International Perspectives on Early Childhood Education and Development 25

Federico Farini
Angela Scollan *Editors*

Children's Self-determination in the Context of Early Childhood Education and Services

Discourses, Policies and Practices

International Perspectives on Early Childhood Education and Development

Volume 25

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Federico Farini • Angela Scollan
Editors

Children's Self-determination in the Context of Early Childhood Education and Services

Discourses, Policies and Practices

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About the Contributors

Claudio Baraldi (PhD) is Professor of Sociology of Cultural and Communicative Processes at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. His main research interests concern facilitation in institutional interactions that involve adults and children, cultural and linguistic mediation, conflict management and evaluation analysis of projects, intervention processes and their results. His most important research concerns the analysis of methods and techniques for dialogic facilitation of children's participation and language and cultural mediation in healthcare settings. Claudio Baraldi has directed or coordinated several research programmes about promotion and achievement of children's rights, policies on cultural diversity in education, forms of dialogue involving children and intercultural mediation in education. At present, he is coordinating the Erasmus+ project SHARMED (Shared Memories and Dialogues), planning innovative educational classroom activities in primary and secondary schools. Claudio Baraldi currently serves as President of the Research Committee 'Sociology of Childhood' (International Sociological Association) and as a Member of the Board of the Research Network 'Sociology of Children and Childhood' (European Sociological Association). In his career, he has trained a large number of teachers, educators, mediators and social workers. In the fields of childhood studies and education, he has published books as a single author or co-author in Italy, edited and coedited three international books (for John Benjamins, Routledge and Palgrave) and published papers in international volumes and journals, including Childhood, Children & Society, International Journal of Early Childhood, Intercultural Education, Irish Educational Studies, Current Sociology, Language and Dialogue, Narrative Inquiry and Conflict Resolution Quarterly.

Iris Duhn Associate Professor has extensive experience in early childhood education research, teaching, and professional development. She has published extensively in highly regarded international academic journals and books in the areas of early childhood curriculum, professionalism, pedagogy, and also sustainability and environmental education in early years. Her research focuses on qualitative research methodologies that engage critically with theory, policy, and practice in early

childhood education. She is interested in globalization and sustainability, in “place” as a concept, and she uses sociology and philosophy to explore innovative thinking and practice in early years.

Federico Farini is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Northampton. From 2015 to 2017, he has worked as Senior Lecturer in Sociology of Early Childhood at the University of Suffolk. While working as a Lecturer in Education at Middlesex University, he was a Founding Member of the Centre for Education Research and Scholarship (2014) and the London Equality in Education Research Network (2015). He received a PhD in Sociology of Intercultural Relations from the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, where he worked as a Researcher in Sociology. Federico has published books, chapters, articles and edited books in Italian, English and Slovenian language. In 2014, he was elected as Vice-President of the International Sociological Association Research Committee 25, ‘Language in Society’.

Fay Hadley, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer who specialises in leadership in early childhood education, working with families and professional experience. She is the Director for Initial Teacher Education in the Department of Educational Studies. Prior to academia, her roles included an Early Childhood Teacher, Director and Project Manager for larger early childhood organisations. Fay’s primary area of research examines leadership in early childhood education. This includes investigating mentoring, professional learning and career pathways for early childhood teachers. She is especially interested in the socio-political environment and how this affects early childhood teachers’ work. Fay’s other main research area is partnerships with diverse families in educational settings and the impacts this has on educational outcomes for children. She has been researching in these areas for the past 15 years, and in 2008, she was the Recipient of the Early Childhood Australia Doctoral Thesis Award for her doctoral thesis. The award was established by Early Childhood Australia in 1995 to encourage Australian early childhood research and to recognise the excellence of early childhood research undertaken by doctoral students in Australia. Fay’s thesis examined the role of the early childhood services (from the families’ perspectives) and argued that these spaces needed to be reconceptualised including the role of the early childhood leader. Fay has published widely in journals, book chapters and textbooks. Fay is currently the Chair of Early Childhood Australia Publications Committee. She is on the editorial board for the Australasian Journal of Early Childhood and was previously the Deputy Editor of the journal.

Jarmo Kinos, first profession was Kindergarten Teacher. His career consists of working as a Lecturer and Researcher since 1985 at the University of Turku. His main research interests and activities can be described as multidisciplinary. His research includes history of education, educational sociology, theoretical-conceptual and early childhood education pedagogical dimension. Another feature in his research is that the objects of research and the subjects of his publications ‘cross’

the borders of the subareas of educational science and thus permeate and are intertwined with each other.

The point of departure in his research is the idea that social crises and key events are always reflected in the field of early childhood education as a need for discussion on reforms. The change and development of society are connected with the change and development of pedagogy. In order to get a grasp on the present, teachers and educators need the interpretational assistance of history. In this way, they are able to build the future in a more systematic manner. However, this is not sufficient if these deliberations do not extend to a reflective contemplation of the educational practices used with small children. The ideals and goals of education become reality only in educational practices. Jarmo's main research interests are research on child-initiated pedagogy in terms of open, participatory and deliberative democracy, developing the operational culture of kindergartens and schools and research on the profession of early childhood education.

Eileen McNeill, Honours Degree in Applied Social Studies in Social Care, has worked in the area of social care for 15 years. Eileen is currently working in the area of community childcare as a social care leader assigned to a childcare team linked to the social work department. Eileen's role involves direct work with children between the ages of 0 and 18, providing group work with children and parenting programmes for parents. Her areas of interest and specialism have involved working with homeless women and children, children in emergency care (children received in to care through emergency placements, 0–12), youth homelessness, group homes for teenagers and secure care.

Yuta Miyamoto holds a Master's Degree in Education and is currently taking a doctoral course at the University of Tokyo, Japan; he is also a Research Fellow of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). Previously, while working for the national government, Miyamoto became concerned with the divergence of policy from practice and so changed his job to Kindergarten Teacher in order to explore this in relation to everyday life with children. Working as one of the care staff, he focused especially on listening to the variety of voices of children, practitioners and parents. While working at the kindergarten, Miyamoto tackled inclusive childcare and deepening the child's understanding – including their development of gentleness and a caring mind, which cannot be measured by inspections or indicators – and presented his work at the faculty research conference. Through engaging care work, he received assurance that children are rich in potential, strong, powerful and competent. Now, Miyamoto is concerned with improving the environment of kindergartens and teachers' engagement and with listening to the needs of these teachers and children. His other concern is fostering the child's development of social capacity, especially their agency and a caring mind. In particular, he is exploring how 4-year-old children participate in interactions, focusing on whole group activities or play and learning.

Carolyn Morris qualified as a Teacher at Bangor Normal College, Wales, and her first post was as a Science Teacher in a comprehensive school in Wales. Carolyn briefly taught English at a secondary school for boys, in Funtua, North Central State, Nigeria. After returning to Wales and having her own children, Carolyn worked in the early years and primary school sectors. She studied on a part-time basis for a BA Degree with the Open University and subsequently at Cardiff University to gain MSc (Econ) in Methods and Applications of Social Research. She entered work in the further education sector as a part-time Lecturer at Neath College and later as full-time Lecturer in the School of Early Childhood, at Bridgend College. At Bridgend, Carolyn also took responsibility for bilingual students who studied through the mediums of Welsh and English. After further study and research conducted in primary schools, she gained a PhD from Swansea University and subsequently worked as Senior Lecturer on Early Childhood and Education programmes at Middlesex University, London. During that period, she was involved in several European research projects and worked with partners at the Universities of Ghent and Prague. Carolyn presented research at Aberystwyth University 'A Child's World Conference' and at EECERA conferences in Tallinn, Barcelona and Dublin. Before retirement in 2014, she was Acting Convenor for an Erasmus MA Inclusive Education programme, at the University of Roehampton run in conjunction with the Universities of Oslo and Prague.

Martin Needham is Associate Head of School for Childhood Youth and Education Studies and Head of International for the Faculty of Education at Manchester Metropolitan University. He trained and worked as an Early Years and Primary Teacher in Nottinghamshire, London and Pakistan. This was followed by development roles in education management and leadership in Pakistan and then as a Local Government Officer working in early education, extended schools services and children's centre provision in England. A Senior Lecturer since 2003, he has taught on early education and multi-agency working in the early years at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Martin has published work on multi-agency working, young children's learning, professionals engaging with parents and leadership in the early years conducting research projects in these areas funded by the DFE and NHS Scotland. He has recently been involved in early education policy contexts exploring early learning and workforce development in the UK and internationally.

Clare O'Donoghue is Senior Lecturer in Education Studies at Middlesex University where she leads on philosophy of education, comparative education and children's literature modules and contributes to modules on psychological and sociological approaches to learning and education policy. A unifying theme in these different aspects of education studies is a commitment to social justice and an exploration of what social justice is and how it can be achieved or denied. Prior to working in British universities, Clare taught and travelled extensively in Latin America. Her interest in Brazil is familial: Clare's maternal grandmother and mother were born and brought up in the North East of Brazil. In addition to comparative education and social justice, Clare's research interests include representations of childhood,

attitudes towards and representations of inclusion and gender equality in children's literature and in educational policy and academic and assessment literacy within higher education, teacher education, teacher identity and teacher beliefs. Clare has taught and trained teachers in Spain, Ecuador, Greece, Thailand, Hungary and the UK.

Leena Helavaara Robertson is Associate Professor in the Department of Education at Middlesex University. Leena's work, research and publications are in the field of multilingualism, culture and learning. She has extensive experience of teaching multilingual children in schools and working with their families and community teachers. For 15 years, Leena led a teacher education programme and mentored teachers in London schools. Currently, together with her PhD and DProf students, she continues to be interested in developing pedagogies and practices that foster social justice. As a Principal Investigator, she has recently led an international research project focusing on Roma children, their families and teachers in England, Finland, France and Romania.

Leif Rosqvist During his academic career, Leif Rosqvist has worked as a Research Assistant with the child-initiated pedagogies project and set out to study and develop child-initiated pedagogies. He has been mainly exploring the question of how could child-initiated pedagogies contribute to citizenship education in early childhood and, also, how the notions of early citizenship education could help in developing child-initiated pedagogies. Other fields of interest include the institutional arrangements in early childhood education and their potential outcomes concerning social issues. The study of such connections inevitably holds presumptions of educational interests, as well as the role of education in defining and contributing to societal wellbeing. In this field, there have been minor contributions, most notable of which is his master's thesis, a literacy review on the subject of 'Preschooling for five-year-olds and social mobility'. With these fields of interest combined, the most central question in his doctoral thesis would be whether early citizenship education could contribute to participation on communal decision-making in later life and how. In his current daytime work at a Finnish day-care centre in Tampere, Leif Rosqvist keeps on prospecting the possibilities and research gaps of early citizenship education at the field level, especially so for the children under 3 years old, who easily become excluded from participatory aspirations.

Elizabeth Rouse, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood at Deakin University, Australia, working with preservice teachers gaining initial teacher education qualifications. Her main areas of teaching focus on developing professional practice of teachers, especially those working in early years classrooms. Elizabeth has over 30 years of experience as a teacher, having spent many years working in early childhood settings as a teacher in the early years of school as well as working with children and families who have additional learning needs. For the past 10 years, she has been working to build the next generation of early years teachers at both

Deakin and, prior starting there, a number of universities and polytechnics in Victoria, Australia.

Elizabeth's research focus has been centred on partnerships between families, children and educators, bringing a view of partnerships that encompasses reciprocal relationships leading to shared decision-making based on mutual trust and respect, and in 2015, she graduated with a Doctor of Education where her dissertation explored the relationships between families and educators in an early childhood education and care setting through a lens of family-centred practice. Within the context of her research, a strong belief in rights-based pedagogies where both parents and children are valued decision-makers has informed her work with preservice teachers.

Elizabeth has published a number of professional texts as well as scholarly papers focusing on parent-educator partnerships, professional practice of early years teachers and leading pedagogical change in early years settings.

Carolina Santillán Torres Torija, PhD in Psychology, works at the Faculty of Psychology of UNAM, where she also holds the title of Master in Psychology (2008). She received a Bachelor's Degree at FES Iztacala in 2004, Master's Degree in 2008 and Doctorate in 2015. She is a Member of the National System of Researchers in Mexico. She is currently Associate Professor 'C' in the Psychology School, within the area of development and education, and directs the Project 'Crisis, Emergencies and Suicide' of the UNAM, FESI. She lectures the subject of applied psychology to the laboratory and carries out research funded by CONACyT on parental involvement in children studies. She collaborates in the Master's Degree in Teaching for Higher Secondary Education (MADEMS) with the subject of ethics. She has received a number of awards including the Fulbright-Garcia Robles Foundation grant awarded in 2010 by the United States Department of State. Currently, her research line is related to mental health in university students (stressful events, depression and suicidal ideation, mainly) and parental involvement of schoolchildren. She is the Editor of the open-access Journal of Behavior, Health & Social Issues.

Miguel Antonio Santillan Torres Torija received his Master's in Mexican American Studies from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), where he also received a Bachelor's Degree in Politics and Public Management with Honours. He qualified as a Teacher and holds a PGCE from Canterbury University and has edited, authored and translated research in public policy and education in the Americas. He is a Member of the Society for Education and Training in England and is currently the Secretary of the International Institute for Higher Education a non-profit organisation based in the USA. He has been a Guest Lecturer in numerous universities in the Americas and the UK, both in the public policy and education areas. He currently is an Education Adviser and a Specialised Qualified Primary School Teacher focusing in the areas of modern foreign languages and mathematics.

Angela Scollan is a Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies and Education at Middlesex University leading modules in children's rights, reflective practice, enabling pedagogies and environments. Before joining Middlesex University in 2012, she worked as Associate Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies at Roehampton University and the University of Chichester. From 2004 to 2010, she worked in Higher Education as Foundation Degree Manager at Carshalton College. She was also employed by Tribal Education as a freelance Early Years Lead Assessor and as an Early Years Ofsted Inspector. While working for Tribal, Angela was also involved in a variety of projects writing Early Years programs for China and worked with many London boroughs to write and deliver bespoke training programs to raise and maintain quality within the education and early years sector. Since the early 1990s, she has worked directly with and for children positioning her practice within a transdisciplinary approach, and as a rights-based advocate, her teaching philosophy, research, and writing focus on the child first, and the role of a learner within education, as secondary. She investigates the concept of self-determination and shared spaces within classroom environments applying pedagogical innovation to promote children's voices in education. She has recently completed an EU-funded project 'SHARMED' (www.sharmed.eu) around those topics.

Fengling Tang, PhD, is Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies at School of Education, Froebel College, University of Roehampton. She worked in schools and further education in China and a nursery school in London before joining Early Childhood Studies and Early Childhood Research Centre at the University of Roehampton in 2007. Her teaching involves BA and MA in Early Childhood Studies at the University of Roehampton and Foundation Degree in Early Years Education programme at Carshalton College in collaboration with Roehampton. She has also undertaken external examining and school governing. Her research interests include early childhood pedagogy and policy, children's rights, Froebelian perspectives in early childhood, technology with young children, play and creativity, professionalism in early years and ethnographic comparative research with young children. She completed her PhD research entitled 'A comparative ethnographic case study of the early years curriculum in Chinese and English contexts' (2004–2008). She conducted a research project on university students' e-learning in collaboration with colleague Dr. Sue Robson funded by UK Training and Development Agency for Schools (2008–2009). She conducted a research project on young children's digital learning experience funded by the Froebel Trust (2010–2012). She took part in Early Childhood Assessment research project led by Professor Mathias Urban commissioned by Education International (2016–2017). Currently, she undertakes a joint research on 'Wellbeing and democratic living: comparative policy analysis of curriculum documents in China, Colombia, Denmark, England and Portugal in the context of the OECD's International Early Learning and Wellbeing Study developments' with colleagues Sigrid Brogaard Clausen, Dr. Sofia Guimaraes and Dr. Clara Rubiano at the University of Roehampton.

Sarah Te One, PhD, is Coordinator of Action for Children and Youth Aotearoa (ACYA), Independent Professional Development Provider and Researcher and currently a Member of the CORE Education's Te Whāriki contract team. Sarah has had many years of experience in early childhood education as a teacher, professional development facilitator, researcher, lecturer, unionist and a parent. She has also worked in the Office of the Children's Commissioner as a Principal Advisor in Education. She has been involved in several major research projects including of Centres Innovation, Teaching and Learning Research Initiatives, a teacher-led innovation fund project and other Ministry of Education-funded research projects. Her research interests focus on children's perspectives and influence on social policy, parent and community partnerships in education, curriculum, transitions to school and advocacy for children's rights. Sarah has been involved in running child rights advocacy courses for the Māori Wardens and many, mainly education groups. She is regularly invited to speak to groups in the community about children's rights. Sarah lives with her husband Mark in a small seaside village just north of Wellington in Aotearoa New Zealand. They have three adult children, two dogs and two cats. She has been involved with many community projects, the most recent being to chair a newly formed local radio station. Not surprisingly, the children and young people in the village host their own show.

Sarah Vipond qualified as a Nursery Nurse (NNEB) in 1983. She initially started her career working in a primary school in the London Borough of Hounslow. During the late 1980s and 1990s, she became a Manager of a day nursery working for Westminster City Social Services Team. Sarah then moved on to Middlesex University where she initially had responsibility for co-coordinating the early years education and childcare facilities; she was involved in a rapid increase in childcare provision for both staff and students covering four campuses. During the evenings, Sarah attended North London University now known as London Metropolitan University and completed a BA Honours Degree in Early Childhood Education. Eight years later, Sarah was introduced to Pen Green Children's Centre and Research Base and enrolled onto a Master's Degree in Integrated Provision for Children and Families in Early Years where she passed with a merit. While still having responsibility for the outstanding university nursery, Sarah was offered the opportunity to lecture on a module with second year students studying towards a Batchelor of Arts in Early childhood Studies. Sarah initiated weekly 'Welly Wednesday' sessions inviting students to apply theory from the lecture theatre directly with young children who attend the campus nursery by following a forest school approach and focusing on child-initiated learning. Sarah is studying towards a PhD. Her research interest is the rituals of hello's and goodbyes while considering how policies surrounding the 2-year-olds offer manifest in the everyday context of the nursery.

Evelyn Wandia Corrado is a Part-time Lecturer at Middlesex University and an Associate Fellow of Higher Education Academy (UK). She teaches in the undergraduate Education Studies program. Her PhD study evaluated the extent dialogic pedagogies can be applied in the Kenyan education within available

"pedagogical spaces" to enhance learning, and equip students with skills for emancipation and active participation in local and global spheres. She grew up in Kenya and has great social cultural understanding of the African context, which informs her research work. Previously, she worked in the UK Mental Health Sector for almost a decade.

Marlane Welsh-Sauni works as an Independent Consultant providing professional development, research and evaluation services and Member of Action for Children and Youth Aotearoa. Marlane is of Māori descent and has had many years of experience of working in the social services, health and education sectors championing and advocating for the wellbeing of all children and particularly Māori children. She has also worked in the Office of the Children's Commissioner as a Senior Advisor monitoring the policies and practices of the Government's statutory Social Welfare Agency providing services to children, young people and their families. Marlane lives with her husband Anipale (Samoan descent) in the city of Auckland in Aotearoa New Zealand. They have four adult children and four mokopuna.

Chapter 1
Introduction

Federico Farini and Angela Scollan

1.1 A Celebration of Diversity

This edited volume offers a unique investigation on Early Childhood on a truly global dimension, focusing on how Early Childhood Education and Care policies, practices and discourse is framed in different national contexts such as Kenya, Mexico, Kazakhstan, Japan, Brazil and China, but also England, Wales, Italy, Finland, Ireland, United States, Australia and New Zealand.

What is being introduced here is a collection of contributions that offer innovative insights on the cultural presuppositions of policies, pedagogies and practices shaping Early Childhood Education. The aim of the collection is to nurture an intellectual space for reflection open to researchers, practitioners and all interested in children and education, a space that includes alternative perspectives from those hegemonizing many Western heritage countries.

It can be argued that 'celebrating diversity' could be key to the collection, not only because of the great variety of the contexts presented, but also because to the many disciplinary angles taken by the authors, who approach Early Childhood Education and Care from Sociology, History, Pedagogy, Social Work, Communication Studies, Pragmatics, Psychology.

Diversity in this collection concerns not only contexts and disciplines, but also the methodologies applied by the contributors, for example Discourse Analysis, Ethnography, Conversational Analysis, Phenomenological Narrative Analysis, Case

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Study Approach, Hermeneutics. The collection offers exemplar applications of innovative methodologies to investigation on Early Childhood Education and Care where empirical cases are approached from different disciplinary fields. Diversity informs the identity of the volume and defines its value for the international debate on, around and hopefully with young children.

Nevertheless, the collection combines diversity with a coherent intellectual architecture, making it a rewarding reading. All contributions, notwithstanding their differences, are firmly rooted in a common interest, scientific and moral at once. Such interest consists in investigating how Early Childhood is positioned in different social contexts. Education and care are used by the authors as powerful lenses to magnify the complex reality of children's participation in their social contexts, and the rich, fluid, ambigous semantics of childhood that determines the position of children in their interactions with adults, instiutions, cultural forms.

Early Childhood Education and Care is surely a broad and hyper-complex theme. The coherent focus of all authors on the space for, and the meaning of, self-determination of the child is at the same time needed and empowering for the reader. Spaces and meanings of self-determination of the child will be explored across 5 continents and 11 national contexts. The collection here introduced is a journey into the discourses and practices that define whether, and in which measure, young children are constructed as subjects who can make sense of their experiences and who can make choices within crucail contexts for their Education, for their Health, for their Care.

Rhythm of the journey is paced by different languages and cultures, taking the reader across the constellation of meanings around childhood, and child-adult relationship, that characterises contemporary global society. Converging and diverging, expanding and retreating concepts of power, rights, justice, autonomy, protection and well-being will be touched upon by the authors during their examinations of policies, legislation, practices, discourses on childhood, children's rights and intergenerational relationships.

This is not the first work that takes an international perspective to discuss the position of young children in education and in society. And it is not the first work approaching childhood as a social construct, shaped by history, histories and culture(s). However, it is believed that the present book offers an alternative platform for an innovative debate. Our claim to originality is argued based on the following on comparison with recent major cognate works.

Papatheodorou and Moyles (2012) provide a comparative and international look at Early Education and Care, and therefore share the global perspective of this book. However, the focus of their work is different as centred on learning and issues that are relevant for teaching, such as the different ways to secure children's development of numeracy and literacy skills in different national contexts. This collection takes a different and somehow competing perspective, questioning the very image of the child as a learner positioned at the receiving end of an adult-led transmission of knowledge.

Similar to Papatheodorou and Moyles, the collection edited by Georgeson and Payler (2013) discusses key influential approaches to Early Years Education as well

as some less well-known approaches from around the world in their original contexts. Whilst Georgeson and Payler's collection is surely stimulating and interesting, the present book diverges from their project. The first diverging choice consists in extending the discussion on how image of the child is reflected to a broader range of social systems such as mass media, healthcare, social work, politics. The second diverging choice consists in a more theoretical approach; a defining characteristic of this volume is that descriptions of practices are always accompained by their conceptualisation within hegemonic or emerging theoretical accounts of the position of childhood in society.

This book explore a very different cultural landscape from the one occupied by Trawick-Smith's work on Early Childhood development across different countries (2014). Rather than assuming the validity of the image of the child as 'becoming', the collection contextualises, de-naturalises and ultimately challenges the image of the child as an unfinished project progressing towards maturity within a future-oriented semantics.

One of the aims pursed by this book consists in favouring greater reflectivity in the discourses that produce the image of the child in a global society. With respect to that aim, the book is ethically aligned to Kroll and Meier's contribution on the role of reflection in a variety of educational contexts worldwide (2015). However, whilst Kroll and Meier are interested in reflection on practices, particularly in the transformative value of teacher's reflection to promote change in Early Education, the present book utilises a more sociologically informed perspective on reflection, targeting not only practices, but also discourses that define the possibilities to think about practices, as well as the meaning of practices against a paradoxical and unstable image of the child.

From a methodological and theoretical point of view, Cregan and Cuthbert (2014) arguably offer the closest comparison to this book. Their overall aim consists in following the modern construction of childhood from the late eighteenth century to the emergence of the conception of the normative global child. For this reason it is beyond doubt that their work is cognate to the present collection. However, it is believed that some differences are apparent. Whilst Cregan and Cuthbert draw on the idea of the child in a wide range of disciplines, this collection does not only talk about different disciplinary discourses but also speaks the language of different disciplines and professional identities through its contributors. Another important difference consits in the use of case studies. Whilst Cregan and Cuthber use case studies to critique the hegemonic image of the child, this collection takes a more grounded approach, using theories and concepts to understand practices and case studies that are treated not as exemplary stories but as living social situations to be understood, rather than utilised.

Lastly, but most importantly, an overall specificity makes this collection unique: its focus on children's rights rather than children's needs. From a cultural perspective, two discourses on adult-child relationships emerge as possible contexts of diverging meanings of self-determination, both with far-ranging implication for the construction of the image of the child. On the one hand the discourse of children's needs and on the other hand, the discourse of children's interests. 'Children's needs'

is underpinned by a semantics of childhood that individualises children and assumes that things need to be done (by the responsible adults) to and for children to support their development into adulthood. The second discourse, 'Children's interests' is on the contrary underpinned not by an individual but a political semantics of childhood, where children are seen as members of a social group who share common interests within some form of relationships with other groups.

It would appear that children's needs and children's interests have contradictory political, social and cultural implications that reflect different images of the child. Children's needs presuppose adults' regulation of children who are supposed to be unable to make decisions and make sense of their experiences. If the discourse of children's needs is the context of self-determination, self-determination concerns limited spaces where children can exhibit their development and maturity under adult's control. Opposed to children's needs, the discourse of children's interests presupposes some degree of agency and the existence of channels through which children can make claims, hold others accountable and express an opinion. Unlike a politics of childhood based on children's needs, where children are somehow absent, a politics of childhood based on 'children interests' constructs children as active and involved, as a group able to make claims at various levels. If children's interests is the framework of self-determination, the meaning of self-determination concerns the recognition of the voices of the children as a shaping force both at the level of interactions and policy-making.

This contribution, differently from the majority of works contributing to the discourse *in*, as well as *on*, Early Education and Care firmly establishes itself in the cultural world of children's interests (but see, as a very recent, theory- rather than practice- oriented exception, the collection edited by Baraldi and Cockburn 2018). Whether by highlighting practices and discourses underpinned by children interests, or by criticizing practices and discourses stemming from the discourse of children's needs, this book brings to the fore the voices of the children in the present, with its interests, agendas and rights to self-determination.

Most of the collected chapters will introduce the reader to a range of investigations concerned with rights-based pedagogies and policies, always accompanied with an interest in the exploration of the meaning of children's rights in the contexts of the research. Other chapters will present critical reviews of the position of childhood in different societies, and its connection with the representation of children's rights, in particular with regard to the changing meanings of the right of self-determination. The collection hosts two clusters of chapters complementing each other, combining the analysis of hegemonic discourses with the investigation of policies and practices, although both clusters are based on solid theoretical foundations. The rich variety of the contributions is kept within the boundaries of a common thread that the contributions share, that is, the interest in the analysis of the dense semantic node where intergenerational relationships, representations of childhood and the meanings of children's self-determination converge.

How do different cultures of education and care shape the semantics of children's self-determination, generating different spaces and configurations for right-based pedagogies and policies?

An answer to such complex and pivotal, question is presented by each individual contribution. All contributions, shed light on the semantics of children's self-determination within Early Childhood Education and Care, on a truly global dimension. Adult-child interactions, pedagogical practices and planning, policies and legislation, discourses on Childhood and children's rights are analysed by the different chapters, inviting the reader to question the different semantics of children's self-determination underpinning it.

A presupposition of this collection, as well as a presupposition of each individual chapter, concerns the need to position self-determination within the historical and social frameworks that define the hegemonic discourse on childhood in different contexts. However, all contributions congregate in demonstrating how the discourse on childhood in society, both in the sense of the position of the child within the social structure and the societal semantic of childhood, is marked by: (1) a legal, political and cultural movement towards the recognition of the child as an autonomous subject in society, (2) a cultural shift from the concept of child as 'becoming', perceived as an empty box to be filled with knowledge, to the concept of child as a 'being' in the here and now, as an 'active agent' with a role in influencing educational practices and, (3) changing and often contradictory policies that define spaces for adult-children interactions, fluctuating between the semantic of the child as 'being' and the child as 'becoming', with important implication for the empirical experiences of children. The latter point refers to some degree of ambiguity in political decision-making and organisational planning and strategy in education, which is believed to mirror the changing contours of the status of childhood in society.

Within this collection, practices and discourses are investigated in their relationship with children's self-determination, in particular regarding Early Childhood Education and Care. Whilst the importance of other social systems, firstly the family, is recognised (many of the contributions collected consider the complex relationships between education and family), this book focuses on the position of the children and their self-determination within social dimensions where organisational realities are very important. The implication of this choice is that all chapters will consider, alongside the many facets of child-adult relationships, regarding practices or discourses, the morphogenetic role of professional identities, organisational arrangements and of course the political dimension.

Since James' pioneering plea (1983) for a more inclusive socialisation where children have an active role in their own development, the idea of the child as an 'active' agent in different social contexts has moved from a minority to a hegemonic position (Osler and Starkey 2006). Not lastly due to the mainstream centrality acquired by the constructivist perspective first advanced by scholars such as Luckman and Berger (1991), whereby each individual makes sense of its own world at the intersection of social semantic (structure) and individual intuition (in the Weberian sense of Verstehen), the western myth of the development of personality presupposing a chronology from immaturity to maturity has appeared more and more controversial (for non-western representation of the relationship between age and personality see, for instance, the classical anthropological account of Mead, 1930/2001, but also the more recent account by Montgomery 2007).

During the twentieth century, philosophers (James 1983; Arendt 1993) as well as psychologists (Gordon 1974; Britzman 2007) have argued that socialisation is a process in which the child has inevitably an active role. Criticising traditional theories of the child's mind as an 'empty box' to be filled with knowledge and moral values, scholars have been advocating for the support of children's autonomy, competence and relatedness which are key characteristics of self-determination theories (Deci and Ryan 2000; Ryan and Deci 2000; Gagne and Deci 2005). Wyness (2012a) is one authoritative voice, but not the only voice, announcing the crisis of modern childhood as defined in the late Enlightenment, a crisis defined by the shift towards the idea of the child as an agent to be heard, listened to, and engaged with.

Whilst in the 1970s scholars like Holt (1974) and Farson (1974) were advocating children's liberation from the domination and control of adults, therefore signaling the persistence of modern conceptualisations of the child as a 'becoming', three decades later Alderson (2006, 2010) and Monk (2004) were in the position to argue that society in the twenty-first century views children as competent rights holders rather than passive recipients. Stating that children are nowadays recognised as competent citizens and participants, demanding adults to become competent in dealing with this cultural evolution, Sinclair (2004), draws a picture of the dominant discourse on childhood in education. This cultural shift has already reached far beyond the academic debate. Within the British context only, public pleas from the British Children's Commissioner (2015) and landmark policies such as the Children and Families Act (2014) advocate for adults to actively hear and engage with what has been heard.

The apparent triumph of the concept of child as 'being' is reflected in the education system by the success of rights-based pedagogies interested in the promotion of young children's participation and agency (Murray and Hallett 2000; Vanderbroeck and Buverne-de Bie 2006; James 2009; Walsh 2011; Baraldi 2015). Rights-based pedagogies are promoted at the political level, both globally, underpinning the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989), and locally, right-based pedagogies can be found at local, national and international levels of policy and practice.

Sociological research has recognised the turn towards children's active role in their own socialisation as a defining characteristic of the discourse on childhood in the late twentieth century (James et al. 1998; Vanderstraeten 2004; Lawy and Biesta 2006; Baraldi 2014). Since the early 1990s, scholars from the field of childhood studies have shown a growing concern with the theoretical conceptualization of children's active participation in society, including not only primary socialisation but also, with an increasing interest, secondary education in organised contexts (Elfer 2005; Robson 2006; Moss 2015). Within this cultural framework, educating children is understood as socialising children towards an 'understanding of their own competencies' (Matthews 2003: 274) rather than the achievements of state-of-development, either institutionalised in politically-defined curricula or related to educators' expectations. Socialisation refers therefore to socialising children to a sense of responsibility and skills in planning, designing, monitoring and managing social contexts rather than to a one-way adaptation to normative expectations.

The success of this new vision of children as social agents has changed the cultural presuppositions of educational practices, inviting education to use children's self-expression as a resource for reflective learning. This book aims to provoke reflection, wonder and ponder upon *childhood as a mirror*. Childhood is the mirror used by education to look at itself, and education is the mirror that reflects the position of children in their social worlds. Self-determination is intrinsically a reflective concept, and its meaning depends on how it is heard, interacted with and decoded. A common thread over the whole collection is the reflective nature of self-determination. The meaning of self-determination, and therefore the semantics of childhood, call into question the position of the child as well as the position of the adult in the educational relationship, professional identities and practice, what Schon (1987), albeit within a teacher-centered framework, defines 'artistry'.

The idea of children's self-determination as the underpinning concept of right-based pedagogies interested in promoting child's responsibility and skills in managing social contexts, needs to be problematised considering those social contexts where right-based pedagogy should be implemented. This does not only concern national or cultural differences, but also the specificity of different social systems. Education, Social Care, the Family, Religion, Economy, Science: these can be understood as complementary and competing discourses that produces different social semantics of childhood and children's rights. This collection, again with some degree of uniqueness, considers this further layer of social complexity over the series of contributes.

It has been argued that levels and forms of children's participation and identity construction depend on the type of socio-cultural context of children's lives (Lansdown 2010). Socio-cultural contexts can determine two types of problems for the exercise of children's self-determination. Within organised educational contexts, the relationship between self-determination vis- à-vis the structural determinants of the society is particularly complex (Prout 2003; Holdsworth 2004; Blanchet-Cohen and Rainbow 2006; Holland and O'Neill 2006; James and James 2008). The first aspect to be considered would be the nature of adult-child relationship, following the examples offered by most of the chapters in this collection. Archard (1993) highlights the centrality of the role of adults in right-based pedagogies, suggesting that a child's internal drivers and desired level of participation are framed around adult power and use of social language cues. Archard's conclusion is reinforced by more recent research by Lundy and Cook-Sather (2016). James and James (2004) recognise how social and cultural perceptions influenced by policy and legislation determine how childhood is constructed and dealt with researches, including situations where adults determine if protection overrides participation (Leonard 2016). Scholars within the intellectual field of childhood studies have shown a growing concern with the theoretical conceptualization of children's active participation in society, including their own education, questioning if adults are advocating what they think a child needs or can do in comparison to or what a child actually needs or wants to do (Alderson 2006; Wyness 2012a, b; Jones and Walker 2011).

A reflective nature of self-determination clearly emerges in this collection, in line with a rich tradition. Alderson and Morrow (2011) offers examples of children's competence and decision-making struggling to fit within adult structures. Presenting case-studies related to scientific research, Alderson and Morrow illustrate that adults may be influenced in their decision-making about the space and place of self-determination not by a child's competence but, rather, by their observation of a child's competency. This is an 'act-of-knowing' that is clearly a position at the intersection between legal and ethical discourses, professional identities and the need to consider risk, control and accountability. The recognition of self-determination is therefore a genuinely reflective act: self-determination is seen through the child who sees its status through its social experiences, which include the adult's gaze through the *mirror of childhood*.

A collection aiming to further the discussion around self-determination cannot exempt itself from a discussion on the position of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) within the discourses and practices of Early Education and Care. It is argued here that the competing discourses on the position of childhood in society are vividly represented in the multifaceted legal work underpinning the 1989 UNCRC.

The Convention globally strives to change the way children are treated and protected from neglect, abuse and exploitation and although the Convention is a set of rights for children, it regards human rights, providing children with a distinct set of rights instead of as passive objects of care and charity (UNICEF 2015). For this reason, the UNCRC appears to entail a children's interest perspective, with a stark contrast with the children's need approach of the previous 1959 Declaration on the Rights of the Child.

As rights-holders, children are expected to know and have full access to their rights whilst being responsible to respect the rights of others. However, within the UNCRC it is recognised the need for adults to understand that children as rights bearers does not suggest those responsible for children should 'push' children to make choices they are not yet ready to make (UNICEF 2015).

The UNCRC has surely become a global frame of reference for children's rights in legal, professional and political terms. But the UNCRC also offers evidence of the ambiguity of children's rights, where welfare rights and self-determination rights are juxtaposed in a somehow contradictory way. It is therefore advisable to explore the Convention in further detail.

One of the first articles of the UNCRC, article 3 introduces the concept of child's 'best interests', meaning that a child's interests are to be defined by the adult, for the child. Here, with some level of linguistic ambiguity, 'interest' is used to frame the rights of the child within a 'children's needs' discourse. Best interests are not defined and advocate from the child for the child (and the adult) but are defined by the adult for the child. Article 3 therefore seems to push the UNCRC towards the welfare rights model within the children's needs framework.

The concept of best interest was already present in the 1959 Declaration, as the ethical pillar of the whole UN resolution. By stating in its preamble that 'the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care,

including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth', the 1959 Declaration firmly established itself within the discourse of children's needs. Whilst incorporating such discourse, particularly in the article 3, the UNCRC presents a more complex cultural framework than the Declaration. But also a more contradictory one. For instance, the well-researched sequence of articles 12–15 diverges from the semantics of childhood enshrined in article 3. Articles 12–15 are known to be the articles introducing self-determination. The article 12 is surely the most studied, discussed and criticised:

> *States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child*

Article 12 is generally considered as the most concerned with self-determination, advancing an undertaking that children are active subjects of rights and that their involvement and views are to be given due weight and recognition. According to this article, a child's right to express his or her views is not undermined in cases of inability of the child to communicate his or her views (albeit such limitations could be placed upon children with disabilities).

At the same time, the article 12 can be the object of a series of critical considerations from a self-determination advocacy viewpoint. For instance, while article 12 places emphasis on the 'opportunity (for the child) to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child', the drive towards child's autonomy is somehow diluted in a model of tutorship by the specification that the child's voice (interestingly, the child is conceptualised as an abstract category, rather thn recognising the plurality of children's voices) can be raised 'via a representative or an appropriate body'. The potential impact of the tutorship model to prevent expression and voice of the child is not only a theoretical preoccupation. The main caveat in article 12, for the advocates of a strong version of children's self-determination, is that self-determination is not an intrinsic attribute of all children but it should be conceded by adults according to their assessment of the child's development. In the same vein, the voice of the child should be listened given 'due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child'. It is therefore possible to observe that whilst article 12 is concerned with right of the child to have its voice heard, it is easy to recognise the conditional nature of children's self-determination presented in it. There is not an inviolable right to be heard for the child; rather, the power of the child's voice depends on the adult's assessment of the child's capacities and competences, measured against standards set by adults. This emerges with some evidence within UNICEF's (2015) interpretation and summary of article 12, where it is clearly stated that the child's right of self-determination should not undermine the right, and duty, of the adult towards the protection of the child. Here, in a nutshell but with powerful eloquence, the ambiguity of the discourses and practices concerning children's self-determination discussed by the collected contributions, is presented.

The ambiguities about the meaning of children's participation in the UNCRC suggest that children's self-determination is a controversial concept and a challenge, depending on how an adult may judge or perceive rights. Burr (2004) argues that the

hegemonic western discourse on childhood, which impregnates the UNCRC, is built on diverging and ultimately incompatible concepts of protection and participation, that is, two conflicting ideologies regarding how children access their rights under adult control. Alderson (2006) offer a more nuanced analysis of the dualism between protection and participation, when stating that that sound knowledge of both protection and participation is required to ensure children have equality towards active citizenship whilst also having a right to be protected.

The UNCRC lends itself as an example of a challenge to self-determination of the child entailed in the enduring idea that children's competence should be checked by adults before the right of self-determination can be conceded. Changes made in the status of children are underpinned via legal structures reinforced by moral and ethical codes that can be used by adults to reinforce self-selected or inherited gatekeeping roles and identities. Wyness (2012a) recognises that children have few rights regarding self-determination within dominant authoritative and paternalist weaker versions of rights-based perspectives, because children are viewed as reliant on adults to bring about change regarding rights-based shifts for and on their behalf.

At the sametime it is here argued that, notwithstanding the evident contradictions and conceptual weakness, the theme of participation in the UNCRC played a pivotal role in bringing up the emerging concept of children's self-determination at the center of the political agenda. It is not by chance that research and literature on children's self-determination has boomed in unison with the UNCRC promulgation, as well as in its long aftermath.

Its limitations do not allow overlooking the Convention's important role, which consists in the introduction of the concept of self-determination as a right of the child as a social group, adding a new dimension to the traditional framework of children's needs of protection, implicating adult's control over children's lives and choices. It might be possible to affirm that the echo of the UNCRC resonates in this collection too.

In addition to the analysis of the intrinsic limitations of the UNCRC, it is necessary to add a cultural analysis to understand how political, historical, social and ideological variables may impact on how children's rights, participation and self-determination are perceived and contextualised. An important contribution is offered by James and James (2004), who recognise a circular relationship between social and cultural perceptions on the one hand, and policy and legislation on the other hand, mutually influencing each other in a dynamic definition of the semantics of childhood. According to James and James' analysis, based on the scrutiny of numerous children's right policies, how children are perceived as rights holders and active agents by adults within educational environments impacts upon spaces children access and self-determination.

Freeman (1983) and, two decades later, Fortin (2003) look further at moral and legal rights to debate if children can be full rights holders legally, ethically and morally, questioning who has a choice as to 'if' and 'when' children can exercise their rights. Both authors point to the need of conceptual clarifications regarding the status of children's self-determination, showing that the legal debate has encountered some difficulties in approaching children's right beyond the principle of protection

and welfare rights. A more critical position is taken by Handley (2005), who identifies it is the child's competence, age and abilities that are primarily considered by adults within a protective framework that subsequently influences participation and listening levels. Freeman (2011) suggests the persistence of the hegemonic position of adult-centered strands is nurtured by the idea that giving children a choice represents a risk because of the pressure this will place upon them in professional contexts shaped by discourses on responsibility, accountability and competence levels. The latter analysis is also presented by research on the medical or psychological models of childhood as discussed by Alderson (2006) and Monk (2004), who converge in observing how medicine as well as psychology are prudent in promoting, or even recognising, children's full capacity, competences, capabilities or abilities as active or equal participants.

Against these perspectives that paint an adult-centered picture of inter-generational relationships, Hendley (2005) argues that promoting a child's rights to participate is not about handing over decisions to children without due regard to age or competence. She suggests there is indeed a fine line and balance required in practice to recognise dominant childhoods constructions, discourse, frames and competences when considering the dynamic relationship between protection for the child and active participation and decision-making of the child, across complex and dynamic life-worlds.

Solidly linked to the scholarly discussion and political framework sketched above as an introduction to the cultural and intellectual milieu of this collection, the contributions in the book stem from different disciplinary and methodological angles to discuss how expectations about children's competence and considerations of their responsibility inform curricula provisions, policies, practices, research and discourse in different national contexts.

The complexity of the meaning of children's rights and how children's rights inform practices in different social systems is offered to the reader by analysis that are solidly grounded in empirical research. Each chapter discusses practices and discourses in and around Early Childhood Education and Care, adding to the descriptive dimension innovative interpretations of the cultural foundations of those practices and discourses. One after another, the contributions accompany the reader in the observation of the intersection between inter-generational relationships, social structures, frames of culture, moral codes and scientific knowledge.

1.2 The Chapters in the Book

The hegemonic discourse on childhood in the social sciences understand children as actively engaged in making sense of their social worlds, interacting with, and construct, social and physical environments. But this is the discourse that defines a limited field of scientific enquiry, generally known as 'the new sociology of childhood'; in which measure such hegemony extends to current practices and discourse in contexts beyond Western social sciences? Eighteen chapters cooperate to produce a multifaceted and complex answer to this question. Their contribution is important,

because it answers a question concerning the alignment, or misalignment, between the discourse on childhood in the social sciences and current practices and discourse that sit outside the scientific system. The collected contributions answer the question by approaching children self-determination from a range of theoretical perspectives to tackle crucial topics such as: How is children self-determination understood in different national contexts? What is the meaning of self-determination and its relationship with Early Childhood education and Care? How is the paradoxical relationship between the educational intention and children's agency conceptualised in discourses and practices? How does children's agency influence the educational contexts and discourses on children's capability?

The editors have decided to organise the collection around two themes, 'practices' and 'discourses'. As suggested by contemporary sociology (Luhmann 1995), any form of organisation, including the organisation of this edited collection is a contingent simplification. The editors' choice should not obscure the fact that each contribution in the 'practices' section presents provoking and informed connections between the practices examined and the discourse on childhood that frames them. In a similar fashion, each contribution in the 'discourses' section is interested in the co-evolution of the discourse explored and practices, policies, legislation, social intervention.

The first theme, 'practices' is inaugurated by a contribution from Claudio Baraldi. The chapter concerns the observation of children's active participation in interactions with peers and teachers discussing if, and under which circumstances, children's participation means also children's agency. Baraldi argues that in educational activities, agency can be made visible as attribution to children of rights and responsibilities in producing knowledge, that is, as epistemic authority. Moving from this theoretical perspective, the chapter analyses how children's epistemic authority is construed in interactions occurring in a pre-school setting in the Italian town of Reggio Emilia, presenting ways in which adults can enhance agency in Early Childhood education.

The following chapter in the 'practices' themes proposes another exploration of educational practices, discussing co-operative problem solving through dialogue and mutual recognition in a Japanese kindergarten. Miyamoto focuses his analytical eye on the nature of children's involvement in democratic practices during class activities. In particular, Miyamoto explores educational situations called 'democratic meetings', which are part of the Japanese pedagogical planning, aimed to provide children with the opportunity to care for, expand and share via dialogue each other's experiences within decisional processes. Based on the idea that every child has agency and can be understood as an equal participant in everyday life, democratic meetings represent a pedogical tool to promote self-determination of young children. In line with Baraldi's conclusion, albeit crossing thousands of kilometres and different cultures of education, Miyamoto argues that the construction of children as owners of epistemic authority is a necessary condition for the promotion of children's self-determination.

Accompanying the reader to an exciting intellectual journey across continents, the third component of the theme 'practices' takes the reader back to Europe, leaping from the Mediterranean to Scandinavia. Offering a strong sense of continuity

with Miyamoto's chapter, the contribution delivered by Kinos and Rosqvist is interested in democratic practices with children. In the Finnish settings of Kinos and Rosqvist's research, democratic decision-making concerns the design of the physical environments in preschool settings, within a project interested in promoting children's participation to the assessment and improvement of indoor facilities of two schools. In particular, the authors focus on the form of participation of children having Special Education Needs, observing their interaction with peers, adults within the Finnish tradition of participatory methods. Based on ethnographic methods, the contribution assesses the participatory project using theories of critical pedagogy of place, concepts of agency as well as the authors' work on child-initiated pedagogy. Despite potential shortcomings of the researched pedagogical approach, the case can be argued that the observed practices reflect a genuine self-determined participation of preschool aged children with a special need. Kinos and Rosqvist's analysis is even more poignant as it focuses on the participation of children with special education needs, challenging established truths about their position in education and society.

The concept of self-determination as constructed in social relationships introduces a crucial question concerning the measure in which adults are equipped to recognise children's determination to claim authorship of narratives channelling knowledges and experiences. Regarding this important question the fourth chapter, authored by Sarah Vipond, presents the results of an action-research that took place in an English nursery. With a unique choice, the chapter is interested in unintended consequences of purposive educational action. In particular, the chapter discusses the unintended consequences of an action-research project aimed to implementing a shift in practice from making observations of children's learning using still photography to sharing and discussing video vignettes with parents. Vipond shows that, whilst the action-research was meant to develop an understanding of children's thinking and learning, the analysis of videos did not only support the interpretation of children's thinking, but also showed that play itself can be medium of communication, channeling children's claims to the status of legitimate experts in their own worlds. Linking with Baraldi and Miyamoto's position, Vipond argues the importance of *learning* how to give consideration not only to children's learning, but also to the status of children as owners and authors of knowledge, who use play to share and celebrate their expertise and knowledge.

The fifth chapter of the 'practice' again invites the reader to travel across continents and cultures. Contributing to the powerful discussion around children's status as legitimate producers of knowledge that characterises the first part of the collection, Martin Needham presents a case study of policy and practices in Kazakhstan, where the educational culture is caught in an unresolved tension between two competing models of learning. The first model is based on the idea that allowing children greater control of some of their activities promotes personal responsibility and self-control, leading to longer lasting benefits resulting from preschool experiences. The other model considers learning as an individualised absorption of teacher transmitted information rather than as a distributed act of thinking. Qualitative, semi-structured interviews with practitioners in the preschool environment are used to explore how national standards policy documents interact with underlying beliefs

about the nature of learning. Needham's findings suggest that, as in other countries, the concept of child-led pedagogy may be inhibited by existing classroom-based expectations of children's participation.

Self-determination as authorship of knowledge, self-determination as narration of knowledge, self-determination within culturally-structured inter- and intra-generational relationships. The emerging intellectual narrative characterising the 'practices' section of the collection is clearly mirrored by the contribution offered by Scollan, presenting the concept of *hybrid-transitions* as a tool to explore transitions between the digital and non-digital worlds as spaces at the intersection of young children's agency and the limitations imposed by their position in society. In particular, data collected during the observation of digital practices in a pre-kindergarten in the Boston neighborhood of Dorchester is discussed by Scollan to suggest that children's agency may be expressed in form of authorship of narratives based on personal memories and knowledge, evolving into collective interlaced narrative during peer-interactions.

The eight chapter of the 'practices' theme, presented by Carolyn Morris, examines how two class-teachers frame and manage classroom learning within curricular activities in a Welsh school. Morris' chapter further enriches the discussion on how children's status as producers and disseminators of knowledge can be observed as the condition of a meaningful form of self-determination in the education system and beyond.

Morris' contribution illustrates situations where children contribute to the plurality and richness of discourses in the classroom, arguing that group work allows far more peer interaction towards the development of the classroom as a socio-cultural context promoting children's trust and agency. As for the previous chapters, the position of the adult is discussed: Morris shows that interactions with teachers have a dramatic impact on children's attitudes towards risk-taking and claims to epistemic authority.

The final chapter of the 'practices' section provides an ideal close to the section, as well as a solid bridge to the 'discourses' section. Duhn's contribution is twofold. Firstly, it is concerned with practices, as it discusses an empirical interaction between a baby and an educator observed in the context of a research project in New Zealand based on ethnographic methods. Duhn's analysis supports her argumentation that that adult's perception of very young children's capabilities both limits and opens possibilities for the child's agency. This is an important further contribution around the role of the adult in creating a positive, or a hostile, environment for children's self-determination. Secondly, the chapter leads to the section concerned with discourses by providing an overview of the academic discourses around infants and toddlers' participation, outlining current understandings of young children's self-determination in early childhood education.

It is believed that this introduction to the 'practices' section offers clear evidence of the complex and intriguing nature of the collection, where analysis of practices is discussed within sophisticated theoretical framework, while and discourse analytical essays keep an eye on practices, lending themselves to be utilised as tools to decipher children's self-determination against historical and cultural backgrounds.

Children's rights can be a significant case study for the intersection of discourses and practices in Education and Care. The specificity of the contributions to the 'discourses' theme consists in tackling the language (and the social semantics mediated by language) that defines childhood and adult-child relationships in a variety of international contexts.

The chapter inaugurating the second theme is contributed by Fay Hadley and Liz Rouse. It is believed that the reader will agree with Hadley and Rouse's claim that their chapter successfully unpacks how children's rights are positioned in Australian Early Childhood Education. Based on a solid argumentation, the reader will be also invited to reflect on the child's position within the current parent-teacher partnership discourse in a country, Australia, which is generally considered as leader about Early Education and Care. The authors argue that a powerful discourse posits Early Childhood educators in front of complex responsibility in their work with children within an interconnecting network of policies, societal expectations of what a 'good' early education and care program looks like, parents' anxieties and support to children's rights to be heard creates potentially competing tensions.

Complexity, increasing pressures on professionals, ambiguities between a discourse on children's self-determination and duty of care, the potential competition between professional identities and families within the framework of working in partnership. The themes introduced by Hadley and Rouse are further expanded by the second chapter in the 'discourses' section, investigating how powerful discourses on childhood impact upon the social space where young children and social workers interact in Irish Social Work. Scollan and McNeill discuss how the individualistic rights-based approach to social work and education advanced by State legislation is intertwined with the enduring semantics of children as subordinated units within the family. With help of a mixed methodology, combing qualitative interviews with professional and document analysis, Scollan and McNeill assess and reflect upon the ambiguous status of the voices of children within Irish discourses in Early Education and Social Work, where two competing semantics, children's self-determination and protection of the child, underpin policies and legislation.

The third chapter expands on the topic of the ambiguous status of children, offering the reader a critical analysis of the discourse on childhood in a major Eastern African country, the Republic of Kenya. Based on ethnographic experiences and document analysis, Corrado and Robertson argue that Kenyan children are actively engaged in the local communities, exercising agency in managing their social worlds. Not withstanding a longstanding semantics in the minority world has been portraying a generic construct of the 'African child' as one who is disadvantaged and marginalized, the authors demonstrate that such construct is not representative of the lived reality of the children in Kenyan communities. In the conclusion, the chapter invites to re-assessed the position of the 'African Child' through ethnography and robust education. Crossing continents and oceans, the fourth chapter in the second thematic area is particularly interesting as O'Donoughe presents a rich review of documents and debates defining the position of disabled young children in the discourse around Early Years Education and Care in Brazil. Most of the

documents reviewed were previously accessible only to Portuguese-speaking readers. Enriching the discussion in the 'discourses' theme, O'Donoughe's contribution concerns the contested status of what the societal discourse would irrevocably categorise as 'deficit childhood'. Whilst the National Plan for Early Childhood (2010) and the National Education Plan (2014) put forward strategies to increased participation in education for all Brazilians, little focus has been historically placed on the rights of disabled children. In particular, O'Donoughe argues that children with cognitive impairments were traditionaly condemned to *fracasso escolar* (academic failure). However, the chapter demonstrates that national shocks like the Zika disease, with its induced microcephaly in newborns, as well as landamark events like the 2016 Paralympic Games may influences social and cultural attitudes towards disability, favouring a new discourse on a fully inclusive, rather than merely 'integrative', model of Early Education.

In the same measure of all previous chapters, the fifth chapter in the 'discourses' collection, authored by Miguel and Carolina Santillan Torres Torija, identifies and analyses some degree of ambiguity in the discourse on childhood, which appears to emerge when the focus is shifted towards children who are positioned at the margin of the social systems. The chapter examines the case of México, discussing how self-determination of the child, which is at the center of current legislation and curricular provision, is intertwined with a semantics of marginalization and social inadequacy developed around one of the most vulnerable groups in Mexican society, "indigenous" or native children. The authors invite the reader to consider the limitation that legislative developments introducing rights-based pedagogies, as well as social intervention centered on the voices of the children may encounter, in situations of enduring ethnic- or cultural-based inequalities.

The sixth chapter in the section tackles the topic of children's status at the intersection of self-determination and their citizenship. A case study within the English education system is chosen by the author, who discusses that education to British Values, now a statutory duty for English Early Education settings, is underpinned by a concept of citizenship as a learning outcome. Based on a dense analytical review of educational policies and curricula, the author argues that Early Education in England, as exemplified by education to British Values, is approached as a crucial phase for a healthy development of the child. Citizenship is pursued as the future outcome of a learning process designed and led by the adult, rather than experienced by children in the 'here and now'. The chapter suggests that a consequence of the paradoxical status of citizenship in Early Education is that discourses on education to citizenship and children's citizenship in education, are absorbed by technical concerns about the implementation of pedagogical means. This entails neglecting that citizenship is experienced and articulated as a practice embedded within the day-to-day reality of children as of adults.

The seventh chapter is offered by Te One and Welsh Sauni, who describe their work with a uniquely Aotearoa New Zealand group, the Māori Wardens. The authors introduce a new perspective, paving the way for further methodological experimentations. Rather than analysing the discourse on childhood and on children's rights, Te One and Welsh Sauni research on children's experiences of learning about the

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in the context of their lived experiences of childhood. Produces through an intense ethnographic immersion, the data presented in the chapter supports two key messages; first, that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is not currently promulgated effectively to promote and protect children's rights; and second, that Māori Wardens are in a unique position to advocate for the 'hard-to-reach'. They witness first hand the impacts of harsh, neoliberal economic ideology on whānau, where, as is revealed, they recognise the unrealised potential of principles underpinning the articles of the CRC.

The eight chapter, closing the 'discourses' section, is a contribution from Fengling Tang addressing the transformation of Chinese early childhood provision towards child-centredness occurred since 1992, in the aftermath of China's Reform and Opening-Up policy. Whilst children's rights have been addressed as part of the Chinese government efforts, especially starting with the China Children Development Plan in the 1990s, a thorough documentary analysis of key policy documents and existing research in the last three decades support the argument that pressure from school learning restricts scope and depth of children's participation outside the school contexts whilst the urban-rural divide as a long-term issue needs to be tackled in order to widen children's participation in China.

It is genuinely believed that at the end of intellectual journey across the 15 chapters composing this edited collection, the reader will have engaged with different perspectives questioning the intersection between the semantics of children[1]s rights, practices and discourses in very diverse contexts. At the same time, the chapters invite to a critical reflection on how the different meanings of childhood underpinning discourses, policies and practices in different social systems and contexts nurture different semantics of children's self-determination and its positioning in relation to adulthood.

All chapters, individually and as a collection, cooperate to define an innovative approach to children's self-determination as a reflective construction. Throughout the volume, children's self-determination is not simply discussed as implicated in specific constructions of childhood in Education and Care. Rather, self-determination is observed as a dynamic concept within which those constructions interact, collide, and mutually influence each other.

Following the intellectual path traced by the contributions to the volume, the reader is invited to actively engage with international perspectives on the relationship between the social position of childhood and the self-determination of the child in the late modern society.

Reflectivity can be promoted by widening the semantic horizon with new knowledge and perspectives; this is one of the noblest traits of dialogical communication: inviting the interlocutor to question its knowledge, as well as the same presuppositions of its knowledge, its thinking and unspoken assumptions (Bohm 2013). This collection aims to promote reflectivity: such aim steers each chapter to investigate the hegemonic discourses on children's position in society, and the practices built upon those discourses, as well as the practices that seem to contradict them. Within this intellectual, but also ethical, commitment, all contributors have accepted the editors' invitation to provide some prompts in conclusion of their chapters, aimed to

promote and support readers' reflection on the intellectual links between chapters on the one hand, and possible further investigation and research on the other hand. Scholarly activity, professional practices, social activism, engaged citizenship, advocacy for children's rights: the reflective prompts offered by the authors aim to further strengthen the potential of the collection to make a difference for the readers in their social worlds.

This volume aims to provoke students, scholars, professionals, and all readers interested in the changing position of Early Childhood in society, to be inquisitive and sceptical, reflective and critical in their theorizing and in their practice, actively building and transforming their knowledge. The international research on the meanings of children's self-determination, and their relationship with Early Childhood Education and Care presented in the collection can be used as a tool for reflection and self-reflection, uncovering tacit assumptions, ideological positions and social conventions that, seen but unnoticed, set the foundation of practice, research and theorizing on childhood.

A final consideration. Across the contributions to the collection, an epistemological approach vigorously emerges. The mirror is raised, and the observation of the categories used to describe the construction of childhood and children's rights is now possible. A reflection that allows us to distinguish not only childhood from the lives of children, but also the deconstruction(s) of childhood as an adult endeavour from the lives of children. This is the inauguration of a possible journey towards the recognition of children's childhoods. Although any step forward will require important methodological and ethical investment, the editors would like to give the journey a name: 'Childrensology', toward a study of childhood owned by children for children.

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Part I
Practices

Chapter 2
Practices/1, Italy: Facilitating Participation in Early Childhood Education

Claudio Baraldi

2.1 The Sociological Observation of Interactions in Early Childhood Education

This chapter concerns the sociological observation of interactions in early childhood education. The observation of interactions is not necessarily a scientific activity, as it may also be useful for practical purposes. Starting from the historical experience of infant schools in Reggio Emilia (Edwards et al. 1998), this practice of observation has become important for purposes of teachers' training. Therefore, the observation of interactions can be used by both researchers and pedagogical coordinators of schools to research and comment on teachers' educational intentions and actions.

From a sociological perspective, the observation of interactions can be based on the epistemological presupposition of *social constructivism* (e.g. Luhmann 1990), which describes the important difference between first and second order observation. While the first order observation posits what is observed as a fact, the second order observation concerns other observations, in particular the ways in which other observations are produced. The second order observation of educational interactions concerns both the meaning that is constructed (observed) in these interactions and the way in which it is constructed (observed).

Against this background, two questions may be relevant to understand and explain how the second order observation can be accomplished in educational contexts. The first and basic question is: What can be observed and considered important in early childhood education from a second order perspective? The answer to this question requires the understanding of the difference between observations in

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sociology and pedagogy. Sociology is a second order way of observing from the perspective of the system of science. Pedagogy is a second order way of observing from the perspective of the education system, i.e. it provides this system with a theory of reflection (Luhmann 2002). This difference has an important consequence. The sociological (second order) observation is interested in educational interactions as social processes as object of analysis. Pedagogical (second order) observation is interested in educational interactions as ways of enhancing/producing children's learning. This differentiation also implies a different observation of the *way* of observing. Sociology is interested in ways of observing that are produced in communication; the question is: how does communication produce conditions of children's participation? Pedagogy is interested in ways of observing that are produced by individual participants, in particular by learners. The question is: how do children learn? This differentiation between communication and learning determines the second relevant question in this chapter. Does the difference between sociological observation and pedagogical observation determine contradictory or complementary ways of observing?

I will try to answer to this question from the perspective of sociology. Firstly, it is important to clarify the meaning of the sociological perspective on the educational interaction. This perspective can primarily focus on the ways in which children and teachers participate in communication processes. Children's participation is frequently considered important by the so-called Sociology of Childhood (e.g. Jans 2004; Percy-Smith and Thomas 2010; Prout et al. 2006; Sinclair 2004; Wyness 2013). This field of sociology, however, has rarely investigated children's participation in educational interactions that involve children and teachers. Very few works present an accurate analysis of children's participation in interactions in settings of early childhood education, in particular adopting Conversation Analysis (Björk-Willen 2008; Danby and Baker 1998). Other few contributions present less accurate analyses of educational interactions (Bae 2012; Palludan 2007). Against this background, it seems evident that this type of analysis needs some more accurate theoretical and methodological reflection.

Following a systemic theory of education (Luhmann 2002), educational interactions can be considered as systems of communication (see also Baraldi 2012, 2014a). In this perspective, communication is the unity of action, information and understanding (Luhmann 1990), and the achievement of communication requires that each participant's action, and information that is uttered through this action, are understood by (an)other participant(s). Moreover, the achievement of understanding can only be shown through further action, since understanding as such is not visible. Therefore, a communication process requires that an action (utterance) shows the understanding of either previously uttered information, or previous utterance. Against this background, communication processes can thus be observed as chains of actions. It is for this reason that Conversation Analysis is able to study the interaction, in particular the educational interaction, as a "turn-taking" system (e.g., Heritage and Clayman 2010; Walsh 2011), in which each utterance (turn of speech) refers either to previously uttered information or to a previous utterance.

