

”Det er Lov.” Rules and Routines in a Norwegian Kindergarten

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Abstract

This project, "Det er Lov." Rules and Routines in a Norwegian Kindergarten, begins by providing a description of a Norwegian kindergarten setting. Ideas such as kindergarten space, food, and clothing are presented. The scope of the project is created through a focus on rules and routines and how they are used and interpreted. The four guiding questions of this project are "How do children experience kindergarten routines and rules?" "How do children learn kindergarten routines and rules?" "How do adults handle conflict?" and "How do children and adults understand their relationship in kindergarten?" The text then goes on to describe instances of pedagogical tact and agency used respectively by adults and children. This project argues that the instances of pedagogical tact and agency occur frequently in a kindergarten setting and are made possible or assisted by the design of the kindergarten space, natural explanations, relationships with care and comfort at the foundation, and specific forms of communication in conflict situations. Adults use pedagogical tact, spacious patterns, and surveillance to navigate kindergarten life. Children use agency to navigate kindergarten life. Overall, there seems to be a balancing act of *adult order* and *child chaos* in a Norwegian kindergarten setting (Os, 2013).

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Introduction

1.1 Topic and Aim

This project, "Det er Lov". Rules and Routines in a Norwegian Kindergarten, examines questions regarding how children and adults create and experience rules and routines in a Norwegian kindergarten setting. Conflict situations and experiences are analyzed to illuminate how children and adults experience rules and routines together and individually. The aim of this project is to present a picture of a Norwegian kindergarten setting and describe how the main actors, children and adults, experience kindergarten life in regards to how they navigate and create rules and routines. Adult-child interactions and relationships are main focuses of this project.

1.2 Research Questions

The research questions used in this project are as follows:

- How do children experience kindergarten routines and rules?
- How do children learn kindergarten routines and rules?
- How do adults handle conflict?
- How do children and adults understand and create their relationships in kindergarten?

The first two questions relate to my interest in a child's perspective of rules and routines in a Norwegian kindergarten. I am interested in how they experience and learn to be in a kindergarten setting from an early age. Experiences from kindergarten affect how a child interacts and engages in the world. My third research question relates to my interest in the adult perspective of kindergarten life. I would like to understand how adults understand and act in a kindergarten setting in Norway. Asking how adults handle conflict is, in other words, also asking how adults experience and learn kindergarten rules and routines. The empirical situations I have focused on in this project are all deemed to some degree "conflict situations" between adults and children in which adult-child interactions occurred. I chose to focus on rules and routines and specifically conflict because these situations highlighted kindergarten experiences and interactions between adults and children. My fourth research question looks more closely at the relationship adults and children have in a Norwegian kindergarten. The interactions between the adults and children are affected by the relationships the share.

1.3 Current Research and Gap

Research data for this project was created through collaboration with adults and one to two year old children research participants in a Norwegian kindergarten in one of the largest cities in Norway. This project adds to a large body of research about different aspects of kindergarten life and children in Norway. Specifically, this project adds to the current and previous research surrounding play and peer-relations in Norwegian kindergarten settings (Os, 2013; Greve, 2013; Løndal and Greve, 2015; Bae, 2009, 2012). These research projects discuss the effects of adult-child interaction in different areas of kindergarten life such as play (Løndal and Greve, 2015) and mealtimes or relationships (Os, 2013). These authors discuss interactions between children as well as between adults and children. My research project addresses only adult-child interactions in relation to rules and routines. As an outsider in a Norwegian kindergarten setting, I am able to approach the topic from a more distanced position. In addition, the majority do not approach the topic from the lense of examining rules and routines or the design of the Norwegian kindergarten. Both authors touch on ideas of routinized practice and the relationship between adults and children in Scandinavian kindergartens. However, they do not go directly to rules and routines in a Norwegian kindergarten. Often times, conflict is at the center of adult-child interactions in kindergarten. My research project is directly focused on conflict situations and planning situations. Because of the time limitations of this project the scope was limited to morning observations in the kindergarten. However, planning and conflict situations exist through-

out the kindergarten day.

In addition, the majority of research relating to children in Norwegian kindergartens whether about mealtimes, adult-child interactions, friendships, or play has been conducted by Norwegian or Scandinavian researchers. This research was also primarily with older children between the ages of three to five.

This project is in the field of sociology of children and childhood and draws from the works of Corsaro and Molinari (2008); Corsaro (2003, 2009) and other authors such as Løndal and Greve (2015); Os (2013), and Bae (2009, 2012) mentioned above. However, this project is beneficial for the field of education as well. I use articles from Van Manen (2008) and Määttä and Uusiautti (2013) to describe pedagogical ideas. The research presented in this project relates to ideas of what makes a positive learning environment and what skills are crucial pedagogical skills. These ideas and suggestions are supported through the fieldwork of this project.

My hope for this project is to describe some aspects of a Norwegian kindergarten setting that will be helpful in other kindergarten settings outside of the Scandinavian model. There are some Norwegian words that are used frequently in kindergarten that are rarely used in English. For example, I discuss at length specific words in Norwegian such as the word for allowance or permission ("lov") in my analysis and discussion. Instead of doing research in my native language and translating my research into English, I am doing research in a foreign language and translating back into English. I used extreme care to maintain the Norwegian connotations and meanings with English words. In general, there is a much smaller body of research from Norwegian kindergartens conducted by non Scandinavian authors than authors with Scandinavian backgrounds.

1.4 Project Inspiration

I was motivated to start this project by some of my very first experiences in Norway. One week after moving to Norway, I began shadowing various teachers and four and five year olds at a kindergarten in one of the biggest cities in Norway as part of an exchange program. I was fascinated and amazed by how the children seemed to me to be experts at kindergarten life. It was as if they almost knew, before an adult told them, when it was time to clean up toys and when it was time to eat. They definitely knew what to wear in January in Norway as well where as this was a large learning curve for me. The teachers

never seemed to raise their voices and seemed not to need very much extra energy to get the attention of the children. Often I could not tell if they were speaking to each other or to one of the children. While a lot of different interactions were definitely lost on me as a newcomer to Norway without a good understanding of Norwegian, I could feel a sense of fluidity and ease in the kindergarten day that I had not experienced before. After talking to the teachers, I learned that things had not always been so relaxed and smooth and that they had spent a lot of energy and time teaching the children how to act throughout the day. This thought is exactly what led me to wonder about rules and routines in a Norwegian kindergarten with younger children. I wanted to know what this process of Norwegian routines and rules was like and how it was taught in a country that had a very important place for free play in curriculum planning and kindergarten life. As an American, I was stunned and wanted to know how what I had experienced with older children was explained to or experienced by younger children. This project is an answer to this wondering and hopefully a resource to others in the field of childhood studies and education. My desire with this project is to use my research questions to describe elements of a Norwegian kindergarten setting that can also be useful in kindergarten settings outside of Norway.

