Designing ICT Experiences to Foster Children's Relationships with People, Places and Things

Hanin Hussain, PhD
Early Childhood and Special Needs Education Academic Group
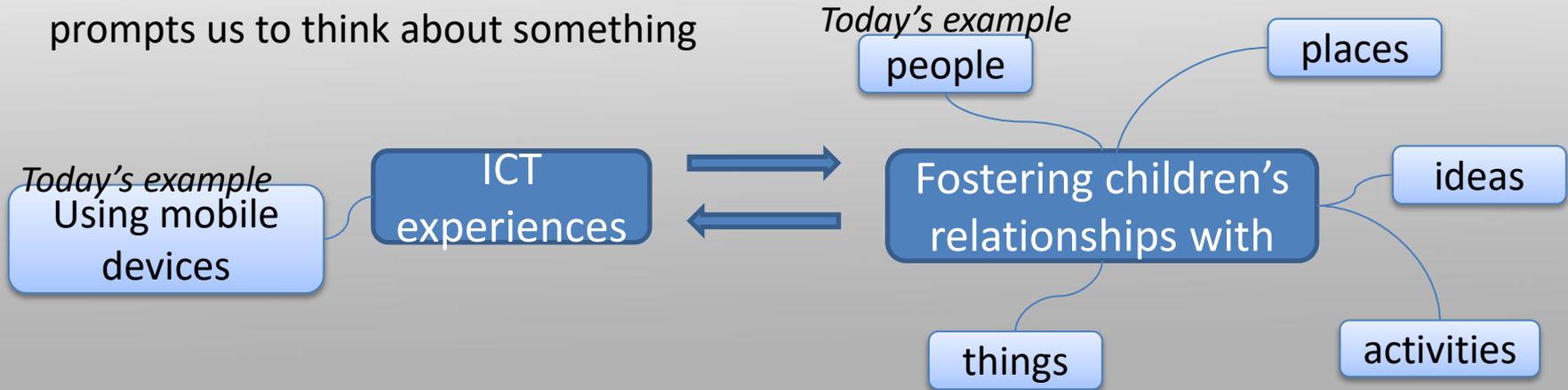
My intentions today

My message: To consider how we can use ICT experiences to support children's relationships with people, places, things and activities

My role: As a provocateur, i.e., someone who prompts us to think about something

Today's example
people

places

Today's example
Using mobile devices

ICT experiences

Fostering children's relationships with

ideas

things

activities

ICT is positioned as one of many tools to foster children's social interactions and relationships

Key assumptions & ideas

- Children learn when they interact with people, places, things, ideas and in activities (sociocultural perspective of teaching and learning)
  - Relationships emerge from ongoing and meaningful interactions in everyday life at the centre
  - Healthy relationships contribute to children's well-being and capacity to learn

- Shift in our questions about the relationship between ICT and ECE (Wang & Hoot, 2006)
  - From … is it developmentally appropriate to use ICT in ECE?
  - To … how can ICT be used effectively and meaningfully as a tool in children's learning and development, given that children are immersed in ICT?

- Children tend to interact more with each other about their tasks and the curriculum theme when technology is effectively integrated in the classroom (Lim, 2018)

- Technology can be used as a tool to encourage teachers to listen to children's voices (Clarke, 2008)
  - Teachers can find out what children find interesting, important and meaningful to them in their learning & lives in the classroom

Let's try it

Focus of our learning experience today
Using mobile devices to enable children to interact with a friend/person and share something about that person with others

What you will need
- A partner: Imagine that this person is your friend at preschool
- One internet-enabled mobile phone/tablet for each pair

What to do with your partner
- Spend 1-2 mins to find out more about each other.

- Using a mobile phone, go to the Google Slides using the link or QR code: https://bit.ly/2EcypUg

- Create a slide on the Google Slides for yourself and your partner.
  - Use the camera option on Google Slides to take a photo of you and your partner and upload it on your slide
  - Use the text option on Google Slides to write something about yourselves/each other

Example

Let's have some volunteers to share their slides

Let's reflect & share

If you were a child engaging in this learning experience,

- How would you feel when given a chance to take a photo with a friend and sharing something about yourself and your friend with your classmates?

- What did you enjoy the most about this learning experience?

- What did you find most challenging about this learning experience?

Let's reflect & share

If you were a teacher facilitating this learning experience,

- What are children learning when they engage in this learning experience? How do you match the learning you've identified with the knowledge, skills and dispositions in the NEL curriculum framework?

- How can you modify or extend on this learning experience so children can interact with places or things or ideas?

- What are some of the issues/challenges that you can face when facilitating this learning experience at your centre? How would/could you address these issues/challenges?

Some provocations for your ongoing thinking

How would/could I design this learning experience … and extend on it?

- My focus as a teacher:
  How can I facilitate this learning experience with children so that
  - I provide children with ongoing opportunities to use ICT and interact with each other
  - children and I get to know each other better and have meaningful relationships?

Some provocations for your ongoing thinking

- Keep it meaningful, rush-free and with minimal stress
  - Focus more on meaningful experiences for children and myself than on outcomes
    ➔ let the outcomes emerge from experiences
  - Stretch it over a long period of time and do it regularly, e.g. offer this to children at a time when they can choose what to do
  - If I am not ICT savvy, I'd 'experiment' with my family first and learn from experiment

- To extend children's learning, I would vary some aspects of the activity while keeping other aspects the same ➔ something new, something familiar
  - Take photos of a favourite place at the centre ➔ favourite activity
  - Encourage children to share their slides with everyone in class at group time to encourage oral skills ➔ sharing Google Slides with families