Extract 2.1, which was video-recorded in an Italian kindergarten (Baraldi 2015), exemplifies the meaning of interaction as a communication system. In turn 1, Mary (a 3 year-old Nigerian child) pronounces the word “beautiful” (“bello” in Italian) with great difficulties, as she can speak very little Italian. However, the teacher shows understanding of the uttered information through her following action.

Extract 2.1

1. Mary:	peeeello! Pe-pe-peeeelllo!
	peeeeeuatiful! pe-pe-peeeeeautiful!
2. Teacher:	è bello. Sì.
	yes, it is beautiful

Here, the teacher’s action refers to the information that is uttered by Mary. It shows the teacher’s effort of interpreting Mary’s words. Mary has specific difficulties in speaking Italian, however, it may be rather common for 3 year-old children to speak roughly. In these circumstances, teachers’ utterances that show understanding also show interpretation of the uttered information, which means that teachers’ utterances can produce *new* information while confirming understanding.

The activity of interpretation is more evident when teachers’ utterances refer to children’s actions, in particular to their intentions or motives to act. In Extract 2.2 (Baraldi 2015), Sofia positively assesses Mary’s drawing performance. In turn 2, the teacher comments on Sofia’s information, confirming her opinion. However, after 5 s of pause, the teacher takes again the floor investigating the reason of Sofia’s appreciation through a question. This question does not refer to the uttered information, but to Sofia’s motive for assessing Marys’ performance positively. In the following part of the interaction, however, as soon as Mary takes the floor, showing her usual difficulties in using the Italian language, the teacher asks for confirmation of the meaning of the uttered word, as in Extract 2.1, thus taking into account the uttered information.

Extract 2.2

1. Sofia:	anche la Mary sta diventando brava
	Also Mary is becoming very good
2. Teacher:	sì, molto brava sta diventando
	yes, she is becoming very good
3.	(5)
4. Teacher:	Ha fatto delle belle forme Mary Sofia?
	Did Mary make beautiful forms Sofia?
5. Mary:	a foiiie!
	a leaeees!
6. Teacher:	delle foglie?
	leaves?

These two extracts show that observing communication means observing the use of language. This use shows not only understanding of previous information and utterance, but also the way in which the new utterance is provided, i.e. the so-called "turn design" (Heritage and Clayman 2010). For example, in these two extracts, the teacher's turns are designed as questions (Extract 2.2, turns 4 and 6) and as confirmation of understanding (Extract 2.1, turn 2; Extract 2.2 turn 2), the latter shown by the word "yes" and by the repetition of words that were previously uttered by the children. Therefore, a specific pattern of interaction can be observed in the interaction. For example, Extract 2.2 shows the teacher's efforts of clarification of both motives and information, therefore a clarifying pattern of interaction.

2.2 Children's Agency in Educational Contexts

Sociological (second order) observation of early childhood education may bring further the analysis, investigating the possible achievement of children's *agency* in the interaction. Agency is not used here as a synonym of participation, rather it indicates two specific presuppositions of participation (e.g., Baraldi 2014a; Giddens 1984; Harré and Van Langhenove 1999). First, agency means display of children's autonomy in choosing among different possibilities of participation. Second, agency means that children's participation promotes change of the existing pattern of interaction. In educational interactions, in particular, agency shows attribution to children of rights and responsibilities in producing knowledge, what can be called "epistemic authority" (Heritage and Raymond 2005). The central question in investigating if children's agency is produced in education is: how are rights and responsibilities of knowledge attributed in interactions?

In the education system, children's agency is limited by their hierarchical relationships with teachers (e.g., James and James 2004; Luhmann 2002; Wyness 1999), which imply that rights and responsibilities for producing knowledge are systematically attributed to teachers. The way of establishing hierarchical relationships in classroom interactions has been frequently studied. The typical pattern of teaching interaction includes the teacher's initiation, the student's response and the teacher's evaluation (McHoul 1978; Mehan 1979; Sinclair and Coulthard 1975), which is known as the IRE pattern. Hierarchical relationships and unequal distribution of epistemic authority, depend on the basic structure of the education system, and not simply on specific interactions. Its more evident manifestation is the differentiation of the institutional roles of teacher and learner. Moreover, this differentiation shows another underlying structure, the double "coding" of the education system (Luhmann 2002), including conveyance of knowledge and assessment leading to selection. Thus, teachers are assigned the right and the responsibility to (1) convey knowledge to learners and (2) assess learners' reproduction of the conveyed knowledge.

Early childhood, precisely because it is "early", can be easily associated with learners' very low degree of epistemic authority and therefore with teachers' high degree of authority in conveying knowledge. Paradoxically, however, early

childhood also offers opportunities to upgrade children's epistemic authority, as teachers tend to avoid or strongly reduce assessments, at least in the schools that have adopted the Reggio Approach (e.g., Edwards et al. 1998) or similar perspectives. The education system can therefore reduce hierarchical relationships and upgrade children's epistemic authority in kindergartens. Without assessments, children are relatively free to behave and are not continuously pushed to learn. Lack of assessment is compensated by a strong accent on affection, so that teachers can emphasise and encourage positive performances without stressing children's mistakes, as shown in Extracts 2.1 and 2.2. In short, in early childhood education the IRE pattern may be very unusual. In a pedagogical perspective, Extracts 2.1 and 2.2 could be observed as cases of the teacher's *scaffolding* of Mary's performances, i.e. a type of action supporting children learning trying to avoid negative assessment. Research on educational interaction has highlighted the importance of scaffolding, in particular as expansion of the IRE interaction to support children's learning (Seedhouse 2004). In Extracts 2.1 and 2.2, however, the teacher's actions do not show ways of checking conveyed knowledge or learning. Therefore, the concept of scaffolding is not sufficient to explain the pattern of these interactions. Rather, Extracts 2.1 and 2.2 highlight a different issue, concerning the teachers' actions that contribute to promoting the children's epistemic authority. This issue is relevant as *lack* of children's epistemic authority may be seen a problem in early childhood education (Edwards et al. 1998).

Against this background, the sociological observation may concern the teachers' actions that promote children's epistemic authority. In particular, the concept of *facilitation* indicates a pattern of interaction that promotes the upgrading of children's epistemic authority (Baraldi 2014b). Facilitation means activation of children's agency, thus replacing hierarchical relationships in teachers-children interaction (Baraldi 2015). Facilitation means that communication shows the promotion of children's participation as agency, and the corresponding expectations of children's (autonomous) personal expression. Facilitation replaces the value of children's performances with the value of children's personal expressions. The high value assigned to affection and personal expressions in kindergartens is an important presupposition of successful facilitation.

Being inspired by the value of children's personal expressions, facilitation also aims to promote *dialogue* with and among children. It is important to clarify what may be the conditions of activating dialogue, with and among children in their early age, if dialogue is understood as "the collective way of opening up judgements and assumptions" (Bohm 1996, p. 53).

In general, dialogue requires three specific presuppositions of communication: (1) equity, regarding the distribution of active participation in the communication process; (2) empowerment, regarding personal expressions; (3) display of sensitivity for personal expressions. In other words, there is dialogue if all children can participate, showing their epistemic authority, if this authority is actively supported as personal expression (empowerment) and if affective actions show sensitivity for personal expressions. In a dialogic dimension, epistemic authority is interpreted as personal expression, which must be supported with equity and affection. Opening

up "judgements and assumptions" (Bohm) is a specific way of opening up and support personal expressions.

Facilitation of personal expression means promotion of children's narratives, showing their authority in knowledge about what they tell (Baraldi and Iervese 2017). Narratives, however, are not individual, but interactional constructions (Norrick 2007), in which the observed reality is interpreted and "storied" (Baker 2006; Somers 1994). Among the realities that are storied, a special place concerns the narrator's identity (Bamberg 2011). Narratives are plural, as what seems to be the "same reality" is in fact narrated through different sets of categories. Facilitation of children's plural narratives is the most important way of showing equity of children's expressions as manifestations of epistemic authority, and empowerment of these expressions.

2.3 Observing Facilitation

The activity of facilitation can be observed in three dimensions: (1) the contents of the promoted narratives; (2) the interactional construction of these narratives; (3) the consequences for children's epistemic authority. The analysis of the contents of the promoted narratives concerns the *types* of narratives that are produced (e.g. personal narratives, family narratives, narratives of belonging to groups, narratives of objects, events, situations), and the construction of children's *identity* (personal, social and cultural identities). The analysis of the interactional construction of narratives concerns the interplay of facilitators' actions in eliciting narratives, children's initiatives in producing narratives, and treatment of these initiatives. The analysis of the consequences for children's epistemic authority concerns the relevance assigned to children's agency (epistemic authority) in narrating. The analysis of these three dimensions allows the understanding of the pattern of facilitation.

The analysis of facilitation can start from the facilitators' turn design. I have tried to identify the most frequent and important types of facilitators' turn design through a long term research (e.g., Baraldi 2003, 2008, 2012, 2014b, 2015). According to my research, they are the following:

1. Questioning that promotes clarifications of children's expressions.
2. Encouragement of children's expressions through minimal responses, repetitions, and direct invitations.
3. Appreciation of children's expressions.
4. Formulation, i.e. summary, development or gloss of children's expression, grasping its gist and promoting children's new expressions (e.g., Baraldi 2014b; Hutchby 2007).

My research shows that these types of turn design are more or less the same for all ages and grades of schooling. However, in early childhood they may present more intensity; in particular, affection seems to be much more important and frequent. We can observe this specificity in the following two extracts.

Extract 2.3 presents the transcription of a video-recording of an activity which is called “circle time”. During this activity, the children are invited to contribute to communication without any constraint of topic and form, just respecting the turn of speech of other children. In this extract, two teachers facilitate the interaction. The extract shows a variety of ways in which these teachers facilitate the interaction, the production of narratives, and the affective empowerment of children’s epistemic authority in the form of personal expressions.

First of all, facilitation includes the teachers’ questions that invite the children to talk (turns 1, 10, 20, 26, 35). These questions signal that a dyadic sequence between the teacher and a child is concluded and someone else can speak. In turn 35, the rule of turn-taking is also evident, it is set through a specific gesture preventing others from interrupting or overlapping, and thus ensuring a fluid interaction and above all equity in participation. Secondly, facilitation includes the teachers’ questions that invite the children to clarify their narratives (turns 4, 7, 12, 14, 28, 33, 38, 40), thus supporting more detailed narratives. Thirdly, facilitation includes the teachers’ systematic appreciations of the children’s narratives (turns 3, 18, 19, 25, 29), signalling that the children’s expressions are important. Systematic appreciations show the affective support of children’s participation and the sensitivity for the children’s personal experiences. Affection can also be signalled through gestures, as in turn 8, where the teacher caresses the child’s head, while she is apparently stressing with humour the inadequacy of the cradle as a bed. Fourthly, facilitation includes the teachers’ formulations of the gist of the children’s previous turns (turns 12, 16, 18, 42, 44, 45). Formulations allow the teachers to develop or explicate the children’s narrative actively, thus providing ways of collaborating with the children to improve their involvement in the interaction. In turn 33, a question of clarification is designed as an interrogative formulation, explicating the child’s previous turn. Formulation is also used to introduce humour in the interaction concerning Marco’s dream about the bears. This humour is welcomed by the child as an affective support of his narrative. Finally, although rarely, facilitation includes the teachers’ repetitions of part of the content of the children’s talk (turns 32, 38) showing that they have understood it. In turns 6–9, the teachers also introduce an ambivalent assessment of Chiara’s assertion. They suggest that the bed which Chiara is talking about is not the cradle as Chiara has now grown up. This is another example of humour, but it is ambiguous as it could also be interpreted as a support of the child’s “development”, rather than participation.

Extract 2.3

1. Teacher1:	Qualcun altro vuol prendere la parola? *Someone else would like to say something?*
2. Chiara:	Io stanotte ho dormito nel mio lettino con la mam[ma *Last night I slept in my small bed with my mummy*
3. Teacher2:	[Brava. Dà gusto eh?= [*Well done. You liked it, didn’t you?*
4. Teacher1:	=Ma nel tuo lettino piccolo o grande? *But in your small bed or in the big one?*

5. ((Chiara shows the bed width with her hands))
6. Teacher1: No la culla.
Not the cradle
7. Teacher2: E' la culla?
Is it the cradle?
8. Teacher1: No::: lei è grande! ((caressing her head))
No::: she has grown up
9. Teacher2: [ormai è grande
By now she is a grown-up
10. Teacher1: Chi è che [vuole
Who would like
11. Chiara: [Abbiamo dormito io e mia madre ((near Chiara, a child raises his hand))
We slept, my mother and I
12. Teacher1: Con te ha dormito! E ci stavate tutte e due?
She slept with you! Was there enough room for both?
13. Chiara: Io ho dormito da::: dove c'è il tavolone grande
I slept fro::: from the side of the big table
14. Teacher1: Invece la mamma?
And your mum?
(.)
15. Chiara: Invece mia mamma ha dormito dove c'è la porta
My mum slept on the side of the door
16. Teacher2: Aha non ha dormito con il tuo papà
Aha she didn't sleep with your dad
17. ((Chiara shakes her head))
18. Teacher1: Ti ha fatto un bel rega[lo (.) la tua mamma a dormire con te
Sleeping with you (.) your mother gave you a nice present
19. Teacher2: [Ti ha fatto un bel regalo!
She gave you a nice present!
20. Teacher1: Chi voleva la parola?
Who wanted to say something?
21. Fabio: Io! ((the child who previously raised his hand))
Me!
22. Teacher2: Fabio che è un po' di giorni che manca. Dai Fabio.
Fabio, who was not at school for a few days. Come on Fabio.
23. Teacher1: Fabio bentornato! Sei stato male Fabio?
Welcome back Fabio. Were you ill Fabio?
24. Fabio: Sì
Yes
25. Teacher1: eh. BEN-TORNA-TO!
eh. WEL-COME-BACK
26. Teacher1: Allora adesso è il tempo di Fabio. Dì un po' Fabio?
So, this is Fabio's turn. Tell us about you, Fabio

27. Fabio:	Io stato io stato io stato a far la nanna a mia mamma *I was I was I was to sleep at my mum*
28. Teacher1:	Anche tu? *You too?*
29. Teacher2:	Vi piace stare con la mamma nel lettone vero mi sa. È bello vero? *You like staying with your mum in the big bed, don't you. It's nice, isn't it?*
30. Fabio:	°Sì° °*Yes*°
31. Chiara:	Io però nel mio letto. *But, I in my bed*
32. Teacher2:	tu nel tuo letto= *You in your bed*
33. Teacher1:	=tu nel lettore grande della tua mamma? *You in your mum's big bed?*
34. Fabio:	Sì *Yes* (1)
35. Teacher1:	Chi è che vuole la parola? Marco T. (1) Prendila la parola *Who would like to say something? Marco T. (1) You can take the turn*
36. Marco	((he takes his turn through a specific gesture used in the school)) Io (.) io ho dormito con la mamma io ho sognato che gli orsi erano cattivi:: *I I slept with mum I dreamed that the bears were bad*
37. Teacher1:	Gli orsi? (.) °Cosa facevano?° *The bears? °What did they do°?* (1)
38. Marco:	volevano mangiarmi per buttarmi nel ghiaccio *They wanted to eat me to throw me in the ice*
39. Teacher1:	Ti volevano? Non ho capito scusa *They wanted? Sorry, I didn't understand*
40. Marco:	volevano mangiarmi e buttarmi nel [ghiaccio *They wanted to eat me and throw me in the ice*
41. Teacher2:	[ti buttavano nel ghiaccio per mantenerti fresco (.) quando ti mangiavano *They threw you in the ice to keep you cool, when they ate you*
42. Marco:	per mangiarmi tutto ((smiling)) *To eat me whole*
43. Teacher1:	Ti volevano mangiare tutti! *All of them wanted to eat you*
44. Teacher2:	Come un gelato, ti leccavano tutto ((laughing)) *Like an ice-cream, they licked you*

Extract 2.3 shows that the children can express themselves by producing knowledge about their experiences. The teachers support this expression, also in affective ways. The teachers' empowerment concerns the experience of sleeping with mothers, which could be considered, in pedagogical terms, as lack of autonomy. It is clear that the promotion of autonomy is much more important as presupposition of the interaction, than as something to be learned through the interaction. Finally, it is possible to highlight the effectiveness of facilitation in promoting interlaced narratives (Norrick 2007), i.e. new narratives that refer to the previous ones: children narrate their personal experiences of sleeping with their mothers connecting to previous narratives of the same type. These narratives show the plurality of perspectives on sleeping with mothers, and the last one introduces the new topic of dreams.

Extract 2.4 shows a sequence involving Mary, who was seen in action in Extracts 2.1 and 2.2. In this case, Mary is courageously trying to narrate a story by using her scarce linguistic resources. This attempt can be seen as an effect of the facilitation: the teacher encourages Mary to participate and express herself, then promoting her narrative. Extract 2.4 starts while Mary is trying to propose the narrative. In turn 1, the teacher attracts the other children's attention, stressing the relevance of Mary's narrative and of the other children's listening. This turn design immediately attracts the children's attention (turns 2–4), which triggers the teacher's clarification question about Mary's narrative (turn 5). In the following turns (6, 8, 10, 15 and 18), Mary continues to tell the story, supported by the teacher's facilitative actions. In particular, the teacher repeatedly formulates the gist of Mary's turns, developing or explicating them, both in affirmative and interrogative forms (turns 7, 9, 11, 14, 19). These formulations allow both the production of clarifications for the benefit of the other children, and the support of Mary's telling. In turn 14, the teacher's formulation is prefaced by a marked signal of understanding (ahhhh!), which highlights her manifestation of interest. In the final part of the extract, the teacher contrasts two versions of the same narrative, produced by Mary and Elena, without taking side, but rather stressing the plurality of possible narratives.

Extract 2.4

1. Teacher:	ma lo sapete che la Mary sta raccontando una storia [e voi non la state ascoltando? *But do you know that Mary is telling a story and tou are not listening at it?*
2. Marta:	[di cosa? *About what?*
3. Child (unidentified):	=di cappuccetto rosso? *of Little Red Cap?*
4. Child (unitentified):	sììì *Yeees*
5. Teacher:	=che storia stai raccontando Mary? What story are you telling Mary?

6. Mary:	è la stoia, fatel (?) sta dormendo con i amisi (2) e [ha fat- It is the stoy, bother (?) he is sleeping with he frinds (2) and he di-
7. Teacher:	[mentre stanno dormendo gli ami:ci: while the friends are sleeping
8. Mary:	Sììì! iiiia dato. A a storia. Del caparetto! Yeees! Haaaa given. He he story. Of the kiad
9. Teacher:	di cappuccetto? Rosso? Of little cap? Red?
10. Mary:	nooooo! Del caparetto! Noooo! Of the kiad
11. Teacher:	[del capretto? Of the kid?
12. Children:	[del caparetto? Of the kiad?
13. Mary:	sì yes
14. Teacher:	=ahhhh! Del lupo e i sette capretti! Ahhhh! Of the wolf and the seven kids
15. Mary:	aloa, lupo mette in pa:ncia! Thefore, wolf puts in stoomach
16. Elena:	nel saaaaaccco! In the saaaaccck!
17. Teacher:	ma lo sai che l'Elena ha detto che il lupo i capretti li mette nel sacco! But do you know that Elena said that the wolf puts in the sack the kids?
18. Mary:	e il lupo i mette i sacco, ya ya mette i pancia. And the wolf he puts i sack, ya ya puts in stomach
19. Teacher:	il lupo non li mette nel sacco, li mette nella pancia ha detto la Mary. The wolf doesn't put them in a sack, he puts them in the stomach, Mary said.

This extract shows that the teacher's actions do not aim to improve Mary's learning, but rather to upgrade her epistemic authority in the interaction with the other children. In particular, the teacher's formulations are not forms of correction, but ways of making the narrative understandable and appreciable (and also contestable) from other perspectives. Learning might be a secondary outcome of this interaction, but certainly it is not its objective.

2.4 Conclusions

I opened this chapter with a question about the (in)compatibility between pedagogical reflections on education and sociological observations of children's participation. According to Luhmann (2002), there is an unavoidable structural and functional difference between sociology as a science observing education as communication, and pedagogy as a theory of reflection on education observing learning as an outcome of communication.

I have presented here the observation of early childhood education as communication, showing that the production of facilitation in kindergartens can enhance the promotion of children's epistemic authority, as a way of showing their agency. Facilitation shows the relevance of children's personal expressions and allows explorations and expansions of children's narratives. Facilitation is supported by facilitators' actions designed to upgrade children's rights and responsibilities and to support them affectively. Facilitators are not "teachers", according to the sociological meaning of this concept, although they take this role in the organisation of the kindergartens. Facilitators' actions display expectations that do not concern conveyance of knowledge and learning, but rather personal expressions as ways of producing knowledge. Children's autonomy is not an objective of learning, but a presupposition of the interaction.

Facilitation is a paradoxical form of interaction, as it implies that the relevance of children's epistemic authority depends on the relevance of adults' actions in promoting this authority; in other words, children's agency, as availability of choices of action, depends on adults' choices in designing their action (Baraldi 2014a, b). This paradoxical form of interaction replaces the linear educational interaction and the clear hierarchical structure that characterises education.

From a sociological perspective, the problem of early education is how pedagogy can observe this paradoxical form of communication. In the last decades, pedagogy has accounted for student-centred approaches (Rogers 1969) and dialogic teaching (Hicks 1996; Mercer and Littleton 2007), considering children's personal expression as a condition for effective learning. The problem here is if pedagogy can also observe a separation between personal expression and learning, which originates from the impossible task of providing together sensitivity for children's authority in producing knowledge on the one hand, and conveyance and assessment of knowledge on the other (Luhmann 2002). From a sociological perspective, forms of interactions without visible conveyance and assessment of knowledge are not "new" forms of (person-centred) education, but rather paradoxical forms of facilitation. The sociological observation of this type of situations can be complementary with the pedagogical observation if the latter becomes a theory of reflection on facilitation. If, however, the pedagogical observation is primarily focused on the issue of learning, it can interpret as forms of education what sociology sees as forms of facilitation.

On completion of his chapter, Claudio Baraldi proposes the following questions to provoke further reflection, research and dialogue

- How are facilitation of epistemic authority and children's learning related and how is the analysis of this relation possible?
- How do age and language proficiency influence facilitative actions?
- Is facilitation applied in the same way to all situations and activities or is its success more likely in specific situations and activities?

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Chapter 3
Practices/2, Japan: The Exploration of Four-Year-Olds Potential: Focusing the Democratic Meeting During the Sports Festival Day

Yuta Miyamoto

3.1 Introduction

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings are social and cultural contexts in which children encounter communal living. ECEC settings have also been recognised as those that express understanding between social participation and democratic practice that learning gives rise to complex interactions based on multiple agents (Lave and Wenger 1991). However, mainstream narratives regarding the concept of childhood consider children as immature because they are incapable of formulating and expressing their own opinions (Aries 1962) and this generalisation has been considered especially true for early childhood.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) advocates for children as holding rights of their own (UNCRC 1989). Therefore, evolving shifts within practice and research consider children to be agents in their own lives which continue to play a key role in ECEC studies and, the complexities surrounding children as the holders of rights (Mayall 2002; Clark 2005). At the centre of this view are perspectives that the actual experiences interacted with and perceived by children cannot be fully understood or deciphered by adults, so that practitioners and researchers must not infer or interpret children's experiences unilaterally, but rather listen to children's voices and expressions to immerse into their worlds. As a consequence, practitioners and researchers must make the effort to open their eyes, ears, senses and minds to children's actions and voices (Malaguzzi 1998).

Thus, research and evolving shifts should emphasise the need for children's participation in and about their own lives and perspectives on a variety of challenges that impact on their experiences (Harcourt and Einarsdottir 2011). For example, in

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Japan, recent research has come to recognise the value of children's play as a means for listening to and decoding children's voices (Miyamoto et al. 2016). This emerging perspective indicates that listening to the voices of young children and, then acting on and from the children's voices is integral in understanding what children feel, experience and need, in comparison to adults thinking that they know best.

Explaining or decoding children's growth when referring to theoretical perspectives based on the psychological methodology or philosophy such as interpretive phenomenology is a challenging and complicated task (Mashford-Scott et al. 2012). Adults can learn for and from children by tuning in to how children construct their worlds and by listening to their voices to learn about the time and space children need to express themselves. Moreover, Pascal and Bertram (2009) recognise that this approach is key to providing environments in which young children feel safe, confident and trusted. Practitioners and researchers working within Japanese early childhood settings are challenging traditional views held about children's lives aiming to treat children as subjects rather than objects in a shift towards the promotion and engagement of democratic practice and interaction. Moss (2007) states that children are already, with or without adult support, participating in democratic life, during their daily interactions whilst living and being.

Children's initiative to participate in their own lives when supported by democratic rules is researched within this chapter and emphasised within a socio-cultural perspectives linking to children's unique learning processes and growth during everyday interactions. During everyday events children's *actions* create *reactions* from those they interact with and these two-way exchanges support children to learn from the actions of self and other. Both positive and challenging exchanges support children to develop stronger voice, competence and strategies towards agency. However, children also learn and develop many strategies and skills to promote their voice being heard when those they are with are unable to listen or hear (Tholin and Jansen 2012). During democratic practice and exchanges between children and adults, preschool teachers reflect upon the importance of democratic participation as a powerful pedagogical approach in developing children's self-esteem. Self-esteem is positively impacted upon when children are seen as learners who have rights and responsibilities as choice makers, idea creators and have the right to have their opinions considered and developed (Pascal and Bertram 2009). This pedagogical approach regards the role of preschool teachers as providing care and emotional support within a democratic environment (Einarsdottir 2014).

In Japan, Japanese practice in preschool education gives great weight to learning, listening carefully and eliciting sympathy from children (CEDEP 2016). However, there has been serious confusion in the construction of educational theory and advice when translated into practice about what appropriate learning, listening and empathetic environments might actually look like to promote democratic practice and experiences. How to achieve a balance within practice that is both suitable and needed for children to develop agency and voice whilst modern teachers in early childhood are able to develop a pedagogy of listening will be explored further in this chapter using research from Japanese practice (Trevarthen 2012). While preschool teachers in Japan have been trying to learn how to better support and listen to children's voices, they have often hesitated to theorise democratic identity, relationships

or responses. Therefore, this research intends to reiterate the urgency of promptly presenting a definition of what the quality of democratic child care is, applying observed practice and evidence to critique and learn from practice.

The purpose of this study is to describe the process in which children and the preschool teachers hold meetings, and examine children's perspectives through their democratic practices during class activities. Children are considered researchers and owners of their own expression. Observed children's actions and expressions are observed and interpreted by preschool teachers' based on their practical knowledge, perspectives, experience and individual preferences. Therefore, it is pertinent to understand the processes by which children's perspectives are formed (such as democratic practice, meetings and the role of preschool teachers) from a theoretical perspective to clarify the methodology and philosophy assumed in this study. Three research questions to explore these aims are: First, how can a democratic meeting be conducted by a class of four-year-olds? Second, how can children acquire their own perspectives on a Sports Festival Day event? Third, how do teachers motivate and guide children to conduct a democratic meeting?

3.2 Theoretical Framework

This research emphasises that every child has agency and can be understood as an equal participant in everyday life. Unfolding dialogue helps construct the frame of a shared awareness and leads to create care relationships based on responsiveness (Noddings 1995). In other words, ECEC practice during interactions and dialogue create a democratic place for children's participation that is open to differences, based on mutual respect and reciprocity during shared experiences and exchanges of opinion (Dahlberg and Moss 2006).

Next, the definition of 'democratic meeting' needs to be clarified for this study. First, we assume the theories of John Dewey, to acknowledge the role of practice and its value to explore democratic exchanges and experiences (Dewey 1916, 1997). Dewey's concept of democracy is based on the idea that a social community has a certain degree of common interest, and that communication and collaboration occur among community members (Noddings 1995). However, levels within and about common interests will vary depending upon individual experiences and expectations. Dewey also explained democracy as essentially a form of life in union with others and the sharing of a common lived experience, and as 'a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience (Dewey 1916)' (Dewey 1916, 1997; Noddings 1995). Each child's experiences unfold in relation to others through the children's democratic lives. However, the nature of children's beliefs about their potential to participate in democratic processes remains a challenging question depending upon their cultural and lived experiences and position. Democratic practice is also emphasised via drafting, interpretation and role of documentation used to understand the world's children enter and share. As teachers observe, reflect and learn from the many processes involved during documentation, the visibility of

childhood and truly democratic behaviour is promoted on many levels (Rinaldi 2006). Thus, democracy in this context represents ideas that accept the potential of ECEC, and means offering improved fundamentals for cultivating new thinking and new practice using the expression and voice of children to learn from and for.

Second, the concept of 'meeting' is defined. First, we assume that a meeting comprises of both dialogue and conversation. The definition of dialogue entails the existence of a speaker and a listener. Conversations can be defined as linguistic interactions that take place when multiple participants address common topics (Tholin and Jansen 2012). Dialogue also represents an attitude toward exploring comprehension, sympathy and mutual acknowledgement together and is associated with a conversation in which the participants' perspectives share the same values. Thus, dialogue and conversation together are permeable concepts for free intercommunication. The significance of meetings, including the related dialogue and conversation, is that different voices encounter each other, expanding the understanding of other's perspectives and sharing experience. Therefore, meetings are characterised by face-to-face contact between oneself and others and are underpinned by democracy (Moss 2007). For these reasons, democratic meetings are predicted to provide participants with the opportunity to care for others, to expand upon the understanding of other's perspectives and to share experiences.

Finally, we explore the meaning of the teachers' role within a rights and care based perspective to form the ethical basis of the ECEC research. Practitioners and researchers during this research project focus on discussions and interactions between the professional and the child to observe how knowledge exchange is fostered and cultivated during opportunities of democratic conversations (or not) (Tholin and Jansen 2012). The ethics of 'caring' inspire research to be responsive, sympathetic and reciprocally flexible in particular to ethical practice and situations that guide the engagement of preschool teachers (Noddings 2013). Indeed, Noddings noted that the attitude of the ideal caregiver has two parts: (i) 'engrossment' in phenomenological involvement with the cared-for and (ii) 'motivational displacement', which temporarily decentralise the caregivers own concerns (Noddings 2013). Thus, for teachers, emotional caring is the key to ethical practice.

Education must create an environment for engaging in continued human resource development by cultivating a virtuous circle of relating to others and developing oneself. The educational facets of the teacher's mission include cultivating children's ideas by asking open-ended questions to extend conversation, which supports the development of complex thinking and problem-solving skills among children (Siraj-Blatchford et al. 2002). Such emotional and educational care and respect to underpin democratic pedagogy is an essential skill and tool required by preschool teachers.

This study also focused on the value and meaning of observation by adopting a hermeneutic-phenomenological perspective based on the concepts of van Manen (1990). This perspective approaches philosophical truth and inter-subjective comprehension by interpreting existence. It also emphasises sensitive responsiveness, deep awareness, interpretation and simultaneously, the suspension of subjective judgement. This means observers should confront any topic by considering all.

3.3 Methods and Participants

Data were collected with a focus on the Sports Festival Day event. The data consisted of 3 weeks of field notes and episodic recordings gathered for its event. They involved 2 classes of children in a Japanese preschool working with a total of 61 children. The episodic recordings, which comprised of the children's meeting sessions, were examined after the children went home from ECEC setting. The meeting sessions each lasted about 5–10 min. Field notes were taken on the children's interactions and the flow of the meeting process.

There were two reasons to choose the Sports Festival Day as the object of examination. First, the Sports Festival Day is generally held between September and October, when the children have already become accustomed to ECEC life and started to develop and enjoy friendships. Second, this event induces children to become conscious of their classroom group identity and start to compare their own classroom group to others. Therefore, the Sports Festival Day provided an opportunity to talk about a single shared goal. Meetings undertaken in small groups stimulated dialogue offering a great opportunity to recognise that children can become aware of others while working towards the achievement of specific goals.

The aims of the present study are designed and owned by adults. They are not necessarily shared by children who pursue their own agendas when engaging in activities. Nevertheless, the research generates a wealth of evidence of children's creativity and independent thinking during activities proposed by adults.

The data were analysed from two perspectives: the children's meetings with each other and the teacher's support. Analysis of the data was based on the dialogue and behaviour from the democratic meetings to plan their Sports Festival Day competition. The focus of analysis of the meeting was on *how* the children behaved and adjusted their communication in response to others as well as to their preschool teacher's support. The analysis of the preschool teacher's involvement noted levels of support offered for children's shared thinking, which was related to how the teachers gave children time to think first. This pedagogical tool offering children space to share their thinking and understanding both supported and cultivated children's opinions, voice and experiences to be heard and developed. These perspectives represent a qualitative approach that emphasises the interpretation of contexts surrounding children's lives (van Manen 1990). Furthermore, permission was obtained to undertake research from the preschool principal, the preschool educators and the children and their parents, whilst also guaranteeing confidentiality of all children and adult participants was ensured.

3.4 Context of the Study

The ECEC setting utilised in this study employed a play-based learning approach emphasising play as critical for child development. The 4-year-old children were assigned classes by age with 1 adult for every 30 children assigned for each classroom group.

Thus, careful attention was needed to cultivate greater awareness of the uniqueness of each child. Therefore, each class teacher also worked with free teachers (who are colleagues not designated to a specific classroom) sharing observations and information on the premises of classroom management. Different teaching roles, agenda and views were respected and discussed to deepen colleagues shared understanding of the children's everyday experiences.

Preschool teachers choose to care for children and help shape their daily lives and are especially focused on children's unique personalities and attempts to develop their potential. This attitude mirrors the OMEP (2010) declaration that young children are more than capable to be agents and advocates of change. Indeed, it is adults that need to listen to children to be fully aware of children's voice, perspectives and ideas in matters that relate directly to them (Engdahl 2010). Children are their own agents and it is the role of adults to be able to tune into a child's agency, identity, capabilities and voice.

Preschool teachers during classroom interactions emphasised that dialogue processes would be based on 'each-child', 'child-object' and 'children-teacher' interactions. Teachers assumed that creating a place and time to engage with and challenge children would lead to the enrichment of their lives, learning and experiences. Therefore, teachers care about the environments they cultivate towards development of children's subjective participation. The main theme during classroom interactions to focus on was the teacher's interest to observe with great care what children were actually interested in and what they were hoping to achieve. Motivation and agenda as to why children do what they do underpinned classroom pedagogy and was a leading factor of interest for teachers to learn from.

Planned activities by the preschool teachers focused on play opportunities within a treasure hunt theme and game that would reflect aspects from the children's lives. This game employed elements of making objects, playing tag and kicking the can, that children had previously played and enjoyed. The rules of the treasure hunt game were as follows: Each class had a designated area. Treasure was first put in the centre of each classroom. Children then took the treasure from the centre back to each designated area. If treasure put in the centre ran out, children begin to take treasure from their opponents' areas. The time limit was 3 min. The player with the most treasure in the end is the winner. Adults must not express ideas or offer advice to the children at any stage because the aim of the game is that children must devise their own strategies for winning.

3.5 Motivation for Constructing the Game

Previous studies emphasised that activities should be changeable and enjoyable and should freely accommodate the different ways children express themselves (Clark and Moss 2001). Activities involving events should not be accidental occurrences unrelated to children's lives.

The Japanese national curriculum for early childhood aims for children to recognise the existence and the feelings of others by accumulating various experiences

with other children and learning to respect their friends (Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2008). This means that repeated activities that children experience form a significant part of their growth and understanding of others. Continuation of these experiences does not mean repeating the same thing because pedagogical intension is to ensure additional learning opportunity is accessible from the things children have already experienced (Dewey 1938). Moreover, children give their experiences new meaning whilst correcting their course, concepts and vision by fostering the quality of each experience (Dewey 1938). The preschool teachers developed the treasure hunt game based on these principles.

The treasure hunt game assumed that recognising each other's opinion and sharing ideas had a significant meaning during the meeting. It also prioritised the processes of the class meeting in which children listened to each other's opinions to then communicate with each other. Class meetings were conducted on a routine basis to resolve difficulties as to how children negotiate or coordinate with each other. However, four-year-old children have less opportunity to experience interactive talking and responsive listening with peers; therefore, the meetings conducted at times, did not always keep the conversational ball rolling, with children displaying behaviours such as talking past or over each other. Preschool teachers had to manage and involve themselves during these meetings whilst respecting children's active participation and listening carefully to their voices. If a child's opinions were accepted, or not, by classmates during classroom interactions the outcome had an important impact on strengthening self-esteem and the will to care for friends. Preschool teachers believed the accumulation of these experiences would produce caring minds able to recognise self and others making connections to create a sense of unity. Hence, preschool teachers regarded the role of the Sports Festival Day exercise as a way to motivate children and help them develop more creative lives. It was also a way to adopt the Vygotskian ideas of the 'zone of proximal development (ZPD)' and to encourage sustainable and collaborative thinking to cultivate more sophisticated communication and action. It also reinforced the idea of sustained shared thinking by which children could own, build and explore experiences to scaffold within creative cycles (Siraj-Blatchford et al. 2002).

During the act of sustained shared thinking it is vital for the adult to reflect upon their own level of listening and understanding of the child's experiences and voice. For instance, when communicating activities or sharing knowledge about children with parents, it is important to include the opinion from the child and not only adult interpretation. Reconstructing events, ideas and experiences that children share should involve rethinking children's activities while respecting their perceptions.

3.6 Findings

At the beginning of the game, the children were observed to be satisfied to simply experience victory or defeat. However, as the children repeated the game again and again, they came to understand it better and came to wonder how well they could do

in this game when played again or if slight changes were made. Children began to talk about strategies for winning. They shared their opinions through their own life experiences and memories of them. Passion ignited the class atmosphere as the children listened to each other, creating a powerful sense of unity and connection. During the game, the children continued to exchange opinions and experiences whilst planning future game strategies in a variety of ways.

Episode 3.6.1: 'Maple Leaf' Plan

Teacher	Today we lost the game. That was too bad.
A	The winner of that game was really us! However, we lost a lot of our treasure at the end.
Teacher	Thank you A. A said so, how about everybody else?
B	I did too. I felt sad.
C	Yeah, they were serious at the end.
D	We were too!
C	Uhh…, I…, I…, was not…
D	C! You were not serious!?
C	I…was listening to a loud voice. Because it sounded so interesting…
D	Why?
Teacher	C was listening to a loud voice, who else did?
E	…I did.
Teacher	Why? What did you find there?
E	The older class cheered us. They were waving their flag. I became curious.
Teacher	I understand. Thank you, E. How about you, C?
C	Me too.
B	Another class should have become curious too!
Teacher	What do you mean?
B	If they had looked aside, we could have won!
F	Then, we will make a surprise plan…
C	How about yelling?
D	Oh, nice idea!
B	OK! We will do that next time!
Teacher	Yeah, I think it's a nice idea. However, look at the others, at once?
	<Everybody looked at the others.>
C	G? You hate this idea?
G	…I hate yelling.
D	Then, what do you want to do, G?
G	I have no idea…
B	The thing is we were not surprised and they were only surprised…
D	Oh! I have a good idea! Scatter some sand!

Teacher	It's interesting, but what if you get hit by sand?
D	Oh, no…
A	What's about maple leaves? A and B got maple leaves this morning.
B	The maple leaves were green. Very beautiful.
H	Oh, and they are the Maple class! If we scattered maple leaves, they would be distracted picking them up!
D	OK! Then, let's gather maple leaves right now!

The strategy meeting started from the comment of child C, 'I was listening to a loud voice (in this game)'. It was because of them staring at the figures that the older students cheered. Then child B said, 'If another class looked aside …,' Her comment inspired the children, who then came up with the idea of a surprise plan. After that, the exchange of opinions continued. Moreover, child A suddenly said, 'What's about a maple leaves?' Child H got inspiration from this casual comment, adding, 'They are the Maple-class!! If we scatter maple leaves, they will be distracted picking them up!' After child H explained this thinking, everybody agreed, building harmony among the group. From an adult perspective, the meeting and ideas discussed by children might appear irrelevant. However, in the preschool environment teachers honoured the shared thought processes and discussion led by children as they evaluated their activity, opting not to interfere in the conversation. As the group followed up on the suggestions made by child H's surprising 'maple leaves' plan combined with their shared discussion, the group began to understand the significance of making plans and carrying them out with friends. Preschool teachers refrained from expressing their own opinions, caring only about three points: developing the children's curiosity, enjoying the uncertainty of the situation, and respecting subjectivity.

Episode 3.6.2: 'A Wall of the Corrugated Cardboard' Plan

3.6.2.1. 'A Human Wall'

Teacher	We will have the treasure game tomorrow. Did you make the treasure yet?
Z	Yeah, I made a plane.
J	I made a train!
K	Me too.
A	We never want these to be taken, do we?
Teacher	Yeah, but it is possible they will be taken.
A	What should we do?
Teacher	What do you think, everybody?
Z	We should protect them!
Teacher	How about this?
Z	I will find my treasure first and will hold on to it until the game ends.
B	Then it looks boring!
A	We will make a plan!

Teacher A said we will make a plan to protect our treasures, how about you?
L We will stand in line.
B And we will hold hands with our friends!
Teacher OK, someone might think that they do not understand,
so please do this.
<Children make line.>
Teacher Do you understand?
M I understand! That is nice!
N Who is taking the treasures?
B Oh…
L Half go to the treasures and another protects it.
Teacher Sorry to interrupt your talk, but it is time to go home.

The strategic meeting started with the comment of child A, 'We never want our treasures to be taken, do we?' Then child Z said, 'we should protect them!' Her comment provoked the other children's discussion towards evaluation of previous shared experiences and game outcomes. Children within the group evaluated that the entertainment value of the suggested strategy of 'protecting treasures only' was boring. Thus, the children came up with the idea 'we will stand in line'. At first, this plan generated many supporting and opposing opinions. However, some children did not yet share or reach the key point that planning a strategy with dual purposes of protecting and attacking at the same time, could actually be a game changer. Through continued discussion and evaluation of their experiences the children began to share their ideas further and gradually came to understand the essence of the game through practice and meetings.

3.6.2.2. A Wall of the Corrugated Cardboard

Teacher We lost two straight matches. How do you feel?
A I was really sad and frustrated!
M We just have to win next time.
A But it is possible we will lose next time! I was really frustrated!
O Let's think up another plan again.
Teacher OK, then, how about a 'human wall' plan you were telling
me the other day?
B Everybody would protect it.
A I would take it from opponent's class!
D Me too!
Teacher B wants to say that almost all classmates protected treasures.
Then, what should we do?
<They thought quietly.>
F I have a good idea! Use cardboard!
N That was interesting! How about making a long wall?
E OK! Let's make one now!

The children expressed some interesting ideas; however, they lost the next game. They then had another meeting although the atmosphere was coloured by negativity. Their teacher asked a question, ‘How about a human wall plan?’, because this plan had both supporters and detractors during earlier games and discussions. Then, child B suggested that ‘almost all classmates protect treasures’. His suggestion was worthy of consideration, and the conversation was really quiet for about 10 s. Suddenly child F said, ‘I have a good idea! Use cardboard!’ His comment was accepted by everyone because the children connected the material with their daily play experience. This idea led to the sharing of their ideas. The children discussed how to *decorate* the cardboard. At that time, however, there was no serious discussion about how to *use* the cardboard. The teacher, however, did not call attention to this. Rather, he watched for it because he perceived the children had the potential to notice it.

3.6.2.3. Children had Unsuccessfully Attempted this Plan

Teacher	You did your best in this game today, but your plan was unsuccessful. What do you think you should do?
L	A lot of friends should hold this wall.
D	But the wall will fall on the ground if we do not hold it.
Teacher	Then, what do you think about a way we have not tried already?
D	We make it straight.
O	If the wind blows?
J	We make a stick and paste it to the back of this wall.
S	The stick is weak! How about we put a box behind the wall?
Teacher	Why don’t you give it a try?
S	The wall just stands! Look!
	<S do it.>
H	That is interesting! Let’s try it! I want to fit a bigger one.
O	Hey, I want to make a signboard.
M	Signboard?
O	Yeah, I will write ‘Look up!’ so another class will look up.
T	Oh, I want to have it!

A few days later, the group attempted this plan, but lost their treasure repeatedly. Another meeting was then held. Child L said, ‘A lot of friends held this wall’. The children noticed that it really mattered how the cardboard was used and held during the game was an important factor. Children’s strategies were certainly fostered, owned and developed by their own actions and evaluations. Child S said, ‘How about we put a box behind the wall?’ This idea made the children understand a possible option was not to have a wall. When the children realised they did not need to hold the cardboard or make a wall, their suppressed ideas flowed. They imagined new uses for cardboard and became conscious of accepting the responsibility they required from each other. This time too, the meeting style shifted from one in which only a few children participated, to one in which many children expressed their opinions. This seemed to indicate a collective consciousness towards their common goal.

This episode indicated that the teacher had rephrased the children's complex opinions with simpler expressions and connected the children's thoughts, and the children grew from listening to others through their experiences and passion.

We played two games on that Sports Festival Day. The games ended in a draw, but the children were completely satisfied. The children created a number of strategies to win and to surprise the opposing class. From an adult perspective, those strategies seemed impractical and meaningless. However, the children were always serious. Their eyes began to brighten as they came up with new and interesting strategies, and they began to move into action with their friends. For them, this game became their own play. This is how the children grew, tested and explored through democratic meetings and experiences. Finally, the following example captures a parent's impressions of the field day.

> My child was always talking to us seriously about this game at home. But I didn't understand what his story was about. Today I watched the game and finally connected everything. The Sports Festival Day was not the place for a performance for an audience.
> I found it led to the children's development because the teacher valued the processes involved, such as the children interacting with each other. Thank you for enjoyable and powerful day.

This comment made us reflect on daily childcare.

3.7 Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter explored the process of a child's mental, emotional and creational modification of recognising other's existence and feelings and fostering each relation by broadening their perspectives and the role of teachers in democratic meetings among children and their teacher. In this study, some narratives led us to conclude that it was difficult for four-year-old children to conduct meetings, but children's active imaginations generated numerous story lines, ideas and shared strategies. These episodes reflected children's decision-making, shared goal setting and teacher support.

To conclude this study and chapter, the following two main points will be presented and reflected upon. Firstly, children developed their own style of participation, bonding with each other during the meetings designed to bring *in* the activities children's reflection *on* the activities. In occasion of the meetings, children built upon and complemented each other's, co-constructing narratives around their experiences. This strongly supported a professional and ethical stance towards connecting with children's actions and meanings, responding to them without assessing them according to adults' intentions or expectations.

Secondly, the research suggests that democratic form of interaction in pre-school settings are nurtured by teachers' trust in children's potential, as well as by teacher's commitment to value and support it in their practice. Believing in children's potential require teachers to be facilitators of children's experiences and communication, translating it towards their inclusion in their pedagogical practice, planning and reflection.

Democratic practices require reflective teachers to accept the curiosity, inquiring minds and sensibilities of children whilst evaluating what children try, do and know. However, recognising the experience, interpretation and perception of others is always ambiguous. The interaction between children and adults can contain a degree of obscurity or wonder because we can never fully understand each other's worlds or intention. A teacher's interpretation of a child's action and intention is dependable on the teacher's skills and knowledge applied to understand the child. The findings of this study capture how the discovery of children's potential can occur through careful observations that focus on expressions, feelings and acquisition of new ideas. Examples analysed from Japanese preschool practice demonstrates that listening to children is a dynamic process involving children and adults interacting with each other. For this reason it is believed that further research is needed at the intersection between adult observations of children and a pedagogical approach aiming to value children's autonomous contributions.

On completion of his chapter, Yuta Miyamoto proposes the following questions to provoke further reflection, research and dialogue

- How do you see children? Look at your own view of children and share this with others.
- Observe children's behaviour and interactions. What kind of chat do you hear and what kind of actions can you see? Which types of children's interactions are you most curious about in your practice or observation?
- What do you think about the relationship between a reflective practitioner and professional learning regarding support for the child's democratic life, such as their development of a sense of self and a caring mind?

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Chapter 4
Practices/3, Finland: A Collective Method of Early Childhood Self-Determination

Leif Rosqvist and Jarmo Kinos

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we present an analysis of a democratic procedure case in Finnish primary and pre-primary context, with special need primary and pre-primary classes as our main focus. We seek to reflect on both the most inspirational achievements as well as some of the obvious shortcomings of this all-inclusive indoor facilities planning project.

Demand for democracy is not unfamiliar to Finnish educational system. The very recent national curriculum guidelines for primary education (POPS 2014) as well as pre-primary education (EOPS 2014; VASU 2016) explicitly state the right to participate and to be heard as a base for a democratic society, a significant change in orientation to previous guidelines for the pre-primary education. The status of student councils was also highlighted some years before, as the right to assemble a student council was codified with a change into the basic education act in 2007, (Perusopetuslaki 1998, 47 a §). The children's right to be heard was also codified into the constitution of Finland (Perustuslaki, 6.3 §) Representative democratic practices in form of stundent councils are well documented in Finnish national as well as international literature (see Kiili 2016; Larkins 2014).

What makes this case peculiar, is the broad inclusion of all students into decision making, including those in pre-primary education, and the careful consideration of the role of students with special needs. In contrast to primary years, to our knowledge, pronounced early citizenship education, in education preceding the primary years (from the age of seven onwards), is moderately rare, though discussion on children's participation and democratic early childhood education is abundant (see

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Einarsdottir et al. 2015; Moss 2007). The moderate lack of procedural knowledge, of what actually happens when children make decisions of collective nature, also blurs the legitimacy of the procedure. Such a broad participation attempted here clearly raises concerns of tokenism, the danger of participatory acts having but symbolic value without consequences responding to statements presented by the students (Hart 1992). Kiili (2016) states in the case of primary education, that when student councils are approached as means of educating for citizenship, i.e. for communal cohesion and argumentation skills, the procedure itself is not always critically inspected.

Pre-primary education, which is considered a part of early childhood education, also puts the concept of democracy into a different perspective. In primary education representative democracy thrives in form of school councils, but approaching everyday issues through inclusive deliberative processes is to date significantly less familiar (Tammi 2014). Moving from democracy as a macro-collective machinery into more situational, everyday conflict resolution, as suggested by Moss (2007) and also in primary education by Tammi (2014), is a perspective early childhood education is well equipped for. In the child-initiated learning processes, practitioners constantly deal with peer as well as adult-child conflict of interests, and engage in their resolution through a context-specific deliberation (Wood 2014). Although presented as an inspiration, especially in the Reggio Emilia inspired practice (Rinaldi 2005), this view is not that often directly associated as a democratic practice, let alone citizenship education.

Responding to these views our aim is to discuss how could the procedure here presented be considered democratic as a whole, and how are self-determination and democratic aspects taken into account in each sequence of the process. In this chapter, we attempt a phase by phase analysis of the democratic procedure that took place in the two now-emerging Finnish schools. We will present points peculiar to this setting, situational as well as collective adaptations and potentially, the underlying assumptions with the pedagogical orientation of primary and pre-primary education respectively.

4.2 Evaluation of a Democratic Collective Will in Educational Settings

The case we present came from participants of an international project set to study and develop child-initiated pedagogies. Our interests, when considering self-determination of children has been to develop democratically appropriate practices through child-initiated pedagogies (see Robertson et al. 2015). The conceptualisation of child-initiated pedagogies, we argue, show potential for modeling early citizenship education. In our view, child-initiated pedagogies seek to base the curriculum on child-initiated learning processes, in which children's views and interests are brought forth. In our view, the key elements of the child-initiated

pedagogies include context-sensitivity, emergent curriculum, reciprocal dialogue with communal approach and freedom of content restrictions. The most well-known exemplary of such practice is the Reggio Emilia approach originating in northern Italy, and our approach to child-initiated pedagogies is greatly inspired by Reggio as well. However, as the practitioners of Reggio state, a pedagogy is not something easily imported from one socio-historical situation to another (Rinaldi 2005; Kinos et al. 2010). To a degree, knowledge is always socially constructed and practice is related to issues met in situ. In this sense, other possibilities to practice child-initiated pedagogies remain. We will now turn into the relations between democracy and child-initiated pedagogies.

Contrasting with the common formal representative view, democracy can be conceptualised as an open-ended process that occurs with reciprocal dialogue. This is the starting point for both participatory and deliberative strains of democracy (Barber 1984; Tammi 2014). Among others, Moss (2007) has argued for a similar practice in nurseries. However, when considering citizenship education, the institutional representative structures are often adapted even in the educational settings, where a more situational approach would seem self-evident (Kiili 2016). It is no wonder, perhaps, that child-initiated pedagogies have not come forth in the practice of citizenship education before the discussion of the form of democracy itself has come into educational practice (Tammi 2014).

From this point of view, an emergent curriculum is a rather radical thought. In child-initiated pedagogies, an emergent curriculum is understood as the emergence of child and adult initiatives that represent socio-historical as well as cultural circumstances. The main difference to a more traditional curriculum is that concerning the outcome. In an emergent approach, alternative possibilities are present and only potential outcomes are present as opposed to traditional specific intended outcome (Kinos et al. 2010). Through open-ended processes children are, in principle, awarded an equal and direct influence in such an important matter as the curriculum. The teacher is sometimes considered purely as a mediator or facilitator in the process, but it is problematic to consider a teacher completely uninterested in the potential outcomes, be it processual or substantial. Furthermore, even in a negotiable curriculum the teachers are likely to hold on to certain procedural principles (Hočevar et al. 2013). In the case of child-initiated pedagogies, such is the principle of reciprocal dialogue, in which the initiatives of adults and children are presented. Such a negotiation implies that there are conflicts of interests in adult-child and peer relations alike. Such conflicts and their resolution are raised and discussed in a communal manner, in which both individual and collective interests are approached. Communality does not only refer to the meeting point of children's individual and wider interests but also the individual and general interests of the adults and children. This is how the participatory politics enter and are needed in child-initiated pedagogies (Barber 1984; Moss 2007)

Such a view can further be contested with the external curricular pressure of primary education everywhere (Rainio 2010; Abdelfattah 2015). It can fairly be criticised also in the case of early childhood education. Hočevar et al. (2013) argue that there are interests regarding educational practice that come from outside the

educational setting, and would thus not be negotiable inside it. To us, the point made here is exactly that which allows one to rely on an emergent curriculum. Since child-initiated pedagogies seek to adapt to their socio-cultural context, it is not very unrealistic to expect that these negotiations, the 'worlds' of children and adults alike, address to these external circumstances, rather than anything arbitrary. Even though the process is open-ended, there will always be a starting point. Since the practices of child-initiated pedagogies vary in this way, the modes of participation are bound to be polyformal as well.

In our approach, shared by many others, there is another, rather major issue. The first and the most critical observation is that early childhood institutions do not quite fill the idea of democracy as the cooperation of sovereign citizens. The resources at hand are balanced very unevenly towards the autocratic ruler, who cannot be elected nor changed with a democratic procedure. It is not very uncommon, nor very questionable that the teachers, in relation to pupils, grasp a power nearly absolute. This observation is commonly known as the pedagogical paradox, of raising free citizens under repressive education, often attributed to Immanuel Kant (for a thorough account of pedagogical paradox in children's participation, see Rainio 2010). It also seems rather explicitly stated in the closing section of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child article 12.1 (1989): *"in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."* Undermining such asymmetry of power presents the hazard of participation in symbolic manner only – tokenism (Hart 1992; Tammi 2014).

To appropriately address to this point, the strategy of inspecting early childhood settings here is to form criteria for democratic procedures, which even autocracies and thus educational settings could potentially meet. We propose three democratic features for inspecting pedagogical solutions: self-government, responsive rule and political equality. These features are based on analogies from theoretical perspectives of democracy in the 'adult worlds'. Namely, how is the asymmetry of power dealt with adult decision making that is considered collective decision making of supposedly free and sovereign adult citizens.

Self-government refers to the principle that the people set the agenda upon the matters that concern them. The ambivalent nature of 'matter that concerns you' requires that the area considered self-governed is always defined (cf. Bird 2000). This is what happens in early childhood education settings as well, though the area of self-government is rather narrow, and most generally without an aspect of agenda setting but defined none the less (Leinonen 2014). The area of self-government can be decided upon with formal practice, that is, institutionally, for instance, with the common separation of private and public realms (see Barber 1984). Sometimes, the people define the area of self-government beside, even disregarding the institutional arrangement. In this sense, the area of self-government is factually defined. The most documented, and also contested example of self-government in the early childhood education are the "free", uninstructed play sessions. For example, in a Danish kindergarten, Ellegaard (2004) found a compartmentalisation of 'children' and 'adult' worlds, the former considered as self-governmental by principle. Factually, the adults kept a respectful distance at times, but also saw as their right to intervene in the sets whenever they chose to.

Responsive rule simply means that the decisions made reflect to the preferences of the people. In case of contradictory preferences the minimum requirement is that the procedure is considered fair, even when one's personal preferences lost in the process (May 1978). In a procedural sense, it then requires that each point of view has the possibility to be heard. Similar to Dahl (1989), each individual has an opportunity but no obligation to participate in political deliberation. Political equality is then concerned with the exclusion and inclusion of the decision making, i.e. who get to decide in principle, and who get to do so factually. The principle of self-government and the situational nature of democracy in mind, we would suggest that in early citizenship education this will be interpreted so that each individual has a factual influence in the field of one's interest and concern. Strains of political equality are present in the values of Nordic early childhood education alongside the competence and caring discourses (Einarsdottir et al. 2015). Given the example of uninstructed play above, these values do not always complement each other.

4.3 Forming a Collective Will: Case and Methods of the Study

This particular case of forming a collective will took place in the school year 2014–2015 and was located in two elementary schools from Turku, Western Finland, the Hannunniittu school and the C.O. Malm school. The latter is directed at children with special needs in hearing or specific language impairment. Very closely adjacent to each other and sharing their facilities, the two schools were also going through a process of administrative emerging. These schools educated 550 students including pre-primary classes with the children's age ranging from 5 to 13. Our focus through the case is with the 44 students of the youngest special need classes, perhaps considered the most easily marginalised in the setting. The children were instructed to express their opinion of a specific aspect of indoor facilities, by attaching an unlimited amount of sticky notes with sensual emotional contents to them. There were five distinct pictures in the notes each depicting a sensations; these were cosy/comfortable, beautiful, ugly, scary/dangerous and noisy/restless.

We came across the case through our wider international *Child Initiated Pedagogies* project (CIP hereafter), set out to study and develop child-initiated pedagogies (see Robertson et al. 2015). For above-presented reasons, especially due to the all-inclusive orientation, we decided to give it a more thorough attention. We presented the case first in EECERA 2015 conference (see Kinos et al. 2015) using documentary such as the presentations given outside the school setting, website reports, photographic documentation by the senior pupils, and summaries and excerpts from class conversations.

For this chapter, we needed a more thorough account. Our strategy was to recruit a satisfactory sample of the most relevant persons able to reveal the democratic aspects of the case. We started out with the four teachers of the first grade and

pre-primary classes with special needs students who were readily participants of the CIP. Our focus being with these particular classes, they were a rather obvious choice. In addition, these teachers mentioned the vice-principal of the C. O. Malm school having a crucial role in this project. When interviewing the participants, the crucial role of school councils and the committee of adapting the new national curriculum came out. Four teachers who at that time were guiding the student council boards, two in each school, were recruited. To sum, we gathered information from nine teachers each holding a special role, or several, to our focus and the case project we present.

The case was revealed through specialist interviews with the help of the previous documentary. We worked with these teachers through pair (for those who worked in pairs in the project) or individual interviews. We interpreted the data through a deductive content analysis, theorising our findings through democratic aspects presented above. Our research questions are as follows: How were the context-specific aspects (i.e. the special needs, traditions of the schools) taken into account in the project? How were self-governance, responsive rule and political equality considered in the project?

From the transcribed (when needed) data, utterances presenting our focus were extracted, and such conceptualisations met with descriptive analysis. Our findings are presented here phase-wise, since each phase had, as it turned out, its specific aspects and issues when considering it a democratic practice as a whole. These were the agenda setting, the procedure, or collective method, and consequences.

On the CIP our crucial aim has been to work from the perspective of a common cause with the practitioners (see Robertson et al. 2015). The strategy was similar here, where we once again gave the voices to practitioners, who have developed trusting relationships with their groups, who have developed a good level of sensitivity and situational awareness and competence, and who actively join in and share ideas with children. Such approach can fairly be criticised for not addressing to children's voices directly, and posing the problem of whether the voices of teachers can in any sense represent those of children (Roche 1999). In this sense, the study is explicitly restricted to teacher perspective. Warming (2005) distinguishes between listening as a tool and listening as a democratic ethos giving voice and points out that the two are not necessarily the same: *listening as a tool requires hearing and interpreting what you hear, whereas giving voice further requires "loyal" facilitation and representation, making a common cause* (p.53). Inquiring children with such density would be a matter of mutual acquaintance and trust that we could not possibly construe with such peripheral approach. If one wishes to address the genuine voices of children, we would suggest doing so through participant observation in which the researchers claim a role in the setting. This kind of trust we have been able to construe with our co-working practitioners in the field, so that we consider inquiring them more ethical in our situation.

4.4 Setting the Agenda

Agenda setting is arguably the point where genuine participation is separated from the symbolic. In a sense, for example, Hart's (1992) first presentation of his famous "ladder of participation" is constantly, though implicitly concerned with the agenda setting. That is, who initiates a project, in what ways can the children be involved and what options are given. Also arguably, it is easily the most undemocratic part of the procedure as well. In our case, the agenda of the case was initially set out rather far from the reach of the children, in a training session for key persons for adapting the new curriculum. There, the teachers were assigned to make a participatory learning environment project in their schools. The means of participation was formed in the deliberative discussion of the teachers, brought from the key personnel to staff meetings.

From the very beginning there were two major themes in this deliberation, first of which was to promote the cohesion of the two emerging schools. As a primary class teacher of C.O. Malm recalls,

> we tried many things to get closer to each other [the two schools] and it was probably a part of including everyone [in the project]. We also discussed that there must be experiences of all of us together.

The second theme to rise was the accessibility. The special needs were raised as a concern for participation from the very beginning, and the sensual-emotional markers were introduced as a solution:

> it was convenient to carry out. Everyone [the teachers] could consider it possible, be the children 5 or 15 – and works with the deaf and with the ones with language impairment, doesn't need too much language. The children can participate equally. (Primary class teacher of C.O. Malm, interview)

Rather than abstract and transcendent, the procedure had to be formed to be tangible and situational. The accessibility, conceptualised with both convenience and political equality, did not only apply to children but to their surrounding teachers as well. It was the teachers who needed to be convinced of their students' abilities, raising again the question of representation of children by adults (Roche 1999). A teacher guiding the board of student council of Hannunniittu raised the matter of creating a responsive atmosphere for enabling agenda setting in the future:

> [W]ith very small gestures, I pointed out [to third grade students] in the everyday life that your opinion, you see, really matters. We are now having the biology exam as oral, because you wanted to try out that oral exam. Then, – in the fourth grade 21 out of the 25 students wanted to be a part of the board [of student council]. I would say, that the class level effort matters more with the "I can make a difference" -sensation.

