical environment and by experiencing the characteristics of objects through the senses, young children take part in a process of exploration and discovery which enables them to construct a new

conceptual framework and knowledge. Attractive as Piaget's theories are, however, in their emphasis on experience and discovery in particular contexts. they are not sufficient to enable primary teachers to construct their entire practice. In particular, his concentration on constructing knowledge through experience alone, the primacy which he gives to logical thought and invariant stages of development, his failure to recognise the importance of social interaction and culture from the earliest stages and, above all, his neglect of the crucial role that language plays in cognition and learning prompts teachers to examine other perspectives on the development of learning and thinking with a view to presenting a sounder theoretical base for the provision of an appropriate education to young children (INTO, 1998, p.4).

While Piagetian theories may have been attractive in terms of experimental learning and discovery methods, according to the teachers' union, they were not sufficient in enabling primary teachers to construct their practice. This move by the union in 1998 significantly impacted the introduction of the *Revised Primary School Curriculum* (GoI, 1999a), the following year. The sovereign power enacted by the INTO shifted the focus from constructivism in the 1971 curriculum towards a socio-cultural approach in the 1999 curriculum. An important emergence of early childhood pedagogy, and one that continues to exist, is the particular interpretation of sociocultural theory that underpinned the 1999 curriculum. The INTO prefaces the role of social interaction and culture and the role that language plays in cognition and learning. The INTO (1998) report and subsequent curriculum take a specific position on Vygotskian theory, favouring the role of the teacher as the most knowledgeable other:

For Vygotsky, cooperatively achieved success lies at the foundation of learning. Central to his theory is what he calls the 'zone of proximal development' which he defines as the gap that exists for an individual child between what he or she is able to achieve and do alone and what he or she can accomplish with the help of the more knowledgeable others. This concept leads to a very different view of readiness for learning offered by Piagetian theorists. Readiness in Vygotskian terms involves not only the state of the child's existing knowledge but also his or her capacity to learn with help. Knowledge is embodied in the child's culture. A mediation influence by the more mature adult is, therefore, central to the learning process. The teacher

constructs new possible conceptual frameworks for the child and creates pathways for learning towards fresh understanding (INTO, 1998, p.4-5).

In terms of early years pedagogy, a significant contrast from the 1971 curriculum to the revised presentation in 1999 was the role of the adult in supporting young children's learning and development. The pendulum of power continued to favour the adult, regardless if the curriculum was underpinned by Piagetian ideology (as demonstrated by the 1971 curriculum) or by Vygotskian thinking (as illustrated in the 1999 curriculum). A key comparison for both curricula was that an appropriate curriculum for early education included the 'processes of exploration, activity, discovery, investigation, play and problem solving' (INTO, 1998, p.5). While the two curricula appeared to align pedagogically, the key distinction between the two was the theoretical underpinnings. Whereas the 1971 curriculum favoured a constructivist approach, the 1999 curriculum was framed by socio-cultural theory. Positioning curriculum and pedagogy in this way impacts young children's learning and development.

Interlude: Zone of Proximal Development

My first encounter with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) was when I was a student of early childhood education. I recall my early years lecturer explaining the term, using her hands to denote the gaps between what was perceived to be the actual and potential of a child's development. The concept was further illuminated with an example of a young child attempting to build a jigsaw for the first time and the steps that an adult can take to scaffold the child's learning. The concept of the ZPD was embedded in all teaching and learning experiences in my early years classroom. In my current role as an early years lecturer, I placed the same significance on the ZPD, as I experienced it as a student and teacher. I also used the same example of the young child making the jigsaw to illustrate the concept. I viewed this

concept as a positive tool to comprehend children's learning and how to ensure children reach their potential. I even worked with the NCCA to develop podcasts on how teachers can scaffold children's learning during play episodes to ensure they are reaching their potential level of development.

This research has altered my thinking about the ZPD in many ways. Firstly, in my initial thesis proposal, I did not plan to engage in Foucauldian thinking and it was a comment from my supervisor (coincidentally about the ZPD) that encouraged me to rethink the concept of ZPD which challenged my thinking (as described on p.5). Beyond this research, however, rethinking the ZPD has challenged the ways I in which I was taught and teach. For Vygotsky (1978), 'developmental processes do not coincide with learning processes. Rather, the developmental process lags behind the learning process; this sequence then results in zones of proximal development' (p.90). When I think of the ZPD now, it is a concept that is imbued with and by power. The term 'zones', implies a restriction and confinement of children's learning. Who defines what the 'zones' are? The term 'zone' is deeply ingrained with power dynamics and relations and I wonder now what is the nature of power, control and agency within these zones? Vygotsky describes a child's development 'as the development of his intellectual functions; every child stands before us a theoretician who, characterized by a higher or lower level of intellectual development, moves from one stage to another' (p.92). I argue that a policy interpretation of the movement between stages and zones signifies what Foucault refers to as biopower. Essentially, biopower is having power over other bodies, 'an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations' (Foucault, 1976, p.140). While the ZPD can be used as a tool to support teaching and learning, it is very often misused as a means of controlling children's learning

and characterising children's level of intellectual development. The 1999 curriculum is underpinned by a particular interpretation and application of Vygotskian theory, with little or no interrogation of the concept of ZPD. Characterising children by stages can create deficit ways of thinking about children and their development, yet in early childhood education 'ages and stages' is a seductive concept in policy frameworks because it allows some alignment with the ways of organising curriculum content in hierarchical steps, all of which are infused and embedded with and by power dynamics.

Aistear

The principles underpinning the 1999 *Primary School Curriculum* build on that of the 1971 curriculum and position the child as 'an active agent in his or her learning; learning is developmental in nature; the child's existing knowledge and experience form the base for learning' (Gol, 1999a, p.8). The curriculum favours active, engaging, hands-on learning experiences based on the uniqueness of each child. It acknowledges that 'the element of play ... is particularly suited to the learning needs of young children' (Gol, 1999a, p.30), yet fails to offer teachers' additional support or guidelines on how to implement a pedagogy of play. To bridge this gap, the NCCA developed *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (NCCA, 2009) for all children from birth to six in 2009. This move from the NCCA was inspired by international trends and was modelled on New Zealand's *Te Whāriki* curriculum (NCCA, 2009). This age range reflects children's learning both at home, in early years settings and in infant classes in primary school. While the statutory age for entry into primary school in Ireland is six, in practice children generally enter primary school at age four or five (Department of Education and Skills (DES), 2014), so children in their first two years of formal schooling (junior and senior infants) are engaged in both the PSC and *Aistear*.

The on-going disciplinary power associated with the Irish language is evidenced by the title of the framework, *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009), meaning journey. It describes the types of learning that is central to children's development in the early years. A key distinction between *Aistear* and the PSC is that *Aistear* focuses on the development of attitudes, values and learning dispositions, whereas the PSC primarily centres on content and the acquisition of subject-based knowledge. Both *Aistear, The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (NCCA, 2009) and corresponding background research papers emphasise 'that learning is a social process, and children from the very earliest, are active participants in the shared construction of knowledge' (Kernan, 2007, p.19). The positioning of children as co-constructors of knowledge underpins the pedagogical approaches outlined in *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009), namely, interactions and play. Again, the global discourse on pedagogy influenced the Irish landscape here, as Kernan (2007) outlines:

[The] continuum of adult involvement in children's play is evident in the findings of the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) and Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years (REPEY) studies in the UK;

Kernan continues by stating the characteristics of the role of the adult in children's play, including:

...cognitive (co-constructive) engagement and sustained shared thinking between adults and children; and the use of instruction techniques such as modelling and demonstration, explanation and questioning (2007, p. 11).