1.5 Thesis Chapters Overview

The next chapter presents general information that is important in order to understand the setting, a Norwegian kindergarten. While this project does not directly tackle questions of Norwegian culture and the influence of Norwegian kindergartens on children in Norway, basic understanding of the institution is necessary to understand the project. After, I present the theory that is used in this project to analyze the data and to situate the project. The project is in the field of childhood studies and main theoretical concepts include power and balance, agency, and peer-play culture, among others. Several terms are also presented to categorize and describe adult-child interactions in this project. After, I present the methods used in this project and the general details of the fieldwork process.

The analysis chapters of this project are divided into four chapters. The first chapter discusses in detail the practicalities of a Norwegian kindergarten that allow the setting to create positive relationships and interactions between adults and children even when the topic of interaction is conflict. The second chapter discusses the design and goals of a Norwegian kindergarten. It is titled “Life Skills.” This chapter elaborates further on how children experience rules and routines and which values and goals are considered important in Norwegian kindergarten. The third chapter is titled “Care” and narrows in on the

adult-child relationship in kindergarten. There are several seemingly simple things that were common in my fieldwork setting that maintained care of the children as the main goal over learning or other outcomes (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). Care and comfort are extremely important in Norwegian kindergarten. This idea is discussed from adult and child perspectives. The fourth and final chapter is titled "Adult-Child Interaction." This is the largest chapter of my analysis and discusses situations of adult-child interaction that pertain to conflict and rules. This chapter works with the research questions of the project of how children experience and learn rules and how adults handle conflict. This chapter discusses use of certain communication as an important component of adult-child interactions.

In the discussion chapter, I elaborate on some questions and concerns that arose throughout the fieldwork and analysis process. The question of translating conversations between adults and children from Norwegian into English is addressed. I also offer some final reflections on the project. Finally, in my conclusion chapter, I summarize the main ideas of the study and suggest some areas requiring further research.

Background and Context

This chapter provides some basic information that is necessary to understand the specifics of this project. First, early childhood education and the kindergarten system in Norway is presented. Second, the political and educational debate of free play or more academically planned activities in kindergarten is quickly discussed. Third, I define rules and routines. Lastly, I offer an overview of Norwegian kindergarten culture.

2.1 Early Childhood Education in Norway

Norwegian kindergarten is a distinct early childhood education system that is organized differently from the elementary school system in Norway. *The Norwegian Framework Plan for the Content and Tasks of Kindergarten* developed by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research is a binding framework that describes and explains the nature and characteristics of Norwegian kindergarten (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). Independence for children is a strong point throughout the Norwegian framework plan that shines through in many areas of kindergarten life. Children should be allowed to form their own ideas and solve problems independently. Social interactions such as friendships and community tasks are extremely important in Norwegian kindergarten (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011).

Care, play, and learning are the three pedestals of Norwegian early childhood education (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). Norwegian kindergarten differs from my other kindergarten experiences in terms of the type of learning that is conducted and considered important. For example, children in kindergarten in Norway are not learning

formally how to read or write before they attend school. Norwegian early childhood education, overall, focuses much more on social competence such as sharing and listening rather than defined subjects such as math and reading. The areas of learning that are included in the framework plan and emphasized in kindergarten are also communication, language and text, body, movement and health, art, culture and creativity, nature, environment and technology, ethics, religion and philosophy, local community and society, and numbers, space and shapes (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). These subject areas act in a similar manner as formal subjects in school. Overall, social and linguistic skills are considered extremely important at the kindergarten level.

Norwegian kindergartens work very closely with the parents or guardians of the children. The kindergarten is designed to develop close home-like connections. Care and closeness play a large role in the development of the kindergarten setting (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). The staff needs to be able to relate to the children and understand them. Above all else, the staff must safeguard the children's need for care and play. Essential to the Norwegian early childcare philosophy is the notion that a child has the right to be a child (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). Kindergarten staff should work to foster a sense of joy in play, learning, and simply being a child. The kindergarten is a place for children to develop their creative zest, sense of wonder, and need to investigate. Every child should be treated as an equal, regardless of age and gender (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). The children have a right to participate and be active in the planning of the kindergarten activities. Their opinions, strengths and weaknesses should be involved in the decision making process (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011).

In Norway, children generally begin going to kindergarten when they are one to two years old and they begin primary school the year they turn six years old. There are different types of kindergartens in Norway, including public, private, nature or outdoor, art, and language kindergartens. "Friluftsliv," outdoor or nature, kindergartens have become very popular in Norway. "Friluftsliv" is the Scandinavian philosophy of outdoor life and a love for the outdoors (Gelter, 2000). The kindergarten uses the outdoor environment heavily in all of its activities and free play and the children spend the large majority of their time outdoors (Nilsen, 2008). While certain kindergartens claim an outdoor profile, all kindergartens in Norway embody a more "Friluftsliv" approach in their daily routines. Children generally stay at kindergarten between seven or eight in the morning to four or five in the afternoon while their parents are at work. The children often eat breakfast and lunch together with food that is provided by the kindergarten and/or food they bring from home. "Matpakke,"

meaning lunch box or lunch pack in English, is generally what the children would bring from home. This concept is discussed later in this chapter. Parents pay a fee each month to send their children to kindergarten which is based on their individual economy. The max amount a family in Norway would spend to send a child to kindergarten is 2,730 NOK per month (Oslo Kommune, 2017).

Attending kindergarten is seen as an essential, important and positive element of a healthy, positive childhood in Norway (Nilsen, 2008). In Norway, from a political standpoint, attending kindergarten is seen as a necessary part of modern childhood. Especially with families recently immigrated to Norway, children are strongly encouraged to attend kindergarten as a means to adapt Norwegian culture and to learn Norwegian. The community and interactions with other children found in kindergarten are extremely important in Norway. Norwegian ideals of togetherness and community are stressed strongly in Norwegian kindergarten (Nielsen, 2008; Nilsen, 2008). In fact, in 2016 the percent of children between the ages of 3-6 enrolled in kindergarten was 96.8% and the percent of children younger than three years old enrolled in kindergarten was 82% (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017).