Not until the matter and the means of participation was set up, did the children significantly enter the agenda setting. The board of student council did agree that the senior students would photograph the results of the method, and took part in designing the sensual-emotional markers. The general agenda was predetermined, but as the procedure took on (described below), it was the children who eventually set the

specific agenda, of the specific issues in the indoor facilities. The situation educational settings are likely to face, as argued above, is that the opportunity to participate might not be even considered by children, until such a procedure is set up. In such cases, it is vital that democratic procedures are made possible from above (cf. Moss 2007). "It was the adults who brought about those issues [of the indoor facilities]. – It was maybe then, when we woke up to the fact that we haven't asked the children!" (Primary class teacher of C.O. Malm, interview). It is also notable that there was a highly prioritised agenda of creating an accessible procedure. Through their actions, the teachers can be considered responsive, though in a pre-emptive manner. In a more general sense, the external circumstances created, in a way, an area of genuine self-government, where the children could act in a deliberative manner.

4.5 The Procedure

The procedure began with class-wise discussion. Class discussion in both first and pre-primary classes took on the means of participation. The sticky-note method and especially the sensual emotional method was co-constructed with several sessions:

> T1: At least the conversation took place first when we aroused those feelings and like went in mental images to different places, and then we concretely visited them…
> T2: what facilities we meant…
> Interviewer 1: and especially the emotional side too?
> T2: Yea, and that's what came out very strong, the gym is always yay, the delight and fun and wonderful and a huge open space, there is no better place! If we go to another extreme, a dark toilet, so…
> T1: Scary.
> (Two pre-primary class teachers, interview)

The discussion continued to contribute to accessibility and tangibility. This procedure may be considered patronising, but essential to make the referendum possible overall. We would interpret the actions of the teachers as a constant contribution to political equality, at the cost of self-government. Once the sticky-notes were introduced, the primary and pre-primary classes of C.O. Malm circulated only in the facilities they used and had experienced. The motive was of a self-governmental manner: There was no point to introduce new unknown and thus insignificant facilities. The procedure of circulating differed slightly, as some of the students roamed around free, and some strictly with their whole class. As presented above in the agenda setting, each teacher had to make independent solutions in order to make the method accessible to his/her students.

> T2: I remember our own class became significant, too, in that we placed a lot of stickers to our own door. That was too, it was these three [gym, toilet, classroom] that came out the most. And then we did, I remember we were in small groups to put them [the sticky notes]
> T1: Yes, two to three children.
> T2: We had discussed them a little, about where we could put them

T1: And then we started seeing the stickers here …
Interviewer 2: The bigger children had put them?
T1: Yes, it was for the whole school, so they [the stickers] started to show around.
T2: And that's what probably got them [the pre-primary students] excited like, hey, this is our common thing!
(Two pre-primary class teachers, interview)

The teachers of pre-primary and primary classes share the child-initiated tradition described above, and thus use class-based communal decision making abundantly. This procedure evoked the sensation of meaningfulness, of being a part of the whole school, and in this way, a full member of their community. Committed, universal participation of the pupils was reported troughout the informants. The referendum was open, so that the opinion was visible and the pupils had unlimited amount of sticky-notes. This represents a slight risk of manipulating the results towards a more uniform view, but there were no serious concerns about this, since no evidence of such interests was found.

Once the sticky notes had been put to place, the senior students, the fifth and sixth graders, photographed the facilities and the vice-principle produced a map from the most noted facilities for the digestion of the referendum results. At this point, the procedure returned to its representative manner: let the more able take care of matters from now on. But it did not take long until the voices of everyone were needed once again. The most significant results (i.e. with the most sticky-notes) were discussed in classes to gain a perspective: deliberative discussion was used to find out what did the children actually want.

4.6 Results of the Referendum and Consequences

At the point of presenting the results, the children had taken the matter of agenda setting into their own hands: some significant results of negative emotional manner had come as a total surprise for the teachers. They wanted to know exactly why the dressing rooms were considered scary. The summary of class discussions and propositions of boards show, that the same issue was considered intimidating very evenly among the classes. That is, the opening of the dressing room door reveals the whole room at any given time. The primary and pre-primary classes also had the special issue with the toilets having motion-sensor controlled lights, that constantly turned off in the middle of the session. On the other hand, they did not consider the dining room noisy the same way as the others did, since they had a different lunch hour quietly among themselves. On the grounds of class discussion, the boards of student councils proposed solutions to these issues and submitted them to teachers. There were two kinds of solutions: That the students should behave themselves in the situations considered noisy and scary, and that there should be concrete fixes to these issues, e.g. a curtain to conceal the doorway in the dressing room, and fixing the response time in the motion sensor.

The resulting fixes were presented in a ceremonial manner by the vice-principal in a gathering of all students from both schools, contributing to the cohesive purposes. The quick and concrete solutions were perceived as something, in which the children could actually see their influence. There was a genuine response to their preferences. There were no reported disappointments by the students. In a documented class discussion in the first primary class (a year after), the students remembered the consequences along with the influence they had made:

[Showing the picture of the toilet]
Student: Hey then the lights turned off instantly (laughing together)
Student: Can't laugh. It was scary.
Student: Now the lights stay. They're always.
Student: The janitor knew now.
Teacher: How did he know to fix the lights?
Student: Well, the students told!
Teacher: Do you feel like you have had an influence on the matter?
Students together: YEAH! We put notes!
Teacher: So we did. If something is not right or you want to make a difference, what can the children do?
Student: We tell the principal, the teacher, the adults..
Student: And mom.

The teacher does constantly present the idea of participation in these documents, perhaps conceptualising or reminding them of their experience, but because of that alone the responses cannot be considered ingenuine. The first primary class teacher added, that "It has to be very concrete with the children. That they see the whole bunch gathering there to see that we are all here." Had the process been delayed, the sense of participation could have been soon lost.

4.7 Conclusion and Final Thoughts

To our view, the case here is notable by two aspects: bending the procedure to all-inclusive manner with a visible, concrete and accessible procedure, along with the quick, considerate and concrete solution to the issues presented by the children. At the same time, there remains improvements to be done for democratizing the agenda setting procedures, and perhaps positions of trust for the younger students with special needs. It should also be clear that such a collective method may do some violence to voices not as strong, compared to smaller arenas, and should not be considered as the only means of decision making (cf. Barber 1984). In the future, these aspects can be taken into consideration. What we witnessed here was perhaps just the beginning of a collective participatory tradition.

As the case study was conducted as presented, the limitations include a retrospect teacher perspective and the lack of child perspective. To remedy this in potential future studies, it is advisable for a researcher to participate in the ongoing process of collective decision-making. Knowledge of the democratic procedures in educational settings is indeed welcome. In a similar vein, the question of whether

the procedure was of genuine participation remains contestable. Viewpoints for and against the procedure's genuine nature presented here hopefully evoke a heated dialogue.

On completion of their chapter, Leif Rosqvist and Jarmo Kinos propose the following questions to provoke further reflection, research and dialogue

- When considering children of primary and pre-primary school age, was the democratic procedure presented here satisfactory in terms of influence making? Why, why not?
- What are the potential benefits of implementing a collective method of decision making, when compared e.g. to smaller-scale class conversation or even smaller-scale situational decision making, in terms of citizenship education?
- To make the collective method all-inclusive, the procedure here was made very simple and concrete. Are there potential flaws in such a strategy?

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Chapter 5
Practices/4, United Kingdom: Finding the Voice of Children. Video-Observation to Discover Children's Claims of Knowledge Through Play

Sarah Vipond

5.1 Introduction: An Action-Research and Its Context

This chapter presents the reflections of an Early Years professional and researcher on the results of a small-scale action research project that was carried out during a period of 12 weeks in a workplace day nursery situated in the premises of a University Campus in London.

This project consists of an experimentation around a shift in practice from documenting children's learning using still photography to sharing video vignettes through an on line learning app and sending it securely to parents. The aim of this pedagogical innovation was to strengthen relationships with families by developing trust, sharing perspectives and acquiring vital aspects of personal knowledge held by parents to develop further understanding of the often complex thought and decoding involved in children's plays (Cochran et al. 1989; Desforges and Abouchaar 2003; Eccles and Harrold 1993; Tait 2010; Ward 2009; Whalley 1997, 2010; Whalley et al. 2013; Whalley and Arnold 1997).

Underpinning the project was the intention to develop the most effective, efficient and successful ways to plan for young children and how these could be shared with parents to attempt to understand the individual needs of each young child, as suggested by mainstream research on Early Years practice (Sylva et al. 2004, 2010) To reflect on the quality of care and education provided in the nursery it was explored if video vignettes could become a useful tool to allow reflection on practice, providing professionals with opportunities to view them repeatedly with colleagues, parents and children in order to inform our practice and deepen our understanding of children's inherent disposition to learn and how we can support this Considering

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Marion and Crowder (2013:68) suggestion that '*video allows us a small window into lived realities that no other medium can provide. It shows process and captures actions and words as they naturally occur in the flow of experience*', it was decided to experiment with the replacement of still photographs to video vignettes as a tool to document children's play in the nursery.

The video vignette was used to make assessments and planning for the children, in line with statutory requirements (Department for Education 2008, 2012, 2013, 2014; Ofsted 2014). The use of video vignettes was used to document children's play and interactions they aimed to provide practitioners at the nursery with an opportunity to visually share and analyse children's play with both children, parents and colleagues to gain a greater insight and understanding into children's thinking. Video documentation, therefore, was intended as a methodological innovation for the assessment of children's development.

However, unintended consequences happened: besides the assessment of children's learning and how this was recorded, the use of video allowed appreciation and reflection on children's creative and autonomous understanding, interpretation and ownership of their everyday experiences to unfold.

With the support of a case-study, this piece of work discusses how the possibility to review sequences of children's play offers the opportunity to capture how play becomes a medium for the expression of children's cultural worlds.

The nursery caters for 47 places for University staff, student and community children aged between 6 weeks and 5 years of age. The team is made up of 14 Early Years Practitioners, a Head of Childcare and a Nursery Manager, with a working experience ranging between 5 and 24 years.

5.2 Methodology: Video as a Tool for Research

Over the past few decades video has been used to document pedagogical interactions and children's activity in a vast range of educational settings (Pink 2010; Poslawsky et al. 2014). A wealth of research (Carr 1998; Carr et al. 2002; Goldman et al. 2006; Flewitt 2014; Marion and Crowder 2013; Thompson 2008) has demonstrated that video sequences offers a more comprehensive documentation than notes, and the possibility to share with others the observations, adding more depth to reflection on practices by including others' perspectives (Goldman et al. 2006), offering recognition of different perspectives and values (Braun and Clarke 2013; Denzin 1989; Elliot 1991; Foreman 1999; Foreman and Hall 2005).

From a methodological perspective, an important advantage of video documentation over written notes is the support to participatory approaches (Flewitt 2005, 2006; Parker 2013), based on the epistemological premise that reality, and knowledge of reality, are co-created from mutual understanding that arises from lived experiences (Carr and Kemmis 1986; Carr and May 1993; Costly and Dikerdem 2011).

A participatory (Drummond 1993; Elliot 1991) constructivist (Laevers 1997) and dialogical (Mc Niff and Whitehead 2011) philosophy constitutes the epistemology of the project. Underpinning the research-action question, *how can we deepen our understanding of children's learning by sharing video vignettes with parents,* was the understanding of the assessments of children's learning as collaborative (Edgington 2008; O'Reilly et al. 2013), and the intention to involve colleagues and parents to gain a more complex and dynamic perspective on children's actions, interests and learning (Lawrence 2010; Page et al. 2013).

The use of video to document children's actions and the interaction between adults and peers can be understood as a form of ethnographic research (Parker 2013). O' Reilly and colleagues describe ethnography as literally meaning 'to write about people' (O'Really et al. 2006, p.214). During this small-scale project, the researcher analysed 400 and 26 video vignettes, 71 children and 14 practitioners. Weisner (1996) describes ethnography in research with children as important as it considers how the cultural context of the child and family are incorporated into understanding the child. This idea, which greatly inspired the project, resulted in the involvement of 70 relatives of the children, who participated in the analysis of the video vignettes.

The use of video entails a careful consideration of ethical issues (Shavelson and Towne 2002), which was carried on in the context of the research under the guidance of the ethical principles described by O' Reilly and colleagues (2013) and Price (1996). With respect to the principle of autonomy, all participants, parents, practitioners and children were given the opportunity to decide if they wanted to be involved in this research project. Practitioners and parents were invited to participate through dedicated and separate meetings, and provided a letter summarising the aims and methods of the research, informing them about the right to withdraw and about the procedure to secure anonymity and data protection.

Parents were asked to give consent for their children to take part in the research; however, children were directly invited to participate as well giving their assent to engage in the study. Throughout the research process, the researcher was continuously monitoring if children were showing any signs of discomfort, which would have been taken as expression of withdrawal (Wellings and Branigan 2000).

The aim of the project was to gain a deeper perspective *on* the child as the result of a cooperative reflection (Whalley and Pen Green Centre 2010). Whilst this aim was achieved, the present chapter focuses on an unintended consequence of purposive action: the use of video vignette became the medium for the perspective *of* the child, and a support for adults to understand it.

In the following section of the chapter, a case-study taken from the research will be illustrated to support the main argument of this work. It is believed that the discussion of a case is the most effective strategy to disseminate the reflection and insights developed during the research (Yin 1993, 2004). The main point that the discussion of the case aims to support is that video documentation facilitates the

adult observer in appreciating, valuing and learning from the voice of the child. All names were changed to preserve the privacy of the people involved in the observations.

5.3 A Case Study. Kia and the Trains

5.3.1 Introduction to the Case Study

Kia is 3 years and 10 months old. His mother, Alice, works on the Campus where the nursery is based. Kia has attended nursery since he was 9 months old, and travels to nursery every day by train. This has probably been the catalyst for his passion and knowledge about the London Underground and the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) train system. At the weekends his father regularly takes him on the DLR when he goes to visit his grandma. Kia is always keen to share his experiences at nursery either in conversation, model making or through play. It is known that Kia is able to retell his daily commute, telling staff at the nursery that he travels to Camden Town, Moorgate, and Chorleywood, and building up scenarios in his narrative. Kia Key person, Sandra, has worked with him for over 2 years

> We have always shared our observations with Kia parents and have been able to support his interest in trains. This has enhanced other areas of learning and development. His hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills are exceptional and he has a good spatial awareness, making the most complex tracks. He is developing imaginative play and often introduces *duplo* people to stand on the platforms and wait for their train. Kia is keen to find solutions to overcome problems in his play, as indicated when he realised his people were too big to sit on his Lego-link train he made another train, using the *mobilo*, which enabled him to sit the people on his train. Together we practise counting the people who are waiting on the platform and those who are sitting on the train, extending his mathematical development. Kia brings his train to nursery every day; it is a replica of the Dockland Light Railway Train Carriage. Kia made a pin board picture of his train. He matched the same coloured shapes to make his train

Kia enjoys role-play and sometimes will pretend to be the guard, saying, “This train terminates at Camden Town”. Kia made a bench from blocks. He sat on them and looked a newspaper. Sandra asked him what he is doing he replied, “reading the paper like the man at the station”. (November 2014).

Whilst Athey (2007) reminds us that if knowledge is to be successfully assimilated, it must fit in with learners lived experience, it can be argued that communication of knowledge and its validation in interaction is equally important. The question for the adults is whether the voice of the child is recognised and valued as the medium of autonomous knowledge and enlightened experiences (Reggio Children 2001), rather than the expression of a tentative exploration in the dark. The argument of this chapter is that the use of video, combined with dialogical reflection on the observations documented by the video involving educational professionals, families and children, is a powerful tool to amplify the voice of children's knowledge to reach sometimes deaf ears.

5.3.2 A Digression: Kane Under a Cone

Karen captured a short video of Kane playing outside under an upturned red cone. Karen was quite amazed and amused by Kane's play and wanted to share this with Alison and the nursery team.

Kane was moving very slowly under the red cone; at the same time he looked very determined in being enclosed under the cone and moving the cone along the floor intently even when faced with interruption and difficulties. This determination to be enclosed and move along the floor seemed important to him in his play.

The use of video and dialogical reflection involving Allison gave room to Kane's voice, as expressed in the play. Was he really playing hide and seek? By replaying the video I could hear another child saying "we need to hide from the monsters don't we?". Was this his objective?

The next day the video was shared and discussed with Alison, who was adamant in dismissing the possibility that Kia was playing hide and seek. “He’s not playing hide and seek, he does that at home, that’s not how he plays it”. This comment of the mother, combined with Flewitt’s suggestion (2006) that the combinations of visual, audio and written data permit multilevel analysis allowing the researcher to literally and metaphorically zoom in on children, led me to re-examine the video.

By re-viewing the video I was aware of more detail than I had first noticed. The use of video in this observation provided an opportunity to see more than just the visual image but provided audio commentary. I became aware of the sound that the cone made on the floor as he pushed it along and shared with the nursery team. We reconsidered previous thoughts and discussed the symbolic representation in Kia play.

In occasion of previous discussions, Alison told me that Kia experiences trains going through tunnels on his way to nursery and that he also enjoys watching trains from the platform as they come through tunnels. The next time I stood on an underground platform I closely observed the train and imagined I was a young child. I felt a feeling of excitement and wonder as the train suddenly appeared out of the black hole at the end of the platform. The train came through the dark hole with speed. It brought with it a huge gust of warm air and a loud noise. The feeling of wonder could be mixed with feelings of anxiety and fear. I tried to imagine the thoughts a child may have and wondered what would happen if the train did not stop? What would happen if you fell onto the track? Where was the train taking us? I frequently travel on the underground. It was not until the reflection supported by the video documentation that I realised the complexity of Kia play and the intricacy of the re-enactment of his experiences coming through the tunnel onto the platform station and how extraordinary it was.

Kia was not playing hide and seek; he was not hiding from some imaginary monsters. He was re-enacting his experiences, and at the same he was presenting himself as an autonomous producer of knowledge. Kia playing was claiming epistemic status and individual access to knowledge, the video made those claims heard and recognised.

Following the review of the cones playing, it was noticed that Kia uses or makes tunnels in most of his model making or play. He often uses nursery furniture to push trains underneath and out of the other side. Our observations have shown us that in schema theory terms ‘going through’ (Arnold 2003, 2010) holds importance to Kia re-enacting his experiences of being in a tunnel and moving the cone along the floor provided ‘functional dependency’ relationships. The cone was ‘functionally dependent’ (Nutbrown 2011) on him moving it. Athey discusses the important shift from action to thought. She states ‘one of the functions of symbolic representation is to re-activate original experiences, thus leading to stability of knowledge’ (2007:139). Athey states that ‘Internalized actions lead to transformations on material and persons’ (2007:34).

Whilst the above interpretation is believed to offer an account of the learning process in and through a circular relationship between experience, reflection and representation; it was felt that someone was missing from the picture: Kia was not just *learning*: he was communicating his knowledge, he was *teaching*.

5.3.3 Kane at Canary Wharf

A few days after the 'cone reflection', Kia arrived at nursery and found Kane had independently made a model out of *mobilo* blocks and planks of wood. He declared it was 'Canary Warf.'

Kia visual account of Canary Wharf was splendid. Observing Kia as a producer and a communicator of knowledge, I wondered what picture Kane held in his mind when he built it, this structure what knowledge was he was sharing to listening ears. I asked Alice if she could take a photo of Canary Warf so that we could have a glimpse of what Kia was holding in his mind and representing in his model. Alice shared the picture of Kia model with her sister, who commented, "I know exactly what part of Canary Wharf Kane has made". Alice brought in photographs to share and discuss.

Supported by the video documentation and enhanced by discussion, adults' acknowledgement of Kia cognitive ability to contain and reflect a mental image and then reproduce this in his model making went beyond the practice of assessing cognitive development. Model-making was being approached not as a demonstration of skill for the observing adults, but as a medium of communication. One of the hundred languages of children, captured using video and dialogical reflection.

Kia knowledge of Canary Warf has been captured and recreated in his model making it a symbolic representation. At the same time, the model is a medium of a communicative intention entailing the claim of autonomous access to knowledge.

Kia captures the curves and the tracks he has observed on his journey to nursery. The trains he makes represent his own experiences. Athey, described this knowledge as having internal constructions that have 'form'. She explains that 'the content of the experience 'feeds' the forms of thought' (2007:55). Piaget (1962:67) states 'representation in the narrow sense allows for the symbolic evocation of absent realities by way of the mental or memory images, and it is based on schemata as 'coordinated systems of movement and perceptions, which constitute any elementary behaviours capable of being repeated and applied to new situations' (Piaget 1962:274).

At the same time, however, Athey (2007:5) notes that: 'without professional understandings, the adult-child relationship is simply custodial'. I now understand that an important component of 'professional understanding' consists in acknowledging not only the development of the child towards the future adult, but also the child in the present. Kane's Kia repeated interest in 'connection' and 'going through' within his play with tracks and trains, and interest in tunnels are not just a display of cognitive competence, but also sharing knowledge in of his environments.

5.4 The Affordance of Video

Gibson (1979) first coined the phrase 'affordance.' Haggerty (2011:386) describes the notion of 'affordance' as 'a useful way of denoting the particular meaning- making or semiotic capacities of different modes and media'. The affordance of replaying this video vignette allowed the researcher to observe the multimodal aspects of Kia play (Cowan 2014), capturing his voice whether it was expressed verbally, through gestures, body language and the same artefacts he manufactures and shares.

Kia had already built the train track, tunnels and a row of houses. I asked Kia if I could video his play, Kia gave his consent with a nod and a smile whilst continuing with his play. When re-viewing this piece of video I wondered what Kia was communicating though his role-modelling. He seemed to ponder, fiddle and shuffle ever so slightly as he re-connected his Lego pieces. Sharing this video with Alice allowed us to review with amazement other observations we had made of Kia This information allowed us to view Kia's play with a more informed wider and clearer lens, finding his voice in it.

Alice and I watched the video of Kia playing with a train track he had built. As we watched the video I noticed that Kia seemed particularly attentive in the way he put the Lego bricks together in order to make adjustments to the train he had previously made. His gestures and body movement seemed intent on the bricks being in the right place. I asked Alice if the Lego bricks Kia was adjusting meant anything to her. Alice replied

> I know what he is doing, those colours represent the underground lines. The yellow represents the *Circle Line*. The green represents the *District Line*. The blue represents the *Piccadilly Line*. The red is *the Central Line*, that's his favourite. It goes really fast through the tunnel we only get on it occasionally but he loves it. We go on it to go to his Grandmas work, it goes in and out of tunnels so it's very dark when we go through the tunnel. When we are at Stratford station the central line runs through there, we are on the over ground, which is much slower. The Central Line comes through really fast every couple of minutes

This vast amount of information suddenly changed my understanding of what Kia was doing and deepened my understanding of the complexity of his play, as a form of learning and a medium to communicate learning. Alice and I watched the rest of the video together. I asked her if the houses were similar to those he sees during his daily commute. She confirmed that the railway line ran alongside the row

of houses and a high street so she could understand exactly what Kia was reproducing in his models and play. She commented "This represents his journey to work and is an accumulation of what he sees. I know this because I am with him. I see it too".

The combination of written observations and photographs are an index of the activity that leaves the reader to re-construct the content and meaning of the activity. On the contrary, video documentation celebrates the active role to the child, and functions as a secondary medium fixing and amplifying the primary medium, play. Subsequently, we looked at some other videos of his play. We noticed that he was very specific about the colours he chose to make his trains. Kia used the red, blue, green, and yellow trays to make carriages. His friend had wanted to play but had turned the boxes upside down. Kia did not want them that way and put them in the proper position. Sandra commented: "he would have needed them to be upright so that you could get into them"; this is what the meticulous re-arrangement of the boxes was doing: teaching about trains. Teaching about trains not only for the benefit of his peers, but also to adults, using knowledge developed by moving in and across his social worlds.

5.5 Conclusion

By sharing the video vignettes with Sandra and the team, it was possible to develop a deeper understanding of Kia and his thinking. The observation of video-documents allowed us to learn from Kia by giving him agency we learn on reflection how much can be missed of the voice of the child in ordinary practice.

After seeing the photographs of Canary Warf, as a team we reviewed our previous observations of Kia It was already known that kia was very interested in arches and tunnels and incorporated them within the majority of his play. Nevertheless, something new was gained, that is, the understanding that Kia playing is a powerful medium to communicate knowledge and to claim the status of a knowledgeable participant in interactions with adults and peers.

We were aware Kia was interested in the underground train lines and he could name many of them. We were astonished to consider that these were so significantly represented and communicated in his play. Reviewing previous observations with a wider more informed lens, we could see that coloured blocks repeatedly appeared in his model making and now understood the significance of them in his play. Thomson (2008:10) observes:

> Images can be read in multiple ways. Despite the intention of the maker, an image, like any other text, is presented to people who bring their own cultural understandings as well as their life trajectories to the act of interpretation. Researchers using visual research thus take on board the understandings that their intentions about what images mean will not necessarily be how they are translated, and thus the way in which their images will be read may not be what they anticipate.

Haggerty (2011: 385) discusses the multiple ways in which children make sense of the world and share their own worlds, and reminds us to look at 'semiotic multimodality' 'Semiotic multimodality' means that we need to consider that communication happens through multiple modes. These may include, gaze, gesture, movement, sounds, actions and artefacts. The ability to review and share the video vignettes with Sandra and colleagues from the nursery team has been transformational in deepening not only the understanding of Kia thinking, but also the understanding of his communicative intentions. Video observations not only support understanding, they generate the utterances in the observer's world. By considering and identifying semiotic multimodality and the nuances of Kia gestures in his play with Sandra we have been able to discover more about Kia understanding of the world around him and, more importantly, of his determined will to communicate the worlds he masters.

Our journey began with us deciding to use video vignettes to record children in order to support the assessments we made and shared with parents. We believed video would have more benefits than previously used still photographs as it could record language and capture children's interactions. We discovered that the use of video provided us with far more than we had first anticipated.

As an experienced established team we took it upon ourselves to inform parents about their children's development and share the observations we had made at nursery. We asked parents about their child's interests outside the nursery and always attempted to engage in conversations with parents when they arrived at nursery and collected their children. With some parents conversations flowed but with many the greetings were often quite hurried as parents had work or lectures to get to. Parents often seemed under a lot of pressure with work and study. Reflecting on the term 'working in partnership with parents' we realised that this often consisted of us informing parents about what we knew about their children. As professional Early Years practitioners we felt it was our role to share our professional knowledge concerning theory, characteristics of learning, and developmental assessments with parents.

This has now changed. Observation of skills and learning are now combined with an understanding of play as a medium of communication. Consequently, assessment has now become an occasion of conversation with children.

The use of video made the team sceptical about the overuse of the assessment criteria. Assessment implies claiming superior knowledge, and this hinders the ability to listen to children, as it makes adults deaf and blind to children's utterances, to their self-description as knowledgeable communicators and to their will to have that status validated.

Rumsfield (2003) discusses the notion of the 'unknown unknowns'. These refer to the things that we don't know we didn't know. We soon realised the power of the moving image. This became an exciting and often daunting journey as we watched children in self-initiated play and pondered on the tiny nuances of their body movements or a shift of gaze or facial expression. Capturing these nuances digitally suggested further considerations were necessary to make the 'unknowns' knowns. We realised as demonstrated in Kia case study that parents hold personal knowledge.

When we provide opportunities to share this knowledge it can deepen our awareness of children's motivations in play and the complexity of children's thinking and cognitive development. Deepening our understanding of children's learning and their determination, motivation and potential to tell their own stories.

On completion of her chapter, Sarah Vipond proposes the following questions to provoke further reflection, research and dialogue

- What consideration do we give to children's journeys/transitions to and from nursery?
- Do iIpads (as recording devices) disrupt our relationships?
- Through an observational lens what assessments are we making about children and who are they for?

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Chapter 6
Practices/5, Kazakhstan: Keeping It Real: Making Space for Play in Early Education Policy and Practice

Martin Needham

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the value of play as an inclusive, accessible, participatory format that promotes children's understanding of how to engage in activity with others. This chapter argues that for young learners, play not only affords children a space to realise their rights to self-expression, acknowledgment of their identities, cultures but it also provides an important forum for developing a child's personality, talents, instincts and abilities to participate.

Arguments about the value of play for supporting the development learning skills are well documented (Moyles 2010; Brooker and Edwards 2010); this chapter considers why, despite increasing international policy support for the contribution of play in early education, adult attention may continue to focus on adult led pedagogy (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development 2012). The chapter reflects on how the space granted to play in national preschool policies interacts with spaces for play in preschool provision. It is argued that adults are often drawn to interactions that emphasise the transmission of subject knowledge and formulaic thinking, leading to the marginalisation of play rather than recognising it as an important format for developing child led social learning, interthinking (Mercer 2000) and distributed cognition (Rogoff 2003).

> While socio-cultural psychologists have described the shared thinking of adults and children as they engage in dialogue and joint activity, they have done so in order to determine its influence on individual children's development. That is they have studied 'intermental' activity in order to understand the 'intramental', while I am suggesting that we should also try to explain children's development as interthinkers. To do so we need to understand how

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> experienced members of communities act as discourse guides, guiding children or other novices into ways of using language collectively.” (Mercer 2000, p.170)

The evidence of effective outcomes for preschool, offered by a number of studies, advocating the value of play based, child-led activity have captured international policy makers’ attention but play can still struggle to find space in some early years curriculums and in setting based practice (Waller 2014). The early part of this chapter examines how early education policies promoting more adult led views of school-readiness might be challenged through raising awareness of play and shared forms of thinking. The middle section of the chapter focuses on Kindergarten policy in Kazakhstan as a case study of the tensions that exists between teacher-led and child-led pedagogies. I found this case study interesting because it featured issues and debates that I have encountered in a number of different contexts. The final section suggests ways in which adults might be encouraged to view play as a more significant component of preschool pedagogy.

6.1.1 A Space for Play in National Policies

The articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF 1989), echo the common linguistic and cultural separation of education and play. Article 29 states that children’s education should develop each child’s personality, talents and abilities to the fullest; while Article 31 advances the right to relax and play as part of joining with recreational activities. The theme of this book centres on article 12, children’s right to self-determination, and this chapter argues that for young learners, play not only affords children spaces in which they can choose, but that it is also an important component of developing a child’s personality, talents and abilities to the fullest. Arguments about the contribution of play to learning in the curriculum are not new (Anning 2010) and therefore this chapter reflects on why despite increasing support for the contribution of play in early education, adult attention is often drawn to focus on adult led pedagogy. Adult-led pedagogy has been promoted by local political pressures to develop ‘school readiness’ and Gilford (2013) discussing the development of this concept, notes two overlapping, but potentially conflicting dimensions: the first being to support children’s holistic development and the second being to prepare children to fit into school cultures. The concern of many early educationalists is that school cultures may focus on particular types of learning and not always be fully supportive of young children’s holistic learning development.

An overview provided by longitudinal studies of effective preschool pedagogies in a number of countries is presented in the Starting Strong III report (OECD 2012). The report advocates that allowing children greater control of some of their (Schweinhart et al. 2005) preschool activities promotes personal responsibility and

self-control. The Highscope study initiated in the 1960s continues to be used to argue that children who experience a play-based curriculum with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activity develop a more independent self-managing outlook over the life course (Schweinhart 2013). Larger and more recent studies in New Zealand (Wylie and Thompson 2003) and the UK (Sylva et al. 2010) are also used suggest that positive social and intellectual benefits accrue in the primary education phase for children from preschool programmes that balance adult-led and child-led activities. This research base is used to argue that opportunities for child-led activity in early education pedagogy not only affirms children as active learners, but also provides children with opportunities to lead some of their own activities and to engage more dialogically with supportive adults (OECD 2012). Children can, in this way, acquire lasting benefits across the life course by experiencing regular opportunities in their preschool education to control elements of their own learning through play and exploration (Schweinhart et al. 2005; Sylva et al. 2010). The studies are quite specific in pointing out that while preschools in general appeared to be associated a positive start to schooling, for preschool to have a longer lasting impact experiences needed to be of a higher quality. Each of these studies viewed high quality preschool as including a significant proportion of child-led activity and this has been reflected in practice in different countries (Georgeson and Payler 2013). The evidence from these studies is used to suggest that allowing children greater control of some of their activities, promotes personal responsibility and self-control in quality preschool environments, which leads to lasting educational benefits (Wylie and Thompson 2003; Sylva et al. 2010). Such programmes provide children with opportunities to develop and lead some of their own activities and to engage with supportive adults. In this way, children acquire lasting benefits across the life course by having space in preschool education to have some control of their own learning through play and exploration (Taguma et al. 2012).

Many countries' national early years curricular reflect different and shifting positions on the space they provide for play. In 2015, President Xi Jinping commented that China had much to learn about Play and kindergarten there have been directed to increase the opportunities for play as a means to promote, creativity and wellbeing (Guardian 2015). The potential of the outdoor learning environment for developing both well-being, creativity and learning was recognised in Chinese policy in 2014 (Hu et al. 2015). In some countries, such has Finland and New Zealand there is a consensus for the value of allowing children space to learn extensively through play to age 6, whilst in others such as England an earlier school starting age reflects greater societal pressure to introduce 'school like' activities at age 5 (Wood and Hedges 2016). In this chapter, interviews from Astana in Kazakhstan are used to illustrate the power of adult-led pedagogy to hold adults' attention in a context where policy has been encouraging kindergartens to create more spaces for child-led, play-based learning and yet existing subject based pedagogies continue to feature strongly in daily practice.

6.1.2 The Potential of Play as an Activity Promoting Participation

Moyles (2010) identifies play as a difficult to define term; she prefers to view it as a process that features choice, where decision making is left to the participants and is without a fixed outcome thereby permitting risk taking. Vygotsky (1966), who laid the foundations of socio-cultural theory (Hedegaard and Fleer 2008), viewed play as the leading source of development in the preschool years. Van Oers (2010) used Vygotsky's framework to suggest that play is not an activity of itself but rather a socially developed activity format where rules are relaxed and there is an increased flexibility together with a high level of social engagement and personal involvement. This is a very helpful perspective that challenges the orthodoxy of frivolity embedded within the word play as it is used in everyday language. Instead play is viewed as an *activity format* implying that individuals can employ play consciously or unconsciously as a device for learning facilitating experimentation, reflection and often social feedback in a range of activities. Play suspends and can transcend the normal rules and roles of a particular context such as the conventions of traditional classroom learning/teaching. Playfulness is very visible in early childhood because there is so much to learn and children are at an early stage of participating and unembarrassed to be seen playing. Play is arguably something that successful learners continue to do in adulthood, but it is perhaps applied in less obvious forms, as a tool to support learning, innovation and understanding.

Play often affords children an opportunity to lead activity, stepping out of their novice role in participation, to operate on a more even status with adults and to lead activity. This permits identities to be reassigned; people, objects and symbols can stand-in for cultural tools and recreate systems of activity in an experimental low risk format (Edmiston 2008). Play affords the opportunity to see what it is like to think together in a powerfully imagined scenario that explores the meanings and possibilities of new roles, artefacts and ideas (Van Oers 2010). To neglect this type of interaction may limit children's opportunities to communicate their ideas and neglect children's right and ability to participate in shared activity in both the short and long term.

> Play as an activity type aims at the mastery of mastering. Play does not produce any concrete knowledge of mastering. It produces general flexibility and a disposition to change one's approach when facing the concrete demands of the situation. (Hakkarainen 1999, p. 234)

Learning to participate and think with others is a feature of much human activity both inside and outside the classroom. Socio-cultural accounts of shared thinking and distributed cognition arising from Vygotskian foundations (Vygotsky 1986) also advance ideas of an ebb and flow of thinking in the context of social activity flowing between individuals, contexts and objects (Wertsch 1998; Lave and Wenger 2001; Rogoff 2003; Jordan 2004; Engeström 2007). They emphasise that individual thinking may be limited and carried into different directions by communicative and physical tools that have evolved power through their extended use over time.

Novices are inducted into such cultures of play practice and shared thinking (Lave and Wenger 2001) through guided participation (Rogoff 2003). Participation in play is particularly dependent upon people establishing what they are seeking to achieve together and pooling their shared understandings to work through the activity or problem at hand. It is therefore a very helpful forum for developing interthinking.

In classroom contexts, tools rules participants and purposes can be different in details but they may also be surprisingly similar in style with adults guiding groups of students along prescribed pathways of thinking and pedagogic practice. Many teachers employ a conversational approach in teaching where the classes existing knowledge is draw out and then taken forward through a shared analysis of a problem or context. This *is* a shared thinking process but it can become a limited and ritualised format, that is oriented towards the assessment of individual achievements (Alexander 2000). Where this becomes the expected format for adult interaction in a classroom, it may present a barrier to adults and children joining in with more playful thinking. In a collection of studies co-ordinated by Pramling-Samuelsson and Fleer (2009), a comparative sociocultural approach was used to examine the cultural attitudes to play represented in video samples of interaction in early education settings in Sweden, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Chile and Wisconsin in the USA. In Australia and the USA, they identified staff taking a non-active, observational role in relation to young children's play. This they attributed in part to the influence of the cautions approach to adults interfering in play advanced by advocates of Developmentally Appropriate Practice (Bredekamp and Copple 1997) who highlighted that adults often disrupt and curtail children's play when they try to participate. This finding contrasted with case studies in Hong Kong and Japan where adults were perceived to be taking a lead role in activities teaching through play. The New Zealand and Swedish case studies seemed to suggest practice where more adult attention was given to planned reflective activity linked to child-lead play. The Chilean case studies were seen to place more emphasis on shared group and community activity rather than child-lead play. Edmiston (2008) and Bruce (2010) both argued that adults can make a very rich contribution to children's imaginary play, but that the adults need to enter play with a spirit of experimentation following the intentions of the child players. They suggest that adults need to keep the play feeling real for the children and not push the activity into the abstraction of the subject orientated pursuit of knowledge.

Mercer and Littleton (2007) and Alexander (2000) show that classroom interactions typically offer scaffolding for children's shared thinking, using the formalized thinking tools offered by the curricular subjects. They point out that the control of these thinking processes often resides with the adult. Assessment processes in classrooms also often emphasise individual retention of knowledge and procedures with fewer opportunities to develop and demonstrate the ability to develop sustain and extend shared thinking (Rogoff 2003). Play allows young children to create, understand and direct shared thinking. As a result play can offer richer insights into assessing children's capabilities to synthesise and apply knowledge. Helping children to reflect on shared thinking processes in different formats can help them to work more effectively in group problem solving contexts.

This section of the chapter has sought to argue that to focus on classroom culture may limit children's participation to focused adult led activities and particular types of thinking. In the longer term this potentially constrains their future participation in shared thinking because it also restricts the development of participatory dialogic thinking skills and behaviours (Alexander 2000).

6.1.3 A Case Study

The following case study of policy and practice in a sample of Kindergartens in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, is used to illustrate how tensions between models of learning can compete for space over time in cultural-historical contexts. It is argued that this case study illustrates how the re-framing of the preschool learning environment may be filtered through prevailing cultural commitments to collective modes of thinking and learning embedded in the concept of preparing children for school. The OECD's (2012) international review of early years policy and practice suggested that documents setting out national standards are used by governments as a major tool in shaping practice and can be effective where they are explicit about policy intentions. This case study illustrates the potential for pedagogical cultures to resist and rework change.

Qualitative, semi-structured interviews with practitioners in their preschool environments were used to explore how national policy documents promoting more child-led learning interacted with their underlying beliefs about the nature of learning and the kindergarten curriculum. The examples offered in the case study are drawn from a series of document reviews, observations and interviews, supporting a review of the National Standards document for Preschools in Kazakhstan (2012). This review was part of a wider road map project to review the national education strategy (Bridges and Sagintayeva 2014). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two Ministry of Education policy makers and two experts with a responsibility for coordinating training at a national and local region level. Interviews were also conducted with three preschool experts from Astana kindergartens. In addition to these interviews, three state managed kindergartens and three privately managed preschool settings were also visited. These settings were in deferent areas of the city of Astana and reflected a range of approaches to teaching and learning. The aim of the data collection process was to assess the nature of the kindergarten learning environments and to ask staff about the influence of the national standards on their teaching, including how pre-service and in-service training supported the application of the standards to practice.

Kazakhstan is one of the largest nations by geographical area. Kazakhstan gained independence from the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1991. The initial challenges of establishing new economic and political institutions have been taken up within the context of a growing sense of national identity and increasing affluence as the vast minerals wealth of the nation continues to contribute to the developing social infrastructure (Bridges and Sagintayeva 2014). In the Soviet

system and era, kindergartens were widespread, perceived to be of high quality and free. Following independence there was a decline in the availability of places and a perceived decline in the quality of provision. The expansion of places and the improvement of quality continue to be addressed as the nation grows in economic confidence alongside an increasing demand for preschool places. This is particularly the case in big cities where there is a perceived need to be ready for school and both parents are more likely to be in employment. Waiting lists for kindergartens have been very long, parents put their children's names for places long before the children are ready and pay to have their child moved up the waiting list. Under the Balpan (little chicks) initiative, which is developing provision in partnership with the private sector, the number of children attending preschool had increased from 40% in 2010 to 75% in 2013 (Bridges and Sagintayeva 2014). Officials in The Ministry of Education emphasised steps to increase access to preschool in Kazakhstan. As part of developing a strategic action plan for 2018, part of an 11-year plan, aiming to increase access and quality so that by 2020 there should be a place for all of the 60,000 children aged 3–6 in Kazakhstan. For children in the 5–6 'preparatory' age group, Kindergarten is compulsory and the focus is more on preparation for school. For children aged 3–5 kindergarten is optional and for those aged 1–3 it is not compulsory.

6.1.4 A Commitment for Changing Pedagogy

A desire for change, specifically to reduce the proportion of what one Kindergarten leader referred to as "teaching from the front" was expressed by all of those interviewed. The head of the preschool programme at the ministry of Education identified policy priorities related to a play based pedagogy identified in the Starting Strong.

> The Priority for change is to move from a more school like classroom environment to a more play based experience for children. Preschool should be a transformative space for children, outdoor play, sports (competition quite a feature, sports, traffic awareness,) outdoor play should take place outside on daily basis and children should be taken out into the real world environment to learn. Lessons should not be holding children in the classroom, good teachers should be caring and able to make the children laugh.

The documents that set out the national standards for preschools (Ministry for Education 2002, 2008, 2012) have, over a sustained period, set out the broad expectation to increase the proportion of child-centred learning for the nation's preschools to follow. For example, they state that educational programmes should include play activity: creative role-plays and games with rules. Section 10.6 (MfE 2002) requires that Preschool educational programmes should be based on the principle of a child-centered approach in interaction between adults and children, allowing for an individual approach to children and work with various groups of children, as well as taking into account age-specific characteristics. The standards call for a balance in the daily preschool routine between lessons, ad hoc activities and free time. They

also ask for preschool educational programmes to be based on an optimal combination of individual and joint activities of children (MfE 2002 10.10). The 2012 document suggested that the existing definitions developed by the previous standards be extend by the inclusion of a broader view of children's competencies as able learners. The interviews with national, regional training coordinators and headteachers suggested that they perceived that

> the key challenges are not so much with the standards themselves as with the understanding of college graduates (more from a theory perspective) and from Higher Education with applying theory to practice. Finding well-qualified trainers in the regions can also be challenging. Following international trends for modernisation is a problem because there is very limited experience of these approaches in the country.

The Astana case study suggested the complexity of cultivating a desire for changing pedagogy to make space for more child led participation. Even where practitioners have experience of this type of practice there can still be considerable cultural pressure to provide adult led learning. Those national experts interviewed about the application of the standards also identified the assertive nature of 'traditional' approaches to pedagogy.

> Learning is mostly in classes with each centre following a set timetable programme for each subject as described by the books identified in the standards especially in the mornings more times in the afternoons attending for that time. Days are from 8 am until 6 pm with most children did use cards and pictures to check children's learning as well as more specialist developmental tests. Mostly they are looking to check on children's socialisation.

Their analysis emphasised the persistence of preferences towards subject based sessions that the standards document did not challenge explicitly enough. The Interviews conducted with Kindergarten principles in both the private and state sector in Astana showed that they linked the standards to a prescribed set of activities in textbooks in each area.

> *Much of the time is taken up with the prescribed curriculum and the Kindergarten directors felt this gave very little space for alternatives.*

Recommendations about the range of hours for each subject seemed to be interpreted by the majority of kindergarten principals and teachers as a direct allocation of subject time rather than being incorporated into a more integrated topic based approach to curriculum. Each of the visited kindergartens delivered mostly subject focused sessions of 15–20 min as recommended in previous versions of the standards. Nine of the ten kindergarten directors interviewed felt that the prescribed curriculum activities took up most of the children's time and that there was very little time for children's interests. In interviews, Ministry representatives in Kazakhstan identified that their priority was to develop preschool staff training by increasing the numbers of well-motivated teachers attending training courses as well as by enhancing the quality and content of the training. Many of the preschool experts interviewed, thought that a key problem was finding trainers with a clear vision of more child-led play based pedagogy who were able to present this in an accessible way to practitioners.

6.1.5 Practitioners and Their Preschools

The following two examples of Astana settings illustrate how two different kindergarten centre directors embraced the idea of developing more child-led pedagogies while simultaneously feeling bound to provide subject based lessons.

One privately managed preschool centre, demonstrated a marked contrast in the style of teaching and learning to the other centres visited. The leader of this centre had studied at the Montessori Institute in Moscow. In the centre's morning sessions the children experienced an extended period of play based activity where they were free to choose from a variety of painting, drawing, role-play and other structured educational toys in the setting. The leader explained that it had been quite a challenge to find the equipment that was imported at a relatively high cost. The leader said that the children enjoyed the morning Montessori sessions and that in the afternoon sessions they experience the more traditional "teaching from the front".

The leader felt that the play-based sessions offered the opportunity to teach the children on an individual basis as compared to the front of class sessions in the afternoon. The individual teaching allowed children to repeat and master ideas that they might find difficult to master in whole class sessions. She said that children enjoyed these sessions more and they had quite a few children transfer from other more traditional preschools who found it hard to choose for themselves. She believed that learning to manage their own activity and learning was a benefit of this approach.

A second kindergarten director who was also part of the government's working party revising the standards document for the older kindergarten age group. Also appeared content to have two quite contrasting pedagogies co-existing in her own setting. In this case, a quite formal ethos within her own kindergarten curriculum time sessions and a freer celebration of play in the outdoor space. She was passionate about the standards group working to simplify the language of the standards and link it more explicitly to children's abilities. She also believed that the children should have more opportunities to choose and to play. There is agreement in the group about children having a right to choose so that they become more open-minded, adaptable to others and to new circumstances. She perceived children in contemporary Astana to be different from previous generations "they know more, their parents are more educated, they are ready to learn and develop". She agreed with other experts in the working party that rote learning was too common and frequently used and at the same time the organisation within her kindergarten featured adult led group based sessions. This classroom context in this setting contrasted markedly with the outdoor space where children had considerable freedom to choose the spaces they wished to go to and who they wanted to engage with. Staff were on hand to engage in much more open and responsive format, allowing the children to developing their own ideas, rules, stories and routines.

These case studies suggested that, as has been noted in other countries (Tharpe and Gallimore 1988), the pursuit of progressive pedagogy will be moderated by existing expectations of the importance of established pedagogic practices. The

kindergarten teachers and advisors were committed to change and yet there is a strong systemic cultural expectation that learning needs to be subject focused and adult led in the classroom context. Such a pedagogic culture may also be a contributory factor when adults seek to engage in children's play outdoors because both adult and child participants expect that they will work towards learning objectives and engage in questioning.

The idea that there may be an orthodoxy of expectation educational activity is advanced by both Brunner and Bourdieu. Such an underlying pervasive orthodoxy relates to what Bruner (1996) refers to as 'folk pedagogy,' to indicate that there are culturally accepted views of the mind of the learner and that these consequently influence the nature of the relationship between teacher and learner.

> From this work on folk psychology and folk pedagogy has grown a new, and perhaps even a revolutionary insight. It is this: in theorising about the practice of education in the classroom (or any other setting for that matter), you had better take into account the folk theories that those engaged in teaching and learning already have. For any innovations that you, as a "proper" pedagogical theorist, may wish to introduce will have to compete with, replace, or otherwise modify the folk theories that already guide both teachers and pupils. (Bruner, 1996, 161)

Bourdieu (1977) points to the fact that in most spheres there are common sense intuitive approaches to activities informed by previous experience. Bourdieu refers to these common sense views of good practice as 'doxa' (Bourdieu 1977, p.164). The term suggests that there can be truth in the sense that people perceive things to be such, but there may be deeper truths that lie hidden. Hence, there may be commonly held views or doxa relating to play and learning, which modify or complement the stated pedagogical intentions of any institution. Sociocultural analysis of early childhood education settings suggests that in many contexts there is a tension between allowing children space to play and the space-place-time of preschools, nurseries and kindergartens we enter spaces that preparing children for school cultures. Preschool institutions separate children into age groupings that emphasise abilities, they put children into larger groups, which emphasise the need for adults to maintain order, and they separate children into safer but more abstracted world. It often seems that children require structure and control; this is emphasised by the more we see children in structured institutions the more their dependencies on adults come to the fore. Thus any suggestions to develop a more child led pedagogy run into the difficulty of seeing the child as being capable of leading learning and being able to support an environment to facilitate this (Burman 2008; Olsson 2009).

In the context of the Kazakhstan case studies, it may be difficult to find a space for a more play-based child-led approach to learning in the classroom context because the resources and structure make it difficult for children to reveal the more open-ended collaborative play. As in other countries, it is in the outdoor environment that there is more freedom (Waller 2014). To safeguard and promote resources for more open play need to be available, but there may also a need to challenge the idea that the most important element of the preschool experience is the adult led classroom-like engagements. Waller (2014) notes that the pressures on English preschools to pursue 'school readiness' may be reducing the resourcing available for

outdoor activity. In order to counter this he recommends consideration be given to the following:

1. Allocation of the appropriate of resources to support learning in outdoor spaces;
2. Sufficient staff time for documentation and reflection on pedagogy and practice;
3. Staff development programmes to support the development of guided interaction and participatory processes with young children;
4. The need for senior staff to be strong advocates for ECEC and engage with policy-makers at local and national level. (Waller 2014 165)

Encouraging awareness of the potential of play as a space for developing process skills and attitude may be important to defending and extending spaces for play. As longer-term approach to shifting classroom culture directly, it may be helpful to explore awareness raising in the outdoor context as a space in which play is expected. The outdoor space is one where children are afforded more freedom and practitioners feel less obliged to intervene in subject-orientated ways. It is a space where the talents and strengths children bring to learning can be more visible. Hu et al. (2015) Encourage Chinese researchers to explore and report on the quality in outdoor environments.

> Future studies should continue to explore the quality of outdoor play with a larger national sample to follow children's physical wellness and other outcomes longitudinally. Findings from such studies will enable us to identify evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies to promote children's optimal development through quality outdoor play. (Hu, Li, Marco and Chen 2015 73)

If we can to continue to provide positive examples of the richness of child –led activity and demonstrate the value of play spaces for developing school learning readiness, we may continue to build confidence in play as an important aspect of learning readiness.

The Astana examples illustrate that in many contexts the outdoor environment in many contexts is the space where the pedagogical expectation is that activity will be child led. Presenting examples of the enjoyment that children experience in such contexts but also the richness of the experiences in this area is perhaps a good starting point for raising awareness of the value of play. Increased appreciation might be converted into more time and resources being channeled into outdoor spaces and consideration might then be given to how to nurture similar experiences indoors. The following example is taken from an English preschool going through a similar process of self-review.

6.1.6 Outdoor Play Observation

This example is not intended to illustrate differences in practice between places, but it is simply presented to rather represent the richness of play in outdoor spaces. It echoes the growing cannon of literature examples of learning stories set outside of classroom

spaces (Waller 2014; Carr and Lee 2012) that illustrates not just children's readiness for school classrooms but children's readiness to learn and engage in activity with others.

A practitioner walks under the canopy of branches in the preschool's outdoor area and something falls onto the card she is holding and she takes it to show two boys who are playing under a pirate flag suspended under the trees over a collection of cylindrical steppingstone logs. The boys look with interest at the insect on the page as she explains how the wasp got there.

She asks, "Are you being pirates again Finn?" The boys confirm that they are. The practitioner puts the wasp on a log and moves on leaving the boys to continue their game, which involves them pretending to sail a ship as they step from log to log, and sometimes on to the ground, which is the sea.

Finn, "I've got a steering wheel."
Louis,"I'm going into the sea."
Finn, "quick the ship is wrecking."
Louis, "I've just been in the mud. Help."
Finn, "There's a wasp he's going to sting me."
Louis, "me too."
Finn, "quick I'll steer the ship."
Louis, "the wasp is leaving from us."[The wasp flies away]
Finn, "it's bedtime for the pirates now."
Louis, "its bed time."
Both boys curl up on a log.
Finn, "Morning now let's get our ship hats on."
Both boys venture off the logs again.
Finn, "It's dark in the sea and there are killer whales and they'll get you!"
Louis "Go back on the ship! You have to go back again!"
Finn "Oh no I can't get back to you!"
Louis, "oh no! Walk up the plank."
Finn, "Jump in the sea."
Louis, "Do you like Octonauts?"{This is a children's TV programme about underwater animal explorers, who travel in submarines}
Finn, "Yes"
Louis, "I'm Kwasii." {A swashbuckling cat in the TV programme]
Finn, "and I'm Dashi." [An engineer dog]
Louis, "and I'm Barnacles."[A polar bear who is the captain of the submarine]
"Ocotnauts to the launch bay! Sound the Octoalarm!"
[10 minutes have elapsed, and Finn and Louis continue to play developing their set of themed happenings on the logs]

This play episode illustrates the power of place, materials and established culture in the socio-cultural framing of the activity. The children using very a few words and abstracted materials conjure up a very real world where they can try out roles identities and ideas. They can test the influence of those roles identities and ideas on others. They learn how to harness the thoughts embodies in words, objects to reflect on possibilities and directions of joint endeavour.

One of the setting's leaders reflecting on how she achieved pedagogic change, said

> We were doing those things but not accepting that we were getting those interactions. We didn't realise we were doing those things and the importance of it. Through discussions, staff meetings and training through written observations and evaluations we could see the quality of what we were doing. (Hadfield et al. 2015)

Recording and presenting reflective studies of teacher-led and child- activities to permeate and inform each other is an important step in promoting balance. Sharing examples of the benefits of child-led play based pedagogy with parents, policy makers and politicians continues to be important in challenging the pressures to focus preparing children for school only through subjects rather than complimentary skills and dispositions.

6.2 Conclusion

This chapter suggests that attempting to change the deep-rooted beliefs about pedagogy is a long-term project that will require further presentations of examples of how play enhances both children's appreciation of early education experiences and contributes to their abilities, aptitudes and attitudes. There is perhaps, a doxa, shared by adults and children in some contexts, that school preparedness requires the ability to internalise lessons from adult discourse and questioning alongside the development of thinking for one's self. There is therefore an expectation that the adults will introduce target knowledge into the classroom space and that the learners will need to internalise or commit that knowledge to heart. An expectation that knowledge is something that we take away with us, located within our skins. Authors such Lave and Wenger (2001), Wertsch (1998), and Rogoff (2003) draw attention to the importance of distributed cognition as a form of thinking that is much less assessed even though it may be present in many classroom exchanges. Play is a format that conjures up worlds by pooling participants' knowledge in a creative problem solving shared mind.

It may also be helpful to stop referring to 'traditional and progressive approaches' in the debate about the place for play and child led learning in early education. Characterising pedagogic change in this way is unhelpful for a number of reasons. First it puts individuals into a binary (Olsson 2009) where they have to position themselves. There should be much less of a binary and much more of a blended spectrum of experiences of adult and child led activities. Secondly, this binary may be unhelpful when one is seeking to update the traditional view of play as a frivolous, expenditure of childish energy (Anning 2010). Play should be an integral part of learning that facilitates complimentary dispositions. The social orthodoxy associates play with tradition and perhaps requires more attention to change this underlying view so that by careful observation of children's skills in these contexts practitioners are able to see for themselves that these contexts offer a complimentary skill set.

Presenting engaging studies of a range of child led activity demonstrating what children are capable of from outdoor play, play spaces activities with families, peers and mixed aged groups, need to be viewed can all contribute to this more integrated view of learning. Encouraging practitioners to engage in reflection on children's capabilities, interests and engagement in less directed and controlled learning activity is an important to step in developing practice. Supporting the development of

play spaces in the outdoors and sensitive adult observation and participation in these spaces could be an important step in developing children's right to participation and play in a world that is increasingly regulated. It is also a valuable space to develop their skills for lifelong participation and engagement in group thinking and understanding.

On Completion of His Chapter, Martin Needham Proposes the Following Questions to Provoke Further Reflection, Research and Dialogue

- How much do think with other people? Try to think of times when your thinking is shared with others and consider how do you help each other's ideas to evolve?
- Can play and teaching happen together or does one subvert the other?
- If you had been the adult present at the example of outdoor play presented in the chapter, how might you have extended the play scenario?

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Chapter 7
Practices/6, United States of America: Hybrid-Transitions as a Space for Children's Agency. A Case-Study from a Pre-kindergarten in Boston

Angela Scollan

7.1 Introduction

Well before the introduction of digital technologies, children were journeying towards discovering new and unique virtual countries where some adults remain fearful to tread or unable to visit. However, many people feel that this is even more true nowadays, where digital technologies make it easier to create and inhabit complex virtual worlds. It is believed that a statement such as '*technology is here to stay and we are in a new era where digital technology will change how we live, work and play*' (Rubin 2014a) will not challenge the reader's expectations, even if when addressed to the social worlds inhabited and constructed by children.

Whilst Prensky (2001) dichotomy 'digital natives'/'digital immigrants' has been as much criticized in the academic discourse as successful in the public discourse (Helsper and Eynon 2009; Steven and Plowman 2014), the idea that a gulf between opportunities offered by technologies and resistance towards them is somehow connected to the generational order (beside other variables, such as socio-economic status and local context) is a recognised platform for research within social sciences and pedagogy as much as within computer sciences, psychology and marketing.

With regard to the generational order, the majority of studies suggest that whilst children move effortlessly in the digital worlds, as well as between the digital and non-digital worlds, some adults finds problematic to shift between the two dimensions, recognising a hard border separating them (Buckingham 2002; Edwards 2013a; Marsh 2010). Livingstone's optimistic plea for the use of digital technology to implement endless opportunities for learning, fun, education and development

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(Livingstone 2009) therefore seems to overlook how many adults are inclined to recognise digital and non-digital worlds as separate and potential concurrent experiential realms.

It is believed that a semantics of distinction between digital and non-digital worlds is one of the reasons that limits the scope of researching in the transitions between the digital and non-digital worlds as spaces for young children's agency, and for its intersection with their position in society. This chapter aims to fill this gap in current knowledge, by discussing some observations of children's agency in the transition between digital and non-digital worlds during the use of digital technologies by a small group of children.

The context of the observations is a pre-kindergarten in Boston. In particular, the observations concerns an activity based on the use of digital technology to support the development of communication skills of two children aged 3 and 4, speaking English as a second language. The author of this chapter was also the observer of the activity in the setting.

7.2 Hybrid-Transitions as Spaces of Children's Agency

A rich tradition of pedagogical and psychological research has explored the impact of technology on the cognitive and social development of the child (Siraj-Blatchford 2006; Morgan and Siraj-Blatchford 2013; Levin 2013; Marsh 2010). However, little research has focused on the implications for children's agency of the use of digital technologies in educational settings. This contribution presents the concept of hybrid-transitions as a theoretical tool to explore transitions between digitally and non-digitally enhanced experiences as spaces at the intersection between young children's agency (James 2009; Baraldi 2015) and the network of relationships and expectations constituting the context of children's action (Bjerke 2011; Wyness 2014; Leonard 2016).

In this contribution, the concept of *hybrid-transition* is used to capture the movement of children between one experiential context of digital nature to another, non-digital, space creating a different dimensional space and place. As a qualifier, 'hybrid' refers to a situation of continuing movement between digital and non-digital worlds, where experiences and learning generating within the two realms are combined and used to support further learning and experiences in each of them. Rather than a temporal sequence, hybrid-transitions are understood here as a social space underpinned by choice and exploration, and therefore representing a favourable context for the expression of children's agency to be explored. Hybrid-transitions allow children to reinvent experiences across different realms, developing new agendas according to them. Dimensional characteristics during digital and non-digital hybrid-transitions are identified as emotive and social reactions, communication and knowledge being transferred between experiences and worlds to accommodate and assimilate new understanding to extend knowledge (Edwards 2013a, 2014; Levin 2013; Levin-Gelman 2014).

Hybrid-transitions between digital and non-digital worlds are approached in this contribution as a social situation where the intersection of children's agency and the constraints imposed by the network of relationships and expectations constituting the context of children's action and sense-making becomes visible. For this reason, it is important to discuss the concept of agency used in this contribution.

Agency is observed when individual actions are not considered as determined by another subject (James 2009; Baraldi 2015), although the limitations imposed by social constraints are acknowledged (Bjerke 2011; Wyness 2014; Leonard 2016). Agency and the conditions of agency can be observed as in empirical social situations (Baraldi 2014, 2015). Agency is relevant in situation where choices of action are available for the agent, who can exercise a personal judgment in the choice (Moss 2009, 2014). Hybrid-transition, rather than a psychological process, is investigated as a space of children's agency, that is, as a space for active participation in communication, in which children can claim their right to produce and access knowledge and learning, generated in the transition between digital and non-digital experiential realms.

The idea that children give meaning to their transitions between digital and non-digital experiences, actively participating in accessing and constructing knowledge, makes hybrid-transitions a genuine social concept. Constructing and sharing knowledge it is obviously an instance of children's capability to both shape their own lives, and to influence their social contexts. Indeed adults who observe, assess and genuinely interact with children during complex exploration and learning journeys are indeed enriched and provoked to weave in, out and between digital and non-digital experiential realms and spaces.

7.3 The Challenge of Children's Agency in the Transition Between Digital and Non-digital Worlds

Rubin (2014b) identifies digital technology as a way of life that develops skills and tools vital to decode, survive and problem solve previously unknown realms, dimensions and worlds. Edwards (2013a) prompts debate regarding media influence to question if digital technology is positive or not for children's development, to provoke adults to consider 'how and what' is it that children and adults learn from each other and independently during their interaction with digital technology. *Who learns from whom* is an area to reflect upon when it comes to digital development and progression. For instance, those more knowledgeable or naturally capable in the use of digital equipment are amazing to observe both physically and cognitively whilst engaging with technical challenges to coordinate digital worlds and tools. Children may observe adult technical skills, although perhaps it is adults who need to learn how to explore and observe children whilst interacting with these emerging new realms, waves and hybrid-transitions (Brown et al. 2013; Edwards 2013a; Marsh 2010; Prensky 2001; Rubin 2014a).

Influential research for Early Years education (Marsh and Bishop 2014; Plowman et al. 2008; Levin-Gelman 2014) recognises the need for adults to be aware of the learning opportunities accessible to children via digital engagement. Technical mastery, that is, the skilled use of technology should be accompanied by engaged observation and participation in transition between digitally and non-digitally enhanced experiences. However, the focus of the above cited studies is on adults to consider the impact of digital technologies the child's emotional development (see, for instance, Levin 2013; Levin-Gelman 2014). It is argued here that such approach does not consider transitions between digital and non-digital worlds (world is used in this chapter in the phenomenological sense of 'experiential realms') as spaces for children's autonomous access to domains of knowledge. It is consequently argued that without valuing children's responsibilities for constructing knowledge, opportunities are missed by adults to decode the hybrid-transition as a space for the expression of children agency, with the consequence of overlooking children's self-determination.