The key characteristics outlined in the EPPE and REPEY reports on the role of the adult in play underpin *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009) and are used a framework to justify the ways in which adults work and play with young children. Teaching techniques such as co-construction, sustained-shared thinking, modelling, and scaffolding are positioned throughout *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009) and its background papers as effective strategies to promote young children's learning, with

little or no interrogation of these strategies. In a similar way, play is positioned as the accepted, shared *truth* of how young children learn:

Since the time of the classic Greek philosophers, play has been considered the characteristic mode of behaviour of the young child, an expression of the natural spirit of childhood and thus a key defining feature of childhood...Nevertheless, there appears to be broad agreement amongst theorists coming from a range of disciplinary backgrounds that play can make an important contribution to children's development. (Kernan, 2007, p.5).

Play is perceived as a shared vision of how young children learn and develop. It has been characterised as such, in one form or another, since the time of the classical Greek philosophers to current times, therefore it is positioned in current curricula frameworks as effective pedagogy. *Síolta* (Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education (CECDE), 2006) views play as 'central to the well-being, development and learning of the young child' (p.9) while *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009) promotes play as a pedagogy to support young children's holistic learning. Yet both curricula frameworks fail to problematise play or address the challenges and complexities that a pedagogy of play can create. The interrelationship between the PSC and *Aistear* is the significance they both place on a pedagogy of play.

Play as a powerful pedagogy?

Aistear (NCCA, 2009) and the Primary School Curriculum (GoI, 1999a) position play as a powerful pedagogy for young children's learning and development. This positioning of play stems from Vygotskian thinking on how 'play creates a zone of proximal development...In play a child always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behaviour: in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself' (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 102). As such, *Aistear* and the PSC promote play as a tool to enable children to reach the next level of intellectual

development. Subsequently, play is perceived as a vehicle for cognitive development and as a means for delivering curriculum objectives and outcomes (Gray & Ryan, 2016).

Vygotsky (1978) argues that 'play differs substantially from work and other forms of activity' (p.93). He states that 'a child's greatest self-control occurs in play' (p. 99) and 'play gives a child a new form of desires...in this way a child's greatest achievements are possible in play' (p.100). The research paper that underpins *Aistear* on how play is a context for early learning and development states, 'the maxim that 'children learn through play' continues to constitute pedagogical 'givens' in many early years settings. In such a discourse, play is primarily viewed as an instrument of learning and development' (Kernan, 2007, p.9). This conception of play creates tensions and challenges for early years teachers, as they are encouraged to provide free play for children to support their needs and interests alongside the vision of *Aistear* and the PSC, where the adult should 'extend and enrich children's learning and development through play' (NCCA, 2009, p.53). Wood (2013) maintains the 'struggle with educational and policy-centred versions of 'purposeful' play as well as ideological versions of free play and free choice' creates 'tensions between the rhetoric and reality of play' (p.13). Play, in the Irish context, has become a tool for delivering curricular outcomes and is underpinned by conceptualisations of purposeful play. Power has shaped the genealogy of early years play, as it has shifted from the child-centred vision from 18th century Ireland to the purposeful, functional role it is imbued with today. Foucault (1979) comments:

Now I have been trying to make visible the constant articulation I think there is of power on knowledge and of knowledge on power. We should not be content to say that power has a need for such-and-such a discovery, such-and such a form of knowledge, but we should add that the exercise of power itself creates and causes to emerge new objects of knowledge and accumulates new bodies of information (p.51).

The exercise of power itself has created a new conceptualisation of play pedagogy, which has emerged in a period of policy intensification and rapid growth. These tensions and power dynamics between the rhetoric and reality of play pedagogy were noted by Gray and Ryan (2016) in the Irish context. They argue that as 'Aistear was never intended to replace the PSC; junior and senior infant teachers were tasked with implementing this play-based and child-led approach to learning in tandem with the curriculum goals encapsulated in the PSC' (p.192). Subsequently, teachers' pedagogy became a balancing act between the curriculum goals of the PSC on one side and the play-based approaches outlined in *Aistear* on the other. This introduces new contradictions for teachers, as it is not just a matter of rhetoric and reality, but teachers being pulled in different directions between policy advice or compliance and the early childhood education canon that they have received in their training programmes. This tension results in a number of challenges as indicated by Gray and Ryan (2016) including: 'lack of training, parental expectations, large class sizes, focus on the primary curriculum as well as increasing demands on teachers to produce 'tangible results'... and a lack of adequate resource' (p.198). These challenges in implementing a play pedagogy means that the reality, 'in practice, play sits on the periphery of the school day with curricular subjects afforded the greatest amount of time' (Gray & Ryan, 2016, p.200).

From a Foucauldian perspective, a pivotal reason that play is afforded a marginalised position in infant classes is the parity of status between the curriculum frameworks. While the Primary School Curriculum is afforded compulsory status, *Aistear* is not mandatory. The prominence afforded to the PSC places it in a hierarchical position, thus creating a power differential between the two. Rather than *Aistear* complementing the PSC, as was intended by the NCCA (2009), the dominance of the subject-based curriculum results in a 'mismatch or misalignment

between pedagogical approaches' (Gray & Ryan, 2016, p.21). Due to its positionality, the subject-oriented primary school curriculum is advantaged over the play-based pedagogy that is espoused in *Aistear*, causing further contradiction. Foucault (1988) maintains that we cannot study power without thinking about what he referred to as, 'strategies of power', or 'the strategies, the mechanisms, all those techniques by which a decision is accepted and by which that decision could not but be taken in the way it was' (p.104). The positioning of *Aistear* vis-à-vis the Primary School Curriculum embodies what Foucault referred to as 'strategies of power'. While both are developed by the same statutory body, they hold different positions within early years classrooms. The positionality of both impacts on the type of pedagogy that young children receive, as play is often used as a method and means to support curriculum outcomes.

Contemporary developments

The last decade or so has witnessed an exponential development of early childhood policy which has transformed the landscape of early childhood education in Ireland and shaped the current conceptualisation of pedagogy. The neoliberal agenda, where the focus is on quality and effective pedagogy in exchange for a high economic return, remains the case. However, the Irish Government underinvest in early childhood education compared to international norms (OECD, 2018; Start Strong, 2017). This means that the Government expects more in terms of economic investment, but without adequate investment to secure the desired or expected educational outcomes. This contradiction highlights again the discrepancies between economic and educational effectiveness and the wider purposes and aims of education.

In 2002, the Department of Education and Skills (formerly Science) launched the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education (CECDE) whose aim was to develop and coordinate early childhood education in Ireland (Farrell, 2015). The Centre developed *Síolta: The National Quality Framework* (2006) and played a vital role in the development and implementation of the national policy approach to early childhood learning. The publication of *Síolta* contributed significantly to the realisation of the objectives in the *White Paper* (Farrell, 2015).

Like many other European countries, Ireland is seeking to improve and develop its early childhood provision. An expert advisory group was set up by the government in 2012 to offer suggestions and recommendations about how to develop early years provision in Ireland. The full expert advisory group report contained 54 recommendations (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2013) (Farrell, 2015). It identifies two key principles that underpins the recommendations: children's rights as set out in the UN Convention, and equality for all. A key recommendation was to increase the amount of funding available for ECEC in Ireland. The expert group pointed out that Ireland was an exceptionally low spender on ECEC. Compared with other OECD countries for example, it spent 0.2% of GDP directly on ECEC services, compared with high spenders (such as Norway) whose expenditure was around 1.4% of GDP. Internationally, 1% GDP is regarded as a benchmark for the level of investment required for a high-quality system of early care and education (Start Strong, 2017) (Farrell, 2015). The report put a strong emphasis on the need to address the variable quality of early years services and the need to ensure high quality provision for all children (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2013). It is commonly accepted in Ireland that the quality of early childhood education and care is variable (Farrell, 2015). Penn (2014) acknowledges that 'Ireland has

undertaken significant steps to improve ECEC and bring it more in line with international standards; however, it still falls considerably short of those standards' (p.42) (Farrell, 2015). Another policy framework that was designed to address these challenges is *Better Outcomes Brighter Future*.