2.2 Importance of Play

In recent years, there has been a debate in Norway over the importance of free play in kindergarten (Alvestad et al., 2014; Synodi, 2010). There are some who feel that kindergarten is a place for free play and should be a stress free environment. Others feel that kindergarten should be an institute that more formally prepares children for starting school. As a public and private institution in Norway, kindergarten structure and values has had a place in political debates. While play still holds an important place in Norwegian kindergarten, there has been a general trend towards planned activities as well (Alvestad et al., 2014; Synodi, 2010). That being said, learning of formal subjects such as writing and reading is reserved for school. Kindergarten is still an institution that holds learning social competence as more important than formal subjects. As mentioned perviously, the different subject areas of kindergarten, communication, language and text, body, movement and health, art, culture and creativity, nature, environment and technology, ethics, religion, and philosophy, local community and society, and numbers, space and shapes act as the formal subjects in kindergarten (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). This debate and how subjects in kindergarten are defined are important background to this project because this pull in both directions was experienced often throughout my fieldwork period. There are

routines and rules in free play and also in planned activities. In my analysis, I found that the routines and rules were often quite the same regardless of the activity, but that the experience of kindergarten itself was constantly changing and perhaps going towards a more school-like structure (Synodi, 2010).

2.3 Free Play

Play has been heavily researched in the field of childhood studies and kindergarten studies (Ødegaard, 2006; Løkken, 2000; Corsaro, 2003; Greve, 2013; Løndal and Greve, 2015; Bae, 2009; Synodi, 2010). There are many different definitions of free play used in different articles. Play is often hard to pin down as a concept because there are many different types of play and many different components of play. Articles discuss role play, nature play, risky play, adult led play, and child play all as different categories of play. Child-led free play, meaning the children decide for themselves what they would like to do without adult interference, is very important in Norwegian kindergarten (Synodi, 2010; Løndal and Greve, 2015). Traditionally more of the day is spent with play than other activities. In addition, the pedagogy of play is sometimes discussed. It includes different types of play such as free or child-initiated or child-directed play, teacher-organized or teacher-directed play or adult-guided or structured play, and mutually directed play (Synodi, 2010). In this project, I do not examine the difficulties of defining different types of free play and how the adult interacts in the free play. This question is taken up by Løndal and Greve (2015) in her work on adult-child interaction in play situations. The focus of this project is adult-child interactions in situations of conflict in which rules or routines are engaged. However, play is also often a part of these situations.

2.4 Rules and Routines

It is important to understand what is encompassed in rules and routines in this project. For both of these terms, I have let the research data decide what they mean in the context of a Norwegian kindergarten setting. In other words, I did not have a rigid definition for rules or routines before beginning the research project. In answering how children and adults experience and learn kindergarten rules and routines, I also am looking into what are rules and routines in my fieldwork setting. I made the assumption that there are indeed rules and routines in my fieldwork setting (Os, 2013). Going into the field, I had an idea of my understanding of what a rule and a routine was. A rule is something that guides the behaviors of all individuals in a kindergarten. For example, if the rule is “It is not allowed

to hit each other,” then no one in the kindergarten should do that. A routine refers to an activity that is done every day consistently. For example, the mealtimes and nap time in a kindergarten are routines. Doing an activity at a certain time every day is a routine. A routine is also defined as “a conventional, fixed, and repetitive pattern of action which makes it easy for children to take part” (Os, 2013, p. 6). Routines often focus on learning social skills such as turn-taking, listening, follow-up, practicing negotiations, and learning something about how to handle different perspectives (Os, 2013). In the methods section, I describe, in two tables, the basic routines of the children and adults in my fieldwork setting. Rules and routines as terms in this section are described in very black and white examples. Through the analysis chapters, rules and routines become much more flexible and fluid depending on the situation and the actors involved. I take the simple definitions of a rule and a routine and analyze how they work in practice in my fieldwork setting.

2.5 Norwegian Kindergarten Culture

This research project examines a part of Norwegian society and culture. Attending kindergarten in Norway is a historically, politically, culturally, and socially Norwegian idea (Angell, 2008). Historically, kindergarten has been an institution separate from school (Angell, 2008; Aase and Aase, 2008). Kindergarten in Norway has its own history as a daycare institution rather than a formal education institution. The kindergarten is a cultural institution. The routines and activities in kindergarten reflect Norwegian ideals and values (Aase, 2008). Norwegian kindergarten is a public institution that children from under one year to six years of age spend a large majority of their time. Os (2013) claims that children’s learning is a social phenomenon because it cannot be separated from the context within which it takes place.

There are certain elements of Norwegian culture that play a large role in the kindergarten setting. Presenting these elements here will avoid confusion when discussing different situations that occurred in my fieldwork setting. In general, many authors discuss kindergarten in Norway as a democratic tradition that links children’s education and care or as an upbringing to democracy (Greve, 2013; Bae, 2009). First, In Norway, it is common to bring a “matpakke” to school or work for lunch. A “matpakke” is a couple pieces of bread with different toppings on them such as cheese or ham in an open faced sandwich. All of the children in my fieldwork setting had some kind of variation of a “matpakke” for lunch. Everyone had a variation of mainly whole wheat bread with something on it and then for dessert maybe some fruit or vegetables. One rule in my fieldwork setting was that the

children had to eat their bread in order to eat their dessert. Because of the “matpakke” in Norway, all of the children had similar things to eat in my fieldwork setting. In my fieldwork setting, the children ate two meals, one “matpakke” and one warm meal provided by the kindergarten in addition to breakfast and a snack of fruit.

Second, the organization of adults in kindergarten is a team including individual kindergarten teachers. In my fieldwork setting, there were two pedagogical leaders and three or four kindergarten assistants. This is a typical kindergarten set up in Norway. There is a high teacher to student ratio in Norway in comparison to one teacher classrooms, and they work together to plan the kindergarten schedule (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). The pedagogical leaders are required to be educated with an early childhood education degree, while the assistants can have a varied background. In bigger kindergartens, it is also possible that there is one educated pedagogical leader and other educated kindergarten teachers and then assistants. The organization varies from kindergarten to kindergarten. However, the team model is characteristic of kindergartens in Norway. Because of the lack of one “kindergarten teacher position,” the children refer to their teachers as “the adults.” The adults are in the kindergarten to take care of the children.