Rubin (2014b) acknowledges that digital realms can be so immersive that the participation into them is neurologically indistinguishable from the participation in the outside world. Radesky et al. (2015) recognise digital technologies offer infinite interactive possibilities that are in stark contrast compared to the one-directional stream of communication experienced by children accessing television. These psychological researches have been recently used to invite adults to reflect on the importance of supporting the child in the transition between digital and non-digital worlds (Scollan and Gallagher 2016), in line with classic research on transitions between different environments, for instance between play and structured learning activities (Dunn 1988; Dunn and Ploumin 1990; Goleman 1999).

However, the plea for a systematic attention to transitions between digital and non-digital worlds is accompanied by the awareness, based on a rich vein of research, that inter-generational conflict can coagulate around the use of digital technologies from the early stages of education (Prensky 2001; Marsh 2010; Levin 2013). Prensky's argument about the fatigue of immigrated into the digital world in attuning with new technology (Prensky 2001) is a the center of the theoretical architecture of these researches, included the ones presenting a more positive outlook regarding the possibility for the adult to manage digital exploration and multidimensional learning opportunities (Edwards 2013b; Plowman et al. 2009).

Notwithstanding different degrees of optimism regarding the possibility for the adult to overcome the digital divide, the researches mentioned in the previous paragraph are all concerned with the use of digital technologies *for* the child, and they all overlook the child's role as constructor of knowledge and protagonist between digital and non-digital worlds. One of the themes of the present chapter is the different scene that children and adult seem to see when they look at digital technologies. Whilst the adults calculate a balance between risk and opportunity for children's learning, seeing the digital as an instrument of the non-digital towards successful

development, the children see the digital and the no-digital as experiential spaces that merge seamlessly. This is a claim that introduces another theme underpinning the chapter, that is, the continuing movement between digital and non-digital worlds. The observations undertaken evidence that digitally-enhanced experiences are brought and used in non-digitally based interactions, where ideas are tested, previous experiences are shared and unfinished exploration are continued.

A third theme of the chapter, and possibly the most innovative, is linked to a sociological interpretation of the transition between digital and non-digital worlds. What is defined here as hybrid-transitions are spaces of children's agency, where knowledge related to digital experiences is used as the presupposition of autonomous choices in non-digital interaction, and vice-versa. This continuum from one world to the other is the social and temporal condition of hybrid-transitions, and children's agency within that continuum requires to be recognised by adults, to avoid hindering the development of affective trust relationships. How this space is acknowledged, provided for and who it is supported by, are aspects within everyday experiences in Early Education that deserve reflection and discussion on.

Linked to the observation of practices is the fourth theme of the chapter, that concerns the ambiguous relationships between adults' agenda and children's agency. On the one hand, hybrid transitions represent one of many possible case-studies for that dialectic, on the other hand they represent a still unexplored field for social analysis. For this reason, a new theoretical concept is introduced in the chapter's discussion on the highly dynamic combination between adults' and children's diverging agendas in the use of digital technology. This concept, *digital scotoma,* refers to a situation where hybrid-transitions become the blind spot of the adult. Digital scotoma therefore indicates a blind spot concerning the observation of children's agency during digital activities and hybrid-transition, that prevents the observer (the adult) to acknowledge the complex creativity, possibilities and learning in such situations. As per the scotoma of the eye, the blind spot in the digital scotoma limits a specific field of observation (children's agency); however, it is surrounded by a field of normal vision. This explains the apparently paradoxical combination of professionals' support of child-centered pedagogies and their inability to detect and react to children's agency in the digital world and hybrid-transitions observed by the author in the context of the research.

The perverse effects of the digital scotoma in terms of the inability to value and promote children's self-determination are similar to the effect of adults' inability to value children's agency, and are well known in pedagogical literature from the 1950s. These effects are described in such terms as children's alienation; children's self-marginalization and distrust, that prevents commitment in specific interactions with adult, which is recognised as a vital component of socialisation and education. Consequently, whilst adults may have their own agenda for the use of digital resources it is apparent that children's agenda might not be the same.

7.4 Hybrid-Transitions in the Provision of Digital Technology to Support Communication Skills: A Case Study from Boston

In line with the collection's overall aim to support reflection on the relationship between children's self-determination and the semantics of childhood, a case study is now discussed to present examples of transitions between digital and non-digital worlds, focusing on the measure in which children are recognised as legitimate constructors of knowledge during hybrid-transitions. The discussion of field notes produced by the author during observations in a pre-kindergarten aims to support her argument that hybrid-transitions can be a space for children's agency. It is also argued that, in a circular relationship, agency defines the meaning of hybrid-transitions for children's experiences.

The case study presented in this section invites reflection hybrid-transitions between digital and non-digital worlds as spaces for the expression of children's agency. The discussion of observation notes presented by the author invites reflection regarding communication, action and reactions that frame children's agency during hybrid-transitions in the use of digital technologies in a small group.

The case study concerns digital activities observed by the author at a pre-kindergarten in the Boston area. The age of observed children was between 3 and 4 years. Three adults were present, two in addition to the author. In the United States, Early Years provision is mainly sourced, planned and funded at State and local level. Approximately 10% of funding for early years education and care is allocated by Federal Government via the grant distributed by the United States Department of Education. Further funding is sourced to Head Start and additional pre-school programmes which were underpinned by the *No Child Left Behind Act (2002) now superceeded by The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015).* Although the Preschool Development Grants (PDG) program secured an increase from 28,200 to 34,000 children who benefited from preschool opportunities in 2016, over the last decade American government and policy have been recognising that not enough has been invested for young children, children's services and early years provision (Mongeau 2016; Mosley 2016). For instance, Federal States such as Idaho, South Dakota or New Hampshire do not invest in Early Year education schools. Whilst it is evident early years education is now given much more importance nationally, funding via non-profit providers serving children from low-income families has not sufficiently been resourced or funded in view of needs, making Early Years Education not easily accessible for low, and middle, income families (The National Institute for Early Education Research 2017). In order to improve the situation, a Federal $3 million preschool expansion grant was delivered in 2016 with the aim to add more seats (places for children).

Within the national picture, the City of Boston is surely a leading force in the public sponsoring of pre-schools towards a more inclusive Early Education; an example is provided by the pre-kindergarten where the observation took place which, at the time of the observation, was one of the 3100 community-based

pre-schools in Massachusetts benefitting of both local funds and additional funds from the 2015 Federal Preschool Expansion Grant initiative, aimed to improve Early Years Provision.

In Boston the Early Years Education department aims to support, train and empower staff who can professionally challenge habitual practice and existing provision in the framework of the Mayoral strategy *Investment in Young People for the City* (Boston Early Education Department 2016). Boston Early Years policy and drive is to avoid children being placed 'just somewhere' without having access to high quality staff, stimulating environments, resources and opportunities. Federal-funded seats are therefore distributed with priority given to low income 'Gateway City' areas as defined by Boston City government. A budget of approximately 12,500 dollars per child per year is spent on resourcing Early Years provision, professional training, remuneration and deployment of resources. Boston's preschool programme, called K1 was accessible to 68% of 4 year old children at the moment of the research, in 2016. According to the *Investment in Young People for the City,* local government in Boston aim for all 4 year olds to access consistently high quality sustainable Pre-Kindergarten experience and provision. Care provision has less empathesis on preparation for school, learner identity or, future citizenship contributions. Although the combination of the local culture of Early Years education and recent federal investment makes the access to pre-schools more inclusive in Boston than in other areas in the country (Mongeau 2017), the approach to Early Years Education in the pre-kindergarten observed is coherent with the mainstream approach in American pre-schools. In the context of the research, children are assessed by practitioners in their strengths and areas needing support, and play-based activities are encouraged in the areas where the need of improvement is observed. The development of communication skills is one of the core areas for American practice in Early Years: children's self-expressive language skills are emphasised in everyday interactions, both with adult and peers.

The pre-kindergarten where the observation was accomplished is located in a multicultural neighborhood, and characterised by a continuing pedagogical investment in the monitoring and support of the development of communication skills, as many children attending the settings come from a recent immigration background, and have English as a second or third language. The activity discussed here is therefore particularly important in the setting's pedagogical plan, consisting in the use of digital technology to support the development of communication skills for two children.

> During a recent visit to a pre-kindergarten in Boston, two children aged three and four years were observed sitting at a PC choosing to embark on a 'vampire' package and every-time they found three words starting with the letter 'v', the vampire gave a deep and scary long laugh... the two children squealed with delight...thoroughly enjoying being scared whilst observing each other's reaction and facial contortions. Enthusiastic screams were undertaken simultaneously with both children theatrically trying to be the most scared, scariest and alarmed. In fact, a competition to outdo each other could even be seen erupting to combine their unique reactions and experiences.

The digital world becomes the pivot for children's agency, expressed as authorship of narratives stemming from the digital experience into the non-digital world of face-to-face interactions.

Narratives of personal memories and present experience are shared and co-constructed by the children during the use of the software; children are involved in the production of interlaced narratives (Norrick 2007, 2013; Stone and Bietti 2016). Interlaced narratives, and their interactive co-construction, represent a form of agency within the peer-group, as it implies the mutual recognition as producer of valid knowledge and meanings (Baraldi and Iervese 2017). Such narratives in the transition between digital and non-digital worlds could not have been used without the experience of the digital world. In particular, the experience of the digital world enhances personal narratives linking ideas, experiences and emotions, that are subsequently "interlaced" in co-constructed group narratives authored by the children. In a circular relationship, hybrid-transition is the context and the outcome of children's agency.

> The sheer joy they displayed during this activity enticed another four children to join them. Child 'a' continued to control the mouse, child 'b' continued to point to the screen to words beginning with the letter 'v', whilst children 'c', 'd', 'e' and 'f', who recently joined the activity, interacted, colluded, negotiated, problem solved and swapped vampire scary stories from a recent TV programme and birthday party they had experienced.

In the above scenario children were observed immersed in the vampire game, a genuinely digital experience. However, within a split second the children would enter back their attention into the non-digital experiential realms. The group of children seemed to effortlessly connect and understand their shared, natural movement through 'hybrid-transitions'. In her role as an observer it took time, energy and genuine curiosity for the researcher to decode and understand these movements and spaces entered by the children.

Hybrid-transitions can only be explored by observers who are tuned into children's agenda. Time is a precious resource that can be a challenge to find when working with and for children with regards to evolving and complex roles and responsibilities inherited across the early years and education sector. Observers who enter children's world have much to decode with regards to meaning, places and spaces. For instance, adults who focus on their own agenda, curricula or goal driven outcomes form their own reality or 'space' that differs from that of children. Reality of practice can be curricula and adult-centered. Professional agendas can envelope adults into habitual zones of practice to prevent *seeing* the real child and worlds they enter.

The following excerpt from the observation notes concerns a very important aspect correlated to the transition between digital and non-digital worlds, that is, the reaction of the practitioner to the child's use in the non-digital world of knowledge and experiences matured in the digital world. The observation illustrates an example of *digital scotoma* that prevents the adult to acknowledge the hybrid-transition as a space for the expression of children's agency.

> Child 'd' is observed to be immersed and excited during the above 'vampire' scenario and seems to be enjoying the interaction with peers and the vampire play. A practitioner joins the group to reiterate agreed rules that "only two children at a time should be using the computer". Four children (including child 'd') were encouraged to leave the computer area and join in with a structured adult led activity.
>
> The group disbanded and instantly the richness of the world they had entered shifted. Child 'd' continued to laugh whilst using a substantial vampire voice, physically making vampire movements to continue his exploration. His play and agenda seemed to continue with or without the computer and his creative and cognitive skills applied during the observed 'vampire play' were transferred between the digital realm and into the physical, non-digital world. The transition was fast and purposeful. The practitioner asked child 'd' to stop using a loud voice and "stop being silly" whilst he created flying actions whilst swishing around and flapping on a curtain.

In the above scenario, child 'd' creatively interacted both with the digital resource and with peers, co-authoring interlaced narratives in the transition between digital and non-digital worlds. For instance, he managed game rules whilst contributing towards construction of new ones, at the same time transforming his and other children's memories as a resource to generating interlaced narratives in the present (Norrick 2012). He alternated between the digital and non-digital realms effortlessly, making the transition itself the space to express his agency and to recognise other children's agency. Reflecting upon the point above where the children disbanded via adult interaction, it is pertinent to wonder what happens to the space and context constructed and visited by the children. For instance, are the shared experiences during hybrid-transitions stored on a social hard drive and suspended by the authors to be managed and revisited or are the experience and space similar to a snowflake melting on the ground becoming immersed in the milieu?

The form of engagement used by the practitioner during the observed activity suggests that the recognition and acceptance of children's agency may encounter some difficulties, when the importance of transition is not recognised. A space between the digitally and the non-digitally enhanced experience, where children were producing knowledge based on experiences and memories from both worlds, is closed by the intervention of the practitioner. This might raise question about the quality of the impact of such intervention on children's learning and development that the provision of digital technology was aimed at.

Although immersed in the continuing transition between digital and non-digital worlds, child 'd' nevertheless left when asked and moved to the area suggested by the practitioner. However, even when firmly positioned in the non-digital realm, and physically removed from the digital world, he continued to author his own participation to the new world, developing on from the vampire theme. Child 'd' transports his script into new realms and spaces during hybrid-transitions.

Hybrid-transitions can be promoted as an expression of children's agency or refused as disruptive for the purpose of educational planning or planned outcomes. For instance, does child'd' receive space to express choice, knowledge or creativity? Does he receive space to experience or consolidate the knowledge he has co-constructed with peers? Does he get opportunity to share experience? Or, taking a more pedagogical approach, does child 'd' get recognition for skills developed or opportunity to choose?

The discussion of the case-study may help in considering what the practitioner 'did not see', and the impact that the lack of acceptance towards the child's agency may have on child 'd' positioning in the educational relationship, in particular in terms of engagement and personal trust, wellbeing and behaviour. This is particularly important in the context of American Early Years Education, where settings are generally observed as extensions of family, structured around affective care, rather than cognitive development (Lara-Cinisomo et al. 2009). As a consequence emphasis is placed on the development of 'quasi-parental' relationships between adults and children, which can be jeopardised by lack of trusting commitments.

The Boston pre-kindergarten observation, as exemplified by some exert from the field notes taken by the author, capture how hybrid-transitions between the digital and non-digital experiential realms, or phenomenological worlds, occur continuously during everyday interactions, inviting the reader to reflect on how they represent an important social space for the expression of children's agency, and a precious opportunity to observe how children manage their own learning, environments, curiosity, behavior and social skills. The discussion of the case study, combined with the underpinning conceptual work, invites the reader to consider how digital scotoma can hinder the appreciation of children's agency.

7.5 Conclusion

Bronfenbrenner (1979) identifies transition occurring when an individual's position is altered as the result of a change in role, environment or circumstance. In the observations discussed in the previous sections, hybrid transitions are a space of change for and from children. Knowledge is generated in the combination of digitally enhanced and non-digital enhanced experiences; this is a form of knowledge which is acted and authored by children through the co-construction of narratives. Brooker (2008) and Petriwskyj et al. (2005) argue that transition is a process of 'mutual adaptation' moving between environments. This chapter suggests a more dynamic and agentic concept of transition regarding the transition between digital and non-digital worlds; rather than adapting, children co-construct social spaces where their agency is expressed through claiming and enacting authorship of knowledge.

Based on observation and analysis supported by concepts developed within the field of childhood studies, this chapter concludes that adults should be mindful of potentially unforeseen but nevertheless empirically important spaces of children's agency in the transition between digital and non-digital worlds. The observations discussed in the chapter suggest that the use of digital technologies by a small group of young children may be the context for hybrid-transitions that open opportunities where personal memories and narratives can be produced and negotiated.

Hybrid-transitions will inevitably occur between digital and non-digital explorations, and it is here suggested that the observation of interactions and communica-

tion in a seamless transition between digital and non-digital worlds can be of the greatest importance to promote a culture of mutual trust and positive engagement in contexts where the use of digital resources impact on children's (and adults') experiences and learning.

The role of the adult to recognise and support children during hybrid-transitions will vary greatly depending upon training, experience and perspective. It is also acknowledged that observation of others, as much as self-observation, is impacted upon agendas, expectations and identities that largely determine what is seen and what it is unseen (Dewey 1966; Bolton 2010).

However, what will not change is the necessity for adults to be able reflect on self, role and impact regarding the ability to cope with change, as suggested by leading authors as Dewey (1966), Oatley (1990), and Schon (1987).

It is possible to romanticize about yesteryears' traditional play experiences; however, digital play has become the 'real play' and lived experiences of today. We cannot know the world our children will inhabit as adults. As Khalil Gibran (1991) famously wrote, '*your children are not your children, you may house their bodies but not their souls, for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams*'. With a more prosaic argumentation, Bruce (2012) recognises how observers learn about the rules and rituals that children follow only if the observer is ready to learn or to be led by children. So today, an invitation is offered to join children and to learn alongside them on their transitions between digital and non-digital worlds, that constitute the reality of their experiences and spaces for the expression of social agency as authors, and co-authors, of interlaced narratives that use both digitally- and non-digitally enhanced experiences.

On completion of her chapter, Angela Scollan proposes the following questions to provoke further reflection, research and dialogue

- What can adults do to enter spaces that children visit or construct?
- How might routines, resources and rules prevent childrens' agency from being heard and, engaged with?
- When children author their own stories, games or play how can adults ensure they are listening?

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Chapter 8
Practices/7, Wales: Foregrounding Relationships in Classroom Practices Framing Children's Learning: Case Studies from Two Primary School Classrooms in Wales

Carolyn Morris

8.1 Introduction and Aim of Study

Education in the U.K is compulsory for children from the age of 5 years and the primary school may have children from the ages of 4 to 11 years attending. Education and its assessment in Wales differs from that of England; the statutory curriculum is a Foundation Phase curriculum for all 3–7 years and a National Curriculum that is a formal subject focused curriculum for children from 7 to 19 years of age (WAG 2014, 2015). Schools in Wales are categorised according to the language of instruction with some in traditionally speaking Welsh areas having Welsh as the first language and English as a second language, whereas in areas where there has been little or no tradition of Welsh this is reversed.

This chapter draws on the findings of an exploratory, qualitative, interactionist, micro-sociological study conducted mainly in two primary school classrooms in Wales. One English medium school classroom with Year 4 children, aged 8–9 years and one Welsh medium school classroom with Year 3 and 4 children, aged 7–9 years. The main aim of the study was to explore:

How the relationships in the socio-cultural classroom contexts influence children's learning dispositions?

Classroom interactions were examined at two levels:

(a) The class-teacher and children;
(b) Children and their peers;

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Incorporated within this aim was a consideration of children's political positioning as 'active' or 'passive' within these classroom discourses and an exploration of the influences on their involvement in learning.

8.2 Learning Dispositions

The term disposition was introduced by Katz in 1985 as relevant to the education of young children and described as a domain of human attributes (Katz 1988). Katz and Raths expand on this and describe dispositions as 'intentional patterns of actions', 'habits of mind' not 'mindless habits' (1985:4) and as a 'tendency to exhibit frequently, consciously and voluntarily a pattern of behaviour that is directed to a broad goal' (Katz 1993:1). More recently, Carr has defined 'learning dispositions' as hierarchically, complex conceptual levels of learning, observable in actions and behaviours (Carr 2001:5) and Carr and Claxton (2002:10), the longer- term outcomes of learning. Costa and Kallick (2014) discuss how strong 'learning dispositions' can be transformative in people's lives and can prepare students for their futures.

Further analysis of the concept 'learning disposition' reveals that it can be interpreted along a continuum of 'situatedness'. Carr and Claxton's notion of disposition is intermediate between a psychological interpretation of the term which sees 'disposition' as a 'highly abstracted, de-contextualized notion' focusing on the individual (2002:12) and the socio-cultural interpretation of Wertsch (1985) which sees 'learning' and 'learning dispositions' as highly situated, with learning as always taking part of the context with it.

8.3 Characteristics of Classroom Relationships

Classroom relationships in the primary school can be characterised in two main ways as:

(a) Asymmetric between the teacher and the child;
(b) Symmetric between children and their peers.

There are several reasons why the relationships between teachers and children are regarded as asymmetric. Firstly the 'generational social status' due to age difference and the power differentials to mediate the structures…

> ….the ideologies, policies and social practices that control children's lives. (Mayall 2002:39)

Here Mayall refers to the constraints on children's lives. The teacher is an authority figure whose role is to maintain order, interpret the curriculum and organise it' s presentation or (re)presentation to the children. S/he will also select the pedagogic

paradigm, classroom rules, daily routines of classroom practice and the level of 'autonomy' afforded to children. A teacher is a mediator who leads the children into the processes of learning and a role model at an intellectual (Katz 1987) and social level (Hughes et al. 2001). The most significant power differentials in relationships between children and teachers emerge in the teacher's role as assessor. At the primary level, the teacher forms an attachment figure, carer and protector.

Relationships between children, peers and friends in the classroom context are generally more symmetrical than the ones they form with adults. Peers provide a counterbalance to adult power and evidence of reciprocity can be observed in the pride they show in each other, the praise, criticism and mutual help they afford one another. Trawick–Smith (2000) discuss how children's abilities to develop positive feelings towards themselves and others are dependent on their emotional states and children who are emotionally healthy find it easier to form positive relationships with peers and adults.

The study's approach was socio-cultural drawing on the work of Wertsch (1985, 1990, 1991a, b); Lave and Wenger (1991) and Rogoff (2003). Wertsch sees 'learning' and 'learning dispositions' as highly situated, with learning as always taking part of the context with it. Lave and Wenger interpret learning as increased participation in 'communities of practice' (1991:65). While Rogoff explains how we gain deeper understanding of institutional and cultural practices if we analyse the meanings that people give to 'cultural tools' and procedures (2003:258).

BERA (2004, 2011) ethical guidelines were followed with special considerations for research with children respected. Headteachers as gatekeepers gave their consent for access to the settings and distributed letters to the parents to gain their consent. Anonymity of the participants was assured and data produced to be unattributable. An explanation of the research processes was made to the children, who were asked for their consent to participate. It was emphasised that their views were needed to find out about the way they learned, that it was not part of an assessment; that they were not under any obligation to participate and could withdraw from the study at any time if they so wished.

8.4 The Classroom as a Socio-cultural Context for Learning

Each classroom's socio-cultural context is unique to the teacher and cohort of children, whose effects on one another are bi-directional. In the primary school, the class group is a highly influential one for children, as they generally remain with the same cohort for a minimum of six years unless they move from the area or to another school. Most teachers have responsibility for teaching one class with whom they spend most of the school day, therefore get to know the children in their care very well and form close relationships with them.

The teacher has a significant status in this context and how this individual role is interpreted is based on socio-cultural influences at personal, professional and organisational level and the educational and sociological philosophies of the period. The

teacher's powerful influence is manifested in the interpretation of the curriculum, goals of learning identified, including pedagogic approaches and discourses, forms of assessments and the imposition of adult authority e. g through rewards and sanctions to enforce rules for behaviour in the classroom. The key issues for this study are whether the context created is one where children are included and a culture of learning developed. In a critical analysis of the learning context important questions to consider are: What kind of relationships are developed? Are all children included? Are their identities as learners positively supported? Are their rights respected and how much autonomy are they given? Is the curriculum meaningful to children? What are the constraints to learning in the classroom? Further criteria of the analysis are of the teacher's ability to influence children's receptivity and involvement in learning through developing stimulating activities that engage children's interest and motivation.

8.4.1 The Teacher's Significant Role in the Classroom

Teaching is defined as both an art and a science with the teacher's role variously defined as pedagogue, instructor, mediator, facilitator and co-constructor according to the range of educational philosophies. All these roles involve 'engagement' with children in the processes of learning. In this study Pascal et al. terminology is applied with the term 'involvement' (Laevers 1994), used for children and 'engagement' for the teacher (1996:19). The teacher represents and communicates to the children her/his personal interpretation and selection of the curriculum both formal and hidden; based on the educational ideology of the setting and what is accepted as knowledge and practice by the culture of a society (Edwards and Mercer 1987).

8.4.2 Practical Classroom Influences on the Teacher

A significant part of the teacher's role is to manage classroom relationships and to maintain order.

Professional craft knowledge can be informed by theoretical and cognitive knowledge but is essentially based on how each teacher reflects and deals with problems related to the demands of the job. In their study Cooper and McIntyre identified four main dimensions that teachers referred to when evaluating the effectiveness of their teaching over an extended time scale (such as a term, year or pupils' school careers), and their professional commitments (e.g. 'coverage of syllabus'). Their short–term objectives, in relation to pupil outcomes and progress, over a narrow time scale (such as a lesson, group of lessons or half-termly unit. Their own performance, in terms of decisions made in pre-active and /or interactive phases of lessons, their management and presentational skills, and the success and appropriateness of their teaching methods. Finally, their preferred image, in relation to the type of

classroom state they seek to maintain, through the promotion of interaction (social and inter-personal) and pupil-behaviour (Cooper and McIntyre 2002:75).

8.4.3 Children's Influences

The classroom context itself is a bi–directional one, with children having an impact on teachers' actions as well as the reverse effect (Cooper and McIntyre 2002). The pupils' interests can be demonstrated by their action such as e.g. bringing artefacts to lessons, their knowledge and understanding, motivation, preferred styles and ways of working (individual versus collaborative) and their expectations. Teacher's planning can also be influenced by pupils during lessons or modified in response to pupils. Pupil influence can be demonstrated in the choice of learning activities, resources, teaching strategy and pacing of lesson (Cooper and McIntyre 2002). Next let us examine teachers' perspectives of children.

8.4.4 Teachers' Perspectives of Children

Various views of children are held by teachers. Whether children are regarded as 'active' or 'passive' will influence the level of 'autonomy' afforded to them in their learning. Hujala (2002:95) emphasizes how a curriculum for young children's learning should position the child as a central 'actor'. Learning processes that position the child as a central actor in curriculum development respect their rights and are more likely to gain the child's involvement and make learning meaningful. These are the premises on which the curriculum is developed in the municipal schools of Reggio Emilia (Rinaldi 2006).

8.4.5 Teacher's Conceptions of Ability

Dweck has identified two frameworks for understanding intelligence and achievement. The 'fixed' theory of intelligence is associated with 'performance', an approach to learning that can produce a 'helpless response' in a child as the result of failure or challenge; whereas 'malleable' intelligence is associated with 'mastery learning', interpreting difficulty as a challenge. 'Mastery' is associated with intrinsic motivation whereas 'performance' is associated with extrinsic (1999).

Ryan and Deci's 'Self–determination theory' has identified factors that support intrinsic motivation, self-regulation and well-being in educational domains and identify three innate psychological needs as relevant "competence, autonomy and relatedness" (2000:68).

8.5 Are the Values of Learning Embedded to Form a Learning Culture?

To learn efficiently, children need opportunities to interact with their surroundings, materials and others. In a classroom situation, the others may be the teachers, adults, peers or friends the child has contact with. The shared meanings of classroom culture are developed through communication and language. Cultures value different learning achievements, and foreground or neglect, different layers of learning e.g. one culture may reward intellectual prowess and ignore the development of empathy, another the reverse (Claxton 2002: 1). To explore classroom learning cultures, we need to examine their discourses.

8.5.1 Classroom Discourse

There are varying theoretical perspectives for the analysis of the significance of discourse. From one perspective, the interaction of the child with others can be interpreted as a process of facilitation which can be viewed in two ways:

1. The adult scaffolding the child's struggles to make sense of experience;
2. The adult giving the child a set of grammars and scripts for making sense either directly or through ways in which the child's own behaviours and utterances are afforded legitimacy (Bruner and Haste 1987:20).

A second interpretation is centred on the social and cultural where the child's discourse with the adult is interpreted as a microcosm of more extensive social processes. From this perspective language has a dual purpose, the first to provide a framework for the child's thinking and cognition and secondly to 'reflect and reproduce' cultural narratives, symbols, representations and conventions (Bruner and Haste 1987:21). It is through discourse that knowledge is shared and meaning is communicated. Through the analysis of the content and patterning (who talks to whom) of discourse much can be revealed about the social order of a setting (Edwards and Mercer 1987).

8.5.2 Creating a Classroom Context for Learning

A fundamental need for children's 'well–being' is a sense of belonging and inclusion in a classroom. The level of inclusivity and differentiation that exist, reflect the teacher's understanding of these principles and the management of their application. The framing of the curriculum and the ways in which the children are involved in learning processes necessitates a knowledge of subject content and an understanding of how affective and social processes impact on cognitive learning. An inclusive

context is created when children's individual needs are identified and met; their emotional well–being and involvement considered, with an acceptance of difference.

A question that naturally arises in relation to children's learning is why some children become successful learners, whereas others do not, apart from innate differences such as that of ability.

The theories that explain children's differing levels of achievement are complex, varied, intersect, overlap and are linked to gender, ethnicity, social class, culture and language. However, what is central to them all is the importance of children's identities in relation to learning. It is not possible in this chapter to explore all the facets of 'identity' as the variations are enormous; what is relevant to consider is how classroom processes impact on children's identities as learners. Siraj–Blatchford and Clarke explains how children's identities are 'learned' (2000:3). While O'Connor (2001) discusses the complexity of 'identity' and how our lack of understanding of this complexity accounts for our lack of understanding of who achieve or fail in school.

Extensive research by Pollard and Filer (1996, 1999) in primary school classrooms has established that the formation of a child's 'identity' as a learner is dynamic and correlates with their successive learning experiences and relationships in the home and school. They identified that a major concern for children in the classroom was developing and maintaining an 'identity', a sense of self, a sense of being valued. The maintenance of 'self' being based on facets of self–image. Pollard explains that children become effective learners when they are confident and can reflect on their learning, trust their teacher and manage risk taking in the classroom. They also need teachers who will challenge them intellectually and give them the necessary support (Pollard and Filer 2000:3).

A further attribute that children need to interact effectively in the classroom is social competence.

Hutchby and Moran Ellis explicate how empirical research shows children 'constantly negotiate' social competence (1998:15). Trawick -Smith discusses how there are two inter related aspects to social competence, being liked by others and having skills to interact effectively in social settings (2000:295).

8.5.3 Framing a Curriculum for Learning

The organisation and framing of the curriculum by the classroom teacher for children's involvement in learning processes necessitates a knowledge of subject content and an understanding of how affective and social processes impact on cognitive learning. Each cohort of children in conjunction with their teacher will create a unique classroom socio-cultural context through day to day interaction in which they all have varying levels of influence. A context that is inclusive will foreground relationships. Findings from research by Pollard and Filer (1996) and Pollard (1997, 1999) indicate that relationships between teachers and children are the basis of the moral order of the classroom. They establish the climate in which teaching and

learning occurs. The relationship with the teacher influencing the child's sense of 'self', their 'identity' in that context.

Goldstein discusses how cognitive growth is 'inherently relational' and how processes such as 'scaffolding of learning' and 'co-construction of mind' exemplify the significance of interpersonal relationships between individuals, pairs or groups (1999:4). Bowman (2001) identifying that the relationship between the teacher/caregiver and the child as the single most important quality in early learning. Goldstein draws on the work of Nel Noddings on the 'ethic of care' and argues for a broadening of our conception of teaching learning processes by including the roles of affect, volition and relationships in cognition (2016:647–673).

We will now examine excerpts of discourses from observations conducted in two classrooms of how the teachers organize and frame the curriculum for children's learning and the importance placed on relationships.

8.5.4 Classroom 1

Whole Class Cross-Curricular Creative activity lesson linked to a whole school theme- Creating a 3D Flag.

In the first example from the Welsh medium primary school an interesting activity is developed linked to a key cultural event in Wales, The International *Eisteddfod* (Festival) held annually at Llangollen, Wales. This festival of music and dance celebrates cultural diversity with participants generally wearing the national costumes of their countries. To raise awareness of this Welsh cultural event children wore various national costumes making the day more memorable and stimulating their interest. Their costumes were diverse, and in some cases authentic, representing countries from Morocco, France, U. S. A. to China. The fact that they had dressed up made them more excited and lively than usual. It also set the scene for the introduction of the art techniques of an international American artist to Y3 and Y4 children together followed by a practical art activity. The teacher enthusiastically read an article about Jasper Johns and then showed them a photograph of his original 3D work of Art, based on the American Flag. The composition developed by triplication of superimposed images of the flag of gradational size, large, medium and small to give a 3D effect. This first part of the lesson in Welsh was formal and involved direct questioning by the teacher who did this with energy fully engaged with the children giving them prompts to clarify meaning.

T1: *What do you see?*

Ch American flag.
T1: *Star Spangled Banner.*
T1: *What's special about the flag?*
By4T. *It's been raised.*
T1: *It's in 3D relief.*

[T1 then explained how in the lesson they would create a flag produced using similar techniques to the artist Jasper Johns. T1 continued by demonstrating how to make a 3D effect flag with rectangular shapes of increasing gradational size.]

The activity had novelty value for the children, and the teacher skilfully stimulated interest by extending the questioning to other areas e.g. asking questions linked to flags that represented the countries of various football teams. She uses prompts to clarify children's comments (Salmon and Freedman 2002:50).

A practical group work session followed, and this format gave children far more opportunity for the expression of their 'autonomy and self–determination'. They interacted with each other in their groups and discussed what they were doing and gave guidance to their peers on the activity, conversing freely. When children moved around the classroom it gave them the opportunity to initiate conversation with others. T1 encouraged Y4 children to support Y3 children.

The dialogue that follows between a boy and girl illustrates how classroom, conversations shift fluidly from task related mainstream classroom culture to unrelated peer sub-culture. Peer interactions themselves develop into relationships in a casual way. We see an acknowledgement and praise by the teacher of children's reciprocity in these relationships with their peers. We also note the freedom that exists during group work for these to develop.

8.5.5 Dialogue Between Dyad y4bI and y4gT During Group Work

The children's conversation which is initiated and led by the girl, indicates that they are friends and initially is unrelated to the task. As the conversation proceeds, there is an offer of help given to the boy.

[gTy4: initiates conversation with bI y4]
gTy4: bIy4 *Would you like to come to my house again?*
bIy4: *Yes!*
gTy4: *What do you mean?*
gTy4: *Would you like to come to my house again?*
bIy4: *O. K.*
gTy4: *You could see my new shoes.*
gTy4: *Would you like help?*
bIy4: *Yes.*
bIy4: *Can I please do it for you?*
gTy4: *I've stuck another one with glue. I've done it wrong here.*
I like doing this! [She demonstrates to y4 boy how to fold a mount, for supporting 3D effect of flag].
You turn it over.
Wait for it to dry.

The dialogue gives us an insight into the warm nature of relationships between these children.

T1: There are good children here! Helping other children.

From these excerpts from C1 the Welsh medium classroom, we see clearly that how a lesson is structured has a major impact on the level of 'autonomy' afforded to children. We have a glimpse of the kind of relationships that exist in this community of practice and an indication of the norms of interaction. Group work creates opportunities for peer interactions, interdependence and collaboration that facilitate the development of relationships. It also gives 'autonomy' and freedom for the expression of children's agency and 'self -determination' during learning processes.

8.5.6 Classroom 2

The next examples are from the English medium primary school classroom and demonstrate the teacher's ability to successfully manage lessons from The National Literacy Programme, (WAG 2010) with a large class of culturally diverse children. She encourages children who have English as a first language to help those who have English as an additional language.

The literacy hour was brought in by the government specifically to improve reading and writing in primary schools. It is a prescriptive programme, with structured criteria for each year group (National Literacy Programme, WAG 2010).

C2. Script from Play '*Fantastic Mr. Fox'*.

This is a lesson extract from the literacy hour based on the play adapted by Reid from Dahl (Dahl 1987) '*Fantastic Mr. Fox'*. It took place during the formal morning session of the literacy hour with the whole class of children sitting at their tables. The class-teacher explained to the children some of the differences between reading from a play and reading from a story. She also explained the format of Scene 1 of the Play's script and that there are six characters in the play, three of whom do not have speaking parts].

T2: We've read 'Fantastic Mr. Fox'. It's a very, very good book, we enjoyed it!
[T2: enthusiastically communicates a message that books are enjoyable]
Teacher reads from the script of fantastic Mr. Fox. and explains as she proceeds.

T2: 'Boggis, Bunce and Bean are sitting at three tables laden with food and placed in a line on the stage in front of the drawn curtain [These are three characters in the play]. They are frozen'.
T2: How are they sitting if they're frozen gCy4?
[Teacher next explains stage direction].
T2: [*Lights are off at this point. Children enter from the back of the hall*].
We don't usually read that! It's the stage direction!

T2: We've got children, *First child, second child, third child*
[These are the three other characters in the play].
T2: We need some children.
And we need three of them.
T2: Who would like to have a go?

[Children put up their hands and eagerly try to get the teacher's attention Demonstrating their enthusiasm].

T2: Jy4 you can be child 1.
T2. Child 2.
T2: Ky4 You can be child 2.
T2. Child 3. Who'd like to have a go? You can have a go.
T2: y4 C You can be child 3.
T2: We've got children. Shall we all read the children's part?
Children read together and then each part in turn.

Sensitivity – The tone of discourse is warm and encouraging.

T2 "There's a big circle there and it says 'no speech marks'. Why don't we use them here? Do you know (b I y4)?

b I y4: we usually use them when someone is speaking in a story.
T2. You're absolutely right! We usually put 'and' around the writing.
T2: Why don't we in the play?
T2: Why bOy4?
bOy4: The names are down anyway.
T2. Good. Excellent! Teacher repeats what the boy has said. And in a play, what do people usually do? It's usually about speaking anyway. So you don't need to tell them you're speaking! Good.
[T2 gives praise and acknowledges children's efforts].
T2: That was beautiful reading but there's one thing I'm going to say!

I'm not criticizing your reading. Your reading was beautiful. This is a play!
[Teacher reads in an inexpressive way].

T2: What could I do to make it more interesting? (referring to play script text).
T2: How would you say it bPy4? [child demonstrates].
T2: Can you see he's putting expression in his voice?

[Teacher clarifies meaning by explaining again].

T2. His voice goes up and down.

[Teacher speaks again in a monotone to demonstrate}. Do we speak like that?

T2: What could I do to make that really good?
gMy4: Expression!
T2: A play is not like reading it's like speaking. You need to put some expression into your play!

The morning activities are teacher led, some choice is given to the children, but within the formal lesson format opportunities for children's 'autonomy and self-determination' are minimal. The teacher sensitively manages the interactions and is warm and encouraging towards the children modelling examples of interactions for them to follow and maintaining positive relationships demonstrating the value placed on good relationships in this context. Through this sensitivity in engaging with the children she gains their enthusiastic involvement.

C2 Y4. Peer group activity play script,' *Fantastic Mr. Fox'* a follow-on activity from the morning literacy hour.

T2 has divided the class into six groups to organise themselves to put on a production of the above play. The groups disperse to various locations while two groups remain in the classroom to organise themselves to allocate parts and practice a performance of the play without the teacher's supervision. There are six characters, Boggis, Bunce and Bean and three child parts Child1, Child 2 and Child 3. The group observed is composed of six boys. The interaction is lively and boisterous and at times they disagree about the allocation of roles, however they manage to complete the task and support and guide one another with N taking most responsibility. The teacher checks on them at the end to ensure that all roles have been allocated.

These are all Y4 boys. The parts are as follows: Bounce H, Bogus B. Bean N. Child 1 C, Child 2 I and Child 3 T. The teacher is not present for most of the sequence and re-enters towards the end.

Children's discourse

H→gchn. Yeah ! We're the weirdos! [child refers to the 3 characters in the play].
N→ gchn. Anybody want to be him? (referring to the characters listed).
H→ gchn. I don't want to be Him! Not me. Cross me off, Not me!
C→ gchn. I wanna be him, I wanna be him!!
N→ gchn. Boys we've got to write down the parts! (Reminds the group that they need to have some order and record the allocation of parts so that there's no confusion). Print Bean, Bunce, Boggis, 1st child, 2nd child, 3rd child.
H→ gchn. Yeah! Yeah!
B→I 2nd child
B→ gchn Who am I again I? [Without the teacher's supervision their behaviour is boisterous however they eventually manage to organise themselves].

I→bB You're Boggis
bB→I'm Boggis,Boggis
bH→Who am I C? Who am I again I?
bI→ bI don't know!
bN→ bH You're Bunce. Is he the skinny one?
bN→ The tiniest ones Bunce
bN→Ready! Let's all read our parts.
bH→What do I do with Bounce? [referring what kind of role he should act out]

bN→ H: I don't think you do. All you do is stay in the background and whisper cruel things to each other

Do I highlight anything? Do I write anything down? (One boy is keeping a record of which parts are allocated to whom and asks his peers for support).

Teacher returns to check on children

T→ gchn You've decided whose who?
bH→T.A 's Bogus, I'm Bunce
bH→T.I'm the midget. No I'm not ready! We need to highlight them!
Not yet! (They are highlighting the script with the parts allocated).

Teacher leaves to check on another group.

[teacher checks that all parts have been allocated].
T→Don't forget to read the stage directions.
It tells you where you should all be sitting at the beginning.
T→You've got to set yourselves up.

This observation demonstrated the confidence and trust the teacher has in the children as she gives them complete 'autonomy' and an opportunity to express their 'self-determination'. The six boys in the group work cooperatively and support one another, indicating the positive nature of relationships that exist in this classroom context.

The children are asked by the teacher to highlight their parts on the play script. The teacher wants to retain the sheets to stick into their books as evidence of their work, indicating the constant pressure of accountability that teachers' experience of having to document learning experiences and the constraints that curricula and assessment processes impose on them.

8.6 Conclusion

Through a socio-cultural analysis of the discourses in these classrooms we can identify some of the influences on children's 'learning dispositions'. The influences of relationships between teachers and children, children and their peers in creating the context for children's learning are paramount. Discourses that encourage supportive peer relations establish the norms for children's interactions in classrooms. This is demonstrated in the mixed age C1 where the teacher encourages the older Y4 children to help the younger Y3 children during practical group work task and when Y4 support their peers this is acknowledged through praise. In C2, during the formal session of the play the teacher is warm and encouraging towards the children modelling examples of interactions for them to follow to maintain positive relationships. She also encouraged supportive peer relationships between children who had

English as a first language and those with English as an additional language, who sometimes needed their help as translators to gain understanding.

Discourses that stimulate children's interest gain their involvement and participation in learning. In Classroom 1, the teacher influenced children's receptivity to learning by framing the curriculum in a culturally meaningful way, linking the activity to a significant Welsh event to encourage their involvement. While T2 was able to present the formal curriculum to the children in a sensitive and interesting way. In both classrooms group work often followed formal sessions to give more opportunity for children's 'participation' and 'autonomy'.

Sensitive discourses of care and trust during interactions between teachers and children contribute to the formation of positive relationships between them. Teachers' model appropriate behaviours for children to follow. They create an inclusive learning context where children feel valued, have a sense of belonging with their rights respected. When children feel included they can then be involved in activities to form a 'social identity' in the classroom. When children's 'social identity' is firmly established they then have the confidence to be involved as 'active' learners using the 'habits of mind' (Katz and Raths 1985) to develop 'learner identities' as masterful learners in a classroom. When children have strong 'learner identities' they can participate fully using the 'participation repertoires' (Carr 2001) of their community of practice to strengthen their 'learning dispositions'.

By teachers foregrounding relationships and interacting sensitively to establish caring relationships with children, acknowledging reciprocity between children, respecting their rights and modelling appropriate behaviours they ameliorate some of the structural constraints of daily classroom lives. These constraints include a structured curriculum, large groups of 30+ children of varying ability and language while working alone in a classroom with limited space and resources. The constant need for accountability in tracking and documenting children's learning forming an added pressure on their time and energy.

How a curriculum is organised and framed for children and how they are positioned within that curriculum as 'active' or 'passive' has a profound impact on their learning in the socio-cultural context created in the classroom. Relationships within the classroom, lesson structure, content and format all influence children's 'learning dispositions'. Group work tasks allow far more opportunities for children's 'autonomy' and the expression of their 'self-determination' to strengthen their 'learning dispositions'.

On Completion of Her Chapter, Carolyn Morris Proposes the Following Questions to Provoke Further Reflection, Research and Dialogue

- How do the relationships between a) teacher and child, b) child and peers, influence a child's 'social identity' in a classroom context?
- What actions and behaviour would a child with a 'strong learner identity' exhibit?
- Explain how children's 'self-determination' strengthens their 'learning dispositions'

Notes
The study was based on exploratory, qualitative, interactionist research conducted in two case-study primary schools in Wales, one Welsh medium and one English medium. The methods were in-depth interviews with head-teachers and class-teachers, tape-recorded classroom observations during classroom lessons, writing activities and focus group discussions with children. Teacher – child discourses were analysed according to dimensions of 'sensitivity, stimulation and autonomy' (Pascal et al. 1996:126) and children's actions and behaviours observed to indicate their 'learning dispositions' (adapted from Carr et al. 2000 and Claxton 2002).

S1 Established Welsh medium primary school, based in a traditional school building. The catchment area was very wide and the headteacher described the backgrounds of the children as socio-economically very varied. The school population is an ethnically homogenous educational community with family interest in Welsh language and culture. The children spoke either English or Welsh in the home and had one or two English speaking parent/s or carer/s. Most of children are therefore categorized as second language Welsh speakers. The class teacher T2 was relatively new to the school.

S2 A much larger newly established school in an open-plan, well-resourced building with modern facilities. Ninety percent of the children are of British origin with English as a first language with the remainder from other ethnic groups with various heritage languages. The children live near the school as it is situated on a new expanding housing estate. The school was establishing its own niche in a new community. Parents were described as ambitious for their children by the Headteacher and working hard to maintain their lifestyles as they had bought new houses on the estate and had limited 'cash and time'. The class teacher was more experienced than T1.

Taking the percentage of children who receive free school meals as a general indicator of the socio-economic background of the children attending, the figures for these two schools are low, both less than 10% (WAG 2018).

Key to Transcription Conventions
A–Adult.
b-boy
C–Classroom.C1 -class 1 – Welsh medium, C2- class 2 – English medium
ch –child
chn–children
chq–child questioning
g–girl
gchn- group of children
Level – refers to level of National Curriculum.
R– Repeats.
S-school
S1- School 1 – Welsh medium
S2- School 2 – English medium
T-Teacher, T1- Class teacher school 1, T2- Class teacher school

y3– Year 3 (7–8 years)
y4– Year 4 (8–9 years)
[ ][Commentary and analysis]

FONT STYLE OF TRANSLATION OF DIRECT QUOTATIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS IN THE WELSH LANGUAGE ARE PRODUCED IN ITALIC FONT. DIRECT ENGLISH QUOTATIONS ARE PRESENTED AS PLAIN FONT.

S1gNy3 [School 1 girl N year 3]
S2 b J y4 [School 2 boy J year 4]

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Chapter 9
Practices/8, New Zealand: Attentive Encounters: Infant and Toddler Participation in an Early Childhood Community

Iris Duhn

9.1 The Domain of Childhood

A focus on children's rights has found its way into educational policy, research and practice to varying degrees (Gillett-Swan and Coppock 2016; Te One 2006; Thomas 2007), although in reality listening to children's voices in order to support self-determination is arguably more complex than often assumed by adults (Konstantoni 2013). Childhood as a social, cultural and biological domain continues to govern those within it, and 'a child' cannot choose to opt out of this domain. However, adults can, depending on the circumstances, determine who counts as a child and who does not. The case of children deemed un-childlike, and consequently excluded from the protection that the domain of childhood can offer, has been made in an attempt to call children to account at the level of the United Nations itself (Amann 2012). This highlights the complexities of governing childhood, particularly in relation to rights and responsibilities of children.

A child's agency and self-determination is limited by understandings of childhood, as children do not have easy access to meaning-making and knowledge production that unsettles the domain (Lee 2013). This is particularly relevant for those children who do not have access to dominant linguistic practices, such as immigrant children, children from linguistic minorities, and children, including babies and toddlers, who communicate non-verbally for a range of reasons (Cannella and Viruru 2004; Viruru 2001). Efforts have been made to explore possibilities of not only listening to children, but to also create spaces where children make decisions that affect them (Helavaara et al. 2015; Nordstrom 2009; Pienaar 2010). This includes the investigation of going beyond concepts of voice and agency to re-think children's

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capacities for decision making and participation (Kraftl 2013). For infants and toddlers, such foci may be particularly relevant as it becomes possible to re-think the meaning of agency and voice as core indicators of participation and decision-making (Duhn 2015).

9.2 Assumptions and Discourses About the Youngest Learners

The current focus on childhood and rights in education extends to the emerging research and policy focus on babies and toddlers as the youngest learners (Cheeseman et al. 2014; Whitmarsh 2008). Traditionally pre-verbal children are considered as moving through developmental stages, and depending on the stage, they are perceived as being unable to hold attention, and unable to be social. Presumably they do not yet have the ability to initiate meaningful communication as they are mainly focused on bodily processes and functions (Salamon 2011). Such beliefs have long informed educators' perception of babies' abilities, and made it difficult to even notice if a child is demonstrating unexpected capabilities (Salamon and Harrison 2015). Another traditional major discourse that continues to shape infant and toddler research and practice highlights the importance of attachment for very young children, and this leads to pedagogical practices where one educator cares for specific children as the primary educator and carer over a period of time (Degotardi and Pearson 2009). In this practice, adults determine how important relationships are formed, with the child as the rather passive recipient of adult care.

Drawing on Merleau-Ponty, an alternative view proposes to understand toddlers "as perceptive, expressive body-subjects of intentional motion and meaningful action, with a natural bond to other human beings and the world" (Løkken 2009, p. 36). In this phenomenological view, even very young children are decision-makers who shape their relationships with others intentionally and through meaningful action. Pre-verbal children or those who are just coming into language, are initiators of co-narratives which develop over time and with (perhaps surprising) complexity (Eriksen Ødegaard 2006). These research findings challenge traditional understandings of young children as unable to hold attention and to be social with each other.

In both cases, be it attachment theory with intentional adults and or its alternative perspective where young children are intentional agents, relationships are considered to be the cornerstone for pedagogies with very young children. This is interesting, considering that babies and toddlers often have very strong attachments to objects (Quinn and Mageo 2013; Whitmarsh 2008). However, dominant discourses of babies and toddlers prevent researchers and educators from considering how very young children's self-determination and decision making might be shaped when the focus shifts from human relationships to children's encounters with materialities (Elwick 2016).

More recently it has been argued that babies and toddlers are both more and less capable than assumed by researchers and educators, especially in relation to social and emotional competencies (Kalliala 2014). Kalliala argues that with the recent emphasis on very young children's rights and celebration of their competencies (Løkken 2009), more complex understandings of whose competencies are celebrated are needed to ensure the emergence of diverse perspectives. While the celebration of very young learners' competencies and capabilities provides new perspectives, it may also again reinforce adults' perceptions of childhood rather than opening up spaces for new methodologies for researching with infants and toddlers. The danger of reinforcing assumptions about the youngest learners also carries the danger of assuming babies' and toddlers' experiences can be easily understood by adults (Elwick et al. 2014). Whether celebrating competencies or charting milestones, there is much scope to unsettle adults' assumptions in order to enable new knowledges, practices and theories to emerge.

Participation of babies in particular is often documented with a focus on representing what children are presumably experiencing. This is the case for research and for pedagogical documentation of children's learning, even when documentation is attempting to capture babies' participation in authentic ways (White 2013). The idea of baby cams, a device that is attached to an infant's forehead to provide insights of daily experiences from the child's point of view, is meant to generate more authentic representations of what-it-is-really-like to be a baby in educational settings. Even if this is done with careful attention paid to the baby's ability to consent by watching the baby's bodily reaction to the baby cam (attached on a soft headband or a hat), the question over what insights about participation are generated has been raised (Elwick 2015). In her work, Elwick proposes that baby cams have the potential to unsettle adult assumptions and thus create uncertainty about what adults think they see/perceive when documenting a baby's learning. An example described in Elwick's (2015) study is the baby cam's view of a child looking up at the adult. When the adult watched the video clip, she began to consider her own powerful physical presence in the encounter differently. She realised for the first time how overbearing an adult's body can seem to someone who is so much smaller. The baby cam highlighted that the world looks different from a baby's perspective. This in turn unsettled the adult's assumption and generated uncertainty about how the child's participation had previously been interpreted. For instance, it might take courage for a baby to even approach an adult who has such a towering physical presence. This would not have been considered previously and allows for the acknowledgement of not-knowing babies' bodily experiences in learning encounters. This in turn opens up possibilities for reconsidering how adults' create meaning around babies' participation (Elwick 2015).

In Australia and New Zealand, early childhood researchers are paying close attention to issues around babies in childcare, including family day care (Bradley et al. 2012; Cheeseman et al. 2015; Dalli et al. 2011b; Rockel 2009; Salamon and Harrison 2015; White et al. 2015). These projects have in common that each of them engages critically with policy, curriculum, pedagogy or subjectivities to open up understandings around babies in education. What emerges are a range of new perspectives, new

approaches and new issues which highlight that there is enormous scope for innovative practices, ways of thinking and ways of being with babies to support participation of very young learners in diverse environments (Salamon et al. 2015).

This chapter, then, focuses on babies and toddlers who have even less of ‘a voice’ and less capacity to contribute to meaning making in the traditional sense than children who have learned to use language to communicate, and have gained access to the children’s right discourse through being-in-language (Gillett-Swan and Coppock 2016). Drawing on research with infants and toddlers in New Zealand (Dalli et al. 2011a), the chapter explores what agency and self-determination might mean for very young children who are governed by the domain of ‘childhood’ and by constructs of agency that rely on language (Duhn 2015). The project itself investigated infant and toddler pedagogies and researchers worked in close collaboration with educators to develop insights into how the youngest learn in early childhood settings in two of New Zealand’s major cities. Five childcare centres participated, and in each setting one of the researchers worked closely with the educators during the 12 month of data collection. The project had ethics approval and to protect participants’ privacy, pseudonyms are used in this chapter. This was a qualitative study in which educators decided when to take short video clips of babies. Some of these video clips were then interpreted in collaboration with the researchers. Over the course of the project the children and educators got very used to the video cameras. The data included in this chapter was collected when everyone had become familiar with the incidental videoing. A particular focus in this chapter is the participation of babies as active members in a learning community.

9.3 Introducing an Auckland Suburb

Early childhood education in New Zealand is split between publicly funded kindergartens and privately owned childcare centres (Duhn 2010). Finding high quality full time childcare is expensive, and adds substantially to the financial burdens of households. This is of particular relevance in Auckland where house prices have accelerated astronomically in the past few years. Kauri Kids, a childcare centre (described further below) is located in a former West Auckland working class suburb which, not so long ago, was comprised of a large percentage of Pacific Island families, some Mãori families, and many working class Pãkehã (Anglo-Saxon descent) families. Now only the affluent can afford to buy a house here. The water’s edge is not far away, perhaps a 30 min walk for an adult. The beach at the end of the road is beautiful, tree lined, with soft caramel coloured sand. For generations of children, in particular boys, this suburb provided a paradisiacal backdrop to their ability to explore. Historically, self-determination and decision-making were part of growing into manhood, albeit a specific kind of manhood, which reflected the culture of the working class suburb itself (Cooper 2009). All of this has changed rapidly with gentrification. The suburb is becoming increasingly attractive to young middle class families with double incomes, an aspect of gentrification that is noticeable in many of New Zealand’s larger cities and along the coast line (Collins 2013).

9.4 Introducing Kauri Kids

The childcare centre, Kauri Kids, is privately owned. It is a 'for-profit' centre that caters for about 50 families, with 30 children attending each day, in New Zealand's biggest city, Auckland. Eight fully qualified educators work with the children. The centre is licensed for eight under 2-year olds. Although there is some specialisation in the team, Kauri Kids' philosophy emphasises that all members of the teaching team build relationships with all children and their families. In practice this means that every educator will work at some point with the under 2-year olds during each month. There is an element of specialisation emerging, however, as some of the educators prefer to work with the babies and toddlers. These educators spend more time than their colleagues with the under 2s to ensure continuity for the children and their families, and to help with the initial building of familiarity and trust.

Kauri Kids has a long waiting list as word of mouth about the families' experiences with Kauri Kids' emphasis on inclusion and relationship building spreads in the community. Waiting list priority is given to siblings' enrolment as the centre focuses on building sustainable relationships within the community. A couple of spaces are kept open for children who cannot easily find places in childcare, either due to disabilities, or family circumstances, including financial issues. Any surplus in income is reinvested in making the centre more ecologically sustainable, and in staff support and development (Duhn et al. 2010). The core staff have worked in the centre for up to 10 years. This is unusual in a profession that is plagued by quick staff turnover (Saltmarsh et al. 2005). Another important policy focus for Kauri Kids is the emphasis on community and relationships as the basis for pedagogy. Many of the families are working full-time which requires particular effort and determination to ensure families develop a sense of belonging to Kauri Kids. During our project it became apparent that often the children were the ones who made connections between home life and Kauri Kids. In our research, parents commented that their children often bring new ideas home, and that family routines have changed because the children insisted that it was important to make changes. Examples were walking to Kauri Kids instead of driving, and also planting a vegetable garden at home because children enjoyed the childcare garden produce so much. These changes might sound insignificant, however, in the context of the childcare centre's philosophy of community building, they are evidence of transformative, democratic practice where children take the opportunity to determine aspects of their life (Moss 2014).

Kauri Kids enrols children from birth to age six. During the study period, there were eight children aged between 6 weeks and 2 years enrolled. Not all of those young children would be present on any given day. Most of them would attend either a few days a week or perhaps mornings or afternoons only. On average there would be two to three children in the room for babies and toddlers, and only at peak times, up to eight. Most childcare services separate very young children from the older ones, often for pedagogical reasons, sometimes on practical grounds, or because of local regulations (Dunlop and Fabian 2006). Kauri Kids largely follows this tradi-

tion but the babies' room is always open to visits from the older children. The babies and toddlers can cross over to the older children, too, if the educators have the impression that this is what a child wants to do. The boundaries between the spaces are somewhat porous, allowing for movement across. All spaces open up to the outside area which contains a large sandpit, an extensive garden with flowers and vegetables and several fruit trees and berry bushes. The babies' outdoor space is fenced off from the rest of the area with a low picket fence that allows children to peep through into each other's space. The majority of Kauri Kids children are Pãkehã, a few are Mãori children, and a few are children from recent immigrant families.

9.5 The Child

At the time when the data collection began, Nikau was just 3 months old. Born into a whãnau, a Mãori concept that describes an extended Mãori family, he seemed to have no problems with the liveliness and noise in Kauri Kids. Even at his very young age he seemed relaxed and comfortable with many people around him. His mother, a producer at Mãori TVNZ (Government owned National Television), had been a close friend of Dani, the Pãkehã educator who particularly enjoyed working in the babies' room. Nikau appeared to feel right at home from the 1st day. While this is somewhat unusual in early childcare, the friendship between Nikau's mother and Dani may have contributed to his sense of belonging. The friendship was the result of Nikau's siblings' previous attendance at Kauri Kids. Nikau was the youngest of four children in the family. Over time Kauri Kids had become an extension of Nikau's extended family. Kauri Kids had become part of his whãnau. It was apparent from Nikau's very 1st day that he had a remarkable social presence. Dani reported on her enchantment with him, and how she found it difficult to let him be with other educators on her days off.

Dani referred to Kauri Kids philosophy: "A large part of our philosophy is about community, it's allowing the kids that time to form relationships with each other. And they are pretty spectacular in that sense". Dani included all children in this statement. For Nikau, this meant that Dani perceived him as a highly capable member of the Kauri Kids's community from his 1st day in the babies' room. She put him in a position where his abilities as a social, physical, emotional and cognitive being were recognised and valued on his terms, but always in relation to others. This is quite remarkable, considering that Nikau was only 3 months old when he first joined Kauri Kids. Dani explained: "….finding your place as a little baby and as an individual, as part of the group – sorting out where you fit in there, the community comes in around you – I find that quite interesting at that age". Nikau was given space to explore and to determine when and how he wants to go about finding his place as a fellow human being amongst others in his community, the babies' room. Dani's pedagogical gesture was one of welcoming him with patience. This involved paying close attention to him without expectations. In a video clip of one of their earliest encounters, Dani described how she understood Nikau's agency and decision-making as a baby.

Dani explained how she sat by his feet on the floor during his second week at the centre, with two other children also playing on the floor close by. Nikau lay on his back, watching the mirror on his left. When Dani described how she perceived the baby, she remembered an intense sense of being fully present with him and holding him in her attention, in relation to the other babies. Dani's intention was to support Nikau's participation by being empathetic to his endeavour to "finding his view of the world, his surroundings. For him, it was getting used to that new environment, new faces". Her pedagogical practice was to create a space where Nikau could get to know himself, in relation to her and in relation to the world around him. Dani made an attempt to recognise Nikau's "spectacular abilities" for relating to the world around him on his own terms. She noticed his smile, at himself in the mirror, however, rather than assuming to know that Nikau was smiling at himself, Dani took the smile as an indicator of the baby's ability to relate to the world. Dani described the smile as warm and she was touched by what she perceived as Nikau's generosity, his openness to be welcomed by others, and to welcome them in return. Dani's ability to admit to not-knowing allowed her to have an attentive encounter with Nikau in this very moment. Sharon Todd (2001), a philosopher of education, states that education should be cognizant of its nature as an ethical encounter between self and other. She argues that empathy it is not a matter of trying to feel like the other (as this is impossible to achieve), rather it is a matter of encountering the other in the spirit of welcome with no expectations. For Dani this means letting go of her expert knowledge as an early childhood educator who was trained to assess baby's developmental milestones. Dani and Nikau experienced each other, an encounter made possible by Nikau's generous smile and Dani's patient and attentive presence.

9.6 A Baby's Self Determination? How Do We Know?

The very brief description of one single encounter between a baby and an educator in a childcare centre does not attempt to provide evidence of best practice to support a baby's participation or self-determination, nor does it represent a moment of truth about a baby's experiences in childcare. As pointed out by scholarly literature concerned with very young children's life in early childhood settings, researchers are only beginning to consider new methodologies and theories that develop diverse understandings of babies' and toddlers' experiences. With a policy shift towards very young children's inclusion in educational discourse, research in recent years has begun to investigate under-2 year olds experiences. For babies and toddlers the notion of participation as a human right has been taken up as an implicit or even explicit research focus in several studies (Bradley et al. 2012; Dalli et al. 2011a; Eriksen Ødegaard 2006). The methods used to collect data, while emphasising participatory research practices, often rely on tried approaches to data gathering, such as listening to children's voices, observing, or taking photos and videos in search of children's perspectives. The limitations of these approaches are becoming more

evident as critical scholarship in this newly emerging field of infant and toddler research is growing (Cheeseman and Sumsion 2016; Duhn 2015; Rossholt 2009). As argued by Elwick (2015, p. xv), “whether or not such research achieves what it claims to achieve in regards to enabling infants to efficaciously enact their human rights and particularly their participatory rights, is generally left unquestioned”. This chapter intended to bring to the fore the impossibility of knowing how those who are not (yet) in-language experience their world.