The backdrop to these policy developments was a climate of continuing recovery from a period of austerity, so the underlying current of many of these documents is the coupling of economic capital in order to build human capital. For instance, *Better Outcomes Brighter Future* (Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA), 2014) is the National Policy Framework for children and young people 2014-2020. It builds on the National Children's Strategy, *Our Children – Their Lives* (2000-2010) (DCYA, 2010) and positions itself as incorporating prior policy learning from the past decade. This consultation included 66,705 responses from children and young people and over 1,000 submissions from stakeholders and the general public (input from across Government, from the National Children's Advisory Council and the National Youth Work Advisory, statutory bodies and non-Governmental organisations (NGOs)). However, the nature of this current policy framework is determined by its title. While the aim of the policy framework is to provide joined-up thinking for the coordination of early years services and supports, it promotes 'best outcomes for children' in particular to disrupt 'poor outcomes', especially for children considered to be disadvantaged. The focus of the policy framework is on 'outcomes'; the strategy is outcomes-led and outcomes-driven, and acknowledges that the content of the policy framework is subject to the availability of resources and investment. The policy does outline the economic benefits of investing in children and young people, highlighting the '€7 return for every €1 invested arising from the provision of one-year, universal quality pre-school service' (p.16), yet fails to

address the issue of quality, which is key to providing effective provision. In this regard, this outcome-driven policy fails to support children, their families, early years teachers, and services. With regard to young children's education and care, the only significant implementation to date (along with free GP visits for under- sixes to a participating GP), is the introduction of the free pre-school years (DCYA, 2009). The Irish government introduced the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme in 2010 and extended it in 2016 (Farrell, 2015). The aim of the scheme is to 'benefit children in the key developmental period prior to starting school' (DCYA, 2010). The scheme is open to all children aged between three years and three months and four years six months, and offers children a free pre-school year, three hours per day, for 38 weeks of the year in early childhood care and education settings.

However, despite some increases in government spending, Ireland currently invests only one-eighth of what other EU countries do in the Irish Early Childhood Education and Care sector (Children's Rights Alliance, 2019). There has been a tendency in the past to introduce short term quick-fix schemes and initiatives. This has resulted in unsustainable working conditions and levels of pay for staff, in addition to unaffordable childcare services for parents. The over-reliance on private providers within the childcare sector puts significant strain on public finances without delivering quality for all (Gol, 2018; Lloyd & Penn, 2012; OECD, 2006; Start Strong, 2015). Despite the increased investment, early childhood education in Ireland is a fractured system. Based on the evidence presented in this research, it is my belief that the systemic issues ingrained in early childhood education at a policy level have a direct impact on pedagogical experiences for all young children in Ireland. Foucault (1979) maintains, 'the exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly

induces effects of power' (p.52). In analysing how exercises of power shaped genealogy from the 1970s to current times, this chapter creates a new knowledge. Foucault believes:

The essential political problem for the intellectual is not to criticise the ideological contents supposedly linked to science, or to ensure that his own scientific practice is accompanied by a correct ideology, but that of ascertaining the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth. The problem is not changing people's consciences-or what's in their heads- but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth. It's not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power (which would be a chimera, for truth is already power) but of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time (Foucault, 1979, p.133).

This research has not emancipated a new politics of *truth* from all the systems of power that are associated with it, such as sovereign, disciplinary, biopower, and the micro-physics of power. Rather, by unravelling the mechanisms of power within each *épistème* upon which pedagogy was constructed, a new story has emerged that connects the local context in Ireland with wider research and international policy discourses and drivers in ECE.

Conclusion

Chapter 4 presents a discursive account of the genealogy of early childhood pedagogy in Ireland, from the 1970s to the present day. It delineates how power, specifically sovereign, disciplinary and biopower, constructed pedagogy for young children. This *épistème* witnessed a diminishing of the sovereign power exerted by the Church and State in relation to ownership of schools and the role of the Irish language, but was replaced by a different form of disciplinary power, as evidenced by the intensification of early years policy and the focus on high-quality and effective provision. Alongside the increase in early years policy, other societal movements influenced the development of early years pedagogy during this period, such as the women's movement, globalisation, marketisation, and the rapid decline and subsequent growth of the economy. This chapter examines the mechanisms of power within each of these

societal movements and highlights the impact that power within these movements had on pedagogy for young children. From this analysis, I argue that the societal, cultural and economic developments within this *épistème* led to a particular positioning of young children, which I have conceptualised as the Policy Child, as depicted by Figure 5.