Third, it is common for children in kindergarten to go on trips as part of routine activities. These trips could be as short as walking around the block of the kindergarten or going to a museum. There is not a large procedure to be allowed to take the children out of the kindergarten or on a trip out in nature. The adult team decides together and has quite a bit of freedom in deciding what they would like to do with the children.

Fourth, in my fieldwork setting, it was expected of adults in kindergarten to take initiative and engage actively with the pedagogical team to plan and implement activities or events in the kindergarten. It was possible for the adults to decide for themselves if they would like to try a new activity with the children or go on a trip. There was room for flexibility and for the adults to decide on their own what they wanted to do or try. Everything did not have to be in the original schedule and freedom or creativity was expected from the adults. “The culture of the kindergarten, such as, for example, spoken and un-spoken rules, norms, and values, will change with the different pedagogues who are present” (Warming, 2005).

Fifth, the children who nap at kindergarten (all of the children research participants in this study) generally sleep outside in their strollers (figure 2.1). The kindergarten typically

has a covered area outside of the kindergarten to have all the strollers. The children are put to sleep at varied times and one of the adults sits outside with the children during nap time.

Sixth, it is very important for children to be outside while they are in kindergarten. Using the outdoor area and being outside regardless of the weather or season is very important in Norwegian kindergarten settings (Nilsen, 2008). I discussed “Friluftsliv” earlier in my description of early childhood education in Norway, however regardless of the profile of the kindergarten, children spend a large amount of time outside. With that in mind, I will present what the children wear to not be cold outside. This might seem self explanatory, yet the order of clothing and deciding what is necessary for the day is important. The children require a lot of different clothing in kindergarten. The following list is typically what each child would have with them in kindergarten in the fall or winter. This list might be a bit shorter in spring and summer. However, the weather changes frequently in Norway. One day it could be sunny and warm and the next day cold, raining and/or snowing.

Kindergarten clothing includes:

- A thin wool shirt,
- thin wool pants,
- a change of clothes,
- thick wool or fleece pants,
- a thick wool or fleece jacket,
- a rain suit (or long johns and jacket),
- two winter snow suits (one light weight and one heavy weight),
- rain mittens,
- wool mittens,
- a wool hat,
- a wool buff (scarves are not allowed),
- rain boots,
- winter boots,

- shoes,
- indoor shoes, and
- extra socks of thin and thick wool.



Figure 2.1: Strollers from my fieldwork setting.

This list is a typical compilation of what a child would need for kindergarten in Norway. The children in my fieldwork setting generally came to school dressed in their wool shirts and pants (leggings) and maybe “normal” clothes on top such as a dress or jeans and a shirt. One of the most important components of staying warm and dry outside is having a base layer of wool. All of the children in my fieldwork setting had this list of clothes at the kindergarten (figures 2.2 and 2.3).



Figure 2.2: Outerwear in my fieldwork setting (The blue and white suit in the corner is an adult snow suit.).



Figure 2.3: Shoe rack at my fieldwork setting.

Chapter 3

Theory

In this chapter, I present some of the works that have greatly influenced my study. I draw first generally from the field of the social studies of children and childhood. I shorten this name to childhood studies throughout this text. Childhood studies is the theoretical background for this project. I emphasize the importance of children as beings and social beings (Woodhead and Faulkner, 2000). This is extremely important for this project due to the young age of many of the participants. I then go into some of the important concepts and terms that are used throughout my analysis to describe the data created during my fieldwork. I draw from Corsaro and Molinari (2008) and Scandinavian research from authors such as Os (2013); Løndal and Greve (2015); Bae (2009, 2012) and Gilliam and Gulløvv (2017).

3.1 The Social Studies of Children and Childhood

My research is in the field of childhood studies which was also previously considered the new paradigm of childhood studies. This field recognizes children as subjects or social actors worthy of study in their own right (Woodhead and Faulkner, 2000). Children are seen as “beings” instead of “becomings.” The research attempts to focus on the thoughts and actions of children as they are without delving into who they will become in the future (Woodhead and Faulkner, 2000). The focus is on their present condition and experiences. Children are viewed as relatively autonomous and competent. They have rights as children and individuals and claim them in their everyday lives (Woodhead and Faulkner, 2000). Overall, the focus is understanding children’s perspectives and listening to their voices. It is important that the actual, everyday experiences of the children shine through in the re-

search instead of my own projections of what I think they think or should think about their daily routines in kindergarten. Childhood studies is the field of understanding the lived experiences of children and about their childhoods. One of the main elements of research with children under the field of childhood studies is that children are beings and social beings in their own right. Childhood is a socially constructed phenomenon (Woodhead and Faulkner, 2000). Children in childhood studies research are viewed and discussed not as what they will become in the future but as they are in the present. This is an important element to have at the forefront during research due to the fact that a large body of research with children is conducted in learning settings such as school. While children are in an institution to learn skills with the intent that they will be later beneficial to them, the emphasis of the research is still with the child as they are, an active being. Learning is involved in many stages of life including childhood (Durkheim, 1982).

Following this theoretical framework, in my research, I refrain from using terms such as baby or toddler. I do not want to use these terms due to the social norms that are connected to them. There are typical differences between babies and toddlers in terms of their abilities and competencies that I do not want to highlight in this project. Distinguishing between the babies and toddlers in my child participant group does not assist my analysis. I would like to have more fluid motion between the groupings of the one year olds and two year olds. In order to refer to the three groups of participants in my research, I use one year olds, two year olds, and adults. It would be even better to go away from age as a grouping because there is a lot of blending in these groups and one month of age difference plays a large role. However, there is a lack of a better way to describe the difference between the two groups in a concise manner. While age is used to group the participants in analysis, age is not used greatly to discuss the different skill sets of the children. This way, the emphasis is on capabilities and agency not socially prescribed stages (Durkheim, 1982). Childhood studies directly criticizes child development psychology as a theoretical background to research with children (Woodhead and Montgomery, 2003).

Furthermore, the childhood studies background is important to this research project because the research participants are very different. One and two year olds and adults have very different competencies. Writing about adults and one and two year olds simultaneously needs to be done with caution. Childhood studies presents a framework that goes away from adultcentric ways of theorizing or thinking. Children are active beings with agency (James, 2009).