Dani’s encounter with Nikau outlines possibilities for further considerations. Dani is obviously attached to Nikau, and the relationship between the two is developing in ways that are possibly similar to primary care relationships (Degotardi and Pearson 2009). However, with a centre philosophy that emphasises that all adults and all children are members of the community as a guiding principle, Dani’s primary caregiving impulse is tempered by the constant reminder to enable Nikau to become a member of the community around him. Dani’s view that Nikau has spectacular abilities for building relationships celebrates Nikau as a fellow human being, regardless of his age. She is able to welcome him as he is in this moment, with a focus on his ability to shape his own world in this encounter. Her emphasis on Nikau’s efforts to become familiar with the people and the place he finds himself in, allows her to create a space for him to explore according to his abilities. She may not be certain what he sees, what he thinks, what he feels and what he wants. Getting to know him better takes time and many more encounters. Dani and Nikau are engaged in building their relationship together in these moments of attentive encounter. Dani reminds us that the smile of a 3 month old is powerful. Nikau brings something new to Kauri Kids, to Dani, to the other children. Following Hannah Arendt (1958), Nikau gifts us the opportunity to think the world anew. Letting go of assumptions and being open to the other is a starting point from which babies’ human right to participation can flourish in unexpected ways. Let’s think the world anew, together.

On Completion of Her Chapter, Iris Duhn Proposes the Following Questions to Provoke Further Reflection, Research and Dialogue

- What conditions are needed to support attentive encounters in busy child-care settings?
- How is a baby’s self-determination strengthened if the adult lets go of assumptions and expectations?
- What new images of babies as learners would further support babies’ participation?

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Part II
Discourses

Chapter 10
Discourses/1, Australia: Whose Rights? The Child's Right to Be Heard in the Context of the Family and the Early Childhood Service: An Australian Early Childhood Perspective

Fay Hadley and Elizabeth Rouse

10.1 Introduction. Children's Position as Part of the Group

In Australia both early childhood and school setting policies and curriculum documents recognise the importance of teachers developing partnerships with families (see: DEEWR 2009 and http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/local-schools-local-decisions/reform-agenda/working-locally/family-and-community-engagement). Researchers, both nationally and internationally, have identified partnerships with families as a critical element in ensuring optimum educational outcomes for children (Berthelsen and Walker 2008; Emerson et al. 2012; Powell et al. 2010; Topor et al. 2010). However, within this discourse children's rights are often overlooked or silenced, but their voices should be heard and listened to.

The recognition that children exist within the context of their family, community and cultural lived experiences has its theoretical basis in both Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework and Bowen's family systems theory (Dunst et al. 1988; Espe-Sherwindt 2008; Özdemir 2007). These theories recognise that: "every level of the ecological system is interconnected and thus influences all other subsystems… [and] helps explain the mechanisms through which children and their families are influenced" (Weiss et al. 2005, p xiii).

Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework presents a model through which to examine the ecology of human development by acknowledging that humans do not develop in isolation, but in relation to their family and home, school, community and society. Each of these ever-changing and multilevel environments, as well as

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interactions among these environments, are seen to be key to development. What matters for behaviour and development is the environment as it is perceived rather than as it may exist (Bronfenbrenner 1979, p. 4), and thus reinforces a constructivist view that reality is an individual perception.

The basic tenet of this model lies in the belief that the world of the child consists of five systems of interaction: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. Each system depends on the contextual nature of the person's life and offers an ever-growing diversity of options and sources of growth (Swick and Williams 2006, p. 371). Each member of the system, and their relationships, are in turn influenced by the broader social, political and educational policies. This broader system (mesosystem) shapes the perceptions, expectations and equality of the relationships that exist between the nested systems (Odom et al. 2004), and as such, creates the 'reality' as it is perceived by the individual. Bronfenbrenner saw these systems as an interconnecting network of influences on the child and the surrounding environment (Özdemir 2007). As well as focusing on the child's and parent's immediate environment and their face-to-face interactions, of equal importance in this model is the notion that the child and family's quality of life is affected and influenced by the other three levels (Turnbull and Blue-Banning 1999).

In building on the notion that humans develop in relation to their family and home, school, community and society, Bowen's Family Systems Theory recognises the interconnectedness and interrelationships of the individuals that collectively determine the unique family group (Brown et al. 1993; Keen 2007; Law 1998; Minuchin 1974; Özdemir 2007). Bowen's theory acknowledges that families are an ever-growing and ever-changing system, which have their own structure, resources and interactional patterns (Özdemir 2007, p. 18). As a system, the understanding is that, actions affecting any one member affect all of the members (Brown et al. 1993; Cox and Van Velsor 2000; Keen 2007; Law 1998; Minuchin 1974).

10.2 Children's Position as Individuals

Children's and particularly young children's right to participate and have their voices heard on matters that affect them is legally defined (UNCRC 1989, 2005), and widely accepted internationally. The UNCRC (1989) articulates children's rights to participation and to have their voices heard on issues that affect them (Articles 12 and 13), and urges the relevant stakeholders to respect children's views when decisions are being made on their behalf. Elaborating on these rights, the UNCRC General Comment 7 (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2005) further recognises the right for young children's voices to be heard, and emphasises that young children are not only "social actors from the beginning of life" (p. 61), but are "active members of families, communities and societies with their own concerns, interests and points of view" (p.62).

In Australia, children's rights are also recognised in the Code of Ethics. This is a voluntary code that was originally developed in 1998 for early childhood profes-

sionals, and early childhood education and care services by the National Peak Body for young children: Early Childhood Australia (see: http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/). The Code has been reviewed three times during this time and the latest version was released in 2016. Two of the core principles of the Code of Ethics are: (1) Each child has unique interests and strengths and the capacity to contribute to their communities; (2) Children are citizens from birth with civil, cultural, linguistic, social and economic rights (ECA 2016).

The next section of the chapter outlines some key policy changes that have influenced early childhood education and care provision and how this direction has positioned children as future citizens who are viewed through a productivity agenda lens in Australia.

10.2.1 Children's Position in Early Childhood and Care in Australia

The role of early childhood education and care services has evolved considerably in the last 20 years, with policies and society influencing these changes. These changes include:

1. A service delivery model whereby families are viewed as consumers; children as global citizens and services important for workforce participation;
2. Increased regulatory standards which requires increased service compliance and accountability, and;
3. Pedagogical changes, with the push for a common curriculum or framework, which influences the role the early childhood professional plays in the service.

Early childhood education and care policy and practice in Australia has undergone significant change in the past 10 years since the election of the Federal Labor government in 2007. The emerging policy directions of the early 2000s were formulated as a result of a body of evidence being presented through the OECD research which positioned the importance of quality early childhood education as building a nation's human capital, recognising the economic benefits of investing in the early years. This push for quality early childhood education also highlighted early childhood education and care workforce issues. Several contemporary international research studies, as well as Starting Strong, and Starting Strong II (OECD 2006) highlighted the importance of the early childhood years, and more particularly, the importance of access to quality early childhood programs. Of significance was the Effective Provision of Pre-school Education Project (EPPE) undertaken as a longitudinal study in the UK (Sylva et al. 2004). The outcomes from the project identified several key findings relating to the benefits and outcomes of early preschool education. Of greatest influence on the future policy directions in Australia was the emphasis in the report that quality services were found in settings integrating care and education, and where educators created warm, interactive relationships with

children. A further study by Cantin et al. (2012) also identified that early childhood education and care service quality was associated with positive parent–caregiver relationships.

In 2009, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) released the National Early Childhood Development Strategy, Investing in the Early Years (Commonwealth of Australia 2009). This strategy provided a whole-of-government approach to responding to contemporary evidence highlighting the importance of the early childhood years, the benefits and cost-effectiveness of ensuring all children experience a positive early childhood. This strategy also highlighted the importance of families, and the need to support families, in providing positive outcomes for their children. The reforms included the development of a National Quality Framework (NQF), which included the creation of National Quality Standards (NQS), national regulations governing the licensing of early childhood services and the development of a national early years learning framework (Early Years Learning Framework – EYLF) to govern professional practice across the early childhood education and care sector. The EYLF replaced previous state and territory based frameworks as the first Australian national curriculum document for early childhood education and care services (Sumsion et al. 2009).

Most OECD countries have a curriculum learning framework for early childhood education and care services. The OECD (2012) classifies these early childhood curriculum documents as either "input" or "outcome" based. In the OECD most Nordic countries have input based frameworks that detail what is expected of educators in early childhood services, while the outcome based documents, which discuss child outcomes, are more likely to be used in the English speaking countries (The Economist Intelligence Unit 2012). Blaiklock (2013) noted that these outcome based frameworks usually consist of general learning outcomes that can meet the broad range of ages and developmental levels in an early childhood education and care services.

The EYLF would be described as an outcome based framework. The first section of the EYLF is the principles and practices that underpin the learning outcomes, including a focus on children's rights. Sumsion et al. (2009), the authors of the EYLF did note that this element relating to participation rights and children being active in their learning were "toned down" due to perceived "political risk". Nevertheless, the EYLF emphasises the importance of upholding children's rights, as well as being responsible for contributing to the community through children developing their own awareness and responsiveness to the needs and rights of others (DEEWR 2009). The second section of the EYLF outlines five general learning outcomes that can be applied to birth-5 year olds (although some researchers have critiqued this – see: Davis et al. 2015). Sumsion and Grieshaber (2012), two of the authors of the EYLF, argue that framework is open to multiple interpretations and hence why the document did not define ages or stages of children's development.

One of the principles of the EYLF is the expectation of early childhood educators in creating and fostering positive partnerships with families. Within the framework, partnerships with families is identified as one of the five key principles that underpin an educator's role, stating that:

> Learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with families. Educators recognise that families are children's first and most influential teachers. They create a welcoming environment where all children and families are respected and actively encouraged to collaborate with educators about curriculum decisions in order to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful (DEEWR 2009, p. 12).

In the National Quality Standards (NQS) this expectation for practice has been further developed to include as a key quality standard; collaborative partnerships with families and communities. In this standard, educators are expected to engage in respectful and supportive relationships with families. The standard states: "partnerships with families contribute to building a strong, inclusive community within the service". Shared decision making with families supports consistency between children's experiences at home and at the service, helping children to feel safe, secure and supported (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority 2012, p. 148). Within these standards is also a focus on including children as decision makers in their learning. For instance in Quality Area 1 Educational programs and practice, the standard 1.1.2 is: "Each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program" (ACECQA 2012). To achieve this standard requires educators who have built respectful and trustful relationships with children and understand that children live in diverse cultural communities and have different dispositions for learning, different abilities and different learning styles. Harris and Manatakis (2013, p. 69) argue that children are "key informants and experts on their own lives" and "'have the right and capability to contribute to decisions' that affect them". Clark and Moss (2011) champion participation of children and pioneered the mosaic approach. This approach involves strategies for listening carefully to the many ways that they communicate their ideas and feelings. Within this system, balancing the rights of children to be heard and listened to, while acknowledging the broader ecological system of family, community and societal values can at times create disequilibrium for educators.

10.3 Children's Position in the Family-Teaching Partnership Dyad

Authors, such as Dahlberg et al. (1999), Dahlberg and Moss (2005), and Hayden and Macdonald (2001) argue that early childhood education and care services are "meeting places" where the development of community takes hold. A "meeting place" is one where families build long term relationships with professionals; where families view their child in relation to other children; and where families develop relationships and networks with other families (Hayden and Macdonald 2001). Within this framework, the child is one part of the system.

Dahlberg and Moss (2005, p 31) present a view that when examining children's rights this needs to occur within a context of 'relational, contextualised and responsible ethical practices'. Within this thinking, an examination of early childhood education and care policy and practice recognises the rights of children to access quality

education and care, where the context of their family, community and culture is recognised and valued. Examining children's rights in the context of relational, contextualised and responsible ethical practices, positioning children from the viewpoint of their broader family, community and cultural lived experiences as shaping their identity and lived experiences presents a professional expectation that educators need to connect with children from a broader social and ecological understanding. In recognising that families are the children's first and most influential teachers, children have the right to positive, respectful shared decision making between educators and families that bring together their home, cultural and lived experiences with that of the experiences gained through their interactions with the early childhood education and care setting.

The EYLF presents a model of partnerships "based on the understanding of each other's expectations and attitudes and build on the strength of each other's knowledge" (DEEWR 2009). Therefore, identifying that in a genuine partnership:

> Families and early childhood educators value each other's knowledge of each child; value each other's contributions to and roles in each child's life; trust each other; communicate freely and respectfully with each other; share insights and perspectives about each child and engage in shared decision making (p. 12).

The literature surrounding the definition of partnership positions it within a theoretical construct in which the terms trust, reciprocity, mutuality and shared goals and decision making are prevalent. Dunst and Dempsey (2007) position partnership within a premise that the exchanges between parents and professionals are 'mutual, complementary, joint, and reciprocal' (p. 308). They identify the key features of partnerships as including dispositions and actions such as mutual regard, joint decision making and joint action, where parents and professionals are working towards a common goal within a relationship based on shared decision making and shared responsibility. Keen (2007) also presents the key characteristics of effective partnerships as including "mutual respect, trust and honesty; mutually agreed-upon goals; and shared planning and decision-making" (p. 340). Family–professional partnerships have been defined as equal collaborative relationships that benefit the family and professional as well as the child through mutual agreement to defer to each other's judgment and expertise (Turnbull et al. 2011, cited in Palmer et al. 2012). Within these descriptions of partnerships, the child is often invisible.

Children's self-determination is influenced through strong and culturally aware family–professional partnerships (Palmer et al. 2012). Families play a key role in providing, maintaining, and supporting opportunities for children's development of self-determination. An effective partnership in which both educators and families engage collaboratively in the decisions made each day regarding the types of experiences and learning opportunities their children will have provides opportunities to practice choice, engagement, and self-regulation. Families and educators can work closely together to promote choice-making, engagement, and self-regulation across home, school, and community contexts. However, the child's own agency in these decision-making processes can be and is often silenced.

While the EYLF guides early childhood educators to create effective partnership with families that are based on mutual trust, reciprocity and shared decision making, these relationships are not always effectively constructed. Recognising that decision-making around the care and education of young children should be mutually and reciprocally shared between families and educators through effective partnerships, children have the right to be heard within the context of this broader family systems approach.

> We had a few problems when I lost my mum and that, so she was a little up and down when she saw me upset, and she also saw her Nan twice a week, and then to nothing, so toilet training and all that was around the same time which was pretty traumatic. I said I couldn't handle it, they wanted to try and toilet train her while, they thought she was ready, I know she was showing the signs, but I wasn't ready (Allison, parent).

Imperative to enacting shared decision-making is listening to the 'voice' of the family who bring a unique perspective to 'knowing' their child. It is important that in listening to the voice of the family that the decisions that are relevant and important to the child are determined through recognition of the broader ecological context which shapes the lived experiences of the child and the family and acknowledging that actions affecting any one member affect all of the members.

Educators and families see the child through different lenses that are based on the lived experiences, values, beliefs and socially constructed understandings each brings to the relationship. However rather than building on the expertise of the families and recognising the agency with which families come into the Early Childhood Education and Care services, there is often a power imbalance in place in the relationship. This power imbalance can result in the expertise of families not being valued as highly as the expertise of the early childhood educator.

> After my partner and I split up we shared the care of our young son, nearly 2. He coped fine with this arrangement and we only began having issues with the centre when he moved into the 2–5s room. They insinuated his unsettled behaviour in the new room was related to our separation, whereas I could see he was anxious about being in the bigger room with lots of older children and that when he was in the outdoor area he would look longingly at the 0–2s outdoor space. I really felt judged by the educators about our arrangement where we shared the parenting of our son and I felt my suggestions about him being anxious in the bigger room were dismissed (Kationa, parent).

In practice, educators will often perceive their role as being the expert or help giver in the relationship they have with the families. This approach leads to an expectation that the parents will seek or follow the educator's advice, or would provide them with information about the child to support their own planning and interactions with this child in the context of the centre (Rouse 2014; Hadley and Rouse 2018). This not only leads to a failure to engage with reciprocal interactions that build on mutual respect, but fails to recognise the expertise the family has of their child, and also denies the rights of the child to have a voice and be centred within the context of a broader systematic context.

10.4 Compliance, the Rights of the Child and Family: Can This Really Work?

Dahlberg and Moss articulate this potential in reconceptualsing the early childhood arena when they state:

> these institutions (ECECD services) have the potential for becoming spaces for ethical and political practices that can engage many people, of all ages…their importance rests as much if not more in their potential purposes and the choices with which these confront us: as sites for governing or for emancipation, for conformist or transformative action, for transmitting or constructing knowledge, for reinforcing or reconstructing discourses…for us the Utopian possibility…is that more preschools and schools might become loci of ethical practices, and by so doing contribute to relationships, with each other as well as our environment, which are founded on a profound respect for otherness and a deep sense of responsibility for the other (2005, pp. 191–192).

Millei and Jones' (2014) critical analysis of the EYLF has them suggesting that a neo-liberal focus creates social policy that privileges western, middle class family structures. Millei and Jones argue that by seeing children as economic resources, those whose development requires more effort or cost, leads to children being seen as less valuable to society. More than 12 years ago, Dahlberg and Moss (2005) argued for the need to create new possibilities that allowed for diversity and difference in early childhood education and care services. They called for a refocus on the importance of relationships whereby a "pedagogy of listening" can create spaces for respect and diversity (Dahlberg and Moss 2005, p. 191).

Unfortunately, a "pedagogy of listening" has become more difficult to practice. Compliance has affected current practices in Australia in terms of understanding the rights of the child, and their family within the early childhood education and care service. For instance on a popular Face Book site titled: EYLF/NQF which has 68,961 members throughout Australia there were conflicting opinions regarding the rights of the child, the family and service policy. The authors of this chapter did a word search on sleeping practices for January – July 2017 and found two interesting posts that illustrated the polarising that can occur when engaging with families. The first post asked the readers about safe sleeping practices in the centre:

> Hi everyone. Just enquiring whether anyone allows for children in nursery to sleep outside a cot with permission to follow home practices ensure sleep of a child whilst developing a relationship with the child and attempting to move to a cot? Whether this be a floor mattress in a pod, rocker, bouncer, bassinet or sling? We know a service that received exceeding by allowing this with the practice being mentioned in addition as consistency of care and meeting individual needs and we have now received not meeting for 2.1.2 and not meeting overall because of this for the same practice with the exact same equipment. Also, we have been advised that no comforters should be taken to bed in the nursery…Thoughts? June 9, 2017

This post generated 33 responses with some arguing the need to respect parents but most responses focused on educators needing to comply with safe sleeping practices and discussed ACECQA requirements regarding being compliant. Others talked about appropriate risk assessment procedures and even mentioned a

document that parents needed to sign: a "deviation of care form": The terminology of this form is indicative of the need educators and services feel they need to comply. A few educators discussed the importance of appropriate supervision and letting a child sleep in a rocker/pram just until the child settled, before transitioning them into a cot. Only one person discussed the child's agency in this post: fight child's agency! It is good for no one if a baby doesn't sleep for the whole day!! One other educator noted the importance of culture: culture plays a huge part in sleeping arrangements and there is a fine line between following guidelines by our government and being supportive and culturally inclusive.

Interestingly the ACECQA Fact sheet that services can give to families (see: http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/family-resources/factsheets/Safe_Sleeping.pdf) notes the need for services to comply with the SIDS and Kids safe sleeping recommendations for children aged from birth to 2 years, and your child's home routine may not be entirely consistent with these. The factsheet does acknowledge where there are differences between what happens in the home and what the service does, the educators should work positively with you to develop a routine for use at the service that is acceptable to both of you. However, the factsheet then goes on to say The educators at your service should also provide you with information and support to help you to adapt your child's home routine to ensure that you are using safe sleeping practices. Again, the rhetoric switches to parents needing to comply with the centre and current policies and practices.

In June (7th) and March (31st) there were two similar posts about either waking a child who is sleeping (at the request of the parent) or not letting the child sleep (at the request of the parent). These two posts generated 15 and 35 comments respectively.

In both posts, the comments were divided between the rights of the child and the family. For instance:

> What if that child falls back to sleep repeatedly they are obviously showing that they want and need to sleep what happens to the right of the child. I understand we have to respect parents wishes but what about the child's wishes.
>
> Both parties (families and staff) need to work together to find the right balance for school and home. This may take a little and some days may be different due to needs. Open and honest communication is key.

These posts also generated references to the CRC, however some educators were incorrectly citing the CRC by commenting that it is illegal to not let a child sleep. However, Article 31 discusses the right to play and rest – it does not say sleep. The discourse of referring to the "sleep" policy was also common in these two posts. We wonder is this reliance on implementing the policy meaning that the child and family's voices are not being heard? How can educators in Early Childhood Education and Care services balance the needs and rights of the child, as well as consider the rights of the family? These are not easy questions to be answered but we would argue that reverting to a compliance approach is not supporting families nor allowing for the child's right to be heard.

10.5 Where to from Here? How Can the Child's Right to Be Heard Be Balanced with the Family and Teachers Rights?

Early childhood education and care services are complex institutions. Teachers have requirements that impact what and how they teach, as well as how they work with the families who access their service. Families also face societal pressures and judgments on "parenting". Within this is the child – they are a part of this microsystem of relationships but they also have rights that need to be respected and heard. Balancing all of these pressures and requirements is not easy. It requires early childhood teachers to be aware of this complexity, tension and the potential for polarising issues when working with families and children. Figure 10.1 is an attempt by us to begin to articulate the complexity of the relationships that exist, as well as highlight the tenuous place the child is in- they are interacting with their family and their teacher, as well as their peers (stuck in the middle!). External forces such as government agendas and societal values influence the teachers work lives and parents approaches to raising young children. Complicating this complex web of relationships is the current neo liberalist agenda, which espouses one truth. However, we know children, and families are complex with many truths and ways of being. Managing this complexity requires early childhood educators to be cognisant of these external influences.

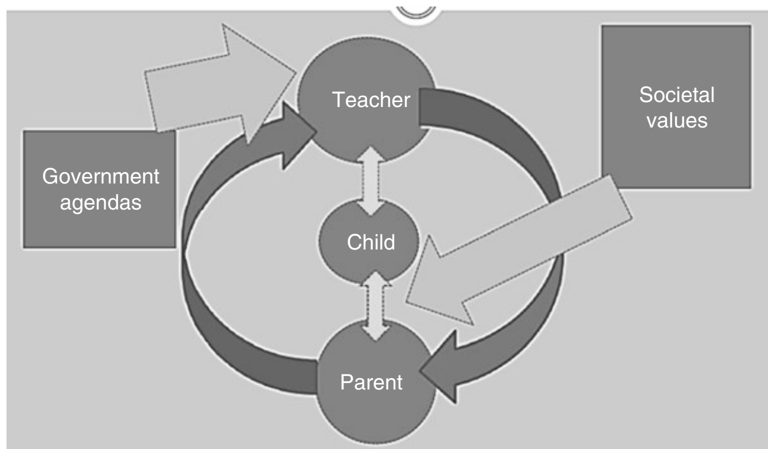

Fig. 10.1 The meat in the sandwich: the child's rights

10.6 Conclusion

Early childhood educators have a complex and multi-faceted responsibility in their work with children. Balancing the ever-increasing interconnecting network of policy frameworks, societal expectations of what a 'good' early education and care program looks like, parental expectations, anxieties and concerns and supporting all children's rights to be heard creates potentially competing tensions. By drawing on conceptual models such as Bronfenbrenner's social ecological model (1979), or the mosaic approach presented by Clark and Moss (2011), early childhood educators can examine their practice to reflect on whose voice(s) is/are heard and whose are silenced. This reflection provides an opportunity to rebalance educator practice, to balance the child's rights alongside that of family, community and broader societal influences to ensure that moving forward our children do not become the meat in the sandwich.

On Completion of Their Chapter, Hadley and Rouse Propose the Following Questions to Provoke Further Reflection, Research and Dialogue

- Can families' needs and children's rights be supported effectively by early childhood care and education services operating within a compliance model?
- Can curriculum frameworks that include principles, practices and outcomes support the development of reciprocal and responsive relationships with families and acknowledge the rights of the child at the same time? How? Where is the child's rights situated within your early education and care service? Are they the meat in the sandwich? Why/Why not?
- Can quality assessment tools and curriculum frameworks be reconceptualised to measure early childhood education and care services' ability to provide responsive quality programs that meet the needs of the children, families and community? What might you do differently after reading this chapter?

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Chapter 11
Discourses/2. Ireland: Listening to Children's Voices in Irish Social Work through Cultural and Organisational Filters

Angela Scollan and Eileen McNeill

11.1 Introduction

The aim of the chapter is to analyse the interplay between children's voice and challenges that Social Workers and Social Care Workers face during daily practice and interactions in Ireland, within a changing policies landscape. Over the last decade there has been major re-evaluations regarding the position of children in Irish policy-making moving away from a reactive welfare model towards a more pro-active, rights-based model (Save the Children 2011; Buckley and O'Nolan 2013; Tusla 2014; Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2015). The landmark government's white paper '*Major Innovations of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*' (2012), that developed from a public consultation that saw 67,000 children and young people share their views regarding services, life and choice has been generating major shifts in Irish social Work with children and young people. In particular, a rights based agenda has been influencing Social Work in Ireland (McLoone-Richards 2012). Directly linked to the homonymous white paper, *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* constitutes the Irish policy framework for social work with Children and Young People for the period 2014–2020, spanning across services from birth to 24 years of age. Children and their families in Ireland, who access community services are much more diverse and less traditional regarding the nuclear unit, diversity, religion, and immigration numbers in comparison to previous

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generations (Hayes 2002; Clooney and Cook 2012; McLoone-Richards 2012; Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2015). Professionals working with and on behalf of children in social services in Ireland will now be defined as Social Workers and Social Care Workers. A Social Worker manages 'caseloads' and has legislative responsibilities when responding to child protection concerns and safeguarding of each child they will be accountable for. Social Workers make decisions for and on behalf of children and are responsible to arrange residential child care placements or co-ordinate case review meetings. In contrast a Social Care Worker aims to meet the physical, social and emotional needs of the children they work directly with via a needs and strengths-based approach. Social Care Workers provide a stable and caring environment so that social, educational and relationship interventions can unfold within safe spaces. Safe spaces may be in a child's familiar environment or within the local community which is a known place. Both the Social Worker and Social Care Worker compliment the other, working towards a transdiciplanary approach to seek a fuller persepctive of children they work with and the life worlds they inhabit.

Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures is underpinned by several constituent strategies cross fertilizing Early Years, Youth and Participation agenda. As an initiative to implement *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures,* the 2013 *Child and Family Agency Act* reflected the shift from the centrality to the services to the centrality to the Child and the Family, following a wide-spread trend towards partnership and co-operation in the delivery of services (see the similar approach of the English Children and Families Act, 2014). A new user-centred approach for social work and family support servicers combine an outcomes-focused agenda with the recognition of the voices of the users; this aim is the driving force towards the transformation of social services in multi-disciplinary and multi-agency services; government agencies, statutory services and the voluntary and community sector professionals are expected to work together to secure that the voices of users are heard. The multi-layered cooperative approach of Social Services in Ireland since 2012 is represented at best by the National Children's Advisory Council, a coordinating body including statutory and non-statutory organisations working with children and young people.

One of the most important provisions of the *Child and Family Agency Act* is the creation and regulation of the *Child and Family Agency* (Tusla), which was soon established in January 2014. Tusla represented, and still represents, the most comprehensive instrument for the reform of social work practice with children, combining child protection, early intervention and family support services, emphasising on the voices of the children and children's self-determination. The concomitant creation of the Minister for Children marked in 2014 a major shift towards a new beginning and approach for children's services by recognising them as an independent actor and interlocutor for Social Services and Policy-making.

Tusla is legally regulated by the Child and Family Agency Act, which is in its turn permeated by the principles of the Better Outcomes Better Futures framework. The agency, the legislation and the policy coherently implement a child-centred approach promoting listening, and acting on expressions and decisions made by

children (Department of Child and Youth affairs 2015). Tusla is therefore the expression of a cultural and political shift in Ireland, moving away from conceptualising children as passive dependents in need of protection towards developing strategies and approaches that recognise children as active participants in making decisions that affect their lives (Buckley and O'Nolan 2013).

However, whilst new approaches of working with children impact on generational relationships and the form of social participation and citizenship in Ireland, Social Workers subjective experience of the implications of the new child-centred approaches is still under-researched. If partnership and user-centeredness are to be the cornerstone of social services, then it is here believed that the voice of civil servants should be promoted and listened to, particularly when a right-based shift generates new and pressing expectations. Rights-based legislation, policy and structures leading current shifts regarding listening, hearing and acting upon the voices of children rely on professional knowledge and interpretation implementing them (Clark et al. 2003; Lundy 2007; Lundy and Martinez Sainz 2018). Roberts (2000:170) suggests that within a rights-based framework, adults working with children require specific skills, wherewithal and training to *recognise power within practice…relating to the process of making decisions with children, not just for them*. The role of Social Workers is therefore pivotal as much as legislative initiatives, and certainly crucial in the implementation of them at ground level. For this reason it is believed that any innovation or improvement to Social Services with children would benefit from a consideration of the perspective of Social Workers and Social Care Workers facing the reality of practice in everyday life and sometimes challenging contexts. Promoting and discussing the voices of Social Workers and Social Care Workers is the main aim of the chapter.

As social services for children and their families in Ireland move towards right-based provision, the recognition of children's voices and promotion of children's self-determination in an ideological, scientific and legal sense, it is necessary to discuss the meaning of such concepts in the semantics of social services in Ireland.

11.2 The Meaning of Self-Determination

Self-determination can be defined as the ability to make choices, independently from the wish and command of others. This definition is concerned with opportunity and drive to choose between alternatives, and it is therefore aligned with the definition of *agency* developed within the sociological fields of Childhood and Youth Studies (Baraldi 2014). It is possible to say that self-determination is the condition of an individual who is consistently recognised as an agent in various social contexts. Although agency, and self-determination, are concepts that do not apply to children and young people only, they are useful to interpret core documents and policies pertinent to children, for instance the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 (UNCRC). In particular, a series of articles within the

UNCRC can be interpreted only in light of the concept of self-determination (as it describes an objective condition, self-determination is considered a more efficient analytical tool to approach legal documents). In the UNCRC, self-determination *of* the child is as important as safety or protection *for* the child: Children have the right '*to say what they think in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously*' (art.12), '*to seek and receive* information' (art.13), '*to meet with other children and young people and to join groups and organizations*' (art.15). However (and here the sociological concepts of agency greatly supports the discussion) the availability to make a choice is dependent upon resources, space and opportunity within a social context and empirical social dimension (Wyness 2000; Penn 2005; Moss 2009; Morrow 2011; Kanyal 2014; Leonard 2016; Smith 2016). The rights belonging to children underpinning the UNCRC and may be traced at local, national and international levels of policy and practice. However, how a child accesses rights within social services is variable and contextualised depending on collaboration with key adults in their lives. It is therefore crucial to explore how self-determination of the child within the adult-child relationships intersects the practice of social work to demonstrate how a child's choices might find space within an adult structured domain.

11.3 Self-Determination of the Child within the Adult-Child Relationship

There is a long history of the debate around the value of active child participation, capturing historical, cultural and social positioning and perspectives of the child as an 'active' agent with regards to their own voice, choice and education (Lundy 2007; Osler and Starkey 2010; Lundy and Martinez Sainz 2018).

Whilst in the 1970s scholars like Holt (1974) and Farson (1974) were advocating children's liberation from the domination and control of adults, three decades later Alderson (2006, 2010) and Monk (2004) could argue that society views children as competent rights holders rather than passive recipients. During the same period of time and outside social sciences, Children's Rights were the object of debate in the discourse of legal studies. Freeman debated in 1983 if children can be full rights holders legally, ethically and morally questioning who has a choice as to 'if' and 'when' children can exercise their rights. The complexity of such debate is evident by the repetition of a similar question by Fortin two decades later (2003), with no further substantial advancement in the debate to be observed coming to the present day.

An example is the uncertain position of legislation facing children's self-determination is offered by article 12 of the UNCRC, which is the most concerned article with self-determination. Article 12 advances an undertaking that children are active subjects of rights and that their involvement and views are to be given due weight and recognition. However, article 12 can also be the object of a series of

critical considerations. For instance, while it places emphasis on the *opportunity (for the child) to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child*, the drive towards a child's autonomy is somehow diluted in a model of health, care or tutorship, by the specification that the child's voice can be raised *via a representative or an appropriate body*.

If it is true that children are not perceived as recipients of adult decision but as agents within the process, it is also true that how processes are understood and engaged with by adults will impact upon participation levels of children. By adding that the voice of the child will be supported *in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law*, the same Article 12 opens the way for any kind of restrictive interpretation.

Notwithstanding the different developments of the debate on children's self-determination, by stating that children are nowadays recognised as competent citizens and participants, demanding adults to become competent in dealing with this cultural evolution, Sinclair (2004), draws a picture of the hegemonic discourse on childhood. Sinclair's claim provokes the exploration of how children are actually understood as competent rights holders and citizens across social work, education and health disciplines. Here, listening to the voices of professionals working with children is again imperative. The form of inter-generational interactions and relationships are influenced by the adult as much as by the child, and this brings about structures, positions, perspectives, role expectations and accountability levels related to professional agendas and interpretations of outcomes, goals vis-á-vis with service users and policy frameworks. Legal, moral and ethical considerations overlap and filter how children are heard, listened to and, interacted with depending upon the position of adults and how policy and professional standards are interpreted and engaged with.

Within the field of Childhood Studies, James and James (2008) recognise how social and cultural perception influenced by policy and legislation determine how childhood is perceived which impacts on behaviour and expectation. Burr (2004) adds a more critical outlook, arguing that predominant discourses on childhood are built on protection and participation, and this generates conflict with rights-based approaches, regarding *how* children access their rights and the role of adult control. In line with Burr, Handely (2005) presents the case that a child's competence and abilities are primarily considered by adults within a protective framework that subsequently influences the nature of children's agency and active participation in decision-making.

A recurrent argument of research on rights-based policies and their implementation is that dialectic between self-determination of the child and protective control exercised by the adult defines the **social space** for children's participation. Lansdown (2001) argues that although the UNCRC advocates that a child's welfare is paramount, the concept of welfare falls within the framework of protection rather than participation. For this reason, self-determination still maintains a secondary position, within an adult-centred approach, supported by an *ethic of care* (Penn 2005; Freeman 2011). This is influenced, particularly within education, health and social

services, by the pressure put on professionals by the ideological and legal *accountability* framework. Social Work is certainly at the forefront of the two contrasting trends: Social Workers working with children are responsible and accountable for the quality and outcomes of their practice, and the protection of children is the core criteria to assess quality (Siraj-Blatchford 2008; NCTL 2013; Callanan et al. 2017; Osgood et el 2017). Accountability and its impact on the reality of professional practice lend itself as a possible challenge to self-determination, which was already present in Article 12, although not linked to policies and professional practices. Article 12, states that self-determination of the child should be recognised, but at the same such revolutionary principle, is diluted by the specification that children's competence should be checked by an adult before self-determination can be conceded. Accountability, and adults' responsibility towards children's safety, combined with lack of trust in children and the hegemony of developmental images of the child, determines a situation where children have few rights regarding self-determination within dominant authoritative and paternalist rights based perspectives because children are viewed as reliant on adults to bring about change regarding rights based shifts for and on their behalf (Wyness 2012a, b).

11.4 Between Protection and Self-Determination, the Case of Ireland

The theoretical discussion previously developed can be applied to social work in Ireland, that lends itself as a worthwhile case-study, due to the power of the rights-based shift characterising policy-making since 2012. In 2013, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs commissioned a study by Buckley and O'Nolan from the School of Social Work and Social Policy at Trinity College in Dublin. The commissioned study undertook an examination of recommendations from five inquiries into the interactions between families and social services in situations of stress, to consider how and if recommendations were sanctioned and had any bearing upon future policy, practice, reform or outcomes. The study was to be used to develop a more effective dissemination and monitoring of future recommendations; however, its major result was that recommendations consistently address issues of safeguarding and highlight the accountability of Social Workers towards government, agencies and stakeholders (Buckley and O'Nolan 2013). Little, if any, reference is made to the voice of the child. Buckley and O'Nolan therefore suggest a contrast between policy frameworks and the role of high-level consultancy, adding further complexity to the reality of social work with children. An urgent question for this contribution thus concerns the perspective of Social Workers in a situation where the paradoxical relationship between accountability and a child's self-determination represents a challenge, for professional practice and for the implementation of right-based polices at once.

11.5 The Voice of Social Workers. Professional Listening between Accountability and Rights-Based Practice

Tusla operates in a context where policy-makers in Ireland are paddling the wave of Rights-based approaches aiming to include children in the body of citizenship. Social Workers who operated for the agency are front line staff who work directly with children and their life challenges, dealing with a diverse range of children's needs and circumstances. The Child and Family Agency suggests that Social Workers need active listening to tune into the voices and chosen expressions of children and teenagers from diverse backgrounds, wide demographic areas and cultural experiences. However, there are complexities involving needs to decode and unpeel potential imbalance of powers, in a situation where Social Workers are expected to learn, re-learn and self-assess how to tune into the voices of children to unpick areas that may need to be returned to within the service (Tusla 2014). Social Workers and children become interdependent and mutually entwined during interactions, but the act of professional listening for the Social Worker has many layers and filters to pass through that impact upon what is heard, engaged with and responded to. For example, how professionals who work with children are trained to listen to a 6 year old child disclosing delicate matters will shape the filters applied to listen (McLoone-Richards 2012), and the same applies to the ideological framework and the approach underpinning policies as well as individual or team practice.

Right-based approaches and safeguarding can be re-conceptualised in the analysis of professional listening as filters for Social Workers-children communication. Adults' professional identities, current legislation, organisational cultures and dominant narratives concerning intergenerational relationships impacts on children's voice and how children's intentions, expression and voices are heard and responded to. A child who expresses voice or choice, for example, is heard (or not) via adult listening filters that are generated at personal, professional and social levels. A model is offered below, to illustrate the dynamic relationship between listening filters and the space to interact with children's expressions and agency.

Whilst generating complexities in the intersection with existing professional cultures and contrasting agendas, rights-based shifts towards recognition of children's self-determination present opportunities for Social Workers to reflect upon professional language, beliefs and values related to power struggle and tension between adults and children's experiences and expectations (Kearney 1987; Skehill 1999; Jones 2010; Jones and Walker 2012; Lundy and Blue-Swadener 2014; Lundy and Cook-Sather 2016). Osler and Starkey (2010) discuss how perspectives on the rights of the child are based on social, economic and cultural positioning of the actors, thus going beyond a prescriptive approach to their implementation. Trevarthen (2011) and Alderson (2012) build upon Osler and Starkey's point arguing that the contextualized 'child' is dependent upon their environment, available resources and the adults that inhabit their world to capitalise on their innate advocacy and determination drivers to be active citizens.

In addition to a sophisticated analysis of the persistent structures of inequality between adults and children, social research since the early 1990s has been investigating another aspect, that is, the interface between education, services and care and structural determinants of the society, and the challenges that this poses to the implementation of children's right to self-determination (Lawy and Biesta 2006). This aspect is considered to be particularly pertinent for the reality of Social Work with children in Ireland, where the rights-based drive emphasised by the creation of Tusla share the platform with a persistent and resistant safeguarding approach underpinning other important pieces of National legislation and recommendations. Our discussion now turns to the ambiguity of the policy framework, focusing on a legislative initiative that still conditions the possibility for the promotion of children's self-determination within Social Work: *Children First*.

11.6 The Complexity of Policy into Practice

Children First is a 2011 legislation that defines guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children in Ireland. It is therefore an initiative primarily concerned with safeguarding and protection, that are strongly prioritised. The rationale of *Children First* is firmly rooted in the Early Intervention models, where a support to families and partnership should prevent the need of costly and risky crisis management. Since 2011, *Children First* has been central to Irish government policies, due to its focus on child protection, to its methodology based on partnership and to its drive towards optimisation of investment, which are all powerful elements in the political discourse on social work. It is pertinent at this point to consider what is the space for children's self-determination within *Children First*, because the thesis advanced here is that the safeguarding-based approach of *Children First* partially undermines the right-based drive that led to the establishment of Tusla. What is the space for children's voices within *Children First*, where the family unit is recognised as the stakeholder and the partner of Social Work?

Children First guidelines do not include an explicit recognition of children's self-determination. Whilst the child is systematically put at the centre, it is conceptualised as dependent, immature and in need of protection. Included in *Children First* as a member of a disempowered minority, the child finds its voice weakened by spirals of listening filters regarding decision and interventions that may affect its life. The interlocutor of the State is not the Child but, rather, the family, within which the position of the child is one of subordination to the parents. *Children First* combines (1) the representation of children as subordinated to the protective family unit (or to the State if a family proves dysfunctional) *in their own best interest* and, (2) a representation of social work as an efficient strategy for children's safety. For this reason, Children First can be considered as an example, as well as a determining force of the uncertain position of social work and the challenges that Social Workers and Social Care Workers face in the transformation of practice in the context where children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. The voices of the children have distant lands to travel, corners to reach and challenging terrain to conquer during its journey. The next section will explore where Social Workers and Social Care Workers perceive themselves in that journey.

11.7 Social Workers and Social Care Workers Reflections from Practice

The paradoxical coupling between accountability towards safeguarding and risk-reduction on the one hand and chiildren's self-determination requiring trust in children's competence and acceptance of risk (Farini 2012) on the other hand has been discussed. This section is concerned with Social Workers and Social Care Workers perceptions, experiences and meanings of their professional life working with children. Professional voices were promoted and collected through eight individual semi-structured interviews, aimed to secure space and support for Social Care Workers and Social Workers' narratives around their professional life-world. In a complex situation where policies demand professionals to prioritise protection and Early Intervention as well as recognise children's self-determination and risk-acceptance, the voices of Social Workers and Social Care Workers are particualry interesting to collect and reflect upon, also and foremost in view of possible further development of practice with children.

The sample consists of eight Senior Social Workers and Social Care Workers operating across the West of Ireland. As a first general result of the research, it is possible to observe that professional narratives present three main themes as most influential in their experiences of working with children: (1) The ambiguous nature of the policy framework, (2) Adult attitudes, (3) Organisational barriers. The following discussion will present Social Workers' and Social Care Workers' perception of their position between protection of the child and recognition of child's right to self-determination through decision-making.

11.7.1 Theme 1: The Ambiguous Nature of the Policy Framework

The ambiguity discussed in previous sections is generally recognised by the participants. In particular, the addition of *Children First* to the picture of social work with children is thought to generate some contradictions. For instance, participants suggest that the same rationale of *Children First*, that is, the emphasis on the family as the interlocutor of social services, may undermine approaches interested in the promotion of children self-determination. A senior Social Worker recognises that while

> The child is both an individual and part of a family unit. Families and social services working together are one of the government targets to support children. For this, social work strategies are developed to support parents and children; they are devised carefully and respectfully without judgements during consultation with adults and children.

There is awareness that partnership with families can hinder the voices of the children, as the continuation of the interview suggests:

> *Children First* guidelines advocate that the childs' individual and unique family context and circumstances, religion, culture, or race should be considered when taking preventative or protective action on behalf of the child. Interventions to support children should not deal with the child in isolation, although within practice, this can cause difficulties for children as they are seen as part of a family unit rather than as individuals.

Nothwistanding that demographic movements and social change in Ireland generate now more diversity, there are still hegemonic discourses that conceptualises the child as a member of the family, channelling communication with the child via the family unit. Another interviewee offers a vivid representation of the disempowering effect on practice as well as on the quality of partnership with families of the contradiction between protection and recognition of self-determination

> The same guidelines are often contradictory of each other. Children's voices and self-determination thresholds are often secondary to the assessment of the quality of parenting, so that the child's background and not the child is seen. For example, Children's voice is considered in the context of planning for the childs furture', although at present there is no mention of the child's wishes or views, regarding the length of time a child spends away from their biological family if it is deemed safer for the child not to be there. A child may express an opinion that is heard but not listened to. Safeguarding policy, structures and levels of accountability can override voice and intention disempowering the child, the parents and Social Workers.

However, the right-based shift in Social Work with children is still a powerful force, and the participants do not fail to recognise its impact within their professional practice. The *Irish National Strategy on Children and Young Peoples Participation in Decision Making* for the period 2015–2020 identifies that '*Children and young people will have a voice in decisions made in their local communities or about their own well-being and life opportunities*'. This demands to social work to secure spaces children's voices can be expressed and space for the professional to listen. This would require time to develop trusting commitments between Social Workers and Children through intense inter-personal relationships not conditioned by the organisational priority for outcome-driven practice. According to

participants, carving a space within practice is not always easy. For instance, a participant affirms that

> whilst recognising that children and young people have a right to participate in decisions that affect their lives, there is not always enough time to support shifts due to paperwork and time constraints relating to case notes and meetings which generate massive workloads.

Organisational procedures and related bureaucratic commitments are further reinforced by the accountability framework, which makes it imperative to produce a detailed documentation of professional practice to be used as evidence during inspectional procedures, either internal or delivered by external agencies. Such commitments, nevertheless, can detract from spending enough time with children and therefore impacts upon levels of participation (Lundy and Blue-Swadener 2014).

11.7.2 Theme 2: Adults' Attitudes

Within social services, how adults initiate and undertake communication and consultation with children impacts directly on children's voices and opportunity to agency. Archard (1993) highlights the centrality of the role of adults in right-based communication, suggesting that a child's internal driver and desired level of participation are framed around adult's responsibility, power and language. James and James (1999) recognise that adults' sematic of childhood, also influenced by policy and legislation, determines how childhood is perceived and the nature of intergenerational relationships. It is here suggested that adults' attitudes impact greatly upon how professionals interact with children, and the measure in which children are involved in decision making or consulted. Research undertaken by Coyne and colleagues at Dublin City University (2006) and concerned with children's experiences of their participation in decision-making in Irish hospitals found that, when asked to feedback about their experiences during medical consultations relating to their own pending hospitalisation or medical procedures, children reflected that they inherited a marginal position during their experience and were mostly excluded from making decisions during consultations. This is due to the communication style or approach used by adults. Coyne's and colleagues convincingly argue that professionals working *on behalf of the child* may prevent children from gaining access to *enough* information about their case, procedures and possible choices. Knowledgeable professionals making decisions on behalf of children indicated in the research they do not believe children are competent enough to make the best choice. A contribution from one of the participants can serve as an example of Social Workers' recognition of the impact of adults' attitudes in the definition of the space for children's self-determination and voices.

> Some of the key principles highlight a national drive for statutory guidelines to ensure the protection and welfare of children whilst at the same time listening to children directly. This style of communication and view of a childs position impacts upon how the expressions of children are listend to, heard and acted upon. However, different cultures, generations and discipline models view the age of development and voice differently.

However, the interviewees are quite firm in defending their professional identities regarding the attention that is devoted to develop communication strategies to support the child as a decision maker in situations that affect its life.

> Consider communication skills and professional knowledge required by a professional working within social services if working with a parent who is caring for a terminally ill child. The social worker will need to offer the parent support and access to emotional, psychological, financial, or rest bite support to care for the sick child. And the terminally ill child is at the centre of the picture and the goal is to make him owning his time so communication is important as is his voice. But the other siblings are also in need of support to come to terms with the change in family health and life. And here is where their voice must be heard within the deployment of strategies to deal with the dynamics of family life and focus that change massively.

A participant presents a situation when children are necessarily promoted as the main partner of the Social Workers, and their authority dramatically raised by difficult circumstances affecting their family.

> There are situations where the child becomes a protagonist, which are situations where parents have their own personal issues. For example, if a parent is addicted to drink or drugs a social worker will aim to support the parent to access medical support whilst also working directly with children of addicts to develop strategies to know what to do to keep safe when their parent's addiction becomes a threat to well-being.

11.7.3 Theme 3: Organisational Barriers

A recurrent theme emerging from Social Workers' and Social Care Workers narratives is the impact of organisational arrangements on their professional practice. In particular, the need to access information held across a range of departments or professional bodies whilst working with a specific child can reduce the time that would be needed to develop intense trustful relationships with children. As noted by a professional during an interview:

> Working across services require time to book meetings, arrange visits, liaise with departments, parents and schools, write up reports, reflect upon or voice concerns or disclosures, share case files and carefully plan next steps. All these points are vital needing to happen at once which whilst are for the child are also against the child because time with the child becomes limited to ensure all other duties are met. The time frame is stressful sometimes because in some cases and individual situations, it can be a life or death situation.

The above reflections capture that the time needed to build up relationships with children and families, the space for children's voices to be listened to should be preserved in situations where time is scarce and precious and that can be emotionally charged or challenging. With the creation of Tusla, Irish social services moved out of health services; whilst this is necessary to develop more innovative and child-centred strategies and codes of practice, the implication of Social Services' independence is the need to manage with sometimes limited resources, complex realities, under the pressure of individual professional and personal accountability. This

might have an impact upon a Social Workers' and Social Care Workers inclination towards more time-consuming and risky practices based on the promotion of children's self-determination.

Another aspect of professional practices impacting on the resources that can be invested to create situations where the voices of the children can be empowered is again linked with the culture of accountability. As witnessed by an interviewee,

> inspections are imperative and a very positive move however they are very time consuming and mean a higher level of paperwork which again is important however time consuming. Ireland is just coming out of a recession and there is a shortage of Social Workers, social care staff and administration staff. Administrative duties are part of the operative Social Workers' and Social Care Workers role as well, and that means that for a worker to listen to the voice of any child, it is time consuming, because the worker must then deal with organisational bureaucracy and attend child protection or case conferences, undertake multiple assessments and, applications to take a child on. Within this complex system a child's voice is often heard and then lost…

Another Social Worker confirms how organisational procedures are as much hindering to the voices of the children as adverse legislation and personal attitudes:

> The length of time it takes to deal with a range of different professionals working with a family, to liaise with senior management and plan and then attend a court appearance, and write lengthy court reports often takes out from the necessary time it takes to properly hear the child. To hear a child a worker needs time to build up a child's rapport and trust, complex cases or families often have a distrust and fear of authority and view social services as there just to take their children. The worker needs time to build trust and break down barriers of fear and false complaints and failure to cooperate to fully see the child's life and get the child's voice. All children depending on their age and ability have different methods of communicating a need to adults. Children's voices can often be heard in their behaviour and often it takes time to know the child and listen to what the child is saying and not saying.

Major challenges relating to the translation of policy into practice for those working across social work with children capture time, communication, professional cultures and organisational arrangements as impacting on how space and levels of children's voices, agency and participation are promoted and interacted with, particularly in complex situations, where Social Workers' and Social Care Workers inclination towards risk-taking is decisively reduced.

11.8 Conclusion

Research has been arguing that between representations of childhood and practices of working with children one of the most evident gaps regards the implementation of the rights to self-determination (Warming 2013; Baraldi and Iervese 2014). This contribution suggests that this is the case for Social Work with children in Ireland. The Irish case is considered to be particularly interesting because the oscillation between recognition and non-recognition of children's self-determination does not only depend on the implementation of strategies for children's empowerment (Jones 2010) or on the solidity and coherence of a rights-based approach (Osler and Starkey

2010). The peculiarity of the Irish case consists in the coexistence of two powerful but contradictory movements underpinning policies in Social Work with children: one towards protection of the child through Family-State partnership and another directed to the recognition of children's agency and prioritisation of their self-determination through the empowerment of their voices.

The risk observed in rights-based approaches in education has been fascinating research both regarding the positive impact (Baraldi and Farini 2013) and the associated risk (Mica et al. 2012) of the promotion of children's self-determination. How theories and legal prescriptions regarding children's right of self-determination translate from theory into educational practice has been the object of recent and current research. The discussion presented here aims to extend the debate to Social Work.

It is firmly believed that Dahlberg and Moss concept of 'pedagogy of listening' (2005: 97) advocating the importance of listening to the voices of the children in education can be translated to the right-based approach characterising the new wave of Irish Social Work with children epitomised by the creation of Tusla. However, it is also true that young children's participation and voices, whilst are promoted by Irish legislation are contradicted by equally powerful discourses and policies, generated by the same ambiguous nature of the UNCRC and national legislation, that prioritise protection, safety and control. Children's collaboration with adults and a consistent and shared exchange of ideas may be found in national Irish policies, and yet it seems sometimes difficult to involve children in decision making, consultation, and information sharing and planning of procedures so that trusting relationships underpin partnerships that are not adult-dominated. If children are to be considered as primary stakeholders and citizens who have a right to be consulted and heard, then a lack of consultation to prepare, inform or include children in procedures, negotiation or decision making, even if motivated by preoccupation for the child's best interest, is a luxury that Social Service cannot afford.

On completion of their chapter, Scollan and McNeill propose the following questions to provoke further reflection, research and dialogue

- How do responsibilities related to professional roles influence how and when professionals engage with and listen to children?
- Using the Irish case-study as an example, reflect if, how and why safeguarding policy and procedures may empower children, or hinder their self-determination
- Reflect upon the impact that the organisational dimension (procedures, accountability, legal framework) can have on the measure in which children's care services become an enabling, trusting and actively engaging environment for children

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Chapter 12
Discourses/3. Kenya: Challenging Negative Perceptions around the 'African Child'

Evelyn Wandia Corrado and Leena Helavaara Robertson

12.1 Introduction

The 'African child' has been highly stigmatised when presented by the media and discussed on political and social forums globally. Indisputably, the 'African child' has been globally projected as poor, malnourished, deprived and vulnerable, disregarding the fact that many African children have happy childhoods. A majority of African children grow up in decent homes with access to adequate amenities and good care from their families. Nonetheless, for many decades Africa has generally been seen as land of holocaust full of poverty, diseases, and wars, occupied by the greedy and ignorant people (Diop 2014; Poncian 2015). The validity of this outlook has not been fully examined especially from the Africans' point of view. Without a doubt, most Africans are astounded by these horrifying perceptions, which not only leave them feeling stigmatised, but also limit their engagements with the rest of the world (Mazrui 2000; Chimamanda 2009; Corrado 2014; Diop 2014; Njoya 2015, 2017).

The biased stances towards Africans are not limited to social and political arenas, but they are also projected in other disciplines. According to the universal childhood sociologists James et al. (2002), most childhoods are under expressed and their human rights are limited by their ethnicity and gender background. For this reason, classifying all African children under the 'developing world' category affects them negatively. The labelling disregards the fact that Africa is a huge continent with many countries with different tribal cultures and traditions. Across these tribes, each community has its own politics, economics, social values and beliefs (Pillay 2014). However, despite the diversity there are several similarities, including how most

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communities work together to enhance their social, economic and cultural status. These statuses seem to progress well, it's no wonder Africa has been reported to have become stable economically and socially in the last decade (ACPF 2014; African Development Bank 2011; AEO 2014). Nonetheless, the negative perceptions still haunt the African people who work hard and who have so much strength in many areas that have remained unveiled.

As the first writer of this chapter, I spent most of my childhood years in central Kenya which were very comfortable and happy. All my needs were met including health, food, shelter, clothing, schools, hospitals and good transportation. Furthermore, I grew up within a socialised community where I felt loved and cared for and there was a sense of brotherhood – and sisterhood – in my society. Many of my peers in Kenya and from other African countries that I have met over the years had almost similar comfortable childhoods. However, they are as astonished as I am, when they see how their childhoods are negatively portrayed globally. Subsequently, I argue that Africa continent is huge, hence taking a few negative childhood studies to present the whole continent is a misrepresenting. I aim to challenge the neglect of other childhoods like the middle class and upper class children, and the traditional and happy African childhoods whatever class background.

As a result, we will identify some of the negative discourses and challenge them, then shed light on the positive aspects of the African childhood's phenomenon. In addition, discuss how the negative perceptions can be addressed constructively. As Cohen (1994) stated, it is important to draw on the strengths of the people rather than to constantly project on their predicaments. Although attitudes take a long time to change, it is vital to start addressing the negative biases that can traumatically affect a society. In doing so, misrepresentations can be overcome to emancipate the 'African child'. Ethnographers have advocated that the unheard should be given platforms, to voice their stories to avoid misconstructions (Woods 2006). Therefore, the 'African child' should be allowed to create its' own identity to override any prejudices, applying the UN Convection on the Rights of the Child (1989) that allows children to engage in their world actively.

In this chapter, we start to critically analyse the universal childhood studies, focussing on their presentations of the 'African childhoods' and the effects. Thereafter, we use Africans accounts and recent research reports to present the authentic positions of most African children. Challenging global biased discourses which limit these children's rights to engage, we further outline how the image of the African children can be restructured.

12.2 Universal Childhoods

Although theories of childhood have differed across disciplines, those who accept more of a multi-disciplinary view, like psychologists, educationalists and policy makers, have increasingly agreed that children are individuals and they play a part in society. Hence, they are 'social actors' and they should have their own rights to be authentic and these rights should be protected. According to James and James

(2001), childhood is not just biological, but also social and cultural. Therefore, the society constructs the role of a child and this role changes according to the society's perceptions. James and James (2001) also distinguished that children are still taken as lower humans by society, since they do not play active roles in social, economic and political arenas. Hence their rights are limited, disputing their position as 'social actors'.

Even so, the adults' attitudes and actions influence the childhood experiences of the younger generations. James and James (2001) identified that most social policies that define the children's rights are highly influenced by adults' knowledge's and perceptions. Consequently, children do not have prominent roles in defining their position; nor do they have many opportunities in engaging in or improving their situatedness of this social order.

Nonetheless, most of the ways in which childhoods are constructed have been drawn from 'western' perspectives, which often appear to take for granted that all childhoods' are universal (Corsaro 2011; Alanen et al. 2015). Indeed, portraying that most children in Africa 'developing' countries are poor and disadvantaged, is a false dichotomy as argued by Phillip and Schweisfurth (2007) and James and Prout (1997). Nonetheless, these children in the 'developing world' are not well accounted for, but appear presumed into a position from the lens of 'western attributions' and global dominant perceptions. According to Andre and Hilgers (2015) the global narrative of childhood is imposed by the dominant cultures and economic powers, subjecting the 'developing' world into subordination.

> In our global age, international institutions play a devise role in dissemination of symbolic representations of childhood that carry cultural arbitrary directly related to logic of capitalism…Global discourses on childhood affects the presentation and practices all over the world (Andre and Hilgers 2015 p.138)

To overcome these biased distortions, there is a need for ethnographers to research the real childhood experiences and meanings across diverse cultures and social backgrounds (James and Prout 1997; Corsaro 2011). They should include the African childhoods' reality, to overcome problematic comparisons and false categorisation. Furthermore, the children's voice should be present while defining social policies, also when accounting for 'children's rights' and when defining social positions to avoid misrepresentations (Andre and Hilgers 2015). Indeed, the UN Convention rights of the Child (1989) Article 12, advocates for all children to be heard and to actively participate in their world. They should include all children across the globe, such as African children who perhaps are unheard in most childhood theories (Andre and Hilgers 2015).

As MacLeod (2008) analysed the Zimbardo experiment (1974) in which some prison guards participants took their roles seriously and mistreated the other participants who acted as prisoners. He concluded that the study demonstrated that people normally assume social roles given to them and these roles shape their identity and social actions (MacLeod 2008). Although Zimbardo study was criticised for ethical reasons, it highlighted how social status and perceptions can affect individuals' self-esteem and confidence. Individuals endorsed to positions of power can subject others into unfair conditions for example stigma, mistreatment and hatred. This can

cause physical, psychological and social harm to the subjects. Exposure to stigma can negatively distress individuals' and isolate them, therefore should be avoided. The stigma can be projected through the predisposed discourses and categorisation. Similarly, the African children stigma is detrimental and should be addressed to overcome their global marginalisation.

This outlook is supported by social attribution theory which indicates that, when a group of people are subjected to bias and stereotypes, their success and failure rates are affected (Dietz-Ulher and Muller 1998; Jackson et al. 1993). Although, the out-group failure is not seen as a direct effect of the stereotypes but rather a lack of ability, in reality it has a strong effect. Some studies have demonstrated the effects of group attributions to people's self-esteem, performance and identity (Gillian 1993; Alanen et al. 2015). People's social identities are significant to their personal identity and when they feel stigmatised or threatened there is negative effect for example to their engagements and self-determination. A study conducted with Oxford schools where students were given specific attributions in the experiments, showed that the attributions given to participants affected their performance (Gillian 1993). Concluding that it is vital to be conscious of ascriptions bestowed to specific groups of people, in this case the negative African children's reports. As Poncian (2015, p.74) stated, '*Negative reporting prepares the Africans to see themselves as having problems and needing external intervention to help them sort out their problems'*. Indeed, the consistent social, political and media bias against African society including the children have detrimental effects on their performance and their identity and should therefore be challenged. Especially, to protect the younger African generations self-image and social confidence while engaging locally or globally.

12.3 The 'African Child' Reality

Children in the traditional African societies were perceived as special gifts and were received with a lot of joy at birth. The mother traditionally took care of the child and tried to make sure that the child was healthy and well catered for. The 'African child' was breast fed for over 12 months. Moreover, the child was surrounded by the community and it was the work of the community to bring up the child for example the siblings, uncles, aunties and neighbours were all responsible of the child wellbeing (Cohen 1994). Indeed, the bringing up of the 'African child' was a collaboration task for all (Kenyatta 1965) and the environment was conducive, meeting most of the necessary needs for the child. As the child grew up, the society took the role of informally educating the child through story-telling, engagement and instructing. They also used African sayings which had philosophical meanings. Many traditional African teachings were aimed for economic and moral investments for the future and were also a reservation of their culture (Kenyatta 1965; Cohen 1994; Adeyemi and Adeyinka 2002). These social cultural structures however, were dismissed as barbaric and uncivilised when most Africa regions came under colonial rule in the eighteenth century. When the colonial governments introduced formal

education in their African colonies, education alienated any form of African culture and traditions. Hence, the African children were exposed to a system that made their identity appear inferior. Consequently, in the last centuries the African society has changed overtime with the new incorporation of formal western education and its effects of urbanisation (Cohen 1994; Njoya 2017). Leaving most of formal educated families living in the cities, as a result the close family network of bringing up the children has altered. Nonetheless, the social networks are still visible, making the experience of children a mixture of tradition culture and modernisation.

Most of African childhood studies only seem to focus on vulnerable African children. For example, children affected by poverty, or HIV and AIDs, or children living on the streets, or abused children in Africa, or children exposed to violence like child soldiers (Kilbride 2010; Cheney 2010; Corsaro 2011; Meinck et al. 2015; UNESCO 2015; ASC-Leiden 2015). However, not all children in Africa are vulnerable and living under such conditions as lots of researches and charity reports seems to represent the 'African child' poverty discourse (Cohen 1994; Andre and Hilgers 2015; Pillay 2014). These presentations are not representative of all children from stable backgrounds who are above 54% in African countries like Kenya, South Africa, Egypt, Angola among others. There are many African children living in happy loving homes with access to fine amenities including schools, health facilities, clean water, electricity, good infrastructure and security. These childhoods are apparent in rural, urban or traditional homes where most African children have extended families that provide good care and support.

The Africa reports signified that even the former vulnerable children's conditions have improved in the last decades (Pascal 2008; ACPF 2014; Pillay 2014). According to ACPF (2014) and International Monetary Fund (2013) reports, most countries in Africa have recently grown economically and are more stable politically. This has improved the living standards whilst the children's' rights and care has better significantly in the past years. The OAU (1990) formulated the African charter that advocates for every child's protection and wellbeing. It states that a child should grow up in a healthy environment where they are secure, healthy and have right to education and to explore their abilities freely without partiality.