Figure 5: The Policy Child

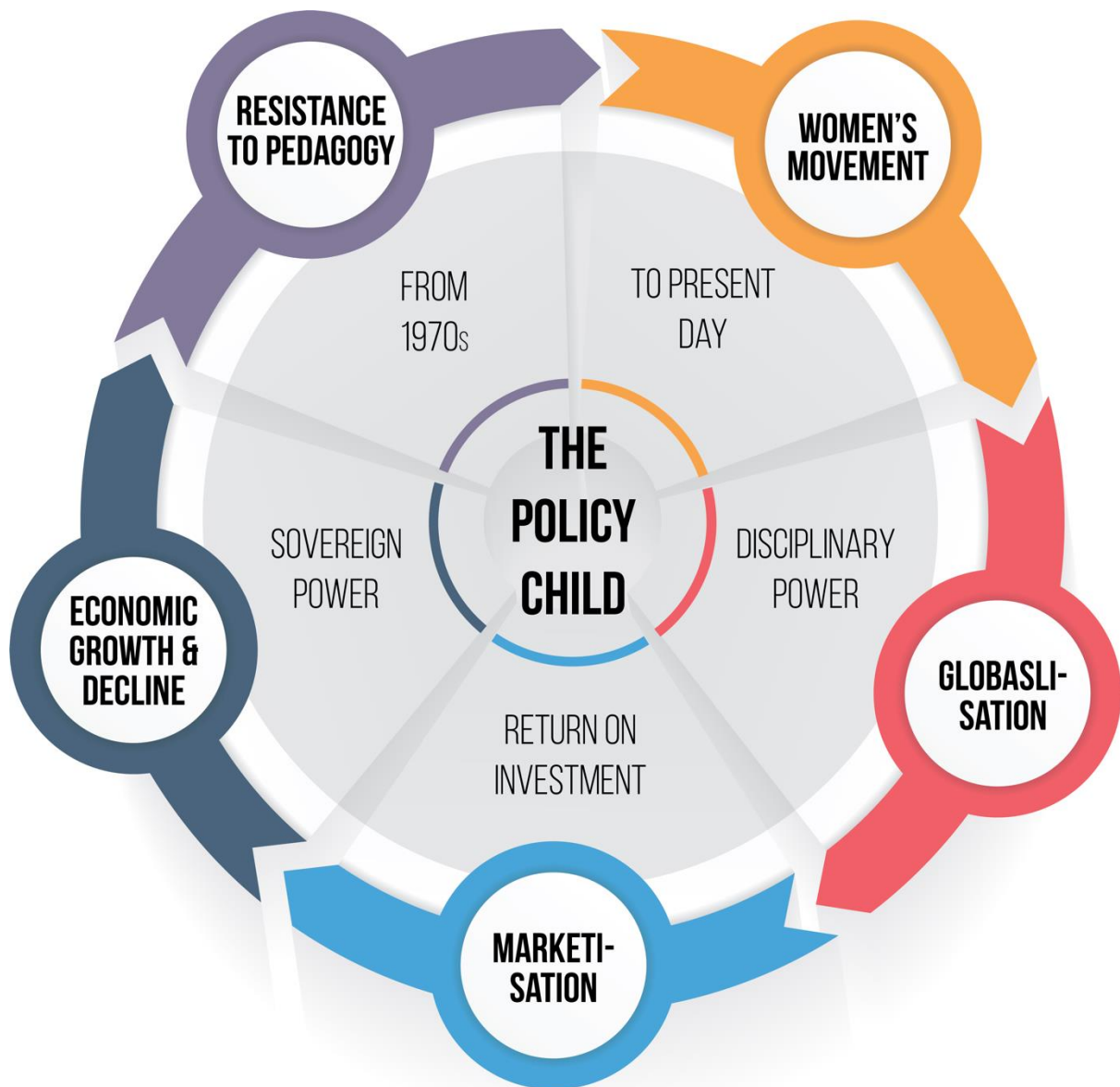


Figure 5 depicts an image of The Policy Child, which was constructed from the 1970s epoch to the present day. This image was created due to the intensification of early years policy, along with a focus on high-quality, effective pedagogy where the economic driver was the return on investment. This positioning of children contributed to the neoliberal agenda of the State, particularly given the decline and growth of the economy during this period. Other wider societal movements also contributed to this construction of the child, namely the power dynamics within the women's movement, marketisation, and globalisation, as Chapter 4 details. These movements led to the resistance of the 1971 curriculum, the formation of the 1999 curriculum, and a move to redevelop and reimagine this curriculum. This research argues that within this *épistème*, children were viewed as the 'Policy Child'. This positioning of children led to a distinct discourse where pedagogy was fuelled by the return on investment and not focused on a child-centred approach. This move continues to have a significant impact on the present redevelopment of the primary school curriculum. The discourse on how pedagogy has been constructed and continues to be redeveloped will be described in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

Plus ça change?

This research demonstrates that pedagogy is not constructed in a vacuum; rather, pedagogy is formed by the interplay of power between the societal, political, and economic movements within a particular *épistème*. The interwoven connectedness of different types of power within these movements shaped early years pedagogy from an Irish perspective from the 18th century to the present day. This research contributes to the global discourse on early years pedagogy by analysing and reinterpreting pedagogy through a local lens. Foucault (2010) maintains that subjects are produced in the 'conjunctions of a whole set of practices from the moment they become coordinated with a regime of truth' (p.19). In a similar way, the global discourse on early childhood pedagogy is established on traditions, history and practices collectively, which form a particular regime of truth. This research contests and challenges the regimes of truth upon which early childhood pedagogy was and continues to be constructed and offers an alternative lens through which to view early years pedagogy.

Chapter 5 presents the contribution this research makes to knowledge, alongside a discussion on the trustworthiness of the research. This chapter also details how key Foucauldian concepts such as 'flows of power' and 'knowledge and truth' have unfolded throughout this research. By presenting a new genealogy of early years pedagogy from a local lens, this research contributes to contemporary global discourses on genealogy and pedagogy. Foucault (1979) maintains that history tends to study individuals and institutions that hold sovereign positions of power rather than studying the mechanisms of power and power strategies per se. Historically, 'power in its strategies, at once general and detailed, and its mechanisms, has never been studied. What has been studied even less is the relation

between power and knowledge, the articulation of each on the other' (Foucault, 1980b, p.51). This research poses the question, how has power shaped the genealogy of early childhood pedagogy from an Irish perspective? By analysing the interrelationship between mechanisms of power and knowledge, or as Foucault (1980b) describes it, how 'power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power' (p.52), this research problematises pedagogy. In doing so, it creates a new discourse; a new knowledge.

Interlude: Power and knowledge

Central to Foucault's governmentality studies was the premise that Western society is formed on the principles of liberty, autonomy and rule of law, alongside a political agenda that explicates these principles. Peters (2008) maintains that as a matter of historical fact, Western society employed technologies of power that operated on forms of disciplinary power and in doing so, bypassed the law and its freedoms altogether. Foucault was interested in the practices of knowledge produced through relations of power. He examines how these practices of knowledge were used to augment and refine the efficacy and instrumentality of power in its exercise over individuals, institutions, and society.

As power, strategies of power, and mechanisms of power create knowledge, and knowledge generates effects of power, knowledge and power cannot be separated. Foucault (1979) contends:

Knowledge and power are integrated with one another, and there is no point in dreaming of a time when knowledge will cease to depend on power; this is just a way of reviving humanism in a utopian guise. It is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power (p.52).

Foucault continues by maintaining that not only are power and knowledge inseparable, 'far from preventing knowledge, power produces it' (Foucault, 1980b, p.59). This research illustrates how power has not only shaped early years pedagogy from an Irish perspective from the 18th century through to the present day; rather, both the strategies and mechanisms of power have determined pedagogy. This finding contributes to the global discourse on early years pedagogy and illustrates Foucault's argument that power and knowledge are inseparable. Power and knowledge have a dual, reciprocal role in relation to each other. Power determines knowledge, i.e. knowledge relating to early years pedagogy, and knowledge about pedagogy is created within the power dynamics of the societal, economic, and political constructs of a particular era. Foucault (1979) claims:

Now I have been trying to make visible the constant articulation I think there is of power on knowledge and of knowledge on power. We should not be content to say that power has a need for such-and-such a discovery, such-and such a form of knowledge, but we should add that the exercise of power itself creates and causes to emerge new objects of knowledge and accumulates new bodies of information (p.51).

The exercise of power itself has caused new bodies of knowledge to emerge from my research and by analysing the flows of power and its sources, a new story has emerged.

Dominant lens for pedagogy

Western interpretations of sociocultural theory have shifted over time and are currently focused on pedagogy (Hedges & Cooper, 2018; Lillemyr, Dockett, & Perry, 2013; Pramling-Samuelsson & Asplund Carlsson, 2008; Rogers, 2011). Sociocultural theories include both Vygotskian (Bodrova & Leong, 2007) and post-Vygotskian thinking, but are predicated on the propositions that the process of learning is a social construction and that knowledge is both socially and culturally constructed. Sociocultural theory as a discourse of power highlights social and cultural contexts as inseparable dimensions in which young children learn

(Vygotsky, 1978). Sociocultural theories are often used as a framework to define pedagogy and justify the ways in which adults work and play with young children (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Jordon, 2009). This global narrative on sociocultural theory can be illustrated through the lens of the local Irish context.

As an illustration of disciplinary power, in Ireland, the ideological constructs of early childhood pedagogy are often presented as a shared understanding. Currently, early years pedagogy and research is predominantly framed within a sociocultural paradigm. The genealogy of this trend has its roots embedded in the 1999 *Primary School Curriculum*, which framed early years pedagogy from a Vygotskian perspective. Evidence of this trend is found in more recent policy, pedagogy and curriculum developments, which are framed within a sociocultural paradigm (Dooley, Dunphy & Shiel, 2014; Kennedy, Dunphy, Dwyer, Hayes, McPhilips, Marsh, O'Connor & Shiel, 2012; NCCA, 2009; O'Kane, 2016). The dominance of one ideology and paradigm has influenced not only *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009) but also current research, curriculum and policy developments for young children in Ireland. For instance, research was conducted on children's transition from preschool into primary school by the NCCA. Again, this research followed the trend and influence of sociocultural theory on Irish policy and curricula and states that:

Sociocultural theory proposes that children are active agents in their own learning and that the same biological or environmental factors can produce very different effects depending on social or cultural considerations. So the ability of the individual to construct meaning from their social and educational interactions will impact on their experience of this transition (O'Kane, 2016, p.26).