3.1.1 The Three Branches of Childhood Studies

The three branches of childhood studies are sociologies of childhood (actor orientated child research), structural sociology of childhood, and (de)constructive sociology of childhood (Alanen, 2001). These three branches guide this research project and I draw important elements from each branch when thinking about how to structure the project and how to present the analysis. The first branch, sociologies of childhood, emphasizes the importance of children as active agents in their own lives. Corsaro (2003) falls under this branch with his concepts of peer culture and play culture, among other themes. Corsaro's work will be explained in greater depth in the upcoming section, "Children's Culture." The second branch of childhood studies, the structural sociology of childhood, emphasizes the importance of viewing children and childhood as part of society. This element is very important because it points out the force of society and how society can impact childhood. This helps to explain ideas that surface due to the research setting of this project being a Norwegian kindergarten. Kindergarten in Norway is a public setting where many children spend a lot of their time. The Norwegian kindergarten itself as an impact on Norwegian children and childhood as viewed in this research project. Generally speaking, the structural sociology of childhood focuses on the macro level and sociologies of childhood focuses on the micro level. The third branch of childhood studies, the (de)constructive branch comes into play when one tries to create distance and question what is normal with childhood and children. It is a form of criticizing or taking away dominant ideas and knowledge about children and childhood. This branch acknowledges how categories for children such as "baby" and "toddler" influence the way we view children and are able to do research with them. This is an important element in this research project with very young children. If they are viewed as babies or toddlers, I and the reader may be inclined to project our previously held ideas on to them. Instead of thinking relatively, we would be coming from an adultcentric point of view. I draw from all three branches of childhood studies in my analysis of routines and rules in a Norwegian kindergarten setting. However, I feel that my project falls more under the second structural branch of childhood studies because of my focus on adult-child interactions and relationship in the institution of kindergarten. Power relations, agency, and structural concepts of childhood relate to this project.

3.1.2 Agency

Agency has been discussed as a main concept in the field of childhood studies. I would like to further elaborate on the topic because it plays a large role in my analysis. Agency

refers to “an individual’s own capacities, competencies, and activities through which they navigate the contexts and positions of their life world” (Robson et al., 2007). In relation to research with children, this concept leads to thinking of children as active and competent beings in their own lives (James, 2009). Especially in relations to adults, children are able to resist and negotiate control and social and cultural expectations (James, 2009). The concept of agency relates heavily to power and control. Agency is also very much displayed in relation to resistance (Corsaro, 2003; James, 2009). How do children resist adult control? This research project examines how adults and children navigate the power and control in their relationship in the Norwegian kindergarten setting. As I will describe in my analysis, a large part of adult-child interaction in my fieldwork setting is being aware of their power and control and not using it to create further conflict or resistance between adults and children.

3.1.3 Children’s Culture

Peer and children’s culture taken from the work of Corsaro (2009) plays an important role in understanding the data from this project. Corsaro conducted fieldwork in mainly Italian and American kindergarten settings. His work relates back to agency of the children in the research group. Corsaro discusses how “Peer cultures are created, shared, and developed through everyday activities where children and caretakers take part” (Corsaro, 2009). Corsaro emphasizes that children make persistent attempts to gain control over their lives and to share that control with each other” (Corsaro and Molinari, 2008). Children’s play or peer culture refers to “a way of life of a group.” It is an ordinary life with children as main actors who produce culture. Culture is produced by children and among children (Corsaro, 2009). Play is seen as a cultural practice that is initiated and shared through a use of symbols to create meaning, values and beliefs among children. There are standards and norms or ideas of what is accepted and expected as there are in adult culture (Corsaro, 2009).

I also draw theoretical ideas from William Corsaro’s work with adult rules and conflict (Corsaro, 2003). He describes preschool in his research as an organization with a set of goals, rules, procedures and expectations for their members (Corsaro, 2003, p. 141). He also points out the restrictiveness of the adult world in comparison to the child world. Corsaro argues that a large part of a child’s sense of self comes from active resistance. Corsaro explains children’s reactions to adult rules in terms of “secondary adjustments” (Corsaro, 2003, p. 140). This means that children find little ways to get out of or resist doing what the adult has told them to do, such as “clean-up time.” In order to avoid clean up time,

Corsaro observed children uses different methods of avoidance he terms “relocation strategy”, “personal problem delay,” and “pretending not to hear strategy” (Corsaro, 2003, p. 150). Corsaro (2003) also stresses the idea that if there is no conflict there is no need for a rule. In other words, he found during his fieldwork periods that teachers did not enforce rules when the children were getting along or playing in a safe manner. It was only when things were not going smoothly that the teachers stepped in to enforce the rules.

3.1.4 Relational Processes

Relational processes is taken from the work of Berry Mayall (2002) in which relationships between parents and children were analyzed in order to understand relational processes (Mayall, 2002). Mayall describes these processes as “processes through which the physical and social conditions of childhoods and parent’s interpretations of these shape children’s daily lives” (Mayall, 2002, p. 41). It is important to mention Mayall’s work with relational processes because it draws attention to broad sociophysical factors that structure young people’s lives (Mayall, 2002). Wider social forces influence the lives of adults and children. Mayall’s work also demonstrated that children view their parents as rightly having authority over them. Parents know more than their children and have to protect them and provide for them (Mayall, 2002). While this concept is applied here to the parent-child relationship, I feel that it also plays a role in the adult-child relationship in a kindergarten setting, especially when the children are very young. Lastly, Mayall accounts that children described their own childhood as a period of learning and participation (Mayall, 2002). Children’s views of childhood and adult’s views of childhood are very intertwined and difficult to separate. One affects the other. “At individual levels, children and parents negotiate their relationships in relation to childhoods lived in a changing society and to new ideas about child-parent relations” (Mayall, 2002). This statement summarizes some of the ideas I use in my observations of adult-child interactions in a kindergarten setting.

3.2 Adult-Child Interaction Concepts

The backbone of this project is investigation of how adults and children interact in a Norwegian kindergarten setting. How do they coexist and create a day at kindergarten together? Ellen Os (2013) writes about adult-child interaction in Norwegian kindergarten in her research focused on toddler meal times. She conducted research based on recordings of children and adults from nine different child-care centers (Os, 2013). Os focuses on teachers’ mediation of peer relations in toddler groups (Os, 2013). I borrow three concepts from her work, “Attentive distance,” “Routinized practices,” and “Power balance,”

and apply them to my research on rules and routines (Os, 2013). These three theoretical concepts are described in the following three subsections. Rules and routines in my analysis are exemplary of how adults and children navigate their differences. For example, one main research question I discuss at length in my analysis is how children learn kindergarten rules. This question is the same as how to adults handle conflict yet said from the adult perspective.