> The last two decades Africa has witnessed robust economic growth and dramatic progress in health and education in many countries. African governments have ratified most of the relevant international and regional human rights instruments and made encouraging progress in domesticating them including children rights…… (ACPF 2014).

More reports from Africa including the Africa Economic Outlook (2014) have supported that African economic growth and life standards have improved in the last decades, despite some of the countries in the region having major issues, which are being addressed. One example of the most prominent countries with high growth of economy is Kenya with increase of 5.7% in 2013 (BBC 2014; AEO 2014). The country has continued to improve its' living standards which are conducive for the children, moving to mid-income economic status in 2014 (BBC 2014). Hence, it is important to challenge preconceptions laid upon the African child, re-adjust outlook and contribute positively to the progress of the African child. AEO (2014) has

reported that human development is on the rise and global chains with inclusive social values have heightened. Indeed, the standards of living for many African children are better and therefore, there is a need for them to value their own identity and at the same time become globally connected and respected.

Africa as a continent has outstanding culture, rich in music, values and religion among others (Gordon and Gordon 2001). The African land would be likened to the garden of Eden (full of milk and honey), but in business terms it is full of diamonds, gold, oil, great agriculture cash crops like cocoa, coffee, tea, fruits and many other food crops. The African wildlife and landscape cannot be compared to any other continent in the world. Many around the world face large costs to visit countries like South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, Morocco and Egypt to see wildlife and to enjoy the beautiful sceneries. The tourists are often shocked by the generosity of the African people who are hospitable and accepting. Africans are socially friendly and welcoming and that's how they accepted outsiders (Europeans) in to their land not knowing they would become victims of their generosity in the eighteen century (Kenyatta 1965; Mazrui 2000). Nonetheless, they still uphold their hospitality nature and many people across the globe have relocated to Africa including Asians, Americans and Europeans and they live in harmony. These social virtues are shaped by the collaborative way of life, supported by the African proverb that 'it takes a village to bring up a child'. This is because the people in Africa come together in good and bad times and they believe in welcoming strangers. Traditionally, Africans help each other to build houses, to organise weddings, to bury their loved ones and even to pay school fees for those who cannot afford. There is less room for individualism and isolation, but people live as a community. The rate of depression must best lower in Africa due to these social structures. The wellbeing of children and of individuals is a social matter hence one cannot suffer alone in silence. Although much of these values are threatened by 'westernisation' like individualism and capitalism, the African togetherness spirit in the communities and in families still stands. These principles are usually illuminated through songs and narratives passed on to generations as part of informal education.

In the traditional African model of education, individuals were trained for survival skills like how to stay safe from danger, how to take care of family through hunting, look after cattle, fishing and growing food. This informal education also passed on cultural values of the society, which gave a collective identity of the community for example, the value of good morals, sex education, taboos within the community and gender roles (Nwomonoh 1998). These types of knowledge were passed on through narratives, where stories, proverbs and philosophies were handed down through generations. Additionally, there were enhanced group work collaborations via peer-group engagements and learning through imitation and practice too (Kenyatta 1965). These methods of learning were collaborative, involved dialogue and also promoted creativity and inquiry. Informal education still remains although introduction of formal education has taken over since the colonial administration. Although, at first education was a three tier system in most African countries where Europeans had the best education and Asians had better whilst African had basics education to provide cheap labour. Formal education had been made equal for all

despite race or class. And in most countries who are members of African Union, education has been made available for many children. Although researchers and education bodies have been calling for improvement in education (Ackers and Hardman 2012; Benoite 2013), younger generations have relatively been well educated. In the last decades there have been positive engagements in the continent and around the world in the areas of education, fashion, media and business among others. There is still room for improvement and the governments have laid policies to try and make plans for future African children.

Today, within the African continent there are many communities with varying values, traditions and economic abilities. In this chapter, we use punctuation marks (") while referring to the 'African child', since it is diverse. The individuals' experiences could differ, for example, the children living in urban areas in middle or upper class economy and children in poverty regions or even in the rural areas fluctuate in exposure (Andre and Hilgers 2015). Also, in communities that strictly follow traditional lifestyles like the nomadic communities for example the Maasai in Kenya, Swazi in Swaziland and Fulani in Nigeria could have different experiences from the urban children. As a result, the reality of having a universal 'African child' category could be challenged and one might even argue that the universal 'African child' does not exist, but is defined by background, exposure and social status. For this reason, there is need for diverse ethnographic studies across the African continent for viable childhood studies exploration. Nevertheless, the communities that choose to follow their traditions to date, have individuals who are intellectual, hardworking and have good social and moral values. Their choices of lifestyles might differ from 'civilised' ways of life, but they still have skills and intellect that can be learned by others. Sternberg (2007) argued that intelligence should not be measured from one community standards, but should acknowledge diverse social and cultural backgrounds.

Regrettably, the global discourses used to describe the African children and their statuses are limited, depressing, and unjustified. The Davis (2006) book titled 'Planet of slums' predicted a decade ago that most African slums will grow rapidly absorbing most of the population in the cities. For example, he reported that 85% of Kenyan population will be densely populated in the slums. He further claimed that there was no hope for eradicating African's poverty in the urban cities. Davis (2006) writings consummated that the African governments' goals to have a healthier better place for children were not achievable by 2030 (Davis 2006). These conclusions displayed very demeaning projections towards Africans. His representations envisaged that Africans had no ability to progress from their pathetic situations hence their issues could only get worse. Nonetheless, African economy in the last decade has progressed and the conditions for the African children have been reported improved across the continent (ACPF 2014). As a result, Davis (2006) damaging predictions were inaccurate and demonstrated fundamental attribution errors (Langdridge and Taylor 2007). The attributions that most of the African population will live in the slums from the writers' perspective seem tenuous. Cities like Nairobi and Addis Ababa have grown massively in last decade with better infrastructure and the economies being named as mid-economies by BBC (2014) and AEO (2014) for countries like Kenya and Ethiopia among others.

According to Poncian (2015) negative bias towards Africans has not just emerged in the recent years, but has persisted for many centuries. Indeed, from the time of Charles Darwin who professed that Africans were closer to apes according to his evolution theory. Africans were regarded to have evolved from apes, hence their intellect was lower than that of other human races and their culture was termed as barbaric (Poncian 2014; Kenyatta 1965). These ideologies were upheld during the slave trade and throughout the colonial rule, when Africans were dehumanised and brutally abused. Africans were misused for free labour by the colonial governments under brutal conditions and when they fought back they were treated like terrorists (Kenyatta 1965; Mandela 1994). In the colonial times Africans were subjected to racial bias and were not allowed to have good education or any other services, until when they challenged their colonial masters and fought for their freedom (Mandela 1994).

Although most African countries gained independence decades ago, the problem of neo-colonial and racial bias persists according to Poncian (2014). The delusion is glimpsed in the biased media which socially constructs the continent as a land of holocaust full of diseases, wars and ignorance. When there are problems facing a section of Africa, the issues are projected like it is the whole continent in trouble as usual. These Africa's negative pre-conceptions are evidence of the intergroup biased attributions which are also reported by various charities and world leaders (Poncian 2015; Andre and Hilgers 2015). This was evident with the reporting about Ebola outbreak in 2014 which affected three countries in West Africa in specific regions, but was it reported like the whole continent had the epidemic (NHS 2014; BBC 2015). The other over 50 African countries were accorded as if they had the outbreak which signifies flawed reporting. Because of this, there were global warnings against travelling to the continent due to specific issues, but the repercussions affected the African economy and how the Africans were viewed by the world.

Similar issues have been seen in the case of terrorist attacks in Africa like in Nigeria where instead of sympathising with the country and projecting the reality that terrorism is a global issue. The issues were reported to be caused by the Nigerian poor Governance when campaigning for the abducted Chiboko girls to be returned (Al-Jazeera 2014). Nonetheless, if other countries have similar issues the sympathy is offered without blame for example the American 9/11, London 2005 attack, France Charlie terror attack in 2016. Depicting the fact that even countries like Nigeria must deal with global issues like terrorism, and need similar support and sympathy. Moreover, they have other positive strengths like Nigeria being one of the fastest growing economies in the world amid global economic crisis (AEO 2014). Certainly, good reports which went under reported but were shadowed by focussing on the security problems only. These biases among others need to be identified and also challenged with the truth. The global society should not just be pointing fingers at the failures of the African people but should also acknowledge their successes. They should also make sure their attributions are accurate, not shaped by their social biases.

Undeniably, these negative global attributions pose discourses that negatively affect the Africans contributions in the wider global society. Psychologists claim that bureaucrats support biased perceptions through categorisation, employing inter-

group processes which affect the recipients negatively (Holloway et al. 2007). In this case the African children. The intergroup aggression is acted upon individuals or groups to fit with what they are exposed to culturally, historically and ideologically in their society. Subsequently, these biases are projected while hiring staff, or while doing business, or engaging in other activities with members of the outer-group. This can be visible at local level and even at global level in political forums, social arenas or even in academic institutions. As a result, how a society is perceived by others can determine how the individuals from that community are treated by other communities, whether the preconceptions are valid or not. These projections are visible in discourses used that usually expose bigoted attitudes, whether in the political stance or whether in the social or academic arena. For example, the global position for the African people and their childhoods. Drawing from Bourdieu perspective, humans internalise social positions that they find themselves in. These social positions predispose people's identity and activity, but they can be negotiated overtime (Alanen et al. 2015). Thus, there is need for the African society to challenge unfair outlook, so that they can negotiate their position and expose their real character. This is important for their individual, local and global engagements. The emancipation will not only affect the Africans alive today, but also the generations to come.

12.4 Challenging Preconceived Discourses

On regular basis as an African living abroad, I (the first writer) have found myself in situations where I had to defend my childhood and African continent. In some instances, I had to explain to some individuals that the whole of Africa is not a desert but has massive of regions that produce a lot of food; including the one exported abroad to international supermarkets. Other times, I have to explain that I had access to good schools and that growing up all my needs were met and i had a great childhood. I can recollect one instance in a social event when a Swiss lady confronted me, that if my childhood account was true, then I must have been a chief's daughter. Her stance left me speechless, since she could not belief that my account was a narration of an ordinary African childhood. Yes, there have been similar cases where individuals' have beheld my descriptions with suspicion, but there are also times where there have been positive engagements. Some people have started reflecting on their own preconceived notions about African childhoods. They have started being more aware of biased narratives and discourses in our world. Some have been inspired to have more conversations with other Africans and a few have gone further and visited the African continent. Their encounters have changed their previous outlooks. Although, not everyone's outlook will be converted, it is significant to engage in these discussions and challenge misrepresentations.

Freire and Macedo (1993) claimed that human existence cannot be silenced to submission by others, but oppressed people can use words, work and action to liberate themselves from any kind of cruelty. His views indicated that people can challenge their oppressor and liberate themselves. In his argument, humanisation of the

oppressed could only come through overcoming fear and individuals pursuing transformation through action (Freire and Macedo 1993). Freire's analysis acknowledged that class, race and gender influenced how man viewed himself and how he was perceived by others. Hence, negotiating the process of liberation required resilience and cooperation with others. The negotiation needs dialogue among the oppressed to enhance unity and then together they could challenge the oppressor (Hooks 1994; Ladson-Billings 1995; Freire and Macedo 1993). Therefore, Africans as well should dialogue and challenge biases for emancipation of their identity.

Ethnographic approaches should be applied whilst exploring the African identities and experiences. The subjective nature of sharing ideas would enhance the understanding of the African society and further create a more conducive outlook for the African child. This is because ethnographers are able to integrate with the society and explore the inside story of the subjects from an emic position (Woods 2006; Clifford 1988). Most African childhood studies have explored their positions using global predisposed conceptions without caring to comprehend the Africans perspectives and values. However, humans are inseparable from their culture and values. Hence, for one to fully understand them and represent them reasonably, one must see them from their lenses (Helfrich 1999; Corsaro 2011). Thus, use of ethnographic exploration would help examine and challenge any imposed positions on African children. For example, all the children projected as poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged. These social discourses are not static but can be changed over time, through using phenomenological accounts from the African communities. Thus help to root out any fundamental attribution errors that are associated to their identity. The authentic outlooks will additionally help disrupt global inequalities and help re-categorise the position of the African child globally. Indeed, reducing bias and giving an active voice to the African child to transform their status psychologically, socially, politically and economically.

A valid example where Africans challenged misrepresentation is when BBC (2014) aired a controversial documentary titled 'The untold story of Rwanda' about the 1994 genocide. The documentary has been challenged by African scholars, Rwandans students and other groups, declaring that it not only gave stories of western scholars but also of the people who had personal issues with the government. The documentary did not speak for and to the victims of the genocide according to the critics (Guardian 2014; Telegraph 2015; Njoya 2015). In addition, although the documentary was reporting 20 years after the genocide, it ignored reporting the great progress Rwanda has made in reconciliation 'Kwibuka' and in advancing their economy despite the bitter past. According to Njoya (2015) the narratives used in the documentary demonstrated a biased misrepresentation of the Rwandans and of racial biases projected towards Africans. Largely, dehumanising Africans' position and misinforming the world about their story. The Rwandans students at Daystar University (2015) expressed their need to uphold their identity without being judged, or misrepresented, or being overshadowed by the past as presented by the BBC documentary (2014). Similar stance was argued by Diop (2014) while reflecting on the global responsibility in the Rwanda tragedy and how there is a recurring denigration towards Africans. Those pointing fingers have amnesia of their contri-

bution to these tragedies and they play down on the handles Africans have triumphed over, as argued by Diop (2014).

Conversely, when distorted social stereotypes are challenged and the truth brought to light, most misinformed individuals will be enlightened. Moreover, the African child's self-esteem will be enhanced and in future will be confident enough to challenge future predispositions. As Poncian (2015) noted, Africans have a role to play to overcome the negative perceptions by first addressing the issues facing their continent effectively and amicably. Moreover, they should be ready to write about their continent from their perspectives to overcome prejudice. According to Chimamanda Ngozi (2009) there is danger in telling one story, since it can produce judgements and misconceptions. She noted that the African history especially has been told using the western perspectives and most have believed it. Nonetheless, more African narratives need to be shared, for example accounts of how they grew up surrounded by extended families and how their social and cultural aspects defined their lifestyles and education. Moreover, more African scholars need to project Africans contributions in the continent and around the world with confidence. They should enlighten the world without partiality about their African heritage, their literature, philosophies and also their global contributions. Some few examples of Africans who have made great contributions are; writers like Chinua Achebe, Professor Mazrui, global Nobel Peace Price winner Professor Wangari Mathaai, in Politics Late Nelson Mandela, in Sports David Rudisha, and Yaya Toure among many others (Mandela 1994; Mazrui 2000; Maathai 2009; Msafiri Magazine 2014). Their contributions have made local and global impact and should be attributed to their African heritage. Besides, their inspirational narratives should be accounted for, on how they rose to being world changers. According to Thiong'o (1983), for many centuries Africans have immensely contributed to the world development through labour, resources, culture, music and sculptures among others. For that reason, Africans ought to confidently project their chronicles and moreover highlight their global contributions.

Subsequently, the education systems in Africa need to value their culture and social background. Nyerere (1968) cited by Kassam (1995) an African socialist argued that education should be able to value the learners and allow application of their culture and life knowledge in the classroom. He further claimed that liberation of man from dependency and ignorance could only come from the man himself, this liberation must relate to their circumstances and experiences for the individual to appreciate it and actively engage (Kassam 1995; Ibbott 2014). Hence, African education should aim at helping students value themselves, their background and encourage them problem-solve their predicaments. This kind of education builds their self-esteem and gives them confidence to actively engage in their society and globally. Moreover, the African education should display the real outlook of the African society and their continent to eradicate global ignorance. Conversely, help project the positive side of Africa to the world and also explain their challenges without bias. According to Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2002) education helps transmit cultural knowledge and values through generation even in the tradition African education (Kenyatta 1965). Therefore, the African authentic ideals should be included in the current African education systems.

Moreover, the African education should embrace contemporary pedagogies which promote students' autonomy and self-determination (Mercer 2000; Alexander 2008). These education systems should allow students to use exploratory discussions to enhance their confidence, creativity and collaboration. Besides, the students should bring their life experiences and culture knowledge into their classroom learning and further engage their classroom knowledge in their daily living. Subsequently, they learn to value their culture, experiences and they also gain confidence to challenge any injustices. In addition, they develop competence to engage locally and globally assertively. According to Adeyemi and Adeynika (2002), education should be holistic developing learners personally and socially, stimulating their intellect, enhancing their self-esteem and confidence to engage in their world and maximising their potential. Thus, the African education systems should become contemporary helping learners to value their culture and further assisting them to meet their needs (Nyerere 1968 cited by Kassam 1995; Ibbott 2014), which include challenging the African identity fallacy. Students with great self- determination and autonomy will be able to liberate themselves from social domination and they will also be able to address issues in their local countries. As Onimode (2009) argues, African issues can only be solved by Africans, whilst the international community would support them. Therefore, robust African education systems would equip citizens in problem-solving, emancipation and development.

Still, the international education and global African studies should represent the authenticity of the African people and their culture. In addition, aid in challenging current global misrepresentations. Most international culture are either unaware of the African cultures or are misinformed through flawed coverage in the media or other resources. Hence, it is vital to educate the world about Africa reality to wipe out ignorance. A study with students from seven countries in Europe demonstrated poor knowledge of Europe and the world. The few students who had limited know-how appeared misguided about other countries (Holden 2005). Some of the students reported that they believed most children in Africa and Japan were unhappy and some believed USA was part of Europe (Holden 2005). This is despite accounts such as the Good childhood report (2015) indicating that children in some African countries like Algeria and Ethiopia are happier that their counterparts in developed countries such as United Kingdom and Germany. The distorted international knowledge in Holden (2005) study can be eradicated through international cultural education, which includes the African culture. At the same time, the contemporary childhood research studies conducted in specific areas in Africa ought not to represent the whole continent. Towards enhancing validity and reliability of these researches, authors should specifically report for the societies or cultures studied. Otherwise, generalising their community specific findings to represent the whole Africa is biased and it misinforms the world. This has been apparent within studies on child abuse, or child soldiers, or children in poverty (Pillay 2014; Meinck et al. 2015; Diop 2014), which are relevant to particular regions in a few countries out of

54 African countries. An example of a predisposed African childhood account is the review on child abuse in Africa, where the studies data was obtained from six African countries (Meinck et al. 2015). Nonetheless, these studies predominately focused on South-Africa and Egypt, however their findings were used to give an overall presentation of child abuse in Africa. Indeed, the review stated that almost 64% of African children suffer abuse, whereas more than 45 African countries were not examined. Additionally, the reviewers noted that the studies did not apply standardised methods, thus 'abuse' meanings and measurements could have been altered (Meinck et al. 2015). This review also compared high income countries with African countries, which appeared to be ethnocentric, lacking cultural sensitivity. Africa being a huge continent with diverse cultures, researchers needs to examine the diverse cultures for a fair presentation. Otherwise, dispersed studies in various countries, regions and communities should be specific in coverage and reporting, instead of generalising their outcomes to the whole continent (Diop 2014). Challenging some of these recurring distortions in childhood studies is vital, since they affect the image and the position of Africans. Therefore, the international childhood studies and research should explore the diverse childhoods in Africa whilst representing them, to overcome partiality. Undeniably, education at all levels should aim to transmit facts and ought to avoid fallacy.

Overcoming social bias will aid in reflection of the true Africans identity, recapturing their appropriate social positions. It will also promote unity in the continent and further allow African children from diverse cultures grow in an environment where they are confident to maximise their talents and to exercise them locally and globally. Employing their uniqueness to explore freely their environment and their creativity and further compete globally. According to Guardian (2014) the negative perceptions limit Africa's global engagement and hence it is imperative to address them. Moreover according to UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989, article 12), all children have a right to actively engage in their world. Thus, by allowing the African children to actively reveal their identity and contest against negative pre-judgments are supporting their human rights (Twum-Danso 2013). Certainly, the African charter (1990) states that all African children should be safe guarded, be provided for with decent amenities and further promote their freedom to explore their abilities. Safeguarding is through protecting these children from any hurt whether physical, social, psychological or economic harm. Consequently, as African governments continue to make the continent a better place for the children (ACPF 2014; Pillay 2014), the world should join hands to eradicate bias that may affect these children negatively in their psychological, social and economic lives.

Safeguarding the 'African child' identity include eradicating negative photos of the African children often exposed by the media and charity campaigners. Protecting the dignity and the image of the 'African child' should be paramount by exposing the reality of African children such as in the photo below.

These primary pupils are engaging in a conservation exercise as they collaborate with their teachers and local bank staff in planting trees. These children are not only healthy but also accessing education. Moreover, they are actively addressing some local and global issues in relation to global warming and conservation. Hence, they are not victims of global warming, but they seem to be part of the solution. Some of these kinds of positive engagements by African children should be projected more.

On the other hand, although those helping vulnerable African children are doing noble acts, it is ethical to protect these children's identity. Since, it is their human right to uphold their anonymity and confidentiality. Besides, these good Samaritans' should avoid projecting stories of small vulnerable groups as if they are stories of all African children. Since, these biased projections violate their authentic identities. According to Njoya (2008), being human is being able to protect everybody's rights and allowing them to have similar dignity despite their gender, race, class or age. Then, for the world to claim they respect all humanity, they need to respect Africans and should help them challenge flawed stereotypes. For many years, African children have been victims of global dominance and prejudices which have estranged their authentic identities. However, today is the right time to transform these discourses and attributions. Mansilla and Gardner (2007) viewed that a respectful mind of a human being should be aware of people's differences, and ought to appreciate their authenticity. Diversity in people and cultures should not divide them, but should help them develop understanding, respect and co-operation, especially in today's close knitted global society. The understanding should be explored through listening to individuals and societies without predisposed judgments. Giving them

chances to narrate their experiences and knowledges and therefore aid in molding of their identities, promoting positive and active engagements.

For future studies, it is critical that we fairly mirror our 'images of childhoods across the globe' and ask ourselves 'how authentic our representations are, or are they biased?' Moreover, how can we provide platforms to voice out the current misrepresented childhoods, to convey their truth? And finally as individuals, how are we challenging distortions of African childhoods in our world today?

12.5 Conclusion

Challenging negative perceptions towards Africans is of the essence, since it has been destructive to the African societies' identity. Recurring biased stereotypes are created out of pre-judgements which are not always valid. Most preconceptions are drawn from intergroup ideologies and social attributions, where out-groups distinctiveness is wrongly evaluated. Ethnography studies can assist the outer-groups to voice their views, which help eliminate misrepresentations. The African society has been recipient of misjudgments for many centuries (Kenyatta 1965; Poncian 2015; Diop 2014) through predisposed theories and discourses. Nonetheless, little has been done to challenge these distortions through understanding the reality from the Africans' outlook.

Without a doubt, the global positions for the African children have been mirrored as underprivileged and vulnerable (Davis 2006; Poncian 2015; Andre and Hilgers 2015). On the contrary, the majorities of African children have decent childhoods with loving extended family ties, access to social amenities and have decent education, both formal and informal. Generally, the African society is collaborative, hospitable and intellectual, and their land is full of great resources which they enjoy. Therefore, it is their human right to challenge biased misrepresentations and actively pattern their identities. Uphold their distinctiveness, as they correct the erroneous global perceptions. In addition, promote self-determination and social confidence for the African children whilst engaging locally and globally. Therefore, there is an urgent need for in-depth balanced research to obtain the African children's insight.

Furthermore, education in Africa and across the globe should collaboratively emulate impartiality and capture the authenticity of the African people. Thus, assent Africans' cultural practices and values, their ideological philosophies, childhood experiences, environment and further acknowledge their positive contributions in the world. Moreover, African education systems should embrace contemporary pedagogies to equip their students with skills that help them engage confidently in their personal and social lives, both locally and globally. Most importantly, the global scholars, media, charities and political leaders should aim to give accurate

views of Africa, and avoid biased attributions. Thus, guard the African children's international position using accurate and constructive discourses.

On Completion of Their Chapter, Wandia Corrado and Helavaara Robertson Propose the Following Questions to Provoke Further Reflection, Research and Dialogue

1. What is your Image of an 'African child'?
2. What has informed that image? Is your source objective, subjective or biased?
3. How can you support African children to voice their reality and authenticity in education spheres?

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Chapter 13
Discourses/4. Brazil: Accessing the Rights of Children with Disabilities: Attitudes Towards and Challenges for SEND in Brazil

Clare O'Donoghue

13.1 Context

Brazil is the largest country in South America by landmass and population. Geographically, it stretches from the equatorial coastal North, through the Amazon, to the temperate zone in the South. To give a sense of the scale of the country, one can fly for over 6 h and not leave Brazilian air space. The majority of the population (86%) live in urban centres in or near the coastal region, rather than in the interior. In 2001 Goldman Sachs described Brazil as one of the BRIC countries, the up-coming economies of the future. Moody's, Standard and Poors, and Fitch all rated government debt bonds as 'investment grade status'. On the basis of this economic projection Brazil successfully bid for the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games, the United Nations classifies Brazil as a 'High Human Development' country, i.e. ranking within the category of countries ranked 50–105 at number 79 (In contrast, the USA is ranked 10th and the UK 16th).

However, there is large wealth disparity. This can be seen in various statistical measures: The Gini Coefficient, the Palma Ratio, The Coefficient of Human Inequality (HDI) and the Inequality adjusted HDI (IHDI) all show much wider wealth disparity than that of the most uneven of the more economically developed nations, the USA and the UK, let alone the more socially equal countries of Scandinavia. Most OECD countries have a Gini Coefficient lower than 0.32 (Equality Trust). The USA (41) and the UK (32.6) have some of the highest levels of inequality in the developed world; the Gini Coefficient for Brazil is 51.5 (UNDP 2015a). The Palma Ratio (the ratio of the income share of the top 10% of society compared with the bottom 40%) for Brazil is 3.5 compared to the US and UK Palma

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Ratio of 2.0 and 1.3 respectively. The contrast with more socially level countries such as Iceland and Norway (ranked 9th and 1st in overall development respectively) which have Palma Ratios of 1.0 and 0.9, and Gini Coefficients of 26.9 and 25.9 respectively, is more pronounced (UNDP 2015a).

The inequality in incomes is 38.7% in Brazil compared with USA 27%, UK 16.2%, Iceland 11.7%, Norway 10.4% (UNDP 2015a). The Brazilian areas of the Northeast, North and Centre-West are the most disproportionately affected as the bulk of metropolitan development is on the South-Eastern seaboard of the country. According to the 2010 Census of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), about 35 million Brazilians do not have piped water, more than 100 million do not have access to sewage networks and more than 8 million urban areas do not have regular garbage collection (Azevedo 2017c). Inequality particularly shows in life expectancy and education; the inequality in education is 4 to 9 times greater in Brazil than in other more economically developed countries (UNDP 2015a).

13.2 Education in Brazil

Providing education for a population as large and diverse as Brazil's across its various geographical regions is a logistical challenge for the government. Brazilian education policy is determined in 10-year National Plans for Education (PNE) passed by parliament. Education is the combined responsibility of the municipalities (Early Years), State and/or Federal government (Basic, Secondary and Tertiary education). The post-dictatorship Brazilian constitution of 1988 declared schooling a social right. It made basic schooling (age 7 to age 14) mandatory and publicly available. Non-mandatory public schooling was available both before and after these ages but with less participation. Private schooling has always been available for those who can afford it. Funding for public schooling was stipulated by law as a proportion of state and federal tax revenue. However, with no fixed spending per pupil, richer states could outspend poorer states or municipalities per pupil capita, so entrenching inequality of provision (Menezes-Filho and Pazello 2004). In 1996 Brazil extended mandatory schooling by a year and introduced the first government funding initiative, FUNDEF (Fund for Maintenance and Development of the Fundamental Education and Valorization of Teaching). FUNDEF was an attempt to redistribute wealth to the poorest regions of Brazil to raise the educational opportunities and outcomes of these children by guaranteeing the amount of expenditure per enrolled pupil in grade 1 to grade 8 of basic education. Mandatory proportional spending ensured the bulk of the money had to be spent on basic education (age 6–14 years) and on school teachers' salaries, particularly qualified teachers, in order to raise standards.

In 2000 Brazil was a signatory at the World Education Forum in Dakar, committing itself to implementing the UNESCO 'Education for All' (EFA) six goals by 2015. The pre-existing FUNDEF was seen to stimulate rapid improvement in primary and lower secondary school enrolment rates (De Mello and Hoppe 2005: 18). Consequently, in 2004, the federal government extended FUNDEF to FUNDEB (Fund for Development and Maintenance of Basic Education) continuing until 2021. FUNDEB extended both the funding provision for and the categorisation of mandatory basic education. Age 6–15 is now seen as Primary Education. What was previously seen as optional upper secondary school (15–18 years) became mandatory. Early Childhood Education was included in Basic Education for the first time: pre-school (3–5 years) and childcare (0–3 years), in recognition of EFA goal 1. The Brazilian government recognises the importance of ECEC in reducing social inequalities:

> The National Policy for Early Childhood Education (PNEI), which encompasses a series of coordinated efforts to increase the supply of education to children from ages zero to five, constitutes a significant improvement in early childhood care and education. These actions are organized around a set of measures that aim to fulfil the country's necessities for inclusive and quality early childhood education, from infrastructural needs to those in pedagogical management. They seek to consolidate an early childhood educational identity that can serve as a first stage of basic education and to overcome social inequality within classrooms in nurseries and preschools. (Brazilian Ministry of Education 2014)

13.3 Special Education Needs Policies

There are various pan-national attempts to promote the rights of people with disabilities and challenge how they are viewed by society, most notably the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). These focus on moving away from a medical model of disability with an 'integrative' focus of helping the individual adapt to existing societal practices, to a fully 'inclusive' social model which focuses on an individual's functionality and how societal practices can be adapted to accommodate these individuals (Rieser 2012). The UNCRPD commits governments to develop equal opportunities and inclusive education at all levels (UNCRPD Article 24.2.a-e) to foster "development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity" (UNCRPD Article 24.1.a) in order that people with disabilities may develop their full potential and "participate effectively in a free society" (UNCRPD Article 24.1.c). This is entwined with earlier EFA 2015 goals, set in 2000, to ensure quality childcare, universal primary education, and education and skills for teens and adults. The EFA goals themselves build on the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education

(1996). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) developed in 2016 to be implemented by 2030 also focus on disability: "target 4.5 specifically commits all countries to ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training, regardless of disability status" (UNESCO 2016 pg 265). This echoes the Incheon Declaration on education (2015):

> Inclusion and equity in and through education is the cornerstone of a transformative education agenda, and we therefore commit to addressing all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparities and inequalities in access, participation and learning outcomes. No education target should be considered met unless met by all***. We therefore commit to making the necessary changes in education policies and focusing our efforts on the most disadvantaged, especially those with disabilities, to ensure that no one is left behind*** [my emphasis]. (UNESCO 2015)

Brazil recognised the rights of people with disabilities, including the right of children with disabilities to be educated, in the 1988 constitution.

> Art. 208. The duty of the State towards education will be made effective on account of guaranteed:(…) III – special education available for disabled people, preferentially within the framework of regular education

The wording implies an inclusive model of SEND education although this has not always been the case in practice. Since the Salamanca Declaration of 1996, Brazil has tried to increase the provision for inclusion of pupils with SEND. The National Education Plan (PNE) (2002) had particular provision for the education of children with special needs and disabilities to be implemented over a 10- year period. Key goals of the 2002 PNE were:

> Universalize, within the next ten years, the coverage of early childhood, pre-school education and primary and lower secondary education for pupils with special needs, through consortiums between municipalities, and whenever necessary, provide school transportation. (Guimarães de Castro 2002: 18)

The 2002 PNE introduced SEND to teacher-training curricula, ring-fenced funding for SEND in mainstream schools, and stipulated provision for SEND pupils. The adaptations and materials to be provided by the PNE (2002) very much indicate a medical and integrative model of disability. The provision caters for visually and hearing impaired pupils in the form of Braille, large print, and audio materials, and providing prostheses for pupils who have lost a limb. Thus it can be seen from the provision in PNE 2002 that the special needs to be addressed were physical barriers to participation in mainstream education, rather than cognitive/behavioural SEND. Further policies: The National Policy of Special Education for the Outlook of Inclusive Education implemented by the Ministry of Education in 2008; Decree 7611/2011, and Operational Guidelines for Specialized Educational Assistance, Resolution CNE/CN 4/2009 aimed to support school inclusion through guaranteeing the architectural accessibility of the school and the implementation of Multifunctional Resource Room/Classrooms with Multifunctional Resources. These later developments were supposed to cater for a wider variety of SEND than the 2002 PNE. They were to provide

> specialized educational assistance for students with disabilities, those with development problems […] enrolled in regular education" [in order to provide] "services, accessibility resources, and strategies that eliminate the barriers to their full participation in society and to the development of their learning. (Brazilian Ministry of Education 2014)

The Brazilian Ministry of Education, in its EFA 2015 country report, is rightly proud to point out that much progress has been achieved on the goals of the 2002 PNE with regard to the provision of identified resources for children with physical disabilities and as evidenced by the increased numbers of children with SEND participating in mainstream education and corresponding decrease in segregated provision: The enrolment of children with SEND in regular school classes has risen from 81,600 in 2000 to 648,900 in 2012. Correspondingly special school provision has decreased from 300,500 in 2000 to 194,400 in 2012 (Brazilian Ministry of Education 2014). However, the comments in the 2014 report concerning SEND are rather vague and hint more at aspiration than evidence-based proof of inclusion. After each of the sections on early years, primary, and secondary school education, there are only comments such as: *"The increasing enrolment of children with handicaps also deserves special mention"*. (ibid).

However, in contrast, to the breakdown of enrolments over several years given for different ethnic groups, the richest and poorest quartiles of society and urban and rural dwellers, there is no such breakdown of figures for children with SEND. This lack of specific focus on children with SEND is further noticeable when discussing EFA goal six, quality education and the need for inclusion of diversity to achieve it. The Ministry of Education does not include the challenge of the extension of quality education to pupils with SEND, who get no mention whatsoever:

> After the analysis of the results achieved pertaining to goal 6, one can say that Brazil made great strides in relation to its position in 2000. However, it still has not attained the level required to develop true quality in education. One must also take into account that excellence in education cannot be dissociated from the attention to the peculiarities of human diversity. Hence, it is necessary to work with increasingly larger volumes of information on the relevant indexes of inclusion referring to populations historically excluded from education systems, such as indigenous peoples, rural populations, quilombolas [descendent populations of runaway slaves], etc. This is a major challenge both for the government and for society as a whole. (Brazilian Ministry of Education 2014)

From this it would appear that the concerns raised by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which evaluated the initial report of Brazil in its implementation of the UNCRPD (26th August 2015) are justified. Despite Brazil changing the model of disability to a social model in 2007, the recently introduced welfare benefits for disability (2013) which are awarded based on functionality of the individual (www.ohchr.org), and the new Inclusion of People with Disability Act 2015 (Lei Brasileira de Inclusão da Pessoa com Deficiência OR Estatuto da Pessoa com Deficiência – LEI N° 13.146, DE 6 DE JULHO DE 2015) which reaffirms the rights of people with disabilities to attend a fully 'inclusive education system' at 'all educational levels' and places the responsibility to provide this system on both the public authorities, and private schools, it appears that a deficit model of disability persists in societal practice. Concern was expressed that,

> the medical model still prevailed in the disability law and policy, the educational system was still segregated, and the institutionalization of persons with disabilities remained the primary challenge. […] Committee Experts were concerned about the practice of abandoning children with disability, and the lack of support for families with children with disabilities which led to a high rate of institutionalization. They inquired about specific measures for the deinstitutionalization of persons and children with disability, and the support available for independent and community-based living. (UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner 2015)

These concerns about genuine inclusion in education to further the right of people with disabilities to fulfil their potential may help to explain why although the 1991 law, Lei de Cotas, obliges firms with more than 100 employees to employ people with disabilities as 2–5% of the workforce, reportedly: "*Of the millions of disabled people of working age in Brazil, just 2% are in employment and as few as 7% have completed any form of higher education*" (Fox 2015).

The mismatch between the letter of the law and how it is implemented in practice may be due to several factors. Some will be the logistical challenge facing Brazil in providing education on such a large scale to communities in diverse geographical regions and raising the quality of education provided in order to meet both the EFA 2015 and the SDG 2030 goals. Some of it will be cultural attitudes towards disability in general and SEND in particular. In this the law is probably ahead of society. Ferreira (2016) writes about the way in which children with cognitive impairments are labelled 'academic failure' (fracasso escolar). The terminology itself writes the child off. The medical model of disability invites pity and paternalism, which chimes with a religious view of charity and alms giving. Indeed until recently, children and adults with obvious disabilities would beg on the streets with their disabilities given prominence to prompt giving out of pity. Social security payments for people with disabilities have reduced the need for people to survive through begging.

As the majority of the population live near the coast, Brazil has a vibrant beach life. This prompts a culture of the body beautiful. Brazil was one of the countries that pioneered cosmetic surgery in the 1970s and amongst those who can afford it, having 'work done' is considered 'normal'. Brazil is second only to the USA in both the number of cosmetic surgeons and number of cosmetic surgery operations carried out per year (Duran 2014; IMTJ 2017, 2019) and has more procedures per capita than the USA (Lee 2016). Indeed, a concern seems to be the democratisation of plastic surgery through installment plans, cheaper payment options to be practice patients for trainee doctors, and even prizes of plastic surgery in the quest of the body beautiful. Watson (2013: 149) argues that most people with disabilities are marginalised because "The Brazilian concept of *citizenship* reflects what society values: beauty, physical perfection and intelligence." Somebody who looks different through physical or mental disability is excluded from the body-beautiful norm and so outside regular society to a greater or lesser extent although always deserving of compassion.

13.4 Rio 2016: A Catalyst for Change

Some of the stated legacies for the Rio 2016 games were: education – to take the Olympic and Paralympic values into Rio schools; transparency – regular dialogue with society, discussing the main subjects of accessibility, child and youth protection, transparency, diversity and inclusion; culture – to represent and celebrate the diversity of Brazilian culture; and sustainability – socially responsible and environmentally sustainable games. Full inclusion for participants and spectators with disabilities in the games was a fundamental of delivering the games. Promoting inclusive and integrative attitudes towards the rights of people with disabilities in all walks of everyday life was a legacy goal.

Brazilian Paralympians already had high recognition, particularly the swimmer, Daniel Dias, who had won more gold medals at both Beijing 2008 (four) and London 2012 (six) than any other Brazilian athlete. Furthermore, Brazilian Paralympic athletes outperformed their Olympic counterparts in both in medal tally and overall ranking at the Beijing 2008 and London 2012 summer games. There was rightful pride in and recognition of the achievement of the Brazilian paralympians but they were seen as exceptional super-heroes.

The legacy of the global 2008 financial crisis impacted on the preparation for the Rio Games. There were street protests about the cost of both the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Games. In a time of austerity ordinary people resented so much money being spent on sporting venues when the public health system and education were so underfunded. New infrastructure projects, such as the new rapid transport system (BRT) with full disabled access and improvements to the Metro and city-centre light railway were said to benefit predominantly wealthy areas of the city. Improved disabled access to tourist attractions did not have an immediate benefit on the life of the poor, even the poor living with disabilities.

Given the unfolding historic corruption scandals, there was concern that there would be fraud in building projects for the Games. The financial situation reached crisis point 19 days before the start of the Paralympic games when it transpired the organising committee had not raised enough money to fund the Paralympics and only 12% of tickets had been sold in advance. There was a real fear that not all Paralympians would be able to attend the games because the Paralympian athletes' travel grants were paid 3 weeks' late. The national and international consternation the news caused resulted in the Brazilian government overturning an injunction in order to provide more state funding (BBC 20.08.2016) and a global #FillTheSeats crowd-sourcing initiative to fund 10,000 schoolchildren and people with an impairment from the State of Rio to attend the games in co-ordination with 'TransformaEducacao', the official education programme of Rio 2016 (Paralympic.org 2016).

Out of the crisis came an opportunity to not only give poor children and poor persons with disabilities an experience of a lifetime but also spread the message of respect, empowerment and inclusivity. Greg Nugent, founder of #FillTheSeats explained:

> The Paralympics is uniquely able to change attitudes toward disability around the world. We saw this in London and I am sure it will happen again in Brazil. But that means making sure the Paralympians compete in full stadia to help celebrate their achievements. Support this campaign – and the world can invite thousands of Brazilian children to marvel at these amazing athletes and experience the power of Paralympic sport. (Paralympic.org 2016)

The opening ceremony of the Olympic Games celebrated Brazil's racial and cultural diversity, the Brazilian children accompanying each national team's entry into the stadium included children with obvious disabilities such as wheelchair users. At the opening of the Paralympic games, the US Paralympian, Amy Purdy, danced with different types of prosthetic lower limbs to show the grace and agility a double amputee. The nine Brazilian Paralympian flag carriers were children with cerebral palsy who used a Brazilian designed prosthetic boot and body support equipment (Flexcorp) to facilitate walking with an adult, rather than use a wheelchair as would be the alternative.Despite the funding crisis so close to the start of the games, the Paralympics were a success inside and outside the sporting venues. Reports in the press did show a shift in attitude:

> In my youth in the interior of Paraiba, people were ashamed to present family members with disabilities. There was a lot of prejudice and they hid in the houses. Today there is awareness in society and demands to the authorities for the inclusion of these people. The disabled are less dependent and have the courage to overcome difficulties. We are seeing this here in the Paralympics. (Historian Gloriete Pimental age 76 in Garcia 2016)

Furthermore, this has translated to political attitudes. The Municipal Secretary for People with Disabilities of Rio stated in an interview with 'O Globo' newspaper that inclusion must be part of State policy and implemented across all sectors. Progress has been made but there is a long way to go and it is important that it does not stop. A wheelchair user can sometimes go to the Maracanã Stadium but everyday s/he also needs to go out and about daily life: to buy bread, do other chores, etc. This needs to be done in comfort. Very often the limitation is not the disability itself but the environment s/he lives in. With fewer obstacles, this persons' limitation could be minimal. To promote this inclusion is not only a duty of the Political/Public Power but of all society (Rocha 2016).

The financial legacy of the games may be in question but it is to be hoped that the attitudinal legacy will be transformative. However, it is too soon to tell. There are claims that the inclusiveness gained by London 2012 had already been ground down by UK government austerity measures targeted at the poor and the disabled combined with a vilification of them in the popular press, leading to a rise in reported hate-crimes and in suicides of the long-term ill and disabled who, declared fit for work by UK government assessors ATOS, lost significant social security benefits. If

this is happening in a country with well-established anti-discrimination laws (Equality Act 2010 being the latest) and relative national wealth, what will be the situation in a country where the extremes as measured by the Palma ratio is more than double (3.5) that of the UK (1.3).

13.5 The Challenge: Zika Pandemic

Prior to 2015 the Zika virus was unknown in the Americas and little known in other parts of the world. The initial challenge facing Brazilian doctors and scientists was identifying the mystery illness sweeping across N.E. Brazil with symptoms not previously seen before. It was identified as Zika, spread by the already established vector, the Ades aegypti mosquito known to transmit Dengue and Chikungunya viruses in Brazil. The significant rise (2023% 2014–2015, Diniz 2017b: 104) in microcephaly, an abnormally small head and brain, in the developing foetus (Cugola et al. 2016), with intracranial calcification was only linked to the Zika virus when vertical transmission from mother to foetus was proved in November 2015 through tests on amniotic fluid and autopsy (Diniz 2017b: 52–4; 87–8). Brazil declared a Public Health Emergency of National Concern and requested from the World Health Organisation (WHO) a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) declaration in November 2015. WHO declared a PHEIC in February 2016, not so much for the epidemic viral illness itself, but for its risk to all women of childbearing age given the proven vertical transmission from mother to foetus and resulting Congenital Zika Syndrome (CZS).

The epicentre of the 2015–2016 outbreak of Zika illness and CZS is the Brazilian Northeastern the states of Alagoas, Bahia, Rio Grande Do Norte, and particularly Pernambuco, and Paraiba: “97% of definite or probable cases of Congenital Zika Syndrome originated in states that account for 28% of all births in Brazil” (Diniz 2017b: 104). The infection itself does not respect class boundaries but lack of hygienic sanitation leads to greater risk of infection: children born to poor women living in mosquito-infested slums (favelas) are the majority, 70% according to Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (FIOCRUZ) (Azevedo 2017c), of the microcephaly cases. The medical condition is life-changing for both infant and family:

> Those children will need rehabilitation forever […] we don’t know much about these diseases, but if we compare with other microcephalies, we see the kids will need extra care for years to come. […] We don’t know if they will have the rehabilitation to achieve their potential […] We know they will be deeply affected by this disease. Their neurological and cognitive functions will be severely affected. But we don’t know if the health system will be able to provide them with all the care they need. (Scavuzzi in Boseley 2016)

As well as smaller brain size, there are other associated medical problems: spasms, difficulty in feeding, poor vision, all of which further impact on the child’s

development (Rossiter 2016). Mothers have to give up work or studies to look after their affected babies. To give some scale to the size of the epidemic: the state of Pernambuco had a total of 10 and 12 reported cases of microcephaly in 2013 and 2014 respectively; by Novermber 2015 there were 646 reported cases, with the Ministry of Health recording a total of 739 cases nationwide. By January 2016 3174 cases were recorded nationwide rising to 8165 by mid 2016 (Diniz 2017b: 64, 73, 99). The federal government is facing three broad challenges with Zika which can be seen as medical, social and educational. Medically, ways need to be found to prevent infection of pregnant women by the Zika virus; investigations into the way the virus affects neo-natal neurological development and therapeutic treatments that help a child with the condition need to be developed. Socially, families with Zika-affected babies need to be supported, financially and emotionally. Educationally, a child with microcephaly needs to given the necessary Early Years stimulation and on-going educational provision and care to ensure development of their full potential.

The federal government addressed the financial need of families first. In response to the Zika outbreak, the Ministry of Social Development, authorised the means-tested payment of Benefício de Prestação Continuada (BPC) [Continuing Provision Benefit] to mothers of babies with microcephaly administered through The Instituto Nacional do Seguro Social (INSS). This benefit is equivalent to the minimum salary (R$ 880) for 3 years, payable when the total family income is less than a quarter of the minimum salary (R$220) per person. This is to help poor families with the cost of caring for their Zika-affected children (PernambucoLeiaJa). Furthermore, the Minister of Cities of the federal government announced that families of children with CZS who have a monthly family income of less than R$1800 will be given priority in the 'Minha Casa, Minha Vida' [My Home, My Life] housing programme and the housing units will be specially adapted if necessary (Jornal da Paraiba 14th July 2017; Azevedo 2016a). However, it can take time for these initiatives to be fully implemented.

The Regional Council of Medicine of Pernambuco (CREMEPE), one of the states with the most Zika affected births, conducted a survey of the assistance available to mothers and their children with microcephaly, the findings of which were presented 20/09/2016 (Azevedo 2016b). The INSS claimed it is mobilising 'to meet all the demands' after the standard waiting period of 30 days for tests to confirm the condition has passed. However, data from the State Department of Health show that in Pernambuco out of the 2127 investigated babies in the period 1/08–10/09 2016, resulting in 379 confirmed cases of microcephaly recorded, over 40% of these confirmed cases were not yet receiving benefit (Azevedo 2016b). A União da Mãe dos Anjos [the Union of the Mother of Angels], a charitable organisation which gives assistance to mothers of babies with microcephaly, claims that the wait is much longer, closer to 3 months and that mothers who live in remote areas are not able to obtain information on the INSS benefit (PernambucoLeiaJa).

Regarding the health aspect of the crisis, both federal and state governments have been racing to catch up: In September 2016, CREMEPE acknowledged that there were not enough multi-professional teams to deal with microcephaly, a lack of

effective medication to treat the condition, and no hospital crèches to cater for babies with this condition in the state capital city of Recife or in the interior of the state of Pernambuco (Azevedo 2016b). However, since December 2015 in Recife, Zika-affected infants from poor families presenting with impaired vision (hypermetropia, myopia, astigmatism and strabismus) have been given free glasses by the Altino Ventura Foundation in order to help support their overall development (Azevedo 2016d). In December 2015, the then Minister of Health, Marcelo Castro, announced that all women in receipt of the Bolsa Familia [Family Purse/Budget benefit] would receive free mosquito repellent in an effort to cut down infection (Azevedo 2016i). Bureaucratic delay meant that this plan was not to be implemented until December 2016, giving protection to about 484,000 women (Azevedo 2016g). However, as of 26th December 2016 there was no official start date for distribution (Azevedo 2016i).

Protocols have been developed to investigate the scope of the neurological damage caused in utero by the mosquito-borne Zika and Chikungunya viruses (Azevedo 2016e). These protocols will extend the original scope of investigation from the first 3 months to the first 3 years of life. This is because the original diagnosis of a small cranium does not explain the children with normal size craniums presenting with neurological changes at 8 months. It is now believed that the Zika virus can affect the foetus at any stage of gestation, with later affected babies showing symptoms of deafness, retina damage and brain cysts (Azevedo 2016g) as well as some babies developing hydrocephalus (Rossiter 2016).

UNICEF has developed, in conjunction with the federal government Ministry of Health, a programme to deliver multisensorial stimulation kits of ten objects (e.g. rattles, mobiles, sponges, balls, mats, support pillows, bracelets) to babies with CZS so that the parents can stimulate the mental development of the newborn babies (Azevedo 2016h). These have already been delivered to the cities Recife and Campina Grande, respective state capitals of Pernambuco and Paraiba. The UNICEF-led project also provides training for primary care professionals, particularly in the psychosocial support to pregnant women, families and caregivers (Governo da Paraiba 15th Sept 2016). As of 2016, Paraiba has 163 confirmed cases of microcephaly with 195 under investigation out of an initial 902 notifications of potential microcephaly (ibid).

Once children have left hospital, Early Years' provision comes under the auspices of the municipalities. This means any response will be local, dependent on the relative wealth of the municipality and the number of children affected with microcephaly. With regard to the Early Years' provision for these children, the Secretariat for Education for the Municipality of Recife issued a statement that there were 16 infants with microcephaly enrolled in schools, crèches and municipal crèches attached to schools. Of these, three children, aged 0–11 months [and therefore presumably Zika-affected children], are in nursery school. These children are monitored by the Special Education Division of the Secretariat of Education and the Health Secretariat of Recife. The Secretariat is keen to point out the inclusive nature of the provision:

> Students with microcephaly, as well as all the other 3,600 students with disabilities enrolled in the municipal network, take classes in the regular rooms, along with the other students of the municipal network. From the age of 4, students with disabilities are also attended by professors specializing in Special Education" (PernambucoLeiaJa)

There are as yet no children with microcephaly enrolled in nurseries in Campina Grande (Jornal da Paraiba 2016a, b). However, in July 2016 the Department of Education of the Municipality of Campina Grande (SEDUC) started a training programme for the teachers and caregivers who work in the Municipal Network of Education nurseries and day care centres on how best to care for babies affected by Congential Zika Syndrome. The Education Secretary of the Municipality, Iolanda Barbosa explained the motivation for this development:

> The child born with microcephaly is a citizen like any other and needs to have his right to a guaranteed education. We understand the option of some mothers not to put the baby in the day care centre in the first months of life but this decision is solely of the family. It's up to us to guarantee enrolment and learn how to take care of these children, ready to welcome them if the demand arises (ibid.)

The children with Congenital Zika Syndrome pose a challenge to Brazil's ECEC and education system within the wider challenge of raising the standards of this public provision for all Brazilians. To meet these challenges successfully, the response must be integrated and multi-faceted as the two quotations below explain:

> In most of the world there are now two separate streams of activity – those concerned with meeting the Millennium Development Goal of Universal Primary Education by 2015 and those concerned with securing an education for children with a disability. These movements must be linked or neither movement will succeed. The challenge is clear: people concerned about disability, including people with disabilities, their families, and organizations, need to consider the challenges of education as a whole in order to be part of developing sustainable practical strategies for education. Likewise, those working on broad educational policies need to think more about marginalization and how to create schools that will be inclusive of all. (Richler 2005: 7)

> Neither of these crises [access to education & quality of education] can be treated separately – access without quality doesn't produce education; quality without access entrenches inequality. Rather equity, quality and access must be sought together. (Making Education for All a reality – Beyond 2015 Position Paper March 2013: 2)

13.6 Conclusion

Part of the problem of the relative invisibility of people with disabilities in Brazilian society and the patchy implementation of inclusive and integrative policies for them is that so many Brazilians do not have equity of either opportunity or outcomes: Despite gains made through welfare payments like Bolsa Familia [Family Purse/ Budget], so many Brazilians live in slums (favelas) with insufficient infrastructure (water, sewage, power, transport). Despite the lengthening of basic education and more funding for teachers, the public education system is educating the majority of

children to, at best, only Level 2 in PISA tests (OECD 2014). Thus, despite the laudable aims of the statues in the 1988 Constitution, the participation in the UNESCO education improvement programmes, the ratification of the Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007), and the long-term forward planning of the National Education Plans (PNE), the challenges posed by social and geographical diversity as illustrated by a high GINI co-efficient and IHDI in the context of a weakening economy do not bode well for the creation of specialist measures to support the inclusion of all children affected by the Zika virus. The EFA goals concerning ECEC (goal 1) and universal primary education (goal 2) are claimed to have been achieved both by the Brazilian government and UNESCO/OREALC but this was before the extent of the Zika epidemic was known. EFA goal 5 (gender parity and equality) has been achieved in education (but not society). However, goal 3 – Promoting learning, life skills for young people and adults – was not achieved by 2015; universal secondary education is still being worked towards, as is goal 4, promoting adult literacy (UNESCO Office in Brasilia).

Progress has been made in raising the subject and professional qualifications of teachers. However, there is far to go, particularly in the ECEC sector (Abuchaim 2016). Previous SEND initiatives have largely focused on physical disabilities as barriers to inclusion with the medical model requiring assistance as the overriding paradigm in which disability is viewed. Severe disability is linked to institutionalisation rather than inclusion.

Congenital Zika Syndrome is a grave disability with as yet unknown long-term consequences. Although the World Health Organization (WHO) has announced the end of the 2015–2016 Zika emergency in Brazil, WHO researchers have admitted that the fight against Zika will be long and burdensome for governments. In addition to dealing with the mosquito vector disease, governments need to prepare themselves to help families cope with seriously disabled children and problems that are not even known (Azevedo 2017a). WHO says it is unlikely there will be a licensed vaccination against Zika until 2020 (Azevedo 2017b).

Given the challenges Brazil faces both in improving the quality of education for the majority of its population, and in the uncertain transition to a socially inclusive, autonomous and rights-based view of disability, rather than the older established medical assistance model of disability, it is debatable how much resource will be available to supporting these Zika children. In such an unequal society, individual family wealth is most likely to determine whether a child with disabilities will achieve their full potential in order to be able to take advantage of the laws that protect their right to work and find employment when adult. Given that the Zika virus has mostly affected the rural poor in some of the poorest states in Brazil, it is questionable how much extra provision will be available to these children and their families beyond basic financial care to keep the poorest out of abject poverty.

Debora Diniz (2017a, b), professor of Bioethics at Brasilia University and a member of the National Network of Specialists in Zika and Related Diseases of the Ministry of Health, laments that now the elections are over the political circus has moved on and the Zika mothers have been forgotten. A year after the announcement of the global emergency by WHO and a year after the inclusivity of Rio 2016, atten-

tion seems to be elsewhere. Yet new cohorts of Zika babies are being born until such time as protection becomes effective and available to all, or until such time as poor Brazilian women have access to comprehensive family planning including the right to safe, legal abortion (Diniz 2017b:108) instead of just being told to avoid pregnancy. Abandoned by public policy, Diniz claims, Zika mothers and children survive as best they can in one of the greatest tragedies ever seen in Brazil. Their plight is epitomised by the state of the Olympic village 1 year on from Rio 2016: the iconic Maracana Stadium, abandoned, looted, electricity cut off, and an unplayable pitch while key stakeholders argue over who is responsible (Guardian 2017), a victim of the on-going economic and political crisis.

On Completion of Her Chapter, Clare O'Donoghue Proposes the Following Questions to Provoke Further Reflection, Research and Dialogue

- Richler (2005: 7) identifies the challenge of working towards a fully inclusive mass-education system as getting those concerned with disability rights to consider the needs of the able-bodied poor, and getting those concerned with the rights of the poor to consider the rights of people with disabilities. How can those concerned with disability rights be encouraged to consider the wider challenges of providing universal quality education?
- In Brazil, the law on inclusion is ahead of social attitudes, including the social attitudes of policy makers. How can society be encouraged to have genuinely more accepting and inclusive attitudes to children and adults with disabilities?
- In a socially stratified society, how can the rights of the most-marginalised, for example, a lower-class child with disabilities from a poorly-educated, poor, rural family, be protected to ensure the child's right to thrive?

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Chapter 14
Discourses/5. Mexico: Children's Rights in Mexico Analysis of a Legal and Policy Framework

Miguel Antonio Santillan Torres Torija and Carolina Santillan Torres Torija

14.1 Children Rights and Mexican Education: A Review of Legislative Initiatives

Aiming to identify the possibilities and assess the position of Mexican children who might still be under the oppression and exclusion of the adults and their world, current legislation and its implementation is reviewed. We examine the mandatory curricular provision under the light of theories that allow us to reflect how "school" is a liberating agency or an obstacle for children's self-determination (Fortin 2009). For this purposes, it is important to evaluate if the approach of the institutional framework lays more on the side of protective rights or self-asserting ones as proposed by Bevan (1989). Although this might be a simplistic categorization based on the aforementioned concepts of rights, it tends to secure the recognized vulnerability, safeguard and need to protect the needs of children to develop. It also caters for those ones of a higher order which allow children to "make decisions" within a relevant context. A very plain example is how the protective right to not be excluded is conducive to the self-asserting right of participation. This decision-making process in the child is conducive to self-autonomy as the essential and underlying process of the child in becoming independent.

It is pertinent to ask ourselves at this point, why is it important to evaluate and analyse the legislation, institutions, and policy? Within public management and policy analysis, it has become an effective tool to break apart the elements that build a policy and the implementing institutions (DiMaggio and Powell 1991). The main

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reason is the consideration that it is precisely these social agents that shape and form human behaviour. Under this premise, it is valuable to ponder if there are any institution that have a more direct influence or effect than educational institutions in the shaping of individual citizens, social groups or society as a whole. This is why we have adopted the sociological approach of the so called "new institutionalism" (March and Olsen 1989) where the aim is to discover how is it that the Early Years provision in Mexico understands, assumes, promotes and protects children's rights and translates them into a curriculum within an educational institution inside and outside the classroom. The study case is, therefore, the curriculum, the recognized rights and the legal framework of Mexican educational provision in the Early Years.

Children's rights have been the outcome of what has been called the third wave of rights, where the first wave recognized the so called blue rights which allowed people to participate in politics, provided freedom of speech, property rights, and religious freedom (Waldron 1993). They were mainly ingrained on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights presented in 1948. In the post-war era, the second generation or wave was generally concerned with equality and a further expansion into cultural, social and economic aspects of human life, such as health and social care, unemployment, housing, etc. Finally, a third also called green wave developed in between the 1970s and 1990s where environmental, health, gender and specific groups gained further rights amongst them, children. To fully understand the nature of this particular social group it is essential to be acquainted with the conception of childhood expressed in the Geneva Children's Declaration of Rights (U.N. 1924) within it, the child is conceived as "lacking physical and mental maturity, needing protection and special care inclusive of the due legal protection after and before childbirth".

Beyond this definition and the theoretical classification or historical development of the legal framework, the fact is that in Mexico as in most countries, children's rights have gained a normative order which is recognized at the highest levels of legislation (View Table 14.1). At the highest hierarchy of "Constitutional" law, the Mexican constitution establishes in its first chapter the human rights and individual guarantees provided by the Mexican government and its legislation. Of our particular interest are Articles 3rd and 4th (C. de Diputados Congreso de la Unión 2017). Together they portray an extensive and highly developed enunciation of children's educational provision and their rights.

We shall first analyse article four regarding the specific provision for children, with the purpose of going from the general provision and the go to article 3 to then the specific rights on education.

Table 14.1 Exclusion data for educational backlog

Number of people	School age	Social background
5.4 million	Illiterate	Indigence
10.1 million	Below primary school	Extreme poverty
16.4 million	Below secondary school	Poverty

> In all its decisions and acts, the State will safeguard and abide by the principle of the superior interest of the child, guaranteeing their full rights. Boys and girls have the right to have their needs met regarding nourishment, health, education and their healthy leisure, towards a comprehensive development. This principle must guide the design, implementation, and evaluation of public policy directed to childhood. The parents, tutors, and custodians have the obligation of preserving and demanding this right. The state will provide the facilities for the private sector to contribute to the accomplishment of children's rights. (C. de Diputados Congreso de la Unión 2017 Article 4:8)

This ambitious statement derives in a broad institutional framework that provides a network of agencies that support both the governmental and private sector to secure the best possible outcomes of Mexican children. In the case of México, the Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos (National Commission on Human Rights (CNDH) was created in June 1990. Only 9 months later the Mexican government ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child approved in September 1989 and it became part of the CNDH jurisdiction. Since 1993 the CNDH has had a specific program on the rights of boys, girls and young adults. However the commission lacks any coercive, direct, formal or legal power to sanction government agencies, private organizations or individuals. Its legal character allows it to investigate and emit legal "recommendations" to government agencies based on citizen's complaints where presumably their rights or specifically, in this case, children's rights have been affected.

The legal instrument that provides a framework to exercise the enlisted rights on Table 14.1 is the "Ley General de los Derechos de las Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes" (2014). This piece of legislation which has been reformed this year (2017), allocates a chapter to each of the enumerated and recognized rights on Table 14.1. It expressly states that the approach of children's rights are: mainstreaming and comprehensive of cultural, ethical, affective, educational and health aspects. All of these based and in correspondence of their age, development, and maturity. This same legislative act recognizes a specific agency as the pillar of the National System for Integral Family Development "DIF" as the responsible governmental institution that implements the policy to secure children's entitlement to their rights. On the other side and as mentioned before CNDH is the agency and ombudsman that can regulate the operation of the DIF's programs and policies. Finally, a substantial contribution made by the LGDNNA is the creation of a specialized Federal Attorney's office for children and one local attorney in each state to prosecute any violations of underage citizens' rights.

However, and despite all of these legislative frameworks, it has been well established, that public policy is generally the result of implementation experience and not all of them are positive. Incrementalism has been identified as one of the main sources of policy change (Subirats 1994) and the provision of child rights in Mexico has been no exception. Probably one of the most significant examples of how practice is extended, that has influenced policy is a case similar to the well-documented case of Victoria Climbe on the Lamming Report (2003) in the UK. Mexican agencies had to learn from the death of 49 children in between 5 months and 5 years of age, who perished due to the neglect of safeguarding issues in their nursery in 2009

generally known as the "ABC fire" (Valls 2009). One of the outcomes of this tragedy was the current "General law for service provision, the attention, care and holistic development of children" Ley General de Prestación de Servicios para la Atención, Cuidado y Desarrollo Integral Infantil (LGPSACDII 2011). Besides the outcome of the imprisonment of 11 senior staff members for more than 20 years, this piece of legislation clearly expresses in detail the safeguarding aspects of centres for children between 43 days and 6 years of age. Covering the main aspects regarding the safeguarding and protection of their human rights to live survive and develop physically, mentally, cognitively and emotionally. This legislation has also provided with a framework to assess the provision delivered in each centre. It secures that children's safety and provides a scheme for staff development.