Other recent curriculum developments for young children in Ireland include the new Primary Language Curriculum (DES, 2015) and a forthcoming Mathematics Curriculum. The research reports (Dooley et al., 2014; Kennedy et al., 2012) that informed these curricular developments are also underpinned by sociocultural theories. For instance, the mathematics research report for children aged three to eight years of age recognises the dominance of sociocultural theory and states: 'sociocultural theories are increasingly the dominant framework used in early childhood education to explain young children's learning' (Dooley et al., 2014, p. 43-44). These reports form the foundation that informs and structures new and forthcoming curricula. This evidence suggests that Irish policy and curricula in relation to young children are dominated by particular selections and interpretations of sociocultural theory. Given the positioning of children throughout this research (p.87, p.122 & p.171), it is interesting to note the dominance of sociocultural theory. From an Irish perspective, policy positions sociocultural theory as the dominant lens through which to view young children's learning and development, to meet its own agenda rather than the positioning of policy within sociocultural theory per se. The flows of power within this movement are that children are positioned as co-constructors and collaborators of their learning, thus implying that the power dynamics between adults and children can be shared. However, Foucault (1976) claims that 'power is tolerable only on condition that it masks a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to an ability to hide its own mechanisms' (p.86), so if power appears to be shared or not to exist at all, it is only that it has been masked, appearing to hide its potential.

While sociocultural theory does provide an important lens through which to view early years pedagogy, the domination of one conceptualisation of knowledge and learning is worth contesting given that singular thinking in relation to pedagogy and knowledge can, I would

argue, be viewed as limiting. While positioning policy and curriculum developments within the sociocultural paradigm acknowledges and recognises both the social and cultural contexts, it offers a particular lens through which to view pedagogy and young children as learners. This research argues that by using an alternative lens, in this case a Foucauldian lens, new ways of thinking about children, childhood, and pedagogy have emerged. This research argues that as sociocultural theories underpin young children's learning and development, as well as pedagogical approaches and curriculum frameworks, they have been utilised to align with the policy zeitgeist. Hence, there is an appeal for early childhood educators to draw on familiar theories and approaches of child-centred education, learning, and assessment; for example, using playful approaches. At the same time, however, these concepts have also been pulled in policy directions to align with outcome-led frameworks and curricula.

Redevelopment of the curriculum

A series of reports were written in consultation with the NCCA on the current redevelopment and reimagining of the primary school curriculum (Irwin, 2018; NCCA, 2016; Walsh, 2018). Irwin (2018) reflects on the aims of the 1999 *Primary School Curriculum* and argues, 'while none of the aims explicitly point towards education as a means to economic profit that, in reality, educational rhetoric can be instrumentalised' (p.8), therefore issues such as globalisation, marketisation and neoliberalism came to the fore. Irwin (2018) prefaces that a value-neutral managerialism in education is the 'target enemy' (p.9). He then asks the question; what philosophy of education will be systematically developed for the process of reimagining the curriculum, suggesting a matrix of values (Irwin, 2018).

A key element of the redevelopment of the primary school curriculum is 'the acceptance of curriculum as a social construction that is continuously negotiated and re-negotiated at a

policy and practice level' (Walsh, 2018, p.11). Walsh (2018) suggests that this is new for Irish teachers as they have 'historically been conceptualised as implementers of curriculum policy' (p.11). This argument suggests a move away from being mere implementers of curriculum policy; rather teachers should be viewed as co-constructors of curriculum policies that are constantly evolving within a particular space and context. In discussing the redevelopment of the curriculum, Walsh (2018) asserts:

...the curriculum must be underpinned by a strong theoretical, conceptual and research basis. However, the detail of this theoretical, conceptual and research basis does not need to be included in the overview....it could be housed in background research papers (p.18).

I disagree with this position. If we are to redevelop and reimagine the curriculum for young children, I believe that we need to view curriculum and pedagogy (and all that they entail) through multiple lenses. Rather than one theoretical paradigm dominating curriculum and pedagogy, contesting theories and concepts representing different paradigms should be explored (Kessler, 1992). This research argues that an awareness of Foucauldian concepts in terms of how power circulates and acts could be explored to offer alternative ways of thinking about pedagogy. Rather than theory being presented in research papers that are located separately from the curriculum, I believe that theory needs to be embedded within the curriculum. It needs to be presented in a way that is accessible to its intended audience so that teachers themselves can engage with theory, concepts and research.

Based on the work of Irwin (2018) and Walsh (2018) and the concept of an evolving curriculum and the need for philosophical underpinning, a report was published on theoretical perspectives on children's learning and how these can inform pedagogy (Ring, O'Sullivan, Ryan & Burke, 2018). While the report acknowledges a range of theoretical perspectives on

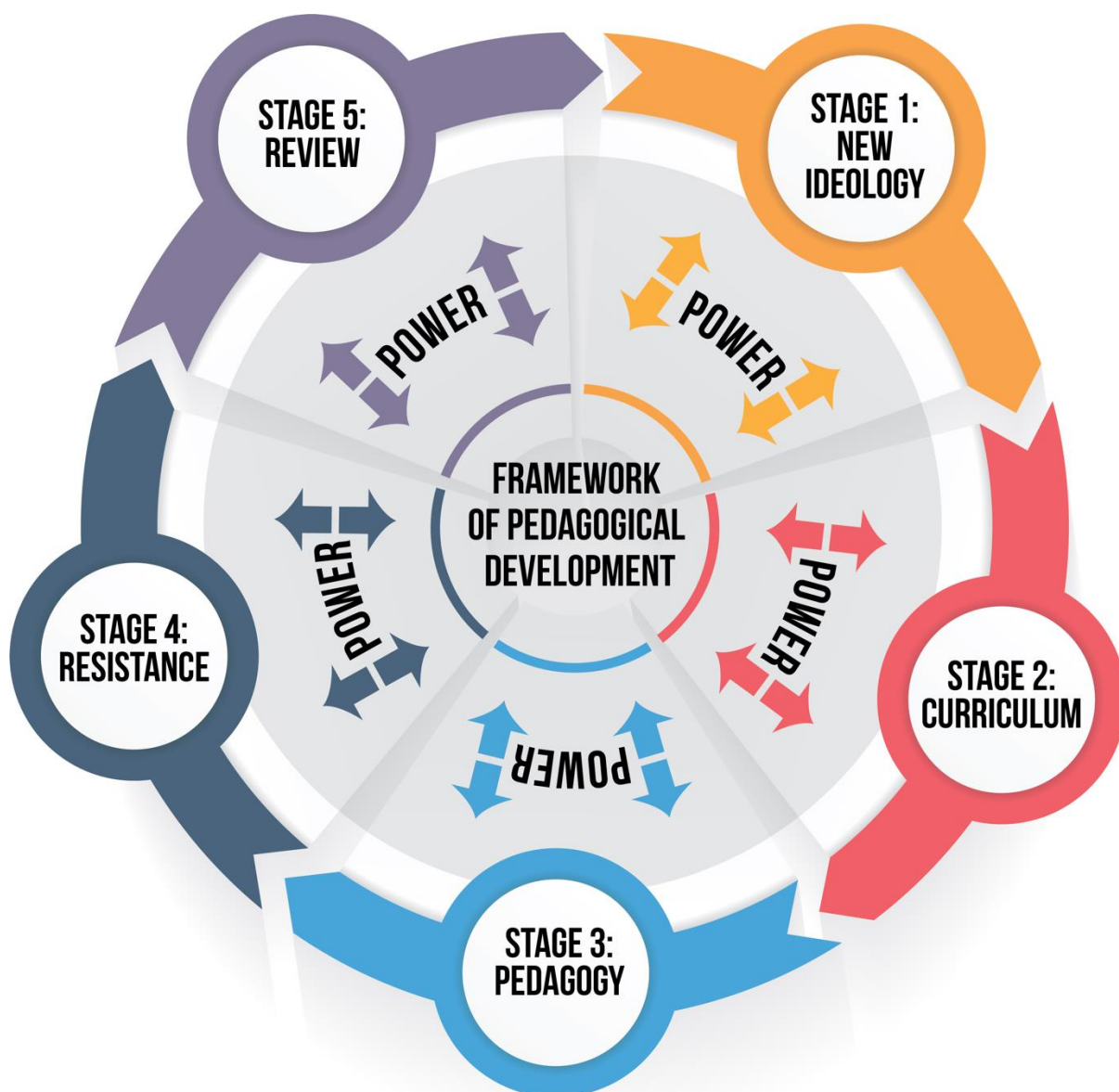
children's learning and development (that were identified in consultation with the NCCA), including sociocultural; bioecological; meta-cognition; attachment; motivation; cognitive psychology; neuroscience, and multiple intelligences (Ring et al., 2018, p.5). This report, much like the work of the pioneers presented in Chapter 1 (pp.32-38 and subsequent analysis) could be considered a new regime of truth, in terms of which theories they have chosen to include and exclude. It is my belief that many of these theories continue to be informed by a dominant paradigm of child development theory rather than contemporary ways of understanding curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. These theories have been somewhat forced together to represent the development of the modern Irish child, with little interrogation of the compatibility of conflict between these theories. I wonder if we have succumbed to what I argue is the *Framework of Pedagogical Development*, by aiming to include the 'current range of theoretical perspectives on children's learning and development' (p.5)? In the need to develop curriculum and pedagogical approaches that mirror contemporary and established theories, are we failing to acknowledge the power exerted by policy frameworks, as well as the expectations and outcomes that are now inscribed in early childhood education? (Wood & Hedges, 2016). In other words, is policy in search of a theoretical framework, or vice versa? This research suggests that we are repeating the same patterns that have emerged since the 18th century.