3.2.1 Attentive Distance

In my research, I draw from Ellen Os's research from mediation of peer-relations during meal-times in toddler groups. She focuses on the elements of adult-child interaction in facilitating togetherness amongst toddlers (Os, 2013). She examines how adults are involved in the ways that children form relationships in Norwegian kindergarten. Ellen Os also discusses the level of activeness of adults in her studies. Are adults adding on to what children say or are they silent in the background? Os terms this idea of giving children space and exiting the situation in some cases, "Attentive distance" (Os, 2013). The concept of "Attentive distance" plays a strong role in the analysis of the situations I witnessed in my fieldwork setting. Sometimes, the adult presence is clear but the children are the central actors. At other times, the adult plays a more central role and the children react to what they do or say. This is one concept that I borrow to explain how adults and children balance "Adult order" and "Child chaos" (Os, 2013).

3.2.2 Routinized Practices

Ellen Os also discusses the impact of "Routinized practices" in forming relationships or togetherness. Ellen Os clearly states some things that children learn in kindergarten are done so through seemingly mundane conversations. Some of these skills include "turn-taking, listening, responding, follow-up, negotiations, and handling different perspectives" (Os, 2013, p.5). From my research, I suggest that from the adult perspective these mundane conversations are very purposeful in learning social skills in kindergarten. I argue that the routines are essential to daily life in a Norwegian kindergarten setting. The teachers do and should think about their interactions with children in mundane situations because they extremely affect each other and how each other's views the world and how to exist in it (Bae, 2009, 2012).

3.2.3 Power Balance: Adult Order and Child Chaos

Ellen Os states “To find a balance where both adult order, and the chaos that children’s initiatives might lead to, are parts of everyday life in child care and represents challenges for the teachers” (Os, 2013, p.7). This statement has resonated deeply with this project. This project has attempted to examine how teachers and children deal with and navigate finding a balance between “Adult order” and “Child initiated chaos.” This balance is essential in childhood institutions in which adults and children work together to coexist. Ellen Os (2013) highlights and stresses the importance of how adults interact and are involved in children’s interactions with each other. It is inevitable that adults in child care situations will be involved in children’s activities (Os, 2013). Therefore it is extremely important to understand and be aware of how adults interact and effect children (Os, 2013). How adults and children create balance between “Adult order” and “Child chaos” in a Norwegian kindergarten setting is investigated further in the analysis.

3.3 Pedagogical Tact and Teacher's Interactions

Anne Greve and Knut Løndal (2015) examine adult-child interaction in their study of teacher’s interaction styles in kindergartens and after school programmes in Norway. They specifically focus on teacher’s interactions in relation to child managed play. They describe three main approaches of “Surveillance,” and “Initiating and inspiring approach” and a “Participating and interactional approach” (Løndal and Greve, 2015). “Surveillance” refers to situations where the teachers do not participate in the play, but keep a distance and observe the children for a certain period of time. The “Initiating and inspiring approach” refers to a situations where the teacher initiates and/or inspires the children’s play without direct participation in the activity. The “Participating and interactional approach” refers to a situation when the teacher participates and interacts in the play in a direct and interactional manner (Løndal and Greve, 2015, p. 496). These three approaches are successful when they are done with pedagogical thoughtfulness and tact. Greve and Løndal (2015) use these three categories in their work to describe different types of teacher child interaction observed in their studies. They make it clear that teachers often switch between these three tactics and it is not a description of the individual pedagogical style of the teacher, but how they chose to act in the given situation (Løndal and Greve, 2015). Teachers may choose to act differently based on a wide variety of reasons. For example the ratio of children to teachers or the severity of the situation influences the teacher to react in a certain way.

Pedagogical tact is taken from Max van Manen (2008). Tact in this context refers to “a special awareness of how to behave in different pedagogical situations. Max van Manen (2008) discusses how this type of tact can be very beneficial and important for teachers. He writes “to exercise tact means to see a situation calling for sensitivity, to understand the meaning of what is seen, to sense the significance of this situation, to know how and what to do, and to actually do something right” (Van Manen, 2008). Key components of tact are one’s ability to improvise and one’s judgment to practical situations. Pedagogical tact plays a large role in my analysis of situations in fieldwork setting. I argue that the examples of conflict management in my fieldwork setting display many situations of pedagogical tact. Pedagogical tact is the way that teachers are able to help maintain the balance between “Adult order” and “Child chaos” that was discussed above. Pedagogical tact leads to the role of teacher as a caregiver instead of teacher as a rule enforcer (Van Manen, 2008).

3.3.1 Spacious Patterns v. Narrow Patterns

The concepts of spacious and narrow patterns are taken from Bae (2012) and provides a way to discuss interaction patterns between teachers and children. A teacher that uses spacious patterns is able to talk to a child in a clear, concise and not threatening way. They are able to give space to the child and judge situations in the moment. When a teacher is using spacious patterns they are treating the child as an active partner (Bae, 2012). A playful attitude and playful initiatives are an important part of spacious patterns because they allow children and adults to take part on equal terms. Spacious patterns allows for an openness in which there is freedom for both adults and children to express themselves (Bae, 2012). A teacher that uses narrow patterns is very controlling and fails to see things on a situation to situation basis (Bae, 2012). They also tend to explain rules separate from the reasonings behind them and disregard children’s intentions and ideas behind their actions. Teachers using narrow patterns are generally primarily concerned with their own intentions instead of what is best for the child. The use of spacious patterns depends on “a view of the child as a fellow human being, where the teacher takes into account the children’s experiences, respect’s the children’s wills, lets the children be themselves, and gives children control” (Bae, 2012). Van Manen (2008) argues that teachers can only act with pedagogical tact if they are also using spacious patterns. A teacher with narrow patterns does not have pedagogical tact. In order for a teacher to act in a spacious pattern they need to be attentive and have a focused presence of mind (Bae, 2012). They need to have an openness towards children’s meta-communicative signals and be tolerant of mistakes (Bae, 2012). They need to also be able to self-reflect (Bae, 2012). Many of

the situations encountered in this study surrounding conflict management and learning of rules and routines display teachers using spacious patterns and pedagogical tact. In fact, this project argues that the design and set up of the actual kindergarten creates spaces where the teachers can more easily spend energy focusing on using spacious patterns and pedagogical tact.