This particular piece of legislation, LGPSACDII, is a hinge that has brought a normative framework to secure that human rights are considered in all aspects of the provision for children in Mexico. Despite the avoidable tragedies, it is important to recognize that having legislation that clearly establishes responsibilities, duties, guidance and action principles as well as terms and conditions of service is an essential framework to secure that children's rights are protected.

14.2 The Genealogy of Mexican Early Years Curricula

To evaluate the aspects of educational provision, policies, centres and curriculums and how they can shape behaviour the same order of analysis is followed. The higher constitutional law is examined to identify the "principles" enunciated, the secondary laws are reviewed and then the curriculum delivered is evaluated. This provides a full picture of the interaction in agencies and how philosophical principles and values are translated into action directed to individual children. Regarding state education the third constitutional article establishes that:

> Every person has the right to receive education, the State – Federation, states, the city of México and the local boroughs will provide pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education. Pre-School, primary and secondary school conform basic education; this one and higher will be mandatory. The education delivered by the State will tend to harmonically develop every faculty of the human being and will promote in them love to their country, respect to human rights, a conscience of international solidarity, within independence and justice. The state will guarantee the quality in mandatory education as well as in the materials and educational methods, school organizations; educative infrastructure and the suitability of their teachers and directives guarantee the maximum learning achievement in the learners. (C. de Diputados Congreso de la Unión 2017:5)

In order to understand the curriculum for Early Years in Mexico, it is important to briefly review not only its legal background but also its historical development. There are substantial antecedents of formal education in the early years that can be traced and followed in the country from pre-Hispanic times (Tank 2010). However, we are more concerned with the provision that can be related to children's rights and we can find a more established provision from the 1800s. As in many other

countries, at the end of the nineteenth century, there were efforts to provide services of child care mainly for the parents of children who were formally employed as a result of the Industrial Revolution (Meneses 1998). However, this public need is formally recognized in the modern era at the beginning of the century by the opening of a series of kindergartens in the first decade of the 1900s. The provision was under the influence of Pestalozzi, Fröebel and Mme. Necker de Saussure. In those days, the main aims were to develop the physical, moral and intellectual" aspects of the child. This can be identified as the formal institutionalization of state education in the early years (SEP 1982). It is in the decade of 1940s that a program is extended to a national level although it was not mandatory. A specific 2-year program was developed to prepare and train Early Years teachers and created a specific governmental agency to supervise and evaluate the curriculum. At this point, a 3-year length curriculum was in place, where the two 1st years were focused on language and social development and the third one added physical and literacy and mathematical "initiation" (Bolea 2008).

It is important to notice the strong influence that European approaches and didactic schools of thought, (Lakatos and Worral 2008) have permanently had from the Mexican perspective. However, it is very noticeable that there is an element of nationalism where article three clearly states that "love to the country" will be promoted and this aspect became more of a priority in this historical period after the Mexican Revolution where nationalistic aspects were incorporated into the curriculum at all levels. Perhaps this aspect could be considered at least controversial by the most purists approaches and how this relates to children's right of freedom of ethical convictions, thinking, conscience religion and culture. Incremental changes in the institutional frameworks happened where infrastructure and staff were provided but no substantial changes happened until 1971 where according to Bolea (2008), Piagetian principles and developments were incorporated. The guiding principles at this stage were to increase play to develop sensorimotor and socio affective skills to develop their self-identity. This is the first advancement towards self-determination in the national curriculum in Mexico. Since then there have been minor reforms and changes and the main target of Mexican policies have been directed and focused on coverage, Mexico's government efforts have concentrated in "schooling" or enrolling children rather than in further developing practice.

14.3 The Challenge of Social Justice for Early Years Provision

At this point, it is pertinent to tackle the provision aspects of education in México. This is probably one of the country's biggest dilemmas: coverage vs. effective practice. México has not been able to deliver both. Perhaps a better understanding of the situation can be constructed when we have a look at the data that conforms the population and how it is distributed in terms of what has been defined as educational

backlog. It is considered that a person experiences educational backlog if: “they are in between the age of 3 and 15 and have not completed mandatory basic education or attend a formal centre (ii) If they were born before 1982 and have not achieved the mandatory level in the moment it must have been completed (full primary), or was born from 1982 and has not achieved the mandatory education level (full secondary) (CONEVAL 2011).The following table summarizes some of the data elaborated by the National Commission for Evaluation of Policy for Social Development.

This saddening reality provides us with a clear picture of how there are about 31.9 million people without access to their right to education, which is around 43% of the total population of the country in between 15 and 64 years of age. This is about 74 million out of an approximate 120 million people that populate the country (CONEVAL 2011). Further analysis of the children’s rights can be done if consideration is given to the principle of equality which is conceded by constitutional law. The promise of universal and mandatory access to primary and secondary education is a broken promise for almost half of the population. Furthermore, it is very evident that the equality principle is broken where the social condition background is a determinant factor to access education. The Mexican government has failed to more than three-thirds of its children and provide them with education, which is only an effective right and a possibility to the social sectors beyond the poverty line. The most recent analysis from 2015 recognizes that this poverty growing tendency hasn’t changed, so in the years between 2010 and 2014, 2.5 million people joined the group of families who live under the poverty line (CONEVAL 2016). It is assumed from the data analysis and under the framework of Bevan (1989) that at least seven of the protective rights are not being secured for at least 43% of the population in México who have no access to education, health protection and well-being, healthy and comprehensive development, inclusion and participation or access to information technologies.

If preventive rights are considered as a precondition, or at least associated with self-asserting rights it is indicative that the provision is lacking effectiveness. A deeper consideration can be drawn from data provided by Campos (2011). This survey confirms a consistent problem in educational provision, which analyses social mobility. This is understood as the options that people have to change their socioeconomic level and the accessibility to move through the socioeconomic structure, which is a factor generally used to measure equal opportunities (Grajales 2013). According to their data and with a direct correlation to two of the children’s protective rights to substantive equality and to not be discriminated it is important to look at educational progression (Table 14.2).

Table 14.2 Educational progression in México based on social background 2011

Primary level	Higher education	Social background
98.8%	42.1%	High
97.2%	7%	Very low

This is a dramatic proportion where only seven out of nearly a hundred pupils who enter primary school will become university graduates if they belong to the group under the poverty line. Although the problem of equality has been a persistent concern in education since Rousseau (1997) according to Rodriguez (2007), an education system is oriented towards equality when it guarantees access to education and knowledge and not only access to the system itself, meaning equal opportunities for children to learn. The second precondition to equality within an educational context developed by Rodriguez is the one where despite their social background or individual capabilities, similar results can be obtained.

Further analysis regarding the right to equality can be constructed on the data and indicators provided by UNICEF (2016). Although there is a growing percentage of the population enrolling in school, the problem appears to be permanence within the school. In the academic year 2010–2011 there were 29.18 million pupils enrolled which increased by 12% in the 2013–2014 cycle to 35.74 million students in all educational levels in México. However, 11.6% of the children aged five or less, who should have access to the Early Years provision, did not attend to any kind of educational centre. That is 252,431 children not accessing either protective or self-assertive rights. It is remarkable that in the next year 2014 preschool enrolment increased by 92% going from 12,521 to 24,017 (CONAFE 2014) however it is this 10% that does not attend that causes concern.

Finally, in this same year 2013, further action was taken by the Mexican government. An "educational reform" started although it has not yet been fully implemented. This included a significant recomposition of the educational system in the country. A brief analysis of the curricular components is proposed aiming to envisage if children's rights are implicitly or explicitly considered in its design. Since the curriculum will be implemented in 2018 there is still no evidence or data that can be analysed and therefore only the curriculum framework can be discussed.

The new curricular framework (SEP 2016) for basic education in México which includes the Early Years, changes its memorization paradigm for one that prioritizes skills, for reasoning, thinking, and understanding. It has five main aims to provide the learner: (1) Full access to written culture; (2) Mathematical reasoning; (3) Observation and enquiry skills to respond to questions on natural and social phenomena, (4) Physical, emotional and esthetical development, (5) Identity building and ethical formation. These five aims are translated in three curricular areas which are (Table 14.3).

A more detailed analysis of the curricular implementation and modular planning evidences a clear consideration of the child development particularly the Social and Emotional development aspects consider their self-assertive rights. Their right to well-being, freedom of expression, health, rest, and recreation are clearly contained in the curriculum. The main exception is their right to access communication technology (Table 14.4).

Table 14.3 Summary of early years curriculum framework 2017

Key learning acquisitions	Language and communication
Skills, abilities values and contents that substantially contribute to intellectual development and are mainly acquired within school	Mathematical thinking
	Exploring the natural and social world
Personal and social development	Physical development and health
Opportunities to develop creativity, value and express art; exercise the body and keep it healthy and emotional control	Artistic development and creativity
	Emotional development
Curricular autonomy	In depth of key learning acquisitions
One of its main perspectives is that the curriculum is "flexible" in terms of where and when themes can be considered or excluded. Some aspects might not be delivered as long as further depth and breadth are pursued in others. In general, this aspect is used for these purposes	Widening opportunities for personal and social development
	New relevant contents
	Regional and local knowledge
	Social impact projects

Table 14.4 Children's rights recognized by the Mexican government

I	Right of priority
II	Right to identity
III	Right to live within a family
IV	Right to substantive equality
V	Right to not being discriminated
VI	Right to wellbeing and a healthy and comprehensive development
VII	Right to live a life free from violence and personal integrity
VIII	Right to health protection and social security
IX	Right of inclusion of boys, girls and young adults with special needs
X	Right to education
XI	Right to rest and recreation
XII	Right of freedom of ethical convictions, thinking, conscience religion and culture
XIII	Right to have a freedom of expression and access to information
XIV	Right to participate
XV	Right to association and meet
XVI	Right to privacy
XVII	Right to legal security and due process
XVIII	Rights of immigrant boys and girls and young adults
XIX	Right to access to information technologies, radio, and telecommunication as well as broadband and the internet

14.4 Conclusion

After analysing the main legislation policy and curriculum of the educational provision for children in the Early Years sector in México it can be assumed that there is a clear consideration of both the protective and self-asserting rights of the children. There is continuous historical evidence that Early Years has been a socially recognized need for which the government has catered for. Although the learning curve has been critical, México has learned from provision mistakes and incorporated safeguarding aspects which are protective rights of children into the provision after the ABC tragedy in 2009. The curriculum to be implemented the next academic year is a fundamental change where the paradigm of memorization of information has been removed and changed for another one based on metacognitive learning where learning to learn, thinking and understanding are the priorities rather than fact learning. However, there are substantial discrepancies in between the discourse constructed by legislation at constitutional and secondary levels. Mexico's most important problem is to ensure that the educational provision provides an environment where children's rights are exercised normally. Also it is to ensure that a quarter of a million children underneath the age of 5 attend an educational centre. Beyond that, it is clear that the main problem that Mexican professionals involved in education have is retention. México loses according to CONEVAL (2016), about one million pupils a year at all levels. School abandonment becomes even more pronounced for children from an indigenous background which directly opposes the rights and principles of equality. This questions the fact that the Mexican educational institutions are actually promoting social exclusion. Despite the long and valued efforts, it is evident that there is a long learning journey to travel for both students and policy makers in the Mexican educational context.

On completion of their chapter, Santillan and Santillan propose the following questions to provoke further reflection, research and dialogue

- How are the rights of the children related to self-determination and development in the Early Years (EY) curriculum in Mexico? Is there a relationship in between social or economical background and access to education and achievement in Mexico? Are self-assertive rights part of the new Mexican Early Years curriculum 2017?
- Why should we analyse educational institutions as an essential component of citizenship behaviour and development?
- Which children's rights does the Early Years provision recognize and promote? Schooling or development? What have been the priorities and effectiveness in EY practice and its curricular development?

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Chapter 15
Discourses/6. England: The Position of Children's Rights in the Discourse on Citizenship. The Case of the Early Years Foundation Stage for England

Federico Farini

15.1 Introduction

In April 2015, the Early Years Inspection Handbook (Department for Education 2015) instructed inspectors to make a judgement on the effectiveness of leadership and management to actively promote British Values in the settings. Although not explicitly included in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS; Department for Education 2014a), the provision of education to Fundamental British Values is now a duty for all English Early Years settings that must demonstrate to promote 'equality, diversity and British values at the heart of the setting's work' (Early Years Inspection Handbook, Department for Education 2015).

However, this chapter argues that the position of Fundamental British Values in the Early Years Education is caught in a paradox. On the one hand, the semantics of Fundamental British Values is genuinely educational: Fundamental British Values are knowledge that creates the conditions for further learning and experiences (Baraldi and Corsi 2016). On the other hand, learners have limited opportunities to experience, to test and to assess the learned knowledge, because young children have limited agency in the education system.

By examining the position of education to Fundamental British Values within the culture of education underpinning the EYFS, the discussion will focus on the ambiguous image of the child who is presented as the agent of its own education as well as the object of *cultivation* towards the adult of the future. This paradoxical position reduces the opportunity for to recombine and apply knowledge on values or citizenship or social participation, because they have limited opportunities to make choices and use their personal judgment. In other words, Fundamental British

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Values are knowledge that is provided within education but that can be applied and experienced only in the future, outside education. Once introduced the main theme of the discussion, the chapter now presents the methodology that produced the elements of the discussion.

15.2 Methodology

This chapter argues for a paradoxical position of children in the discourse on citizenship advanced by Early Years policy and curricula in England. The discussion is based on a document analytical review of the Early Years Inspection Handbook, the EYFS and other educational policies. Document analysis requires a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, in order to elicit meaning and develop empirical knowledge (Rapley 2007). Atkinson and Coffey (2004) refer to documents as ‘social facts’, which are produced, shared, and used in socially organised ways. Documents that may be used for systematic evaluation as part of a study take a variety of forms. For instance, educational documents include attendance registers, minutes of meetings; manuals; school brochures; teachers’ professional journals; organisational or institutional reports; curricula.

Documents analysis entails finding, selecting, appraising and synthesising data contained in documents, to be then organised into major themes and categories (Labuschagne 2003). Document analysis is deemed as particularly appropriate to approach educational curricula through a focused intensive documentary case-study (Stake 1995). In the case of the research presented here, the study aims to produce a rich description of the semantics of education underpinning the EYFS, because it constitutes the cultural space of education to Fundamental British Values in Early Years Settings. Document analysis has been previously applied to educational curricula, using them as a key to decipher emerging social forms in the semantics of education, for instance with regard to digital learning and computer mediated communication (Angers and Machtmes 2005; Scollan and Gallagher 2016).

As an analytical procedure, document analysis combines elements of content and thematic analysis. Content analysis is the process of organising information into categories related to the central questions of the research, entailing a document review in which meaningful and relevant passages of text are identified (Corbin and Strauss 2008). The second stage of document analytical procedure is thematic analysis, which is addressed to recognize emerging themes within data (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006).

The reliability and validity of document analysis are secured by a circular relationship between interpretation and theory (Bowen 2009). Provided that document analysis is driven by objectivity (seeking to represent the document fairly) and sensitivity (responding to even subtle cues to meaning), interpretation of documents is made possible by theoretical categories that pre-exist data, which in turn can be validated by data.

Document analysis is not a formalistic methodology: documents are understood as historical objects; for this reason, the analysis of the position of Fundamental British Values in the Early Years Education is now introduced by a historical review of citizenship education in the English education system.

The aim of the following historical review is to read the introduction of education to Fundamental British Values as a statutory requirement for Early Years Settings within the bigger picture of an arduous journey of Citizenship education in English Curricula. The case is advanced that education to Fundamental British Values in Early Years is part of a broader cultural process within education, concerning the conceptualization of citizenship as an outcome of successful educational planning.

15.3 An Historical Review of Citizenship Education in English Curricula. A Quest for Political Neutrality

Until the end of the twentieth century, British governments had been reluctant to introduce any form of citizenship education (Hodgson 2008). Excluded from curricula, Civic education was left to initiatives of individual schools. A recent review of School Codes and Statutes across the first half of the twentieth century (O'Sullivan 2014), suggests that Civic education was rarely implemented, and when provided, it was conceptualised as moral education for the individual.

Under the influence of pedagogical publications addressed to primary schools teachers, ('History as a School of Citizenship' by Madeley 1920) and teacher education pamphlets ('The Teaching of History', by the Board of Education 1923), history was recognised as the medium for the transmission of moral values, inspiring pupils with exemplary lives of British heroes and heroines.

However, the progression towards Citizenship education was hampered by political disagreement regarding the concept of citizenship.

The debate in the after match of World War II revolved around Marshall's model of citizenship. (Marshall 1950). Although it is widely acknowledged that Marshall's model is hegemonic in the English discourse on Citizenship (Kymlicka and Norman 1994; Kymlicka 2008), also informing aims and objectives of citizenship education (Osler 2000; Olssen 2004) its cultural primacy had been long contested, leading to a delay in the development of citizenship education in English school curricula.

Marshall's tripartite model of citizenship is based on (1) rights and responsibility; (2) political literacy; (3) community involvement. The first component, rights and responsibility, is itself a tripartite category, collating civil rights, political rights and, most controversially, social rights.

Civil rights, already conceptualised in the eighteenth century are the rights necessary for individual freedom, such as liberty, freedom of speech, justice and property rights. Political rights developed in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and are chiefly understood by Marshall in the framework of representative democracy, as the right to vote and to stand for political offices.

Whilst Civil and Political rights were already included in traditional, history-based, Civic education, the political controversy during concerned Social rights. Social rights are defined by Marshall as:

> a range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being, according to the standards prevailing in the society. (Marshall 1950, p. 149)

Marshall's view of social rights aims to 'civilise capitalism', reducing the inequality that the economic system tends to produce. Marshall's social rights aligned with post-war consensus (Kymlicka and Norman 1994) appeasing both the Social Democracy of the Labour Party and the model of Managed Capitalism of post-Churchillian Conservatives (O'Sullivan 2014). However, during the 1970s, the consensus around rights and citizenship had left way to a polarised debate centred on the legitimacy of social rights, gradually hegemonized by the ideology of the New Right emphasising Civil rights and Market self-regulation rather than Social rights (Biesta and Lawy 2006, p.68). The vanishing of consensus on the very meaning of Citizenship prevented any further advancing of Citizenship education until the late 1990s (Lawy and Biesta 2006).

It was only with the 'New Labour' that some political consensus on the meaning of citizenship was restored, enabling the relatively recent, and relatively dramatic, developments in citizenship education to take place. In 1997 the historical momentum was created whereby a government-commissioned *Advisory Group on Citizenship* could successfully put forward the case for the compulsory teaching of Citizenship in the English curriculum.

Hodgson argues that by the end of the twentieth century, Citizenship education to some extent came to be a relatively safe alternative to some of the much more radical political education that was taking place in schools since the late 1970s on an *ad hoc* basis (Hodgson 2008). In addition to that, Biesta and Lawy (2006) demonstrate how the new Labour largely accepted the individualistic interpretation of the role of the citizen that the Thatcherite programme had bequeathed them, emphasising the alliance between individual rights and a sense of responsibility and obligation. However, the historical datum is that in a now favourable cultural environment, the recommendations advanced by the Advisory Group were publicised through a landmark paper, named the 'Crick Report' after the Chair of the Advisory Group (1998).

The Crick report is informed by the 'rights and responsibilities' rhetoric of New Labour, and builds upon a partial recovery of Marshall's semantic of citizenship (Larkin 2001), which therefore provides the framework for the development of education to Fundamental British Values in Early Years Education. The Crick report considers three interrelated learning outcomes for Citizenship education: (1) social and moral responsibility towards those in authority and each other; (2) community involvement, including service to the community; (3) political literacy, that is, the knowledge, skills and values to be effective in public life. The Crick report is a political document, and the learning outcomes of Citizenship education fits in the

Communitarian agenda brought forward by New Labour, calling for morally motivated, responsible and politically engaged citizens (Etzioni 1995). Citizenship education aims to:

> make secure and to increase knowledge, skills and values relevant to the nature and practices of participative democracy; also to enhance the awareness of rights and duties, and the sense of responsibility needed for the development of pupils into active citizens; and in doing so establish the value to individuals, schools and society of involvement in the local and wider community. (Crick 1998: p.40)

The Crick report was subject to criticism for being indifferent to issues of equality and social justice. Nevertheless, Crick's framework successfully resonated across the whole political spectrum, due to its emphasis on the duty of the citizen to participate in public affairs, to respect the rights and freedoms of the nation state and to observe its laws and fulfil the duties and obligations of citizenship. Scholars have suggested that the success of the Crick report is due to its ideological continuity with the New Right Agenda, for instance the emphasis on personal responsibility and individual choice (Miller 2000) and to its methodological affinity to 'safe' teacher-centred pedagogies, interested in transmitting 'good' citizenship (Smith et al. 2005), rather than promoting the social and critical capabilities of young people (Tomlinson 2005).

The Crick report was to become the ideological and technical imprint of compulsory Citizenship Education from September 2002, introduced via a curriculum described as 'light touch' by the then Secretary for Education Blunkett: schools were allowed flexibility to deliver the curriculum in ways that matched the local conditions. Burton and May (2015) convincingly demonstrate that this remains the case today; whilst there is a curricular programme to follow, topics can be covered within various aspects of school life, also as part of existing subjects.

The analysis of the Early Years Inspection Handbook support the case for a direct influence of the prolonged cultural framework underpinning the Crick Report. Education to Fundamental British Values concerns first and foremost providing the children with knowledge that represents the foundation for taking part in the British society as responsible, proactive, tolerant and law-abiding citizens. Early Education seems to be understood as a preparation stage for the development of the ambiguous communitarian and individualistic agenda pursued by successive governments since the mid-1990s.

This historical review of education to citizenship in English educational system has provided a context for the idea of utilising Early Years Education to implement education to Fundamental British Values. Education to Fundamental British Values is the initial step into a journey towards responsible, pro-active and accountable citizenship. The analysis of education to Fundamental British Values in its historical and cultural context introduces us to a discussion focused on its paradoxical status as educational knowledge, and its connection to the educational semantics of childhood.

15.4 Fundamental British Values as Educational Knowledge

The inclusion of education to Fundamental British Values as a statutory requirement for Early Years settings entails the transformation of Fundamental British Values into a set of learning outcomes, that is, into a possible object of educational planning. From a sociological perspective, all educational curricula, as well as educational planning, can be understood as a component of a triadic configuration that also includes the teacher and the learner. In particular, educational curricula help to stabilise the relationship between the latter two (Weick 1979).

A triadic configuration 'teacher, learner, curriculum' unburdens both the teacher and the learner, enabling more stable pedagogical relations. It is in light of the curriculum that the history of the teacher-learner interactions, as well as their personal characteristics. Can become meaningful for the interaction. School curricula represent one of the changes that encompassed the morphogenesis of the modern educational system at the end of the eighteenth century, together with the so-called discovery of the child, the universalization of classroom education and the professionalization of the teacher (Vanderstraeten 2006). Curricula do not only reduce the complexity of the educational interaction; curricula also reduce the complexity of the internal environment of educational organisation, because they limit the possibility of choice for teachers, pedagogues and managers. Because of their status as State-enhanced programmes for decision making in educational settings, curricula also represent the interface between the education system and its broader social environment. The political system cannot teach; nevertheless through the State administration politics can imposed curricular models and organizational structures.

All educational curricula and all forms of educational planning aimed to attain established curricular goals for the development of the child simplify decision-making for teachers, as well as for practitioners and managers in Early Years settings. Within the EYFS, similarly to Primary and Secondary schools curricula, age-specific activities are imposed. In the case of the EYFS, such activities must be tailored to secure the child development in State-sanctioned core areas: 'understanding the world', 'personal, social and emotional development', 'people and communities'. Fundamental British Values are now presented as a component of all core areas that structure the curricular framework of Early Education in England.

15.5 Fundamental British Values in the EYFS: The Present as Preparation for the Future

Since 2015, education to Fundamental British Values is considered as a component of the general Early Years settings statutory duty to secure a positive and socially constructive development of the child. Fundamental British Values are as much

important as any of the many facets of a State-designed, well developing individual. For this reason, Early Years settings must demonstrate to State-appointed inspectors to include teaching of Fundamental British Values, as failing in doing would result in loosing financial support.

However, a concept such as Fundamental British Values sits at the verge of vacuity, due to the unclear definition of what British Values, and particularly what Fundamental British Values should entail. Some clarity, or at least some operational directions, are provided by the Agency that implements Early Years settings inspections, the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). OFSTED presents a non-negotiable trivial list of values to be transmitted to a child as a foundation of further Citizenship education. Such values are: (1) Rule of law, (2) Mutual respect and tolerance, (3) Democracy and, (4) Individual liberty.

The first two Fundamental Values refer to learning how to manage feelings and behaviour, treating others as the child wants to be treated and understanding that rules matter. The third and the fourth values refer to learning how to make decisions together, making use of self-awareness and self-confidence.

The analysis of the curricular position of Fundamental British Values evidences the enduring influence of Marshall's model of citizenship, at least in the version revived by the Crick report. Rule of law, mutual respect and tolerance, democracy and individual liberty are object of learning, translating into the language of pedagogical planning Marshall's two dimensions of citizenship: 'Rights and responsibility' and 'Community involvement'. The Conservative-led educational policy underpinning the Inspection Handbook 2015 can be therefore be considered as a continuation and expansion of the cultural project inaugurated by the New Labour government, and an evidence of a persistent semantics of citizenship education across the political spectrum, across educational stages and across two decades of British history.

Criticism to the educational treatment of Fundamental British Values has concerned the elusiveness of the idea of distinctive British values (Jerome and Clemitshaw 2012) and the difficulty for practitioners to avoid a language implying some form of moral supremacy against other nations and cultures (The Guardian 2014). Notwithstanding the importance of a discussion on the ideological implication of the nationalisation of Fundamental Values in not underestimated, it is believed that the understanding of education to Fundamental Values presented by guidelines for Early Years Inspections is probably a more pertinent object a sociological analysis.

The guidelines for Early Years Inspections demand settings to include in their planning activities that are directly relevant of the transmission of Fundamental British Values. Education to Fundamental British Values is presented as a core resource to equip children to acquire the 'core knowledge they need to be educated citizens', as well as 'developing skills and understanding to play a full part in society' (Department for Education 2015).

The moral foundations of future British citizenship are clearly interpreted and presented as learning outcomes of adult-led and adult-centred activities. How a setting educates to Fundamental British Values must be shown on paper in terms of

pre-planned activities pictorially linked to the desired learning outcomes. The direction of educational communication prescribed by the Guidelines for Inspectors is clear: from the adult to the child. The educational treatment of Fundamental British Values understands them, and the very name is a powerful indication of this, as a *valuable* object to be 'passed', as an object of value to be 'transmitted' through a learning process monitored by the practitioner in the role of the 'knowledgeable other' (Parsons and Bales 1955), and inspected by State bureaucrats.

However, the Guidelines for Inspectors are not a pedagogical document. Their influence on the interpretation and implementation of the curricula is high, but they are not a curricula, they are not the EYFS.

Nothing in the EYFS prevents practitioners to devise opportunities for children to learn Fundamental British Values by practicing them, and nothing in the EYFS denies space for the voices of the children to be heard. On the contrary, the analysis of the Characteristics of Effective Learning and Teaching embedded in the current EYFS suggest that the best teaching practice recognised by the document consists in 'supporting children to think critically and become independent learners'. In the EYFS, the (well) developing child makes sense of the world through 'opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places technology and the environment' (Department for Education 2014b).

Thus, the pedagogical foundations of the EYFS would suggest that Early Years settings in England represent a favourable environment for children's experience of FBV in their everyday life, enhancing the use of educational learning to learn. The child-initiated pedagogy informing the Characteristics of Effective Learning and Teaching is influenced by the Reggio Emilia Approach, being based on the acknowledgement of the child as an agent who makes choices relevant for its own education (for a curricular perspective on the Reggio Approach see Siraj-Blatchford 2008; for a more sociologically informed analysis see Baraldi 2015).

However, the EYFS is a complex document, at the intersection of contrasting agendas; for instance, the concept of child-initiated pedagogy is accompanied by an indication that Early Years Education, therefore education to Fundamental British Values too, must be provided as preparation to future stages of life. The child-in-the-present, who is at the centre of child-initiated pedagogies, is seen through the mirror of the adult-in-the-future. The status of children as citizen in the here and now of their educational experience is not denied; however, it is submitted to the priority of the adult-led journey into adult citizenship. This is clearly suggested by the government's policy 'Listening to and involving children and young people': Early Years provision is expected to develop children 'skill and attitudes that *will* allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to society' (Department for Education 2014c).

The preparatory nature of Education to Fundamental British Values aligns with the generalised trend towards the reconceptualization of Early Years provision as preparation for the following stage of life. The idea is that Early Education is preparation for school education, under the umbrella of 'School Readiness' (Office for Standard in Education 2014; for critical voices see Bingham and Whitebread

2012; O'Connor and Angus 2013). The EYFS indeed provides references to literature listing the social skills that provisions must impart to children (for instance Heckman and Kautz 2012): Motivation, Sociability, Attention, Self-regulation, Self-esteem, Time preference. They are evidently skills for a successful participation in school education. Education to FBV is approached as an addition to them.

Within the pedagogical and ideological framework of School Readiness, Education to Fundamental British Values, as well as all aspects of Early Years provision, are colonised by the culture of schooling, based on standardised expectations and generalised learning outcomes. Education to FBV is thus embedded a top-down implementation model in which practitioners are perceived as the *implementers* (Jerome forthcoming) of State-administered decision-making programmes, while their voices, as the voices of the children, is noticeable for its absence.

Government's guidelines for Education to Fundamental British Values dictate educational planning, for instance expecting settings to 'support children with material on the strengths, advantages and disadvantages of democracy, and how democracy and the law works in Britain' (Department for Education 2014c). Fundamental British Values are a core component of the 'knowledge, skills and understanding which young children of different abilities and maturities are expected to have' (Department for Education 2014b).

Fundamental British Values are therefore included in a discourse of expectations, performances, measurability and assessment. Early Years provisions must secure that Fundamental British Values support children in being 'developed enough' for the next stage of their life, that is, School Education. It is argued here that what is missing from the picture is the intention to value children's experience of their social contexts in the here and now. Professional guidelines invest Early Years Inspectors with the responsibility to assess the social development of young children, measuring their 'acceptance and engagement with the Fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect' (Department for Education 2015).

Fundamental British Values are future-oriented, understood as the foundations of a process of citizenship learning which is projected in the future. Practitioners are assessed (and the financial support that funds their jobs depend on such assessment) according to the measure in which they: 'ensure that children understand their own and others' behaviour and its consequences, and learn to distinguish right from wrong', lead children in 'learning to take turns and share, and challenging negative attitudes and stereotypes', secure that all children 'develop the skills that *will* enable them to positively contribute to their communities' (Department for Education 2014b).

Lloyd (2015) argues that the 'School colonisation' of Early Years provision is further enhanced by its marketization in the aftermath of the 2006 Childcare Act. Measured by tables reporting the success of pupils in subsequent Primary education, the effectiveness of Early Years provision to secure school readiness shows their 'quality' to families and funding bodies, within a market-driven competition for accessing scarce resources (Moss 2009). In the framework of the 'educationalization'

of Early Years Provisions, marketisation further reduces the space for children's agency, favouring the implementation of knowledge-based, predetermined learning objectives.

A core argument of the present study is that the ambiguous status of Fundamental British Values in Early Years education is caught between the continuation of a long tradition of promotion of civic virtues on the one hand, and the impossibility for children to experiment such virtues due to their limited agency in the education system on the other hand. This is an important claim, that deserves to be further discussed.

Taylor's (1989) historical account of the conceptualisations of human value can support a discussion on the ambiguous relationship between young children and citizenship status. According to Taylor, in hierarchical societies human value was ranked against the proximity to the owner of the land. Examining the transition from feudal societies to societies based on trade in Western and Southern Europe, Taylor observes a semantic evolution, whereas human value is a function of dignity, which is taken to be both the possession of, and what it is owed to, each and every individual, regardless of the conditions of their birth.

Notwithstanding the universalistic semantic of dignity, human value as a structural form does not disappear in modernity; in order to differentiate grades of human value, the universal and inclusive principle of dignity is coupled with the selective and exclusive principle of 'level of development', which is measured according to displayed separateness from others, to displayed self-governance and independence from the claims, wishes and command of others.

An emerging circular relationship between the condition of minority of the child in the discourses of modernity and the reproduction of the double semantic figure of dignity and development can be exemplified by modern European scientific theories, for instance developmental psychology.

Freud's theory of taboos (Freud 2011), puts at the foundation of human society self-regulation and self-control, exercised by separated individuals. Freud metaphorically and epistemologically link primitive societies to a condition of childhood, which allows a translation of his ideas from cultural relationhips to generational relationships. Childhood, of humanity as well as of the individual, is marked by lack of self-control and lack of separation from the world. Developing from influential Freud's theories, the idea of childhood as a society of 'sauvages' inside civilised adult society allows to places children in a liminal space where, whilst protected by the recognition of their dignity, are excluded from the exercise of citizenship consequently to their incomplete separation from the world of instinct, illusions, caprices. Another example is offered by Piaget's developmental psychology (Piaget 2011), where young children are seen as 'egocentric' in the sense that they are not aware of a difference between themselves and the rest of the world. Individual development is the ability to create a distinction between self and the world. Separation between self and the world is the goal of child's development as a condition to access to reason.

The relevance of Freud and Piaget's theories for this contribution consists in their convergence towards a depiction of change as a movement from a less to a more

desirable state. This applies to the history of human society as well as to the personal history of each individual. Its importance consists in the legitimisation of normatively stipulated anticipations of improvements as the child transitions to adult life.

Taylor suggests that the function of the combination of development and dignity serves to detect a shared quality among aristocracy and bourgeoisie, that would have been otherwise be separated by degrees of honour. However, that coupling can also be catalyst for semantics of categorical distinctions: development is associated with general historical movement (savages against civilised), with gender assiology (female against male), with ethnicity-based differential (black people against white people) and with phases of personal development (child against adult).

In fact, the coupling between dignity and development is currently accepted in the public discourse only regarding intergenerational order, and in particular this is the case within education (although it has been the object of criticism, particularly from the area of childhood studies, see for instance Wyness 2014; Leonard 2016). Notwithstanding wide criticism, however, the concept of development and its underpinning structure, that is, the coupling between the inclusive principle of dignity and an exclusive principle still generates social semantics within the education system, and the document analysed in this study offer an example of that.

Whilst dignity generates inclusive and universal human rights, citizenship generates exclusive and conditional personal rights (Mattheis 2012). A word of caution is however needed: it is not suggested that in education children suffer a systematic violation of their human rights. After all, education is provided 'for the best interest of the child'. What children do experience nevertheless is their exclusion from 'personal rights', therefore the exclusion from citizenship in the education system (Biesta and Lawy 2006). While the semantics of rights is based on the dogmatic of human dignity (Luhmann 1981; Teubner 1988, 2010), human dignity does not always entail personal rights. Quite the opposite: the analysis presented here suggest that the semantics of childhood is constructed in the social sphere exactly based on limited access to personal rights. Used as axiological criteria, separateness from others, self-governance and independence, they allow to define different grades of individual value, despite the universal attribution of dignity. Children have dignity, but are not separated from others, due to their incomplete development: this contribute to legitimize the invention, typical of European modernity, of the condition of moral and legal minority of children. Children are recognised human dignity, they are protected and nurtured, but they are not recognised personal value, and this legitimizes their exclusion from citizenship and active participation, also in the education system (Lawy and Biesta 2006; Burton and May 2015).

Theories on the semantic of human value developed in modern constitutional thought (Joerges et al. 2004; Lee 2005; Teubner 2010, 2013, 2014; Kumm et al. 2014) can help in understanding the ambiguous relationship between young children and citizenship status. The starting point of the argument would be Taylor's idea that in modern western society human value is based on dignity, which is taken to be both the possession of, and what it is owed to, each and every person regardless of the conditions of their birth (Taylor 1989).

However, constitutional theories emphasise that citizenship is not linked to universalistic dignity, but to conditional inclusion in all social domains (Teubner 2010, 2014; Verschraegen 2011). For this reason, citizenship lends itself as a case study for the interpretation of the position of childhood in society.

Dignity is the foundation of children's rights, which in turn have been underpinning Early Education and Care policies over the last three decades on a global scale. Children's rights are a generation-based expression of human rights, and can be understood, following Teubner (2010), as a social institution that secures the constitutionalisation of the individual, that is, the preservation of the conditions of dignity.

Lee (2005) distinguishes human rights, concerning the preservation of human dignity, from 'personal rights', concerning inclusion in all social domains and therefore defining the meaning of citizenship. Whilst Lee's aim is to classify different forms of rights, the separation between citizenship and human rights has been elsewhere recognised as pivotal in the crisis of modern constitutionalism (Dimitrijevic 2015). This is particularly important in relation to children, as it opens a space for the ambivalence between the recognition of children's rights as human rights, and the conditional citizenship of children. Children's safeguarding and well-being posits adult's protection of the 'future citizen' in opposition to the risk of children's active citizenship in the present. Adult's protection of children separability, 'acting on behalf' of the developing children to preserve the condition of dignity of the future individual underpins (human) rights-based policies as the *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (Department for Education 2015b).

The semantic of children's rights as 'human rights' underpins a meaning of children's agency as subordinate to the 'responsible adult'. This is the paradox of agency: the relevance of children's agency depends on the relevance of adults' actions in promoting children's actions. This paradox originates from the position of children, who have no access to the most important decision-making process in social systems (Baraldi 2014). How much the voices of the children can make a difference depends on an adult decision. This is not confined to English educational policies but appears to be a feature of the discourse on childhood in education across Europe. A review of policies related to childhood in Europe, suggests that the paradox of agency depending on adult action underpins not only educational but also social work policies in England (*Listening to and involving children and young people,* Department for Education 2014c), childcare policies in Ireland (*Childminding and day care for Children Under Age 12,* Health and Social Care Board 2012) and children's rights legislation in Italy (*Childhood's Right Convention* in Italy, Autorità Garante per l'Infanzia e l'Adolescenza 2015). The agency of the child, that is, the status of the child as a citizen in the present, is a function of an external assessment of its development, against an abundance of standards generated and the intersection of the discourses of science, education, politics and law.

The overarching argument of this contribution is that Citizenship as education-provided knowledge, to be then used by the child to orient judgment and choice, is limited in its scope by the position of young children in the society, and in particular in the education system. It has been discussed that Fundamental British Values are created as educational knowledge, but a type of knowledge cannot be used as the foundation of further learning, due to the impossibility of experiencing it, verifying expectations, reflecting upon what has been done to gauge what else could be done (Baraldi and Corsi 2016).

The idea of child-initiated pedagogy introduced in the EYFS has the potential to address children's meanings and experience of citizenship as practiced, but only if it is matched by a pedagogy and analysis which allows children and young people to develop skills for critical thinking and political change.

In the current cultural climate, the hegemonic idea is that education to Fundamental British Values needs to set the foundation for addressing the contract between citizens and the Nation State at a later stage of the education system. However, it is argued here that education to Fundamental British Values should go beyond this, exploring and valuing young children's lived experiences.

This advocated approach to education for citizenship is perhaps best conceptualised as education for *cosmopolitan citizenship* (Osler and Starkey 2006; Osler 2011), aiming to equip children to contribute and to engage constructively with difference at local, national and international levels. It is therefore an inclusive rather than exclusive concept because it assumes that everyone in society, including young children. Are citizens not moving *to*, but *through* citizenship. Indeed, this approach makes no distinction between what might otherwise be regarded as a status differential between citizens and not-yet-citizen.

Conceptualizing citizenship as an ongoing practice involves a fundamental change in the way citizenship education, including its prepedeutic education to Fundamental British Values in Early Education, is conceived and articulated, with a transfer of emphasis from questions about the manufacturing of citizens to the investigation of the complexity of young children's experience of citizenship, and how they perceived themselves as citizens in the present.

On completion of his chapter, Federico Farini proposes the following questions to provoke further reflection, research and dialogue

- Is *education* to fundamental values compatible with child-initiated pedagogy, where the agenda is set by the child rather than the adult?
- What is the implication of education to State-defined (via curricula) fundamental values for the capability of citizenship education to welcome and value cultural differences?
- Would it be possible to develop a concept of education to and for citizenship beyond preparation for *future* responsibilities, valuing the child's lived experiences in the present instead?

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Chapter 16
Discourses/7. New Zealand: "I Have a New Taiaha": Learning New Ways to Advocate for the Rights of Mokopuna Māori

Sarah Te One and Marlene Welsh-Sauni

Dedication to Emeritus Professor Anne Smith

E te toka tū moana o ngā tikanga tamariki
Nāu te karanga i tuhituhi māua i tenei wāhanga o te pukapuka nei
Nāu i whakahirahira
Nāu i whakaohooho
Nāu i whakamanawa i a māua ki te whai tonu tenei mahi hōhonu/hira
Nō reira e te rangatira
Moe mai i tō moenga roa
Moe mai, moe mai, moe mai rā

To you, a rock who stood strong for the rights of children
We dedicate this chapter to you
It is your voice that extols us
It is your voice that inspires us
It is your voice that supports us to persist in this important work
Therefore, esteemed leader
Rest in your resting place
Rest, rest, rest in that distant place

16.1 Introduction

During 2015 and 2016 Aotearoa New Zealand submitted its fifth report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UN Committee). The non-government parallel report was unequivocal in its opening statement claiming that successive

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governments have ignored their obligations to comply with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) and continues to breach children's rights. It appears that governments are more concerned with complying with powerful constituents' desires than they are with addressing the flawed policies and, legislative barriers and punitive barriers (Action for Children and Youth Aotearoa (ACYA) 2015). This is despite continual warnings that policies and practices unduly discriminate against Māori children. Time and again (ACYA 2003, 2008, 2015, 2016a, b, c) government had been alerted to the facts that mokopuna Māori (Māori progeny, children and young people) are among those whose wellbeing has been undermined by limited and narrow focused policy.

This chapter will describe the background context to one of the only training programmes offered to duty-bearers in Aotearoa NZ: Child Rights Advocacy Training for Māori Wardens (ngā Wātene Māori). It begins with a short description of the Wātene Māori movement followed by a brief explanation about the Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi) as the background context for understanding obligations and rights for tangata whenua (indigenous people, Māori) in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand's international obligations. Recent recommendations from the UN Committee establish why understanding the UN CRC is critical for those working with mokopuna Māori.

16.2 Ngā Wātene Māori

In the 1860s Wātene Māori emerged as an indigenous response to support Māori people to avert negative interactions with Pākehā *(British, see Appendix i, 'Glossary' at the end of the chapter)* society. In 1945 Wātene Māori were officially gazetted under the Māori Social and Economic Advancement Act 1945 (NZ Government 1945). This Act set up a system of self-government under Tribal Committees to oversee the nominating of wardens and their activities (Kaunihera Māori (Māori Council), no date). Later, the Māori Community Development Act 1962 (NZ Government 1962) was introduced under the statutory authority of the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Māori Development (NZ Government 1962). This Act conferred legal responsibilities on Wātene to advise and assist the Māori people in respect of their general welfare and, in particular, in respect of their health, housing, education, vocational training, and employment. This Act also gave them specific roles related to the prevention of riotous behaviour and the prevention of drunkenness. In the years since the establishment of Wātene Māori the authority and control of Wardens' activates has oscillated between government-appointed controllers such as the Minister of Māori Affairs, the New Zealand Māori Council and local district councils. Today, Wātene Māori are asserting their rangatiratanga (autonomy, authority, self-determination) to govern their organisation, operations and activities.

In 2007 Te Puni Kōkiri, a government ministry responsible for providing policy advice to government about issues affecting Māori, together with Wātene Māori, began a process of refreshing the role of Wātene to take account of current societal

issues impacting on Māori people. Today Wātene Māori are visibly integrated into the fabric of many communities across Aotearoa New Zealand as advocates to advance and protect the general health and wellbeing of Māori people.

16.3 Covenants Acting in Concert

Three covenants, when considered in unison with each other, provide a powerful mechanism for upholding and advancing the rights of mokopuna. These are Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi), UN CRC and the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Te Tiriti o Waitangi (1840) is the founding bicultural document setting out the protection of the rights of mokopuna in relation to their entitlement to all the treasures (tangible and intangible), unique beliefs, values and practices of Te Ao Māori (the Māori world view; Article II), and their entitlement to the rights and privileges of a bicultural Pākehā/Māori society (Article III, Te Tiriti o Waitangi 1840).

In 1993, when the New Zealand Government ratified UN CRC, the protection of the rights of mokopuna were further strengthened by all 54 Articles and in particular Article 30:

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practice his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language (UN CRC 1989). In 2010 the New Zealand Government signed up to the UNDRIP (2008) and the full impact of all 46 Articles apply to mokopuna Māori.

Beyond the literal meaning of these covenants, lies a shared intent and purpose to uphold and advance human dignity in the pursuit of justice, freedom and peace. A pursuit made explicit in the mantra of Wātene Māori.

> Aroha ki te tangata – For the love of the people (Te Puni Kōkiri n.d.)

It is this shared purpose that drives our desire to work in culturally preferred ways that discover, recover, ignite and release cultural understandings of ways to advocate for the rights of mokopuna.

16.4 The Current Situation for Mokopuna Māori

Unfortunately, neither the intentions of UN CRC, nor the four UN Committee reports published since Aotearoa NZ ratified the UN CRC have been realised to great effect in recent years (ACYA 2003, 2008, 2015, 2016a, b, c; Ora Taiao 2016; UNICEF and Save the Children 2016). ACYA's civil society report revealed four themes:

- there is inconsistent and incomplete data about children
- greater cohesion and co-ordination is needed between legislation, policy and practice as well as across sectors and agencies
- universal and proportionately targeted responses are required to meet all children's needs
- spending needs to be planned, enacted, implemented and accounted for in a manner that advances children's rights (ACYA 2015)

The ACYA report confirmed that

> some children, particularly […] Māori […] face significant barriers to the full enjoyment of their rights. Many mokopuna Māori and their whānau are struggling in a system that fails to recognise the enduring impacts of colonisation and neoliberal economic policies, which favour competition over collaboration. (Durie 1998, 2005)

Collective whānau (family), hapū (collective of related families descended from a common ancestor(s)) and iwi (groups of hapū descended from a common ancestor(s); sometimes called a tribe) -based solutions to improve living standards struggle in hostile economic circumstances with hierarchically imposed mainstream measures of accountability and effectiveness (Smith 2013).

No one is claiming that the circumstances some mokopuna Māori are facing are acceptable. The difference lies in approaches to solve increasing disparities between rich and poor, and majority and minority, indigenous populations (Rashbrooke 2013; Poata-Smith 2013). While the policy solutions are developed in the political arena with little or no consultation, the impacts are felt by many mokopuna Māori and their whānau (ACYA 2015, 2016b, c, d). Data (Simpson et al. 2014) suggests that living standards are inadequate, that the benefits of education are compromised and that general health and wellbeing measures are well below those of their peers.

The coalition centre-right Government in Aotearoa NZ (2009–2017) followed the example of other Anglophone countries and adopted a targeted approach for those in the most dire need (Moss 2016). The flaws of the Aotearoa NZ approach were made very clear during its Session with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in October, 2016. While the efforts the Government had made to re-dress disparities were welcomed by the UN Committee, the vice-Chairperson, Amal al Doseri (2016, pers. comm.) critiqued the Government for its narrow focus and pointed out that this approach undermined the overall intention of the UN CRC which, as Anne Smith (2016) wrote, should be interpreted holistically.

At the time, and led by Judge Andrew Becroft, the Children's Commissioner, there was widespread resistance to the name "Ministry for Vulnerable Children" also named Oranga Tamariki (loosely translated as Children's Wellbeing). The misappropriation of te reo Māori *(the Māori language)* in the name is in itself, misleading. The English name stems from a deficit view of children quite contrary to the UN CRC views of a child as agentic and actively engaged in his or her world. As al Doseri (pers. comm.) observed:

> We are well aware of the mandate of the Ministry of Vulnerable Children. We are happy to see that [is a focus for] special attention and this huge effort is put [towards …] the protection of the vulnerable children. However, I have to reiterate […] that the Convention on the

> Rights of the Child is not [just] about vulnerable children. It is about every child living in the state party. On the other hand, and looking at the name of the existing Ministry of Vulnerable Children: the name entails a stigma and labelling of a certain group of children.

The UN Committee noted that the previous Government had no clear definition of vulnerable, and more seriously, failed to comprehend the stigmatising, marginalising effect of the terminology. The final report included the following recommendation to the Government:

> Consider a different name for the proposed Ministry for Vulnerable Children, and avoid the categorization of children, in law and policy, which may lead to stigmatization; (CRC/C/NZL/CO/5 para 7(b))

Since November 2017, Aotearoa NZ has had a change of Government. One of the Prime Minister Jacinda Adern's first actions was to re-name the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, the Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children.

That said, the issues for tamariki (children) Māori remain the same. Māori are disproportionately represented in care and protection services, in youth justice facilities (ACYA 2015; OCC 2012, 2016). Mokopuna Māori are statistically more likely to lag behind their peers educationally and on all measures of child wellbeing and living standards (Boston and Chapple 2014; Simpson et al. 2014). The UN Committee recognised these data as a threat to Māori language, identity and culture and once more, urged the Government to redress the negative stereotypes about mokopuna Māori by strengthening measures and activities to prevent discrimination (CRC/C/NZL/CO/5 para 15). Even though there are examples of strengthening activities, these are not sufficient to protect and preserve Te Tiriti o Waitangi tino rangatiratanga rights for mokopuna Māori (CRC/C/NZL/CO/5 para 19). The discourse of vulnerability reinforces an already deficit view of Māori which is why child rights advocacy for and by Māori is so important.

16.5 Child Advocacy Workshops with Wātene Māori. Transforming Aroha (Love, Compassion and Service) into Agency

One group continuing to support UN CRC awareness raising is the Ministry of Māori Development Te Puni Kōkiri's Māori Warden Project. Since 2012 Te Puni Kōkiri both fund and coordinate training opportunities for approximately 1000 Wātene throughout Aotearoa NZ. Two full day child rights advocacy training courses have been run between four and six times a year in different regions. Attendance at the courses can vary from between 15 and 30 participants, some of whom are new trainee Wātene and some of whom return (more than once) modelling a pedagogical construct of tuakana teina – where an older, more experienced warden (a tuakana) scaffolds novice trainees (teina) as part of a culturally embedded induction process.

In this section, we describe the features of the training and use examples to illustrate 'aroha ki te tangata'. The training is grounded in unique cultural features of Te Ao Māori including te reo Māori, tikanga (correct ways of doing things, protocols and rules), taonga tuku iho (values, traditions, treasure handed down from ancestors) and aroha (Barlow 2001; Mead 2003). These provide the context for how the rights of mokopuna can be understood and what the roles and responsibilities are to advance and protect their rights. Two constructs underpin praxis for Wātene Māori. First, the notion of Aata (practice of respectful relationships, Pohatu 2003, 2004), is embedded in the practice of respectful, reflective, strategic transformation enacted through whānaungatanga (a process of making transparent the extended family-relationships and their inherent obligations). Second, the concept of Rangatiratanga (Barlow 2001; Durie 1998), the act of self-determination, underpins the reification of Praxis in the communities where Wātene Māori live and work.

Transformative pedagogy (Smith 2002, 2004) is the method through which Wātene are empowered to examine their beliefs, values, knowledge and experiences. The learning outcome sought is to develop their reflective knowledge, appreciation for multiple perspectives, and a sense of critical consciousness and agency.

Appropriate indigenous rituals, learning processes and language are embedded throughout the 2-day workshop. The workshop is segmented into three learning phases (Table 16.1: The three phases of child rights advocacy training): (1) Critical consciousness and multiple perspectives, (2) Reflective knowledge, (3) Agency.

Each phase contains a series of interactive activities designed to meet shared learning outcomes. There is not room to discuss each of these phases in-depth so two elements of critical consciousness and agency are used to explicate transformational pedagogy.

Table 16.1 The three phases of the child rights advocacy training

Critical consciousness and multiple perspectives	Reflective knowledge	Agency
Preferred rituals of engagement with trainers and subject	Introduction to UN CRC and its origins	Identify and practice culturally preferred ways to engage with mokopuna
Examine personal childhood experiences of rights	Reflect on Te Tiriti o Waitangi	Scenario based exercises to identify breaches of children's rights and develop an advocacy plan to address these
Examine today's children's' experiences of rights	Examine Māori examples of advocacy	Identify a child rights based issue in their community and develop an advocacy plan
Consider how the rights of children are viewed across multiple perspectives		

16.6 Rituals of Engagement: Whakawhanaungatanga

Trainings are usually held on a marae where the tikanga of that particular rohe (a geographical area defined by the sovereignty of an ancestor(s)) starts with a mihi whakatau (a welcome ceremony), karakia and waiata (blessings and song). We refer to this phase as whakawhanaungatanga – building a sense of belonging and reciprocal obligations – an important construct in relational pedagogy (Te One 2011). This phase is important for participants to find their voice not just as individuals but also as members of a group in relation to one another. We use a seemingly simple approach by asking participants to share the origins of their name. This is significant for several reasons: first, there can be no wrong answer; and second, more often than not, people like to tell the story of their name because, finally, it links us to our roots. For many, the story of a name is about whakapapa (genealogy) and turangawaewae (A place to stand/belong by birth right and genealogy/ancestry), or as a reminder of a significant event:

> I was named for my grandmother on my mother's side. She raised my mother and so, my name was to whakapapa back to her people.

> My uncle came back from the War unable to have children and so I was named for him after a singer in World War 2.

For many Wātene, their Māori name was anglicised for Pākehā convenience and because, particularly for older Māori (60+) Aotearoa NZ's education system banned the use of te reo Māori as part of its assimilationist policies (Smith 2013).

> My name is […] but I was always called Bub. The Pākehā teacher could never say my name right anyway.

16.7 Personal Experiences of Childhood

The process of whakawhanaungatanga involves both seriousness and humour and sets the stage for the next phase of the training: drawing on past experiences of childhood to understand experiences of children today. When we begin, it is not unusual to hear comments like:

> Children today are spoilt
> Children today don't know how lucky they are.
> Children today have no respect
> Why should children have rights – what about adults' rights?

These views of children are not unique to the Wātene. But, in our view, it is important to reveal these perceptions, explore them thoroughly and use them as the foundation for transforming attitudes. Because most adults rely on their memories of their own childhoods to understand children's lived experiences today (Te One et al. 2014), we begin by examining childhood through a process of critical

consciousness-raising using small group work followed by self-selected sharing with the whole group (Fig. 16.1).

In this section, a selection of quotes represents what many Wātene share about their childhoods, both good and bad.

What were the good things about being a tamaiti (child)?

I was raised by my koro (grandfather) and nanny. I had to work hard but all us kids did – chopping wood, milking. My sis had to do lots of the cooking. They were strict and you knew about it when you did wrong. I let the fire go out one time and boy, did nanny go mad … we didn't have electricity and the range was for everything – cooking, hot water – but they were fair and kind. We didn't have a lot of money but every Friday, Koro would bring home lollies. We didn't have shoes and. But we never went hungry. And I remember those lollies. I loved my koro and nanny.

Back in the day, kids knew how to do lots. We learnt how to hunt, gather Kia moana (sea food), and work in the gardens. We loved playing outside – we were always outside – we would raid the neighbours' fruit trees and we loved looking for Kia moana. We were never hungry.

We didn't expect much and we were always up at the marae (traditional building used as a place for people to gather) for something. We were surrounded by whānau. It was all about whānau really. I had lots of brothers and sisters and there were always heaps of cousins. Yea, it was whānau.

What were some of the difficult things about being a tamaiti?

You know, when I started school I had no idea what was going on. I was raised by my nanny and when I was about five, I suppose, my mum came and got me and sent me to school. My underwear was made from bleached flour bags. That was OK but you see, when I started school I couldn't speak Pākehā (English). The teacher was so angry with me for kōrero (speak) Māori and she kept yelling at me to speak English. I was trying to tell her that I couldn't speak English. They would strap kids

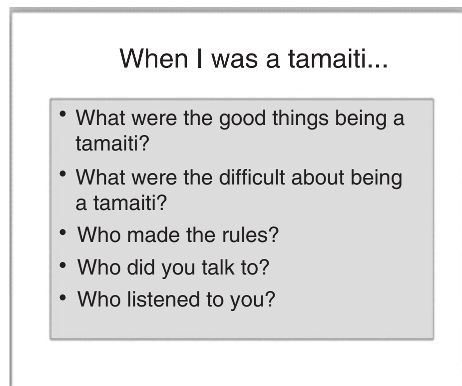

Fig. 16.1 Thinking about your childhood

for speaking te reo. I was really confused. At home, Mum would get mad at me for kōrero Pākehā and at school they would get mad for kōrero Māori.

Gangs, drugs, alcohol… it was hard to accept my Dad's affiliation with a gang. There was lots of violence, both physical and mental. You never knew what was coming. I missed lots of school and I hated that. Dad was in and out of jail all the time and when he was home there was always fighting so I used to run away to my grandmother's place.

My mum got sick and we had to live with aunty. We had to move away from our friends. Uncle really took it out on my brother and so he ran away coz he had to leave – we all ended up in care but not together. I found it hard to trust people after that.

16.8 Thinking About Children and Childhood Today

The next stage of phase one is often done as a whole group exercise (Fig. 16.2). Critically reflecting on memories was very often an emotional experience that shifted the generalisations about present-day experiences significantly. Major generational differences appear and in some cases, the good things about being a child are also difficult. One example of this is technology, which is routinely regarded as a good thing until some of the major issues Wātene deal with, emerge in the discussions:

> They are always on their mobiles; texting all the time. And they have to have the latest. But then there is text-bullying? You know, that's linked to suicides and that's something we have to deal with lots in our [region].

Another resounding theme is hunger. In stark contrast to the experiences of many of their parents and certainly, grandparents, Wātene are observing the real impact of child poverty.

Fig. 16.2 Children today

Now think about the tamariki of today

- What are the good things about being a tamaiti?
- What are the difficult things about being a tamaiti?
- How do tamariki spend their time?
- Who makes the rules?
- Who do tamariki talk to?
- Who listens to tamariki?

> The fridges are empty and kids are hungry. It's not like in our day when we could always rattle up a feed – we knew where to look for Kia and everyone had huge as gardens. You know, when people had too much fruit (except for the Pākehā), or too many pumpkins, you just shared it out amongst your whānau. Nowadays, lots of our whānau don't know about that stuff and where they live, it can't happen and it's our mokos (meaning grandchildren) that suffer too.

16.9 Phase Two: Recognising Mokopuna Have Rights

Recognising the issues facing mokopuna today provides a neat segue into the next phase of the training focusing on the UN CRC. It is during this session that a discernible shift from perceptions of the child as spoilt, to one of mokopuna rights-holders. As Michael Freeman says, the fundamental premise underpinning the UNCRC is recognising that children have the right to have rights.

During this phase, the general principle articles are discussed in relation to the major categories of the UN CRC. Again, shifts in perception are dramatic which age-old, ill-conceived assumptions such as "children should be seen and not heard" are dismissed and replaced by an understanding of Article 12 and 13 rights alongside an awareness of the role of an advocate. Region specific examples of historical and present-day Māori advocacy for indigenous rights become a platform for understanding agency. Memories of past injustices (such as illegal confiscation of land and deliberate attempts to suppress te reo Māori) illustrate a tradition of advocacy.

The scenarios developed for the trainings use real-life experiences based on the issues facing mokopuna the Wātene themselves identify in their role. The UN CRC combined with the Wātene experience and in-depth understanding of the cultural impacts of issues like youth suicide and long-term poverty on mokopuna. Through trainings, aroha ki te tangata, becomes embedded as well as enacted as part of the praxis of Wātene.

Without exception, realising that there is an UN CRC has had a profound impact at a professional and at a personal level for many Wātene.

> I knew that we should listen to our tamariki (children) but now I know that they have a right to be heard, I am going to make sure I do. We need to listen eh? It's not just about what we think should happen, they have ideas too.

> My daughter, who teaches in a Kōhanga Reo (Māori early childhood centre), do they know about the UN CRC? They need to. This is great.

> I wish I had known about [the UN CRC] before. My son was told not to come back to school but we were never told why. Then he was suspended and we never knew anything. If we had known he had a right to know, to speak, maybe things would have turned out differently coz after trying to get to talk to the Principal, and them not listening to his side, we just gave up and he ended up leaving [school] anyway.

16.10 Tūmanako (Desire, Hope): Creating Awareness About a Child Rights Framework

At the end of one training, during the poroaki (farewell), a young trainee stood and proclaimed "I have a new taiaha (ceremonial spear)". In his hand he held a copy of the UN CRC. In the previous 48 h, this group had grappled with the issues facing mokopuna Māori that were neither remote, nor distant, but present in their whānau, their hapū and iwi. Like many before him, this young man was staggered to learn that the UN CRC and it's potential to improve decision-making for mokopuna Māori was relatively unknown by those who made decisions that impacted directly on his and his whānau's lives.

One solution mooted since Aotearoa NZ ratified the UN CRC is for the Government to adopt a child rights framework. Such a framework could remedy some long-standing weaknesses in the current approach to fully realising the UN CRC through constructive dialogue between the government and civil society, including mokopuna Māori, underpinned by the general principle articles. After hearing all the evidence from the children's report, the NGO groups, the Children's Commissioner and the Government, the UN Committee (CRC/C/NZL/CO/5) recommended that the Government "adopt a comprehensive policy and strategy for the implementation of the Convention … based on a child rights approach".

This is not as far-fetched as it might sound. To support the intentions of the UN CRC, the Children's Commissioner Act 2003 clearly positions the Commissioner as the primary advocate for children in order to give "better effect" to the UN CRC, and to take into account the UN CRC "when carrying out functions and powers" (ibid, s3b, c, d). The following specified functions relate directly to creating an awareness of both children's rights and the UN CRC.

to raise awareness and understanding of children's interests, rights and welfare
to raise awareness and understanding of the Convention
to increase public awareness of matters that relate to the welfare of children:
to promote, in relation to decisions that affect the lives of children, —

(i) the participation of children in those decisions; and
(ii) an approach to children's views that, in each case, gives due weight to those views in accordance with the age and maturity of the relevant child (ibid, s12, c, d, i, j)

A barrier to adopting such a framework exists because there is very limited understanding of the UN CRC and training in the public sector is virtually non-existent (UNICEF 2011). Bearing in mind that previous UN Committee recommendations were not actioned, the UN Committee's current 2016 recommendations reiterate the importance of dissemination, awareness-raising and training. They urge the current administration to

> Strengthen its currently limited awareness-raising programmes, campaigns, and dissemination activities, including through increased dedicated awareness-raising funding to the Office of the Children's Commissioner, in order to ensure that the provisions of the Convention are widely known by the general public, including parents, caregivers, teachers, youth workers and other professionals working with children, as well as children themselves.

> Further strengthen systematic training on their responsibilities under the Convention for all professional groups working for and with children, including all law enforcement officials, teachers, health personnel, social workers and personnel of childcare institutions, as well as State sector and local government officials (CRC/C/NZL/CO/5 para 12 (a) and (b)).