Framework of pedagogical development

This research presents a genealogy of how power has shaped early years pedagogy from the 18th century to the present day. This genealogy reveals that power, in all its forms; sovereign; disciplinary; productive; repressive; micro-physics, and biopower, has determined pedagogy for young children in Ireland. This finding has implications for the future of early years

pedagogy both nationally and internationally. A contribution to knowledge that emerges from this research is the cyclical nature of the framework of pedagogical development. While this pattern has emerged from an Irish perspective, its application has global significance. The flow of pedagogical developments that emerges from this research, has five key stages, including: Stage 1: New ideology; Stage 2: Curriculum; Stage 3: Pedagogy; Stage 4: Resistance and Stage 5: Review, as Figure 6 outlines:

Figure 6: Framework of Pedagogical Development



A meta-layer of power permeates each of the stages and the interplay of power is shaped by the political, cultural, social, religious, and economic context of a particular era. Stage 1 commences as a new ideology or *regime of truth* for young children is formed based on new priorities and purposes and shows the flow of power between the political, social and economic movements of a particular context in a particular era. For instance, this research demonstrates how children have constructed in various eras as: the Romantic Child; State Child; Catholic Child; Neoliberal Child; Global Child; Policy Child; and the Sociocultural Child (p.87, p.122 & p.171). Each image of the child creates new constructions of children and childhood and positions early years pedagogy, curriculum, policy, and research within a particular lens. This new thinking is then embedded in curricula (Stage 2) and subsequent pedagogy for young children (Stage 3). While curricula and related pedagogy are implemented, they are subsequently met with different types and forms of resistance (Stage 4), and new forms of socio-economic realities. This resistance leads to a curriculum review (Stage 5) so that new theories, ideologies or concepts can be embedded in the curriculum redesign. The cyclical process of pedagogical development is then repeated. This sequence of movements has occurred in early years pedagogy since the 18th century in Ireland and continues to influence the redevelopment of curricula to this day. This contribution to knowledge has implications for both pedagogy and genealogy. The process of how pedagogy is developed contributes to contemporary global discourses on ECE pedagogy and the learning from this framework can be applied to international developments. Rather than repeating the pattern or process, pedagogy can be viewed vis-à-vis the mechanism of power; the micro-physics of power, and the interplay of power within the societal, political, cultural, and economic movements of each *épistème*.

Interlude: Trustworthiness

If this research claims that a framework for pedagogical development exists, and more significantly, from an Irish perspective, that a pattern has emerged since the 18th century, how can I argue that this research is trustworthy? Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintain that the value of a research study is strengthened by its trustworthiness. They argue that the four key principles of establishing trustworthiness include: creditability; transferability; dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). While they maintain that these criteria are essential for research in a naturalistic setting, I argue that these four principles can determine the trustworthiness or validity of this research. Creditability is the confidence in this genealogy; transferability demonstrates how the findings can be applied in other contexts; dependability shows the findings are consistent with the research approach used here and could be repeated; and finally, confirmability is a certain degree of neutrality, i.e. the findings are not based on researcher bias. This section demonstrates how this research is trustworthy, yet is also subject to limitations.

No research is without its limitations or boundaries (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011) and this research is no different. It is critical to acknowledge the limitations of this research to demonstrate how I am a reflective, reflexive researcher. Firstly, this research is bound by the Irish context and therefore the findings are specific to this context. However, as argued throughout, these findings can be applied to other contexts and so the learning is transferable in terms of understanding local and global policy flows and how these manifest over time. A further perceived limitation of this research could be that this research is 'not doing Foucault'. I echo Ball's (2013) words to justify this, 'I do not do Foucault, and I am not Foucauldian' (p.1)

alongside a recognition that Foucauldian thinking should also be subject to critique (Baudrillard, 2007; Joseph, 2004). Rather, this research adopts some Foucauldian concepts and ideology to deconstruct the research question, as I have previously argued (pp.6-7 & p.46). It could also be argued that this research is subject to researcher bias, for instance, what aspects of Irish history have I chosen to include and why? What elements have been excluded from the discourse? I argue that I have chosen the most influential policy documents, and the societal, political, religious, and economic moments over time that pertained to the development of early years pedagogy. However, how can I establish the internal and external validity of the research? This section argues that the four key principles of trustworthiness, as outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) (credibility; transferability; dependability and confirmability), frame this research and thus I claim that this research is trustworthy.

From the outset, this genealogy is credible, as Lincoln and Guba (1985) claim that some of the features of credible research include prolonged engagement, peer debriefing, and persistent observation. This genealogy evolved over the period of my EdD studies, with persistent debriefing with colleagues and peers during residential weekends. Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintain that establishing the validity of the research also requires continual observation. This genealogy sourced primary materials and carefully observed and analysed these to document the genealogy. Alongside this internal validity and cross checking, this research was also exposed to external validity. Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to this as 'thick description', which is one technique to ensure transferability. Amankwaa (2016) outlines thick description as 'describing a phenomenon in sufficient detail one can begin to evaluate the extent to which the conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, situations, and people'

(p.122). This genealogy is laden with rich, thick description, both in terms of historical detail and practices of self. As such, the findings from this research, in particular the framework of pedagogical development, can be applied to other contexts and so the research is deemed transferable. Lincoln and Guba (1985) posit that to establish dependability, a strategy referred to as an 'inquiry audit' can be utilised. This is where an independent researcher examines the research. I engaged in discursive practices with a colleague to justify the research design and approach to the study and also to evaluate the validity of the findings and contributions to knowledge. This step ensures that someone outside of the research is conducting an inquiry audit into the research study, thus making the research more dependable.