3.3.2 Pedagogical Thoughtfulness and Love

This section presents theoretical concepts and ideas that support the data relating to care and the adult-child relationship in kindergarten. The idea of pedagogical tact is visible throughout my analysis. The concepts of pedagogical thoughtfulness and love also from the work of Van Manen (2008) and from the work of Määttä and Uusiautti (2013) further describe the importance of this type of attitude. Määttä and Uusiautti (2013) define pedagogical love as one of the many types of love an individual can feel and express. Figure 3.1 “the Many Faces of Love” describes the different types of love. Pedagogical love works in the lives of teachers by creating two obligation, an attachment to learners and a dutiful perseverance of life values (Määttä and Uusiautti, 2013). They write “pedagogical love speaks to interdependence- the recognition and acceptance that we need others” (Määttä and Uusiautti, 2013). The teacher needs that have a continuous trust in the student and the student's abilities. In addition, the teacher needs to work actively to show this trust to their students. Määttä and Uusiautti (2013) emphasize several simple techniques that teachers use to demonstrate pedagogical love. These include:

- concretizing,
- illustrating,
- asking questions,
- discussing,
- listening and repeating,
- thanking for the small steps forward,
- providing remedial or supplementary instruction,
- making the standards lower temporarily in order to make time for maturing, and
- not giving up or quitting easily

(Määttä and Uusiautti, 2013).

The teacher must take the student's individual situation into consideration (van Manen, 2008). Lastly, the teacher's goal is the principle of minimal help. The principle of minimal help refers to the idea that "the teacher's role becomes smaller, little by little, and a learner develops survival strategies for him or her" (Määttä and Uusiautti, 2013).

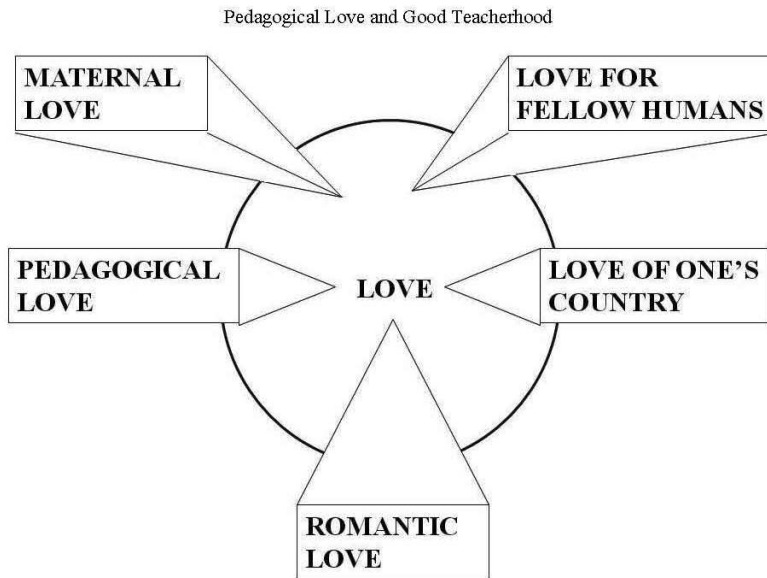


Figure 3.1: The Many Faces for Love (Määttä and Uusiautti, 2013).

Chapter 4

Methods

In this chapter, I first present the fieldwork period, location and participants. I then present the research methods I used during the fieldwork period and my researcher role. I justify my choice of methods and choice of research participants. Next, I describe some concerns in the methodology of this project and the ethics of working with very young children. Lastly, I discuss my analysis process and analytical methods.

4.1 Fieldwork Period, Location and Participants

Research for this project was conducted in a kindergarten located in one of the biggest cities in Norway. I spent a couple days a week for three months (October to December) at the kindergarten from 7 A.M to 12 P.M. to observe and participate in morning drop off and activity routines. There were twenty-one children participants and six adult participants in the research project. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 present information about the research participants. All of the names of the participants have been changed in order to protect their privacy. The children were grouped into two different groups based on age and ability. The groups were very flexible and changed from day to day depending on the activity and attendance. However, the starting point for the two groups was age, one year olds and two year olds. The ages of the children displayed in the table are the ages they were from the start of the research period. Tables 4.3 and 4.4 present the daily routines of the children and adults.

Table 4.1: The Children

Gender	Name	Age	Group
Boy	Harald	21 months	1 and 2
Girl	Olivia	13 months	1
Girl	Emma	15 months	1
Boy	James	19 months	1
Boy	Mason	9 months	1
Girl	Mia	11 months	1
Girl	Sofia	11 months	1
Girl	Abigail	15 months	1 and 2
Boy	Henry	21 months	1 and 2
Girl	Kara	18 months	1
Girl	Haley	14 months	1
Girl	Katherine	2 years	2
Boy	Thomas	13 months	1
Girl	Sarah	19 months	1 and 2
Boy	Alex	2 years, 6 months	2
Boy	Martin	2 years, 2 months	2
Girl	Isabella	2 years, 3 months	2
Boy	Kristian	1 year, 10 months	2
Girl	Molly	1 year, 11 months	2
Girl	Charlotte	2 years	2
Boy	Liam	21 months	1 and 2

Table 4.2: The Adults

Gender	Name	Group	Job
Man	Fredrik	2	Kindergarten worker
Woman	Kari	1	Kindergarten worker
Woman	Kristina	1	Pedagogical leader
Woman	Cecilie	2	Pedagogical leader
Woman	Beth	1	Kindergarten worker
Man	Bill	2	Kindergarten worker

Table 4.3: Child Routines

Child Daily Routines	Location
Drop off, good-bye to parents	Eating room
Free play/activity	Reading corner/ play rooms/ outside play area
First meal	Eating room
Sleep/ rest time	Outside in strollers
Wake up/ free play	Inside play room
Second meal	Eating room
Free play/semi free play	Inside play room/ eating room
Pick up	Inside play room/ eating room

