

# Could Piklerian approach improve the quality of interactions in early childhood education and care?



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# The first 3 years of a child's life

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- The need for **Early childhood education and care** for children **under 3 years old** increased from 26% to 34% (OECD, 2019).
- The **importance of process quality** is supported by a large body of literature (OECD, 2019).
- **Process quality has been associated with child development** (Bigras et al., 2012, 2017; Blain-Brière et al., 2012; Cantin et al., 2012; Laurin et al., 2019; Lemay et al., 2015; Tardif & Lemay, 2012).

## Reality in child care settings for children under 3

- Regarding levels of global process quality, studies (Drouin et al., 2004; Gingras et al., 2015) have found:
  - **low to fair quality** levels in for-profit-childcare centers
  - **fair to good** quality levels in not-for-profit childcare centers.
- The **quality of interactions** is the dimension of process quality that seems to be most associated with child development (Pianta et al., 2016 ; Sabol et al., 2013).
- Nevertheless, the level of **quality of interactions** for children under 3 years in childcare centers **is not high enough** (Barros et al., 2018; Jamison et al., 2014).
- However, the level of quality of interactions offered to children aged from 0 to 3 years old tends to be **higher when a particular pedagogical approach is adopted** by the educational team (Lemay et al., 2021).



# Piklerian approach

**Ecosystem model of educational quality**  
(Bigras & Lemay, 2012)

The importance of bidirectional interactions between the child and their environment

**Attachment theory**  
(Ainsworth, 1983; Bowlby, 1988)

Foundation of security



**Self-determination concept** (Ryan & Deci, 2017, 2020).

Three psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and belonging

# Piklerian approach

**Ecosystem model of educational quality**  
(Bigras & Lemay, 2012)

The importance of bidirectional interactions between the child and their environment

**Privileged educator - child relationship - care moments**

Foundation of security



**Free movement /autonomous activity**

Three psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and belonging

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# Purpose of literature review

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## **Examining what is known about the Piklerian approach.**

- Identify the themes and the quality dimensions studied regarding the Piklerian approach





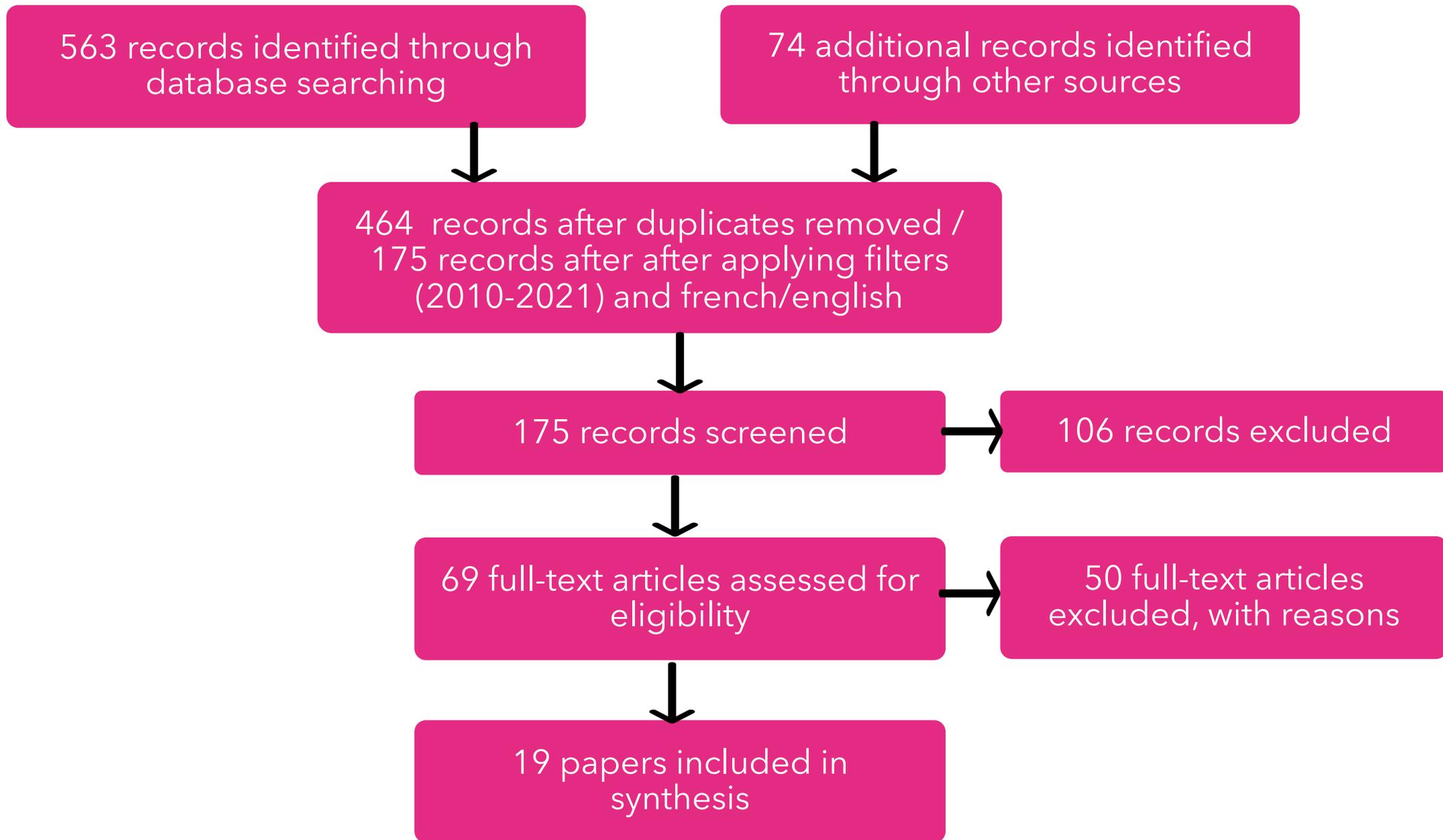
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# Knowledge about the Piklerian approach