To establish confirmability, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend strategies including an audit trail, triangulation, and reflexivity. They describe an audit trail as transparent steps taken from the start of the research process to the reporting of the findings. The audit trail began prior to the formulation of my research question as I noted the shifts in my research focus in my diary. I systematically recorded and justified my research decisions from the outset, including the approach, structure and design of the study. These measures were recorded externally in my research diary and many of these steps are woven internally within the interludes of this research. Alongside the audit, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) recommend using multiple sources of data to triangulate and corroborate findings and as a test for validity. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that rather than viewing triangulation as a method for validation, researchers use this technique to ensure the research is robust, rich, comprehensive, and well developed. This research uses a range of data from multiple sources within each épistème to ensure the genealogy is rich, comprehensive and well-developed. Denzin (2014) identifies

many types of triangulation, one being theory or perspective triangulation. This research moves within research paradigms, but justifies the movement of same. It is framed by Foucauldian concepts or perspectives and this is delineated within each chapter in the interludes. Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to reflexivity as systematically attending to the construction of knowledge at every stage of the research process. They suggest that one way to achieve reflexivity within research is to have a reflexive diary where all the research decisions and reasons for them are recorded and reflected upon (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Considering that 'practices of self' is a key tenet of this research (as presented earlier on pp. 27-29), I took on board this advice and documented my research decisions and rationale for these in my reflexive diary. Alongside this external reflexivity, I wove many of these reflections into the research itself within the interludes, thus demonstrating my reflexivity from the outset and continuing throughout the entire research process. As this research uses strategies such as an audit trail, triangulation and reflexivity, I argue that it establishes confirmability.

This section has established that this research is founded upon the four key tenets of trustworthiness, namely, creditability; transferability; dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I argue, therefore, that this genealogy is trustworthy. Alongside the framework of pedagogical development, a further key contribution to knowledge is the construction of a new genealogy.

A new genealogy

Foucault did not describe a general issue or theory of society; rather he identified a set of problems and outlined some methods of analysis, one of which was genealogy (Ball, 2013). Ball (2013) maintains that 'one of the primary facets of Foucault's 'method' is the production of histories or genealogies' (p.33). Ball (2013) continues by arguing 'histories that are not 'about' Foucault, but about 'doing' genealogy as an exercise of 'interpretive analysis'...focusing on the interplay of knowledge and power' (p.38). As a form of interpretive analysis, genealogy centres on the interplay between knowledge and power. In a genealogical approach, power is analysed as a network that continuously functions and is ever present. Individuals circulate within this network of power relations and are both subject to and objects of power. Therefore, 'genealogy is not after the who or whom of power. It is the how of power that interests genealogy. Genealogy focuses upon the relations and forces of power connected to discursive practices' (Tamboukou & Ball, 2003, p.8). As this research presents a genealogy of how power has shaped early years pedagogy from an Irish perspective, it contributes to the field of research and scholarship in early childhood education, specifically to global discourses on early years pedagogy.

Foucault once described genealogy as 'gray, meticulous and patiently documentary' (Foucault, cited in Rabinow, 1984, p.76). When I reflect on this research, I think of my careful sifting and patient documenting of books, articles and journals to piece together the genealogy of early years pedagogy from an Irish perspective. While I never found the process 'gray'; in fact, I was surprised by many of the historical developments that I was unfamiliar with prior to this research (e.g. Corcoran's influence on the education system and the payment-by-results scheme), I can understand why Foucault may have felt this way. For me,

this genealogy brought the pages of history books to life. How then do I know that my research is a genealogy? A starting position for genealogy is that there is no definitive truth. Rather, the genealogist looks beyond historical practices in which 'truths' about early years pedagogy have been constructed. Therefore, genealogy aims to go beyond the limits of 'truth' by presenting an alternative account, a reinterpretation, rather than accepting the 'truths' of early years pedagogy. The purpose of this recreation is to provide what Tamboukou (1999) refers to as 'a counter-memory' (p.203) that enables individuals to reimagine the historical practices of their present lived experiences, thus opening the possibilities for the future.

Foucault (1979) conceptualises truth as:

[A] system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. 'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it (p.133).

By analysing the systems of power that have induced and produced early years pedagogy, alternative truths have emerged from this research. Foucault (1979) identifies a political problem associated with the production of truths:

It's not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power (which would be a chimera, for truth is already power) but of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time (p.133).

For Foucault, truth and power can never be detached, as truth is power. Yet by emancipating truth from systems of power, the interplay of power within political, social, economic, and cultural spheres is revealed. Tamboukou (1999) declares that 'genealogy is concerned with the processes, procedures and apparatuses by which truth and knowledge are produced, in what Foucault calls the discursive regime of the modern era' (p.202). By unravelling the power within the processes and procedures that have produced early years pedagogy since the 18th century in Ireland, my research contributes a new, significant genealogy to the discourse on

early childhood pedagogy. This new genealogy contributes to the body of knowledge on early years pedagogy from a local lens and this learning can be applied to discursive practices in other global contexts.

Interlude: Technologies of the self

In terms of defining pedagogy, Jiménez and Valle (2017) pose the questions:

What would happen if we defined pedagogy as a discipline or art, par excellence, of the care of the self? Where does this notion take us from and where does it lead us, especially in terms of education? Where are we heading if we acknowledge, following the trajectory of Foucault, that until now certain pedagogy has privileged the study of educational discourses (discourse analysis) and domination forms as devices of knowledge-power (genealogy)? And, above all, if we accept that in his latest works Foucault reveals another feature of the self, not fully formed but constituted through regulated practices (techniques of the self) (p.703).

If we contend that pedagogy has privileged the study of educational discourse and has been deeply influenced by knowledge-power dynamics, what would happen if pedagogy was shaped using a Foucauldian lens? This research has woven interludes throughout the narrative as a means to deconstruct ideology and concepts, but also to reflect on practices of self. For me, before one can care for the self, a deep understanding of knowing oneself needs to exist. Foucault (1988) prefaces the knowledge of the self as the first step of the journey to knowledge, stating ‘knowledge of the self (the thinking subject) takes on an ever-increasing importance as the first step in the theory of knowledge’ (p. 22).

As this research developed, so too did my knowledge of self, or ‘gnothi seauton’ (as presented on p. 28, 44, 45 & pp.48-50). Foucault (1988) reveals four technologies that exist; technologies of production; technologies of sign systems; technologies of power, and technologies of the self. Foucault (1988) ascertains that these four technologies often function and interact with

each other, but that the knowledge of technologies of self has the potential to create a new knowledge, or a new discourse:

I am more and more interested in the interaction between oneself and others and in the technologies of individual domination, the history of how an individual acts upon himself in the technology of self (Foucault, 1988, p.19).

Along with the interludes that have shaped the narrative, the following two episodes illustrate both my reflexivity as a researcher and how my 'gnothi seauton' has evolved over the course of the research.