As it stands, there are currently no frontline networks for collaborating about the UN CRC rights and what they entail for children or adults. At a time when the Government is investing heavily in vulnerable children, the targeted social investment approach with its associated predictive risk-modelling algorithms appears to have disregard the communitarian approach advocated by Judge Mick Brown (2000) as well as ignoring its UNDRIP obligations to Māori as self-determining, capable and competent. Individualism coupled with fault and blame attitudes ignore the potential of using collective, collaborative whānau, hapū, iwi approaches where the inherent dignity of mokopuna Māori remains intact.

Most people know there is an UN CRC: awareness is one thing but training and enactment of the UN CRC requires resource and this remains elusive. As far as we know, ngā Wātene Māori is the only group who engage routinely in child rights advocacy training as part of their certification. With constant restructuring now part of the public service landscape, the Māori Warden Project itself may well be vulnerable to political whim. While Wātene may have a new taiaha, there is, as yet, no cohesive plan to support them in their advocacy for the rights of mokopuna Māori on the front line.

On completion of their chapter, Sarah Te One and Marlene Welsh-Sauni propose the following questions to provoke further reflection, research and dialogue

- What do we know about the UN CRC? How can we, in our respective roles, uphold the UN CRC in our daily work?
- How can we, in our respective roles, uphold the rights of indigenous children in our daily work?
- How can we support effective advocacy for all children? How can we strengthen the relationships between practice, policy and research?

(i) Glossary

Aata Practice of respectful relationships
Aotearoa NZ The Maori name for New Zealand (NZ)
Aroha Love, compassion and service
Hapū Collective of related families descended from a common ancestor(s)
Iwi Collective of hapū descended from a common ancestor (s); sometimes called a tribe
Karakia Blessing
Kaunihera Māori Māori Council
Kia moana Sea food
Kōhanga Reo Māori early childhood centre
Kōrero Speak
Koro Grandfather
Māori Indigenous people of New Zealand
Marae Traditional building used as a place for people to gather
Mihi whakatau A welcome ceremony
Mokopuna Progeny, children and young people
Oranga Tamariki The Māori name for the Ministry for Children, loosely translated as children’s wellbeing
Pākehā British, English
Poroaki Farewell
Rangatiratanga Autonomy, authority, self-determination
Rohe A geographical area defined by the sovereignty of an ancestor(s)
Taiaha Traditional spear
Tamaiti Child
Tamariki Children
Tangata whenua Indigenous people, Māori
Tangata Person/people
Taonga tuku iho Values, traditions, treasure handed down from ancestors
Te Ao Māori The Māori worldview
Te Puni Kōkiri Ministry of Māori Development
Te reo Māori The Māori language
Te Tiriti o Waitangi The Treaty of Waitangi
Te Whakatakoto Tikanga Plan, strategy
Teina Younger sibling
Tikanga Correct ways of doing things, protocols and rules
Tuakana Older sibling
Tūmanako Desire, hope
Turangawaewae A place to stand/belong by birth right and genealogy/ancestry

Waiata Song
Wātene Warden of the community
Whakapapa Genealogy
Whakawhanaungatanga To make connections between people; building a sense of belonging and reciprocal obligations
Whānau Family
Whānaungatanga A process of making transparent the extended family relationships and their inherent obligations

(ii) Legislation

Non-discrimination

15. The Committee recalls its previous recommendation (CRC/C/NZL/CO/3–4, para. 25) and recommends that the State party ensure full protection against discrimination on any ground, including by:

    (a) Taking urgent measures to address disparities in access to education, health services and a minimum standard of living by Māori and Pasifika children and their families; CRC/C/NZL/CO/5.
    (b) Strengthening its measures to combat negative attitudes among the public as well as other preventive activities against discrimination and, if necessary, taking affirmative action for the benefit of children in vulnerable situations, such as Māori and Pasifika children, children belonging to ethnic minorities, refugee children, migrant children, children with disabilities, lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender and intersex children and children living with persons from these groups;

Right to Identity

19. While appreciating the State party's efforts to preserve Māori identity, including through language and television programmes, the Committee is concerned that these efforts remain insufficient and recommends that the State party:

    (a) Intensify efforts to promote and foster Māori language, culture and history in education and increase enrolment in Māori language classes; CRC/C/NZL/CO/5 GE. 6.
    (b) Ensure that Māori children adopted by non-Māori parents have access to information about their cultural identity
    (c) Ensure that all government agencies developing legislation and policies affecting children take into account the collective dimension of Māori cultural identity and the importance of their extended family (*whānau*) for Māori children's identity.

The full UN Committee statement reads: (a) Adopt a comprehensive policy and strategy for the implementation of the Convention and its first two Optional Protocols. They should be developed in cooperation with the public and private sectors involved in the promotion and protection of children's rights, as well as in consultation with children, and based on a child rights approach. This policy should encompass all children in the State Party and all areas covered by the Convention, be supported by sufficient human, technical and financial resources, clear and adequate budgetary allocations and a time frame, as well as follow-up and monitoring mechanisms; The UN Committee Report for New Zealand can be downloaded from http://www.acya.org.nz

Much to the dismay of the children's sector in Aotearoa NZ, the Government has established a Ministry for Vulnerable Children. Judge Andrew Beacroft, the recently appointed Children's Commissioner, has openly criticised the name of this ministry and has publically refused to refer to it as such, preferring instead to use the Māori name "Oranga Tamariki" which translates loosely as children's wellbeing. A specific recommendation by the UN Committee urges the Government to consider a name change as it currently stigmatises and marginalises those children it is designed to serve. It remains to be seen whether or not this is actioned but it seems unlikely.

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Chapter 17
Discourses/8, China: Children's Participation Rights in Chinese Early Childhood Education: A Critical Investigation of Policy and Research

Fengling Tang

17.1 Introduction

Children's participation has been one of the most debated and examined aspects of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Lansdown 2010). According to the UNCRC, children's rights are broadly defined as three types: Survival and development rights, which are related to the resources, skills and contributions necessary for the survival and full development of the child; protection rights are concerned with protection from all forms of child abuse, neglect, exploitation and cruelty; and participation rights refer to that children are entitled to the freedom to express opinions and to have a say in matters affecting their lives (United Nations 1989). Research related to children's participation are often based on the UNCRC article 12 and article 13:

Article 12: 'States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given the due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.'

Article 13: 'The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information an ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.'

I dedicate this chapter to my mother who passed away in China March 2018 after brave fight against her illness. I would not be able to complete this chapter if having not been inspired by my mother's courage and determination.

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Interestingly to note that the UNCRC put state governments' responsibilities to facilitate children's participation rights alongside recognition of child maturity followed by an explanation of what this right means. Accordingly, Flekkoy and Kaufman (1997) acknowledges that the competency of children go hand in hand with children's experiences as well as maturation in the context of realization of children's rights and participation rights in particular. The UNCRC predicts that it is not easy to fulfil children's rights without holding the governments to account. As Lansdown (2010) mentions, children's rights to participation will only remain rhetoric unless the governments make real efforts to introduce the necessary legislation, policy and practice. Hart (2011) points out other important issues such as power relations and children's struggle for equal rights toward the realization of children's participation rights. And this is especially so for disadvantaged children in the process to 'struggle against discrimination and repression and fight for their rights in solidarity with others' (Hart 2011: 84). When children's viewpoints are seriously listened to and taken into account in decision making the power balance tips towards the child (Carr et al. 2005).

The discourse of 'child participation' itself has invited debates among academics and researchers. Hill et al. (2004) argue that participation means children's direct involvement in decision-making about matters that affect their lives, whether individually or collectively, at 'the initiative of decision-makers or of children and their representatives' (Hill et al. 2004: 83). Lansdown (2010) classifies children's participation into three types: consultative participation, in which adults seek children's views to build understanding of children's lives and experience; collaborative participation, which provides a greater extent of partnership between adults and children with opportunity for children's active engagement; and child-led participation when children are afforded the space and opportunity to 'identify issues of concern, initiate activities and advocate for themselves' (2010: 20). These three levels are operated in non-liner or hierarchy fashion, on the contrary, each of the three levels is appropriate in different contexts. The Childwatch International Research Network (2006) emphasizes the importance of understanding child participation in a broader sense within the social contexts and interrogating the power structures within systems created to realize child participation. Lansdown (2010) continues to argue that in order to research children's participation rights fully there is a great need to identify indicators to measure participation and then measure the extent, quality and impact of the actual participation children are engaged with.

Jones (2010) draws our attention to children's perspectives on child rights in the context of the UNICEF (2009): 'As the holders of the rights stipulated in the Convention, it is imperative that children know and understand their rights and are empowered to claim them' (cited in Jones 2010: 44). Raby (2014: 77) critically investigates the children's participation initiatives from a neoliberal economic and political context which 'prioritises middle class, western individualism and ultimately fosters children's deeper subjugation through self-governance'. Fitzgerald et al. (2010) argue that a dialogical approach to child participation urges researchers

and practitioners to recognize the complex interplay between agency and power and hold the voice and status of children at the forefront. Similarly, the United Nations (2009: 25) consider effective and meaningful participation as 'ongoing processes' in which children are heard and participate must be 'transparent and informative, voluntary, respectful and relevant, child-friendly, inclusive, supported by training, safe and sensitive to risk, accountable'.

China as a country which ratified the UNCRC in 1992 has made great efforts to improve quality of early childhood provisions by addressing child-centredness in early childhood pedagogy in the aftermath of China's Reform and Opening-Up policy. Children's rights have been addressed as part of the Chinese government efforts especially starting with the China Children Development Plan in the 1990s. This chapter adopts documentary analysis as methodological approach (Bowen 2009; O'Leary 2014) and aims to provide a critical account of young children's participation rights in Chinese contexts by analyzing key policy documents and existing research published since the 1990s. I am aware of challenges involved in selecting relevant sources and critically analyzing them and have decided that the main type of documents for the study are written texts available from relevant databases in traditional print form or electronic form such as policies, academic research, official reports in China and international contexts where relevant.

The following sections aim to provide a critical investigation of policy and reserch to enable readers to reflect on how children are positioned and how childhood is constructed in Chinese society through the focus of young children's participation rights.

17.2 Children's Participation Rights in Chinese Context: A Policy Perspective

17.2.1 Introduction to the Section

This section analyzes some key policy documents with relevance to children's rights since the 1990s. China's Reform and Opening Up phase was led by President Deng Xiaoping and has continued through to current China led by President Xi Jinping. With Deng Xiaoping's slogan in 1983 'Education must face modernisation, face the world, and face the future' as a result of the Party's agenda focus on socialist construction (People 2017), the main focus of education policy shifted from the politicalised and moral dimensions during the Chairman Mao era to nurturing talents and promoting science in order to keep in pace with the Western world and Japan in particular (Vickers and Zeng 2017). The Law on Compulsory Education enacted in 1986 is an important milestone for Chinese education and school aged children are entitled to receive 9 years of compulsory schooling whilst early childhood education covering 3–6 years of age in China is not part of compulsory education.

Triggered by the Tian An Men Square Student Movement of 1989, educational policies have put more emphases on serving socialist construction, economic development and the needs of society since the 1990s. The post-1997 has seen great developments in education from early childhood to higher education in terms of provisions and management reform, highlighting more the function of education as key to economic success (Zhou 2011).

The Outline of China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (Ministry of Education 2010) is another milestone in the development of Chinese educational policy. As stated in the Plan, 'Education is the cornerstone of our national development and social progress. It is the fundamental way to improve the overall quality of our population and promote the all-round development of the people. Education carries the hope of hundreds of millions of Chinese families for a better life' (MoE 2010). The Plan clearly identifies three priorities: prioritize education in economic and social development planning, prioritize education funding in fiscal expenditure, and prioritize education and human resources in public resource allocation. The Plan pledges a substantial increase in education funding to raise the proportion of national fiscal education expenditure to 4% of the GDP by 2012 and to ensure the steady growth of this proportion in the future (MoE 2010).

Under the influence of the China Medium- and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan, early childhood education was addressed as key towards educational reform and development (Yuan 2010; Zhou 2011). Three phases of Early Childhood Education 3-year plans between 2010 and 2020 respectively set up goals in order to improve quality of kindergarten education, regulating kindergarten management, prevention of schoolification, and aiming for 85% enrolment of preschool children of 3–6 years of age by 2020 from 77.4% enrolment in 2017 across China (Ministry of Education 2017). Early childhood education is funded both from public and private sector whilst there is a great need for the central government to increase the level of investment (Zhou 2011). According to Zhu (2015), contemporary early childhood education is becoming more diverse in its forms, funding sources and educational approaches in line with the increasingly open and diversified society influenced by the Chinese culture, socio-economic changes, political system and Western cultures.

Under the influence of the UNCRC, China published relevant policies related to children's survival, protection and development such as China Law on Protecting Children and Young People (1991), China Children Development Plans since the 1990s, China Law on Mother and Infant Health (1994), China's Education Law (1995), and On Prohibiting Children Workers (2002) etc. For analysis purpose in relation to children's participation rights in the context of early childhood education in China, three key relevant policy documents are to be focused on: China Children Development Plan in the 1990s (The State Council 1992), the Kindergarten Education Guidelines (MoE 2001), and the Learning and Development Guidelines for Children of 3–6 Years Old (MoE 2012).

17.2.2 China Children Development Plan in the 1990s

Influenced by the UNCRC, the China Children Development Plan in the 1990s was published aiming to reduce infant mortality, improve women pregnancy health, improve children's life quality and education experience, and provide more support for families (The State Council 1992) triggered by the World Children Affair Summit. The State Council required all levels of provincial and local governments to implement the Plan according to local situations. As stated in the Plan, 'children are the masters of the 21st century, children's survival, protection and development are base for improvement of population civilization and premise for human future development.' Thus, the Party and Government have made great efforts to promote children's survival, protection and development by urging the whole society to 'protect children, educate children, be role model for children, and work for children' (The State Council 1992).

The Plan set up objectives for improving children's living conditions, educational opportunities and services, and legal process to protect children's entitled rights. For example, the Plan aimed for a 30% decrease of infant mortality, a 50% decrease of malnutrition for children under five. The Plan recognized the importance of after-school activities for children by urging all provinces, cities and 90% of the counties should set up more than one type of after-school education or activity centres for children. The Plan also aimed to address equity issues around minority ethnic groups, children with disabilities and children from disadvantaged family backgrounds.

Education was seen as key to socialist modernization and the importance of early childhood education was highlighted in the Plan. The Plan recognized the need to 'proactively develop early childhood education' by inviting different stakeholders and using various means to raise funding. The Plan set up aim for 70% enrolment of city children 3–6 years old in kindergartens and 60% of children in countryside. The Plan addresses the importance of women's role in educating children and the important part that community and families play in promoting children's development. The Plan also urged relevant parties to take responsibilities to achieve objectives with awareness of localities. The Plan also addressed the important role of international collaboration and exchange activities in helping to implement the Plan.

It is interesting to note that there was very little explicit mentioning of children's rights in the Plan although the Plan was borne out of the context of the UNCRC. It clearly shows though that the Plan is more related to children's survival and development rights rather than children's participation rights. What I can relate the Plan to children's participation rights is when the Plan addressed the importance of opportunities for children to participate apart from school contexts, such as physical activities, cultural events, entertainment and after-school educational activities. However, it is not clear though about the role of children in the process of participating such as after-school activities. For instance, are children encouraged to take part according to their own interests and likes? What is the relationship between children and adults involved in decision making such as these?

17.2.3 The Kindergarten Education Guidelines (Ministry of Education 2001)

In the context of China Education Law (1995) and the Kindergarten Work Guidelines (1996), the Kindergarten Education Guidelines was published by Ministry of Education in 2001. The Kindergarten Education Guidelines (MoE 2001) still acts as the current statutory framework for kindergartens across China. The Guidelines are divided into four main sections including principles, education content and requirements, implementation, and evaluation. The principles clearly address the importance of happy childhood alongside positive learning experience for children and respecting children's personalities, rights and dispositions. The guidelines see kindergarten education as an important part of elementary education for children and as foundation for schooling and life-long learning. At the same time, 'play as basic activity' and opportunities for children to develop their individuality and personality in kindergartens are addressed (MoE 2001). The Guidelines recognized the holistic emergent nature of young children's learning and explained content and requirements in terms of how to support children's five learning areas including health, language, social development, science and arts.

It is interesting to note that 'respecting children's rights' is addressed in the section of overall principles but 'children's rights' is not explicitly mentioned in the remaining parts of the guidelines. However, there are areas related to children's participation rights clearly stated in the guidelines. For example, opportunities are provided for children to express themselves and kindergarten teachers offer space and time to listen to children too via supporting children's learning and development such as language, social development and arts (MoE 2001). Regarding health development, the Guidelines established a balanced view in terms of kindergarten teachers' role in protecting children and caring responsibility whilst respecting children's own needs of independence and autonomy to avoid over-protection of children. The Guidelines address the importance of providing various activities for children's active participation. For instance, there is clear mentioning of 'creating free and loose environment, encourage and support children to communicate with adults, peers and others to experience fun of communicating via language' whilst children are encouraged to express themselves clearly and promote language development (MoE 2001, 4).

Similarly, regarding social development, children are encouraged to participate in collective activities and experience fun of being together with teachers and peers. This aims to help children to develop right attitudes towards self and others and learn basic social skills including self-regulation and respecting others. Very importantly, the Guidelines recommend that it is important to provide free opportunities to support children to choose, plan activities and encourage them to solve problems and not to give up facing difficulties in the area of science or arts. Regarding the section of evaluation in the Guidelines, it is clear that the role of children is recognized as important as other key stakeholders such as the kindergarten leadership team, teachers and parents being part of the evaluation team, which is further

highlighted in the Guidelines as 'evaluation process is one in which all parties participate and support as well as collaboration' (MoE 2001: 16).

17.2.4 The Learning and Development Guidelines for Children of 3–6 Years Old (Ministry of Education 2012)

The Learning and Development Guidelines for Children of 3–6 Years Old is built on the 2001 Guidelines but expand illustration of educational guidance in order to help kindergarten teachers and parents learn about basic stages and features of children's learning and development from 3 to 6 years and thus help them to 'establish reasonable expectations, implement scientific care and education, and enable children to have happy and meaningful childhood' (MoE 2012: 1). The guidelines emphasize principles regarding children's learning and development expanded from the 2001 Guidelines – holistic learning and development, children's individual differences, the importance of first hand experience through play and daily activities, importance of children's learning quality, and recognition of children's positive attitudes and behaviour. It clearly states to 'fully respect and protect children's curiosity and interest, help children to become motivated, focused, face difficulty, brave to explore and try, love to imagine and create' (MoE 2012: 5), which is believed to provide good foundation for children's schooling and life-long learning in the Guidelines. The Guidelines also maintain the strong tone set up in the 2001 Guidelines in terms of supporting children to have 'happy and meaningful childhood' and address the importance of setting up essential early childhood programs and policies to target all children alongside addressing the most disadvantaged populations.

The guidelines 2012 are in line with the 2001 Guidelines regarding the five learning areas but provide detailed illustration of learning goals and educational guidance based on 3–4 year olds, 4–5 year olds and 5–6 year olds. For example, it explains with more detail about what children of 3–4 year olds should know, be able to do, shall be able to do with support and suggestions of methods and strategies are provided for kindergarten teachers and parents to support children. Regarding health, the Guidelines (2012) divides health into three main areas including physical and emotional health, motor skills, life habits and skills and there are objectives set up for each of the three areas within health. The Guidelines (2012) set up detailed goals for each area. For example, in terms of children of 3–4 year olds, they should be able to dress and undress themselves with help and be able to put away toys and books; 4–5 year olds should be able to dress and undress themselves without help and should be able to organize own objects; and 5–6 year olds should be able to change clothes in different weather, be able to tie shoe laces, be able to organize and sort out own objects. In terms of supporting children to achieve these goals, kindergarten teachers and parents shall encourage children to do things under own capacity and be positive towards children's efforts to promote children's independence and autonomy.

Similar to the 2001 Guidelines, the 2012 Guidelines encourages kindergarten teachers and parents to provide opportunities and set up environment for children to take initiatives and engage with activities related to the five learning areas. Children's participation rights are not explicitly mentioned in the 2012 Guidelines but again it is clear that opportunities for children to participate and get involved are recognized as important to support children's learning and development. This might indicate that opportunities for child participation serve learning and development purpose but not for the rights perspective. Therefore, it is rather difficult to tell what role of the UNCRC and learning/development theories play in the formation of the Guidelines (2012).

17.3 Children's Participation Rights in Chinese Context: A Research Perspective

17.3.1 Introduction to the Section

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was ratified in China in 1992. With China's rapid economic, social and cultural changes in the last three decades, it is important to investigate practices of children's participation rights in Chinese context. This section aims to provide a research perspective focusing on the most relevant research published at national and international contexts during the last three decades. It is important to note that the review process has to be selective due to time, geographic location, language, significance of research and other accessibility factors. I have tried to review national research in China published in Chinese as well as international and comparative research published in English with relevance to children's rights and child participation in Chinese context. Bearing in mind China's geographic, demographic, economic and cultural diversity and large population, this section acts as a snapshot of children's participation rights in China and does not aim to generalize.

China has made great efforts to implement the UNCRC via various means including enactment of policies, founding institutions, organizing conferences, and international collaborations (Wei 1996). Wei (1996) reviewed important aspects around children's rights in China based on two conference discussion in 1995 and 1996 held in Beijing on China's implementation of the UNCRC. Apart from developments of policies, China also encouraged all levels of governments and the whole society to create appropriate environment for children's development by investing on children's education and health to ensure children's survival and development rights.

17.3.2 A Snapshot of Research About Children's Participation in China

Children's rights perspective in the context of the UNCRC has shaped early childhood education, especially in the 1990s. This is reflected in Liu's (1996a) discussion of the importance of rethinking education function via children's rights perspective and she strongly suggested that teachers shift ideas of educational function from 'educator' and 'being educated' to an equal relationship between them and children in line with children's rights perspective. Liu (1999) argues for the role of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959) and the UNCRC (1989) in shifting views of children in Chinese context from traditional instrumentalist views of children to views of children as human being with entitled rights. Liu (1999) discussed respecting and protecting children as one of the principles guiding Chinese early childhood education practice by respecting children's dignity, learning interests and differences and establishing equal democratic relationships between teachers and children to ensure the realization of children's rights in China. Kindergarten teaching shifts from focusing on textbooks to children, teachers' role from being an instructor to supporter, collaborator and guide in children's learning and play to enable them to respect children's development rights (Chen 2003). As Liu et al. (2005) observed, 'group lessons' remain the basic reference that young children used to describe kindergarten activities whilst increasing spacing and time are provided in kindergartens for children's play with the introduction of 'interest corner' activities and they consider this as positive change in the process of early childhood reform addressing respect of children's rights to play.

There are research focusing on the importance of children's participation in terms of its contribution to children's development and life. For example, Liu (1996a) strongly argues play as children's rights to learning and development in the context of the UNCRC (1989) and play as the basic activity in line with the Kindergarten Work Regulations (Ministry of Education 1989). Wei (2014) argues that children's participation is important process in which children can develop their subjectivity, and take actions based on their increasing independence, power of judgment and personal sense of responsibility. With regard to child development, participation is beneficial to children's personality and enable children to build confidence and capacity to integrate into society and strengthen social interactions. Thus, children's participation can promote an effective change and social improvement (Wei 2014). Regarding school, children's participation is indispensable for the creation of a sociable environment in the classroom, which stimulates cooperation and mutual support needed for child-centered interactive learning. Only through direct participation, can children have a real interest in democracy and form a sense of competence and a sense of responsibility. Similarly, China National Children's Centre finds correlation between children's participation and their cognition, emotional and psychological development (Yuan et al. 2017). In the case of children affected by AIDS, Zhang et al. (2009) suggest that children with responsibilities in

housework and caregiving for family members experienced personal growth and emotional maturity.

Children's participation outside school contexts such as home, community and society has also been relatively new focus of research. The most recent large scale study commissioned by China National Children's Centre (Yuan et al. 2017) investigated 8847 children of primary to secondary schools from seven cities in the West, Middle and East part of China including Beijing as the largest city. The study is based on seven dimensions of child participation including family participation, school participation, after school activities, social interactions, extracurricular education, website involvement and public affair participation. Interesting results come out, for example, regarding parent-child communication, the most frequent topic is about children's learning whilst there are some parents who talk about how to deal with feelings and emotions with their children. Pressure for learning seems to be most expressed regarding school participation, after school activities and extracurricular education. As China National Children's Centre (2017) comment, children have great motivation to participate however there are factors holding back them to fully participate. As Goh (2014) argues, Chinese children are experiencing shifting socialisation pressures to an increasingly exclusive focus on academic achievement as education is seen as the main and achievable route to upward social mobility. Unlike Western societies, where children's participation in housework is seen as either a means of socialisation or a source of domestic labour, housework is considered as a distraction to academic work in Chinese context.

Based on the two main aspects of child participation rights regarding opportunities for children to express viewpoints and engage with decision making, Qin (2017) argues that children are encouraged to express their views in the context of schools and homes whilst there might be less tolerance and support from schools in rural areas to facilitate children's freedom of expression than cities schools in China. Yeh and Yang (2006) argue that Chinese children are more likely to respect the advice of adult authorities associated with more important issues in decision making and children are likely to let adults make decisions for them if they think they could benefit from doing this (Chen et al. 2013). Qin (2017) argues that there were contrasting studies about children's rights to decision making in family: on the one hand, due to Confucian ethical principles Chinese parents are overly involved in their children's decision making process and reluctant to encourage independence and autonomy in their children; on the other hand, some studies address that Chinese family culture is under transformation as parents are not authoritarian but more likely to support children's independence and encourage them to express their views and make choices of their own among those with high levels of education and greater socioeconomic status (Gong et al. 2012).

Children's participation in virtual environment or digital community is another area of research in the last decade. As stated in the UNICEF's latest report The State of the World Children 2017 (UNICEF 2017), digital technology has the potential in transforming the world's most disadvantaged and vulnerable children and break cycles of poverty and disadvantage by allowing them to connect with families,

friends and make decisions for themselves. Online connectivity has opened new avenues for civic engagement, social inclusion and other opportunities. According to China National Children's Centre study (2017), three-fourths of children from primary schools and secondary schools have own mobile phones and half of the children have own computers and majority of the children have Chinese social media account such as QQ and Wechat for messaging, watching videos, play games and shopping rather than learning purpose. It is rather unknown though whether there is a gap between urban and rural areas regarding children's engagement with digital technology and it is rather unclear about the role of digital technology in disadvantaged and vulnerable children's lives.

Some international or comparative research further illustrates similarities and differences between China and other countries regarding ways how children participate and reasons behind. For example, through a cross-cultural study in Bangkok, Mumbai, Sydney and Beijing 2004–2006, Mason and Bolzan (2010) argue with their colleagues that the cultural context and traditions were pivotal in understanding 'child participation'. Participation is often associated with concepts of obligation in Asia-Pacific countries, where the ethos of collectivism has been dominant thus responsibility to family and community has traditionally taken precedence over individual rights. Australia on the contrary is more associated with individualistic connotation of 'participation' in the context of neo-liberalism. Children's participation rights were not being consistently or significantly operationalised in the Asia-Pacific region countries with some recognition but limited evidence about implementation. They also observe that child participation appears to relate to family interactions around clothing, family consumption and extra-curricular activities and there are tensions in child-adult relations around sharing power (Mason and Bolzan 2010). For example, some Chinese children challenge rights asserted by adult in decision making of friendship and emotional involvement due to impacts of one child policy.

With awareness of the UNCRC and international efforts to promote children's rights globally, national and international events in relation to children's participation have been held in China. For example, children reporters began to participate China's most important national conferences such as National People's Congress and China People Political Consultative Conference in 2003. In 2007, a reporter team made of children took part in China's 17th National People's Congress news report, which was a break-through in China's media history. The bilateral cooperation between Vietnam and China started with the children's forum on the prevention of trafficking, organized in Hanoi in 2006 (UNICEF 2009). This was the first joint children's forum on cross-border trafficking between the two countries, implemented collaboratively by the Viet Nam Women's Union and All China Women's Federation, with technical assistance and support from UNICEF in both countries. One hundred twenty children from border provinces in Vietnam and China attended the forum expressing their views and concerns and provided recommendations on prevention and protection of child victims of cross-border trafficking. These directly fed into the development of national strategies, policies and bilateral

Vietnam-China cooperation plans on prevention and protection of child victims of trafficking. Chinese children's participation in International Summit on 'For Children' stood out as they proposed ideas for the society to tackle problems such as children's need of safe environment, social issues in relation to children, children's role in building friendly society and designing living spaces (Xiao et al. 2017 in Yuan et al. 2017).

The UNCRC and national policies related to children's welfare might have drawn academics' and researchers' attention to the urban-rural divide in China. For instance, Qin (1995) observed that primary schooling tendency existed in rural areas preschool education with a lack of play time but heavy reliance on reading and writing as well as low quality of staffing and facilities. Zhu (1995) investigated some rural areas in Hunan Province and discovered issues around preschool maths education in that there was a lack of opportunities for children to do hands on activities with rote learning as main activity through teachers' direct instruction via textbooks. Meanwhile, at the time of China's economic development a large number of people have migrated from countryside to cities to find more work opportunities and consequently issues arise around education of their children, living quality, work conditions and social status (Sun 2002; Lu and Zhang 2004; Tobin et al. 2009). Education of children of migrant workers in cities was caught great attention. Cheng (2002), Liu (2002), and Zhang (2005) reported their voluntary work on supporting migrant worker's children in Beijing through developing programme called 'Si Huan Play Group' initiated by Professor Zhang Yan and students from Beijing Normal University. Si Huan Play Group as informal programme was set up in the community where migrant workers work and live to participate in their community and children were provided with materials and activities and developed communication, language and social skills by playing and interacting with other children and student helpers. Si Huan Play Group mirrors society's efforts to address social issues at the time.

Similarly, issues around the 'left-behind children' since the last decade came out. The 'left behind' children are those under 18 years of age who live with a single parent or their extended family in rural areas while one or both of their parents are away seeking employment in urban settings (Ding and Bao 2014; Sudworth 2016). In 2009, 11% of the population, around 145 million people, moved from the countryside to large cities to find employment sometimes without family ties (Hu 2012). The problems concerned with left-behind children are most severe in Anhui, Henan and Sichuan provinces, where 44% of rural children live without their mother or father. The left-behind children in rural China have encountered various issues ranging from access to education, quality family life, relationships with caregivers and parents, and participating in family activities and consequently are the negative effects on children's emotional, social, psychological, health and academic developments (Luo et al. 2008; Lu 2012; Luo et al. 2012; Wang 2018). Consequently, the chances for the left behind children's participation are scarce in comparison to city children.

17.3.3 Factors That Might Have Promoted Children's Participation

Macro-level structural factors such as policy developments undoubtedly have played a big part in promoting, protecting and implementing children's rights in China. Among the earliest cohort of countries that ratified the UNCRC, China has made great efforts to further develop national policies to promote and implement children's rights. The most important national policies include the China Children's Development in the 1990s, China Children's Development Plan 2001–2010, China Children's Development Plan 2010–2020 and China National Medium-Long Term Plan for Education Reform and Development 2010–2020 alongside some specific early childhood policies such as the Kindergarten Work Regulations (1989), the Kindergarten Education Guidelines (2001) and the Guidelines for Development of Children of 3–6 years old (2012). These policies were borne out of China's own needs in the context of globalization with focus on quality education, equity, children's holistic development, self exploration and collaborative learning (Gu et al. 2010; Shi 2003). Some of the policies made direct reference to the UNCRC whilst there are not explicit or detailed mention of children's participation rights in others. However, it is fair to say children's participation would not happen if not influenced by these policies in Chinese context.

Other macro-level structural factors such as establishments of national and regional organizations, institutions or agencies have contributed to promoting children's participation in Chinese context. Creating an awareness, understanding and knowledge of the UNCRC has been a strategy pursued by government-led agencies such as the Women's Federation, and taken up by Civil Affairs Bureaux which are responsible for welfare homes and care of street children (West 2002). China's first after school education institution – Da Lian Children's Palace was founded in 1949 followed by establishment of China Youth Pioneer Team, International Children's Day was adopted in 1950, and Small Trumpet radio broadcast began as the first programme for preschool children in 1956. China National Children's Centre was founded in 1982 as a leading force in promoting children's participation across China focusing on children's creativity, social interaction, morality, positive attitudes and healthy personality (Yuan et al. 2017). China National Children's Centre has also played a central role in promoting international collaboration for children's participation in education, cultural and arts events.

Early childhood pedagogical and curricular changes influenced by the West together tied in with own traditions promoted to a great deal children's participation in Chinese kindergartens. For example, the impacts of Constructivism on kindergarten curriculum reform include children's first hand experience, and children's active learning in constructing understanding as reflected by Wang (2004a, b) and Yao and Wu (2004). Teaching in kindergartens shifts from focusing on textbooks to children, teacher's role from being an instructor to supporter, collaborator and guide in children's learning and play. This enables teachers to respect children's development rights and follow children's interest, needs and differences (Chen 2003). This is also

reflected in Tobin et al. (2009) and Tobin and Hayashi (2011) who argue that influenced by the Western ideas Chinese kindergartens provided more chances for children to participate in daily activities such as story telling, providing constructive feedback to peers, and election events with relevance to children themselves. As Bae (2009) argues, everyday interactions and communications with the staff influence the realisation of children's participation rights in the case of Oslo, Norway. This also echoes in Chinese kindergarten practices where teachers have paid attention to children's voices and provide children with opportunities to participate in decision making (Liu et al. 2005; Zhu 2015).

Culturally, China society possess elements traditionally connecting children closely to family. Traditional ideas of family education with kindness to children, respecting the elder, loyalty to family etc. as basic principles in guiding child rearing have been maintained for centuries in China (Yao 2004; Wu 2006). Although criticized by some scholars due to closedness based on blood relationship (Wei 1996), this family tradition in some degree has contributed to children's participation in families and communities. Having been borne and having grown up as a child in rural area China, I clearly remember my experience of participating in family life and village events during childhood. As the oldest child in my family, I helped my mother from a young age with pride prepare and cook meals, do housework, feed chickens and pigs, and harvest in the fields with my mother as my father was working for a school and educational authority in the town. I also enjoyed participating during Chinese New Year or other important events in my village. My childhood experience contrasts a great deal to the experiences of the 'left-behind children' discussed earlier due to social, economic and demographic changes over the years. It is rather worrying with the potential loss of this connectivity between children, families and communities as catalyst for children's participation in rural areas.

17.3.4 Barriers to Implementing Children's Participation Rights

Despite the progress, children's participation still faces some major challenges in China (Wei 2014). As argued by Liu (1996a), China's awareness of children's rights might have originated in history with Confucius' concept of 'ci you', which means treating children with kindness by caring, loving and protecting children, to serve the family and state's stability from an instrumentalist perspective. However, there is a lack of awareness and understanding of children's rights (Liu 1996a, b) and children's participation rights in particular although national policies with regard to children's rights have been established since the 1990s. As mentioned earlier, the macro-level structural factors have contributed to the promotion of children's rights in China. There is still a great need to create and develop micro-level efforts ranging from understanding children's rights, promoting awareness of children's rights, and implementing children's rights across schools, families, community and society (Bao 2016).

Traditional views of children and childhood addressing obedience, respect and duty towards parents as well as pressure to perform at school might have restricted the scope and depth of children's participation in family, community and society including decision making in local and governmental affairs (West 2002). When adults perceive children as independent human being entitled with rights and perceive childhood as a period which is care free and play based distinctive from adulthood, children might be provided with more opportunities and allowed to explore and participate out of their interest. The other way around, children might be deprived of opportunities as such but more often need to conform to adult subscriptions. In many cases, traditional customs made it inappropriate or disrespectful for a young person to challenge the position taken by an adult or even to voice an opinion (UNICEF 2009). Under the UNCRC, children's best interests are defined as the prime principle to children's participation in decision making process. However, questions arise here: What are children's best interest? How children's best interest be defined? How children's best interest be communicated effectively between children and adults involved? Who make the final decisions? More often, adults decide for children what can be good for them even though children have their own interest and preferences (Mason and Bolzan 2010; Qin 2017).

Children's participation rights stand out as a difficult domain for Chinese educational reform due to competitive school learning, pressure from university entrance examination, family expectation together with international influences regarding child-centredness (China National Children's Centre 2017). Under this climate, children's participation is more related to school contexts but not widely spread outside schools. Children's participation in after school activities become an extension of school education focusing on extracurricular activities to help with disciplinary learning in preparation for university entry examination (Yuan et al. 2017). In addition, child poverty and social issues such as education of migrant workers' children in cities alongside the left-behind children in rural areas since the last two decades are another area to hold back children's participation. Children's participation can only remain rhetorical in rural areas if issues due to urban-rural divide are not resolved in China (Qi and Wu 2016).

17.4 Conclusion

China is a country with great geographic, demographic, economic and cultural diversity. Therefore, the chapter here based on some national and international data cannot represent all localities of China. In addition, due to the relatively small sampling from various research nationally and internationally, the study of children's participation in this chapter cannot apply to all children in China, either. Through the documentary analysis of relevant policies and research in national and international contexts, the study here only provides a snapshot for children's participation rights in China since the 1990s till the present. With the significant influence of the UNCRC starting in the 1990s, Chinese government has made great effort to develop

policies and initiatives to implement children's rights. Although research directly on children's participation rights in Chinese context is relatively limited, there is clear evidence from research in the field of early childhood education showing that there are opportunities for children to express their views and be listened to and there is space for children to participate in kindergartens and homes (Yao and Fang 2002; Sun and Zhang 2006). More space and time are provided for child-centredness, respect for children and meaningful dialogue between teachers and children in early childhood education in the context of China's National Medium- and Long-Term Plan for Education Reform and Development 2010–2020 and the Learning and Development Guidelines for Children of 3–6 Years Old (MoE 2012).

China has paid great attention to children's participation rights by ratifying the UNCRC, enacting relevant policies, and developing initiatives in the last three decades. However, evidence from research shows that children's participation is more related to school contexts and opportunities for children to engage with families, communities and society are rather limited due to increasing pressure from schooling and academic achievements for higher education entry examination. In addition, the urban-rural divide brings in another major issue around education of migrant workers' children in cities and more currently the left-behind children in rural areas in China. Promoting equity in terms of distribution of resources, quality of education, and equal opportunities for children's development is considered as a prime principle for Chinese education policy, especially in the context of the China National Medium- and Long-Term Plan for Education Reform and Development (Gu et al. 2010). The urban-rural divide has to be tackled in order to widen children's participation in China.

To further implement children's participation rights in China, opportunities also open up. China must strive to promote awareness of the UNCRC and children's participation rights in particular. There is also a great need in China to conduct research to further raise people's awareness of children's participation rights, explore ways to widen children's participation outside of school contexts, and work towards the notion of 'authentic participation', in which children are empowered to take initiatives alongside opportunities for meaningful dialogues with adults involved (UNICEF 2004, cited in Mason and Bolzan 2010; United Nations 2013). It is rather a long way for China to go beyond the tokenistic approach to authentic participation but clearly it is the family, school, community and society together that can make this happen.

On Completion of Her Chapter, Fengling Tang Proposes the Following Questions to Provoke Further Reflection, Research and Dialogue

- How are young children's participation rights reflected in Chinese key policy documents?
- In what way does children's participation intersect with social, cultural, economic and political developments in contemporary China?
- What are the remaining challenges for China to widen children's participation?

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Chapter 18
As a Conclusion, to the Future: A Discussion on Trust, Agency and the Semantics of Rights in Intergenerational Relationships

Federico Farini

At the end of a long journey across people, places and cultures, there is a strong belief that the book has offered valuable insights on the position of childhood in society for scholars and researchers. At the same time this book aimed to facilitate a reflection on Early Childhood Education and Care as a crucial context for children's, but also for adults', socialisation, a theme that sits at the centre of ever growing interest, not only academically and pedagogically, but also at the level of policy-making and the media discourse.

In this collection, the contributors have offered intelligent and innovative discussions of policies, practices and discourses around Early Childhood Education and Care, presenting examples and case studies on a genuine global scale, where no continent has been excluded. Departing from different disciplines and following directions dictated by different methodological traditions, the contributions have converged in presenting a rich analysis of the cultures of childhood shaping those policies, pedagogies and practices affecting the lived experiences of young children.

Notwithstanding the different approaches, professional profiles and contexts of their analysis, all authors used self-determination of the child as a powerful key to decode the position of young children in society. All contributions succeeded in presenting whether, how and in which measure, in a variety of National contexts, children constructed as a subjects who design and manage their social worlds. Piece by piece, story by story, a colourful picture of the spaces of children's self-determination at the intersection of policies and practices and discourses has been painted.

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In the introduction it was suggested that, despite an inherent diversity, the contributions were going to be much more than a simple, although stimulating, collection. Such claim was based on the recognition of their common scientific and moral drive towards the exploration of the semantics of childhood that determines the position of children and their relationship with adults. On conclusion of the collection another strong tie between the contributions is recognised: the authors converged in suggesting the importance of the dialectic between trust and distrust for the spaces and nature of adult-child relationships.

From the planning of a role-play to the definition of national policies, from the use of pedagogical technologies in a nursery to legislative initiatives, the dynamic balance between trust and distrust shapes the semantic of Early Childhood and the space for children's self-determination.

How do different cultures of education and care shape the semantics of children's self-determination, generating different spaces and configurations for right-based pedagogies and policies? This question was introduced as a common thread followed for all contributions. It is possible now to advance a global answer to the question: trust in children is the defining variable for the meaning of children's self-determination across nations and continents.

Adult-child interactions, pedagogical practices and planning, policies and legislation, discourses on Childhood and children's rights: whilst the collected contributions explore different objects in the constellation of Early Childhood, the distinction trust-distrusts continuously generates social semantics underpinning the meanings of children's self-determination. The oscillation between trust and distrust in young children informs expectations about their competence and responsibilities, and this reflects in policies, practices, research and discourses on a global scale.

Whether focusing on practices or discourses, each contribution in the collection tackles the crucial, complex and fluid intersection between the semantics of childhood and recognition of children's agency and children's citizenship in the present, as it shapes different conceptualisations of children's right and children's self-determination on an global scale. To conclude the book, and to propose some lines for further discussion and research, an argument is now developed around the pivotal importance of intergenerational trust.

18.1 Between the Child and the Pupil

One of the characteristics of European modernity, and its global ramifications, is a socio-cultural process known as 'the discovery of the child'. Since the seventeenth century, a construct called 'childhood' has appeared, gradually but irresistibly, as a structural component of all social systems (Ariés 1962; Cunningham 2005). Social systems such as the arts, families, law, health, politics, economics and science have contributed, each one from its specific perspective and language, to the generation of a multidimensional, complex, often contradictory but nevertheless solid semantics of 'childhood in society'.

Professional practices and discourses have been crossing, clashing, converging and diverging within and across social systems, mixing and overlapping. The result is a panoply of portraits of the same subject, the child, painted with a wide range of ideas and beliefs concerning its capabilities, the value of its agency and the possibility for its self-determination.

However, no other social system has been more fascinated by the child than education. Both as an external reference, the child in its journey to adulthood, and as an internal reference, the pupil to be educated, the child has invariably captured the attention of education, to a point that from the late nineteenth century, education has become, concurrently to the family, 'the social system of childhood'.

It can be argued whether the tension feeding the educational debate (and the debate on education in society) that generates the perpetual condition of reform and self-reform of the education system (Baraldi and Corsi 2016) is nurtured by the education's fascination for an object, the child, who is necessarily out of its reach. As the pupil, the child is a product of education, a persona, that is used to construct expectations and to serve as a reference for communication. The 'true' children, the individual psychic systems, are something very different from the pupils. Children sit outside of educational communication and there is always the possibility for them to avoid or subvert education, even at very young, pre-scholar age (Dotson et al. 2015; Scollan and Gallagher 2016).

The characteristic anxiety pervading the educational discourse is generated by the diverging forces of fascination and inaccessibility emanating from the child. Education advocates the function of *forming* children, creating cognitive abilities that are necessary for them to adapt to social norms (Luhmann and Schorr 1982); however educational communication cannot control the children and the children cannot be formed.

However, when mass education was introduced, the educational discourse on childhood, that is, pedagogy, used to entertain a fairly secure relationship with its object on the one hand (the child) and its function on the other hand (the education of the child). Understood as a linear process, education was based on linear logic, devising pedagogical means to achieve its goals. Utilising the language of more critical account of the traditional pedagogical discourse, classic pedagogy was a form of self-description where education understood itself as means of correction for 'the sin of childhood' (Britzman 2007). Within the traditional pedagogical discourse, the image of the child's capabilities and the space for its agency and self-determination was painted in the faintest colours.

Nevertheless, whether as social engineering or a means for correction of childhood, education has been facing a continuing situation of crisis, transforming the need for reform in its main form of self-description (Baraldi and Corsi 2016). It was only in the early 1960s that the discourse in and on education came to terms to an understanding that 'the crisis of education' was the reconstruction as an item for pedagogical and political agendas of the structural limit of education (Arendt 1993). Such limit concerns the impossibility for education, as for any other form of communication, to control the how the observer makes sense of the information and motivations underpinning communication, and therefore how the observer reacts to it.

As it is well known by any educational practitioners, from Early to Higher Education, no educational intention, even if enhanced by the most refined technology, can direct the development of children's personality. This claim might not come as a surprise, and it is underpinned by philosophical pragmatism already, and particularly by James' point that the development of a child's mind cannot be completely controlled by any educational technique, due to the independence of psychic processes of meaning-making, that are inaccessible from the outside (James 1983). James introduces the idea of an inescapable role of the child is its own development, which can be integrated with a reference to Portes' claim that in any social relationship a possible derailing factor for intentions is that participants may react in contingent ways and devise means of by-passing the intended consequences of actions (Portes 2000). Even the clearest goal and the most advanced pedagogical means cannot secure that educators' actions will have the intended consequences (Vanderstraeten 2004). Unintended, and often significant, consequences that the educators cannot control, and of which they are often unaware, are a necessary companion to any educational intention.

In sum, unintended consequences are always possible in education, also with very young children, as convincingly demonstrated by Dotson and colleagues with regard to the strategies implemented by toddlers to subvert meal-time discipline in American nurseries (Dotson et al. 2015), and by Scollan and Gallagher with regard to the sue of 'forbidden' technological apparels (Scollan and Gallagher 2016). It is true that unintended consequences are one of the building blocks of modern liberal economics: Adam Smith's 'invisible hand', maybe the most famous metaphor in social science, is an example of unintended consequence. Smith maintained that each individual, seeking only his own gain, is led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention, that end being the public interest. In the influential article titled 'The Unanticipated Consequences of Purposive Social Action' (1936), Merton extends the analysis of the concept of unintended consequences from its economical original context to all social systems.

Since Merton's ground-breaking article, the problem of unintended and unanticipated consequences has pertained not only to economic science, but also to the effectiveness of practices and social planning, with obvious implications for education that is the most ambitious social system advocating to itself the task to produce and preserve the presuppositions of social cohesion through the systemic socialisation of children. The ambitious task that education sets for itself underpins the relevant amount of pedagogical publications that recognise it as the medium for the transmission of the moral values that represent the foundations of society (Kymlica 2008). For instance, Lawton et al. (2005), as much as Batho (1990), demonstrate, at least with regard to the English contexts, how education has been claiming the task of securing the development of democratic citizens through civic education. This concerns Early Years Education, as 'education to fundamental (British) values' has become a mandatory component for all Early Years settings (Lloyd 2015, see also Chap. 15 in this collection).

Notwithstanding high hopes nurtured by education's self-description, pedagogical theories have been experiencing severe difficulties in avoiding the unintended

consequences of educational intentions. For Merton, the functions of a social practice are its "observable objective consequences" (Merton 1957). Manifest functions are those outcomes that are intended and recognized by the agents concerned; latent functions are those outcomes that are neither intended nor recognized. Although the distinction between manifest and latent functions has been the object of sociological critical accounts (Campbell 1982), pedagogical research towards the unintended consequences of an educational system that aims to rationalize socialization still utilises it as a basic analytic concept (see Kendall 1998). However, differently from pedagogy, sociological research on education has not always been concerned about the unintended consequences in the field of education; for Parsons and Bales (1965), socialization (which includes education) fulfills a fairly unambiguous role within society. Moving from the theoretical presupposition that human beings are open systems, exchanging input and output with the environment, socialization is understood by Parsons as input delivered to individuals by and through their social environment; the output of this operation would consists in the transformation of individuals' inner structure, making it fit with the norms and value orientations of the society in which they live. A concurrent sociological theoretical approach to education, which is here advocated as more realistic, pays attention to the mutual operational closure of psychic systems and social systems, suggesting that it is not possible to describe socialization in terms of the transfer of a meaning pattern from one system (society) to the other (the individual) (Baraldi 1993). In fact, the interaction between a psychic system and his or her social environment might or might not provoke particular structural changes in the 'inner sphere' of the individual (Vanderstraeten 2000).

Within this theoretical model, the concept of 'unintended consequences' should be taken into account by a sociological analysis of education: when a pedagogically stylized act communicates its own intention, the person who is expected to be educated acquires the freedom to travel some distance, for instance, to pursue the intention out of mere opportunism, or to avoid 'being educated' as much as possible (Vanderstraeten 2006). The realism of the pedagogical models based on the transmission of knowledges from the adult to the child has been questioned also with regard to Early Years Education (Baraldi 2015; Siraj-Blatchford 2008). Thus, an interesting question for educators and educational scientists concerns the possibility of reducing unintended consequences of pedagogical action.

18.2 The Problem of Trust for Education

Education "is action that is intentionalized and attributable to intentions" (Luhmann 1995: 244); the reference of the educational action is the pupil, and the standardised expectations about its learning allow to observe the effect of education and the need for reform, either of education or of the pupil. Whilst the *socialisation of the child* only requires the possibility of reading the behavior of others as selected information such as potential dangers or social expectations (Vanderstraeten 2000), the

education of the pupil, and this is true from Early Years Education onwards, aims to generate standardised learning patterns that cannot be left to chance socializing events but presupposes coordinating a plurality of efforts.

However, education cannot be conceived as a rational form of socialization, because it cannot eliminate the possibility of resistance because children's psychic systems are inaccessible, while the pupils is nothing else than a persona created by education itself. In fact, intentional communication with educational goals doubles the motives for rejection. In any communication, the meaning can be rejected if the addressee or receiver finds the information unsatisfactory and/or the intention unacceptable (Vanderstraeten and Biesta 2006). Research suggests that even at a very young age children actively participate to educational communication, selecting whether to accept it or not (Bjork-Willen 2008). The addressee has the opportunity to reject the educational communication, if he or she refuses the role of someone who needs to be educated.

Nevertheless, and notwithstanding its improbability, education happens and children, often from a young age, are included in educational organisations and become objects and subjects of educational discourses. If pedagogy cannot secure the reproduction of the educational relationships, what is the resource that support the reproduction of education? What can support children's acceptance of the educational intention, of teaching, of teachers' requests of learning and teachers' evaluation or correction?

The question is particularly intriguing, as it draws attention to the position of children in the education system, which represent for most of them a crucial context of social experiences. What can support such acceptance where children's position is one of exclusion? The answer reminds to the function of a specific medium of communication, a medium specialising in creating the conditions for the acceptance of communication. This medium is trust (Luhmann 1988). A crucial theoretical claim, which is pivotal for the argument presented here but also underpins all contributions is that children's trusting commitment in the interaction with adults is vital for the reproduction of education. More than any other social system in modern society, education needs trust of children for its reproduction. Without children's trusting commitment, education could not exist. Lack of trust activates a vicious circle between lack of trust and low social participation (Farini 2012) that circle implies loosing opportunities of children's action, reducing their preparation to risk trust, and activating anxiety and suspicion for educators' actions. One can describe these effects as secondary socialization, when "secondary" refers here to the consequences of the methods that are used to educate. Some of these consequences are of course currently fairly well known: distrust in interactions with specific educators can determine children's marginalization or self-marginalization in the education system, with possible drop-out and consequent reduction of effectiveness of education in society; these may be understood as unintended consequences of education. Education is particularly affected by lack of trust that creates perverse effects as alienation, prevents commitment and leaves the floor to disappointment of expectations. The advancement of the discussion now demands undertaking reflection on the sources of trust as a medium of acceptance for communication.

Firstly, trust can guarantee basic presuppositions of action and relationships when it is referred to expertise. This is the case for classic pedagogy, and for the current revival of teacher-centred stance, postulating the dependence of children's commitment to education exclusively, or primarily, on their trust in adults' expert guidance, counselling and teaching (Vanderstraeten and Biesta 2006; Britzman 2007). This source of trust is the foundation of the relationship between the pupil and the teacher, but has been questioned for failing to value the competences and autonomy of the child (Shapiro 2002; Kelman 2005). Trust in expertise concerns the participation in the organisational dimension of education, in school-based learning, but does not support risk-taking outside of the classroom, with obvious implication for the quality of children's socialisation. Critical pedagogy and sociological childhood studies have questioned the effectiveness of teachers' expertise in promoting children's trusting commitment. In particular, according to childhood studies, children's opportunities of participation in educational settings are strongly reduced "by curricular and behavioural rules and structures" (Wyness 1999: 356), that is, by the latent functions of the education system are fulfilled alongside of the official curricula. In education, the reduced opportunities for participation available to the *pupil*, result in less opportunity for the *child* to learning trust by taking risk and engaging in social relationships.

18.3 Trust Based on Categorical Inequalities

Not included in the repertoire of sources of trust presented by Giddens (1990, 1991), therefore making its discussion a genuine contribution of this chapter to sociological research, is a second source of trust connected to the organisational dimension of education: trust based on categorical inequalities. The theoretical underpinning of this construct may be recognized in Tilly's claim that inequality becomes embedded in the organizational structures (Tilly 1998). This is particularly true for education, which is a system where inequality among individual performances and among goals attainment is at the same time a basic structural feature and an expected output. Tilly elaborates an inventory of causal mechanisms through which categorical inequality is generated by and sustained in organizations. Tilly argues that certain kinds of social structural relations are solutions to problems generated within social systems. This is not argument for a smooth, homeostatic kind of functionalism in which all social relations organically fit together in fully integrated social systems. The functional explanations in Tilly's arguments allow for struggles and contradictions. Nevertheless, his arguments rely on functional explanations insofar as at crucial steps of the analysis he poses a problem generated by a set of social relations and then presents the demonstration that a particular social form is a solution to the problem as the explanation of that social form.

For instance, categorical forms of inequality among pupils are created in education through selection categorical distinctions make easier to discern who and when to trust and who and when avoiding risks. As Tilly puts it: "organizational improvi-

sations (and educational selection can be ascribed to this category) lead to durable categorical inequality". Pupils are categorized according to their performances, and such categorical distinctions become stable features of organization. Most importantly for this discussion, categorical distinctions can be used as references for the differentiated allocation of trust commitments in the teacher-pupil relationship, thus enhancing the stability of educational communication. This latter point demands further explanation. Tilly distills the core explanation of categorical inequality to three positions: (1) Organizationally installed categorical inequality reduces risks. Categorical inequalities support the decision-maker in the risky choice whether to accord trust or not in any specific situation. This is a claim about the effects of categorical inequality on the stability of organizational relationships: the former stabilizes the latter; (2) Organizations whose survival depends on stability tend to adopt categorical inequality. This is a selection argument: the functional trait, categorical inequality, is adopted because it is functional, that is, solves the problem of stability, (3) Because organizations adopting categorical inequality deliver greater returns to their dominant members, and because a portion of those returns goes to organizational maintenance, such organizations tend to crowd out other types of organizations. Tilly's model is readily applicable to educational organization, where the categorical inequalities generated from selection offer a references for the allocation of trust. This is a self-constructed mechanism to reduce anxiety. In educational situations, categorical distinctions make it easier to know whom to trust and whom to exclude.

Categorical inequalities become stable features of organization because they enhance the survival of organizations that have such traits, and that as a result over time organizations with such traits predominate. The adoption of the organizational trait in question may be a conscious strategy intentionally designed to enhance exploitation and opportunity hoarding, but equally it may result from quite haphazard trial and error. However, whilst stabilizing social relationships, categorical inequalities stabilize position of marginalization for some pupils. The stabilization of educational organizations based on categorical inequalities and differentiated allocation of trust commitments support their reproduction in condition of improbability. Nevertheless, it presents a paradoxical consequence: categorical inequalities reduce the potential of educational organizations in accomplishing their institutional goal, that is, the planned socialisation of *all* children. Taking into account Tilly's inventory of causal mechanisms through which categorical inequality is generated and sustained by organizations, it appears clear that trust based on categorical inequalities can be understood as a condition, and a consequence, of the reproduction of the educational organisations. Trust based on expertise and trust based on categorical inequalities are intertwined: while educators' expertise legitimizes them as evaluators in institutionalized selective events, selective events produce the material references to build and develop categorical inequalities. The two sources of trust are coupled: the effects of one form are the presuppositions of the other. In the education system, educators' expertise creates the material foundations of categorization, and trust based on categorical inequalities builds systems of social closure, exclusion and control, where children may experience anxiety about the future out-

come of present actions, favouring risk-avoidance behaviour and conformity. However, trust based on categorical inequalities is only one side of the picture, that necessarily brings dis-trust based on categorical inequalities with it. The problems of institutional distrust are well known, and described in terms of a spiralling relationship between marginalization of some pupils and their alienation from educational communication.

Not surprisingly, in light of the limitations of trust based on expertise in motivating children's trusting commitment, and in light of the cost of trust based on categorical inequalities in terms of the exclusion of children, a concern for education is to reflect on other possible sources of trust to sustain children's acceptance of education.

18.4 Affective Trust in Education and Its Relationship with Children's Agency

Both trust based on expertise and trust based on categorical inequalities leave the floor to problems of institutional distrust. However, and this introduces a third source of trust in education, trust can also be generated through interpersonal affective relationships that mobilise trust through a process of mutual disclosure. In this second case, the trusting commitment concerns the relationship in itself, a 'pure relationship' (Giddens 1991), and trust results in a demand for intimacy. Interpersonal affective relationships seem to be much more motivating than expertise. Since the 1980's, childhood studies have been challenging the ontological foundation of adult's expertise and control as a source of trust in the relationships between children and adults. According to a rich literature children cannot be considered passive recipients of adults' information and command (James et al. 1998); on the contrary, they are social agents who actively participate in the construction of social systems (James et al. 1998). The continuity with the pragmatist philosophy of the early twentieth century is evident. Children have their own agendas and concerns which may go beyond the institutional scopes of education and the mere self-interest in educational career; the educational relationship is a different environment for adults and children, who may take into account risk which are neglected by adults. Therefore, social attention moves towards children's trusting commitment and necessity of building trust in their relationships with adults (Holland and O'Neill 2006), also with regard to Early Years Education (Burger 2013). Whilst the sociological research on education continues to reveal that mainstream educational practices are still centered around standardised role performances (Parsons and Bales 1965; Sinclair and Coulthard 1975; Mehan 1979; Vanderstraeten 2004; Farini 2011; Walsh 2011), other strands of sociological research, either theoretical or focused on pedagogical experiments and innovation, emphasize the importance of agency in the construction of children's trust in education, from a pre-scholar age (Baraldi 2015; Harris and Kaur 2012). As a condition to develop person-centred approaches

in critical pedagogy, it is suggested that adults should risk interpersonal affective relationships with pupils, listening to their personal expressions and supporting them empathically (Rogers 1951). In other words, childhood studies advocate the inclusion of the child in the education, from its early, pre-scholar, stages (Karoly and Gonzales 2011), questioning the measure in which trust can be built between the adult and the pupil.

Agency is key to the development of trusting commitments that are *stronger* and more *complex* than trust based in expertise, and more *inclusive* that trust based on categorical inequalities. A certain degree of agreement within childhood studies is observable with regard to the semantic of agency. Agency is observed when individual actions are not considered as determined by another subject (James 2009; James and James 2008; Baraldi 2014). However, the concept of agency implies that individuals '… interact with the social conditions in which they find themselves' (Moosa-Mitha 2005: 380), acknowledging limitations imposed by social constraints (Bjerke 2011; James 2009; James and James 2008; Moosa-Mitha 2005; Valentine 2011; Wyness 2014).

Agency and its social conditions are visible in social interactions (Bae 2012; Baraldi 2014; Baraldi and Iervese 2014; Bjerke 2011), where agency can be observed in the availability of choices of action and the agent's possibility to exercise a personal judgement and to choose according to it (Markstrom and Hallden 2009; Moss 2009). In other words, adults are invited to consider that children are social agents who can and must tackle important issues, "dancing" with them (Holdsworth 2005: 150). This claim is both ideological and theoretically founded, with a clear reference to constructivism and the postulate of the unavoidable independence of psychic systems as processors of communication and communicative intentions (Luhmann refers to the *intransparency* of psychich sytem for communication, 1995). These ideas have inspired the concept of promotion of children's agency in education, supporting children's self-expression, taking their views into account, consulting them, involving them in decision-making processes, sharing power and responsibility for decision making with them (Matthews 2003).

It is argued here that the transformation of the cultural presuppositions of education towards the recognition of children's agentic role is important for the construction of children's citizenship in the education system (Percy-Smith 2010), which requires the recognition of their personal rights and their the empowerment as contributors of different ideas and perspectives (Invernizzi and Williams 2008). This is true also for Early Education, which has been approached by a young but flourishing research stream as a possible context for children's citizenship, centred around the recognition of the child as an agent (Kjørholt and Qvortrup 2012; Lansdown 2004, 2005). Based on a critical assessment of the theoretical presuppositions foundation of pedagogical tradition, a discourse on the child in education has emerged, colouring an image of the its capabilities and agency in the brightest shades of self-determination.

18.5 From the Pupil Back to the Child?

Positioning the child as agent in the education system entails important consequences for the reproduction of the system itself, because it allows building trust based on the experience of active, practised, citizenship (Lawy and Biesta 2006; Pascal and Bertram 2009; Seele 2012), therefore avoiding the risk of marginalization and feelings of alienation that are the unintended consequences of education and trust based on categorical inequalities. Promoting children's agency can be seen as a way to build trust through the exercise of agency (Farini 2012). However, the promotion of children's agency may meet important obstacles in conditions of radical distrust, which prevent from the construction of person-centred relationships and affective expectations (Farini and Baraldi 2013; Farini 2014). According to Luhmann (1995), while trust enlarges the range of possible actions in a social system, distrust restricts this range, in that it requires additional premises for social relationships, which protect interactants from a disappointment that is considered highly probable. When distrust is established, building trust appears very difficult because the interaction is permeated by trust in distrust. This appears to be the current condition of mainstream education, where trust based on expertise and trust based on categorical inequalities generates distrusts on an interpersonal level (for a case study on the connection between categorical inequalities and marginalisation in education see O'Connor and Angus 2013).

Ultimately, the challenge for education is to establish the conditions for mutual trust, that is, mutual humanization and mutual reassurance, based on acknowledgment of participants' needs and fears as well as based on responsiveness to them. Using Buber's powerful language (Buber 2004), the challenge consists in the transformation of educational relationships from and '*I to It*' model, where the 'other' is the project of our expectations and planning (the It, the pupil), to an '*I to Thou'*, model, based on the acknowledge of the incommensurable alterity of the 'other' (the Thou, the child). The challenge for education, if an inclusive and complex form of trust should be created, is to substitute the pupil with the child, as the internal reference of the education system.

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