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- Literature review
- Assistance of a research librarian
- Steps in a rigorous review process

**Identification**  
**Screening**  
**Eligibility**  
**Included**



Papers : 19

Studies : 11 (7  
theses or  
dissertations)

Main focus :  
educator-child  
relationship,  
most of them  
concern 0 to 3

Studies are  
mainly  
descriptive

## Studies regarding the Piklerian approach

**Systematic observation of the behaviour of educators during specific moments such as lunch** (Belza et al., 2019a, 2019b), **getting dressed** (Belasko et al., 2019), as well as during **free play** (Sagastui et al., 2020; Sagastui et al., 2021).

- The results highlight the stability in the practitioners' actions, providing children with a **sense of security** in a stable and familiar environment. In addition, considering the **child's level of autonomy** would allow children to regulate themselves and increase their social skills.

Description of the **Piklerian/RIE-inspired practices** (Christie, 2010; 2018) and educators' **beliefs** (Fatahian-Tehran, 2020)

- Practitioners demonstrated a **good understanding of care practice**. The practices between practitioners and children demonstrate **respect and confidence in the children's abilities**. Indeed, interactions are not experienced in a rush, and the educator **offers choices to children and waits for a response each time**.

## Studies regarding the Piklerian approach

**Educators' perceptions of care as a program** (Bussey, 2012 ; Bussey et Hill, 2017), and **training** to promote warm, sensitive, and responsive interactions between the child and caregiver

- The care approach is not taught during **educators' initial training**, but is supported through communities of practice in childcare centers.
- **Warm, sensitive and responsive interactions** between children and caregivers can enhance children's development.

**How educators think and reflect on their interactions with children** (Cherrington, 2011; 2018)

- Ability to make **intentionality explicit regarding their interactions with children**. They were more able to support their statements with a theoretical perspective.

## Studies regarding the Piklerian approach

### **How relationships are formed between children and practitioners** (Johnston, 2011)

- All three participating educators referenced the Piklerian/RIE approach, raising the importance of training in **understanding sensitive practices**.

### **Concept of a referent educator** (Violon, 2018 ; Violon et Wendland, 2014, 2018, 2021)

- This practice provides a **sense of security** for parents and children. However, the educator respondents believe that the absence of the referent educator would make the child experience **difficult moments**.
- While the results highlight a **positive link** between the referent and the children's attention span.
- **Care is better defined.**

# Identify the themes studied regarding the Piklerian approach

**Interaction : educator behaviours** (verbal and nonverbal interactions between educator and children)

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**Beliefs and perceptions** about caregiving practices

Concept of **referent educator**

Systematic observation of the behaviour of educators during specific moments such as **lunch** (Belza et al., 2019a, 2019b), **getting dressed** (Belasko et al., 2019), as well as during **free play** (Sagastui et al., 2020; Sagastui et al., 2021).

Description of the **Piklerian/RIE-inspired practices** (Christie, 2010; 2018) and **educators' beliefs** (Fatahian-Tehran, 2020)

How educators **think and reflect on their interactions with children** (Cherrington, 2011; 2018)

**Educators' perceptions of care as a program** (Bussey, 2012 ; Bussey et Hill, 2017)

How **relationships are formed between children and practitioners** (Johnston, 2011)

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**Concept of a referent educator** (Violon, 2018 ; Violon et Wendland, 2014, 2018, 2021)

Identify the quality dimensions studied regarding the Piklerian approach

## Ecosystem model of educational quality

(Adaptation : Bigras & Lemay, 2012)

**Quality of orientations** : Perceptions, beliefs, vision of the child and knowledge about the pedagogical approach

### Process quality

Physical environment

Children's experiences children

**Nature of the interactions**

### Structural quality

Ratio Qualification's educators

# Conclusion

- The components of the **Piklerian approach** could contribute to **improving the quality of educator-child interactions**
- Studies concern the **quality of orientation** (perceptions, intentionality) and provide information on **relational quality**
- Studies do not share the same vision of **quality of interactions** as in Teaching Through Interaction framework (TTI; Hamre et al., 2013)
- Studies do not consider **all the components of educational quality** (process, operational, structural).

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