The first episode demonstrating my 'gnothi seauton' represents my early engagement with Foucauldian thinking. My research question stemmed from my interest in power and I was cognisant that power is a key tenet of Foucault's work. While revisiting those positioned as early childhood pioneers, I engaged with Rousseau's 'Émile' (1762) for the first time. I read it in its entirety, in one sitting, as I was captivated by the book and its many references to power that appeared within the narrative. I proceeded to write a lengthy review on power, inspired by 'Émile' (1762), including sections on: 'The child has gained nothing by birth'; 'The spirit of the rules of education is to give the child less power'; 'Give each child his place and keep him there', and 'Man is born free and everywhere he is in chains'. This review, although substantive in quantity, only presented a linear account of power within the text. It included one-dimensional, descriptive details of the aphorisms of power within 'Émile', but failed to recognise the mechanisms of power that shaped the political, social, cultural, economic, and religious movements of France at that time and how these movements influenced pedagogy for young children in Ireland. While the reading of 'Émile' was an essential component of my work, in terms of genealogy and the influence of European ideology on Irish pedagogy, I

realised that the interplay of power dynamics within these movements and how the mechanisms of power produced pedagogy for young children in Ireland were more prevalent. The lengthy review was thus re-written within these terms of reference.

The second episode that reveals my 'gnothi seauton' is how my thinking has shifted over the course of this research. It is as though I am wearing a Foucauldian lens at all times! In my work, in my actions and in my interactions, I am cognisant of power in all its sources and forms. As Foucault (1979) reminds us, power is productive, and I view this new lens as a productive, positive challenge. One example that illustrates this is how I now present the Zone of Proximal Development to my students. I have previously reflected on ZPD within the research (p.5 & pp.159-161) and I have observed how my presentation of ZPD to my students has altered, perhaps not too drastically in terms of language, but significantly in terms of meaning. Rather than presenting the ZPD as an uncontested ideology, I invite the students to reflect on the ZPD and to think about how it positions children and their learning. A simple change in presentation offers the students time to think and perhaps challenge and contest.

I think that my interest in Foucault coincided with a critical period in my life. When dislocating myself from familiar spaces and places, I felt the need to experiment with new modes of thinking and perhaps with new modes of being. My Foucauldian journey started with a lecture from Donald Gillies which was too complex for me to comprehend (pp.50-51). The journey now continues with a better knowledge of early years pedagogy, power, genealogy, and a deeper knowledge of self. Gillies (2013) argues that Foucault's work can shed light on a topic and 'offer new insights into leadership, new problems for the discourse to face, and new

opportunities for alternative educational discursive formation to emerge' (p.29). I argue that the same maxim can be applied to early childhood pedagogy (Thomas, Hall, & Jones, 2013); Foucault's work offers new insights into pedagogy for young children, new challenges for discourse to face, and new opportunities for alternative educational discursive formations to emerge.

Conclusion

Dean (2015) declares that Foucault 'has become the starting, not the end, point for coming to grips with the problems and problematizations of our present' (p.403). While this research comes to a close, I realise that it is not an end point. Rather, this genealogy is a starting point for contesting and problematising early years pedagogy. I recognise now that the map supporting this genealogy (pp.16-18) is never-ending; it has no end points, only starting points. There is no final stop, no final destination; rather, genealogy is an infinite road of discovery. While this research was bound by the localised context, this genealogy could be applied across other global contexts to produce new ways of thinking about pedagogy. In an interview in 1982, Foucault comments about humans as thinking beings:

The main interest in life and work is to become someone else that you were not in the beginning.... Man is a thinking being. The way he thinks is related to society, politics, economics, and history and is also related to very general and universal categories and formal structures. But thought is something other than societal relations. The way people really think is not adequately analyzed by the universal categories of logic. Between social history and formal analyses of thought there is a path, a lane – maybe very narrow – which is the path of the historian of thought.

For Foucault, the way one thinks is interwoven with society, politics, culture, economics, and history. But thought is more than societal relations; it is about becoming someone else,

someone who you were not at the beginning of the process. Through this research, I have discovered that I am not akin to the curator of the museum that I related to at the beginning of this journey (p.1); rather, I am becoming a genealogist. As my thinking has evolved and intertwined with the power relations of the genealogy of early years pedagogy, I have formed a pathway. It may be narrow, but it is a pathway nonetheless, between social history and formal analyses of thought.

Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr (1808-1890) is credited for the maxim *plus ça change, plus c'est le meme chose*, loosely translated as 'the more things change, the more they stay the same'. This sentiment echoes the resigned acceptance of the transience of human existence amidst the perpetuation of the permanence of institutions and establishments. The ephemerality of human existence is also embedded in Foucauldian thinking, as he contemplates:

As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end. If those arrangements were to disappear as they appeared, if some event of which we can at the moment do no more than sense the possibility – without knowing either what its form will be or what it promises – were to cause them to crumble, as the ground of Classical thought did, at the end of the eighteenth century, then one can certainly wager that man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea (Foucault, 1966, p.422).

With a somewhat resigned acceptance, Foucault acknowledges humankind's temporal existence; one that is perhaps nearing an end. Just like a face drawn in the sand at the edge of the sea, our existence is transient, a mere moment in time. So, if our existence is futile, how can humankind make its mark on the world? Foucault (1980a) articulates that one of the meanings of human existence is never to accept anything as definitive, immobile, or to be true, and that to do so requires resisting power in all its sources and forms. In a lecture he delivered on *Truth and Subjectivity*, Foucault (1980a) argues:

In a sense, I am a moralist, insofar as I believe that one of the tasks, one of the meanings of human existence—the source of human freedom—is never to accept anything as definitive, untouchable, obvious, or immobile. No aspect of reality should be allowed to become a definitive and inhuman law for us. We have to rise up against all forms of power—but not just power in the narrow sense of the word, referring to the power of a government or of one social group over another: these are only a few particular instances of power. Power is anything that tends to render immobile and untouchable those things that are offered to us as real, as true, as good.

For Foucault, a critical part of human existence is to never accept anything as definitive by challenging regimes of truth and power relations. As well as contesting the regimes of truth upon which the canon of early childhood pedagogy is constructed, this research has led me to question and to challenge power in all its forms.

This research poses the question: How has power shaped the genealogy of early years pedagogy from an Irish perspective? When interpreting the findings from a local lens, this research critically challenges the ‘truths’ of early childhood pedagogy by analysing the mechanisms of power upon which knowledge about pedagogy was and continues to be predicated in Ireland. This research demonstrates how power, disciplinary; sovereign; bio-power, and micro-physics of power, shapes the pedagogical approaches that young children experience vis-à-vis curricula, policies and frameworks. While these findings are critical for comprehending the genealogy of pedagogy within the Irish landscape, this research offers so much more. In a broader sense, it creates a discursive space to deconstruct the importance of understanding present, past, and future pedagogy through genealogy. It brings to the fore issues of whose truth and whose power hold sway in contemporary early childhood contexts. The research highlights the need for criticality and contestation, not just of contemporary frameworks and policy, but of the so-called pioneers and their continued influence in early childhood education. In critically analysing the genealogy of early years pedagogy, like

Foucault, I have become a moralist. Throughout this research, my knowledge of self, my *gnothi seauton*, has evolved. I now believe that one of my tasks is to never accept anything as definitive or as true, particularly in relation to early years pedagogy, and to rise up against power that creates immobility, as recommended by Foucault (1980b). Alongside my evolved *gnothi seauton*, this research examines how power shaped the genealogy of pedagogy for young children in Ireland within particular *épistèmes*. While each *épistème* differs in terms of the cultural, social and economic movements of Irish life, this research argues that the framework of pedagogical development (p.181) is a cyclical process and the same pattern that emerged in the 18th century continues to produce early years pedagogy today. While *épistèmes* may change and theory evolves, the pattern of how power produces pedagogy remains the same. As such, Karr's maxim, *plus ça change plus c'est le meme chose*, can be applied to the genealogy of the construction of early years pedagogy in Ireland.

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