Table 4.4: Adult Routines

Shift	Time	Daily Routines
First shift	7:00 AM to 2:30 PM	Set up, breakfast, first diaper change
Second shift	8:00 AM to 3:30 PM	First diaper change, outside area check
Third shift	8:30 AM to 4:00 PM	Second diaper change, first lunch time
Fourth shift	9:00 AM to 4:30 PM	Second diaper change, nap time
Fifth shift	9:30 AM to 5:00 PM	Nap time, second lunch time

4.2 Research Methods and Role

This project was based on participant observation and informal interview discussion. Participant observation was the main research method of the project. Participant observation refers to engagement with research participants to better understand their lives, their experiences, and how they make sense of the world (Warming, 2005). Through participant observation, one is able to create knowledge built through a relationship, particular place, person and time. In addition, participant observation allowed me to view children's perspectives in my fieldwork as multiple and changing and contextualized socially, culturally, historically and biographically (Warming, 2010). Participant observation allows the researcher to learn not only about the participants but also about their context. This was a large component for my project as I also wanted to understand a Norwegian kindergarten setting. I describe my second research method as informal interview discussion because I used my interview guide actively during my participant observation (See Appendix B). Often in the morning, I would ask the adults different questions pertaining to the kindergarten rules and routines. I discuss these two methods in relation to other methods that could have been used in the next section.

My research role was very important in shaping the outcome of the fieldwork and the following analysis. I was an outsider in the fieldwork setting. This enabled me to ask basic questions and have the adults and children tell me and show me how things were done. This also enabled me to adapt a more adult-like role in the kindergarten. I was an adult, yet different from the other adults due to my personal competencies.

Each day I would arrive at seven in the morning when the kindergarten opened. Normally, children had not arrived yet and there was time to discuss different themes with the adult that had the first shift at the kindergarten. It was during this time from 7:00 to 7:30 A.M. that I was able to have discussion and learn more about how the kindergarten worked. One by one children would begin to arrive. Each parent and child had their own routine but the general trend was to talk with the kindergarten staff and ask the child what they wanted to do or where they wanted to sit to eat their breakfast. After more children had arrived and the next kindergarten staff member had arrived, the group would move into the play area that was bigger and allowed for more free play. Throughout the morning as staff and children arrived, a plan for the day was made and adjustments were made from the monthly plan already in place. Children started with getting ready to go outside, or to do an art project, or to have free play depending on the day. The layout of the kindergarten was important for the flow of the daily routines and how the staff worked with the children (figure 4.1).

During my research I would begin the day by sitting at the table in the eating room (figure 4.4) as the children arrived and then move to the corner of the play area room that was situated between the two rooms of the area. I placed myself out of the way yet also in the center of activity in the play area.

While I was in the kindergarten, I always had a pad of paper and pen with me to write down different things I saw and participated in. Often, I was included into the play while I was seated on the floor taking notes. While the children viewed me as another adult who worked at the kindergarten, they were always curious to see what I was doing and what I had with me. Conversations such as the one that follows were normal occurrences during my research period. The following situation between myself and Abigail describes my role as an adult yet with different competencies from the other adult kindergarten staff members (Corsaro, 2003).

ME: Do you want to draw?

Abigail looks at me and looks at my notebook and pen.

ME: You can draw on this paper.

I turn to a new page from what I was writing on. Abigail takes my pen in her hand and starts to move it across the paper. She begins to laugh and tries it again. She takes the pen off the paper and begins to examine where the ink comes out.

ME: You turn the pen on and off like this.

I click the pen on and off. Abigail tries to touch the top of the pen where the ink comes out. I turn the pen off (thinking it is best she does not get ink all over her hands). Abigail seems to begin to get bored of the pen, itself, and tries to write again and discovers that nothing appears on the paper (because the pen was off).

ME: We have to turn it on again to draw.

I turn the page. Abigail draws some more and starts to walk away with the pen and my notebook.

ME: I need to have my notebook so I can write it in too, but you can stay here and draw if you would like.

I take the pen and paper back. Abigail looks at me confused and back and forth between me and the pen and paper. I show her a lego tower that she can play with. She walks away with the lego tower and goes to see what one of the other children is doing.

The drawings from this situation are presented in figures 4.2 and 4.3. Instances of play or interaction with one and two year olds were very important to the research. By interacting with the children through my notebook they were some what invited into my observation and role in the kindergarten. While I was unable to actually completely inform the children about my notebook, they were aware of its presence in the play area and were invited to use it. Warming discusses how she used this same technique in her participant observation in a danish kindergarten. "I sat down and made notes in my notebook while I observed

the children. This provoked some children's curiosity. They asked me what I was doing and I answered" (Warming, 2010, p. 63). Many situations occurred one after the other that presented more information for how one and two year olds viewed kindergarten life. One minute they were interested in what I was writing or the pen I had and the next they were on to the next thing that drew their attention. Other ways that I participated in play time were building with blocks, role play and reading books, among other activities. In general, I was viewed as an adult with different competencies. The other adults used a "report book" to make notes and mark attendance. The children were not allowed to use that notebook but they were allowed to draw in my notebook. I was like an adult in that I also carried a notebook, yet different in that I let the children part take in my writing. Also, when there were more planned activities such as painting or going on trip I was more on the side of an adult in the environment than a child. I would help the children with mittens or shoes if they were older or help the adults dress the one year olds fully to go outside. It was important to help the adults and be active in the fieldwork setting but to remember that I was not one of the staff.

4.3 Choice of Two Methods

Participant observation was the research method that made the most sense based on the majority of my participants' ages and the setting of my research project. I wanted to become a part of the kindergarten day and see how it was constructed from the point of view of the children and the adults. I did not want to alter it or effect it in significant ways. Luckily, the kindergarten activities planned already let me observe and participate in many settings that I could have created myself by using other research methods. For example, I thought about using drawing as a research method. Yet, instead of asking a child to draw a particular thing, I wanted to observe and document how the children chose which colors to use or what they wanted to draw or what they did when they did not want to draw anymore. These activities and moments were already an integral part of kindergarten life for one and two year olds. In addition, I decided to only use participant observation in consideration of fair representation of the children (Alderson and Morrow, 2011). I did not want to create research about them, but rather create research with them. It would have been difficult due to the very young age and competencies of the child participants to accurately depict them in other methods such as mapping, drawing, recall, or group interviews (Alderson and Morrow, 2011). Many methods were not feasible while acknowledging the children as participants. On the other hand, if I had been able to design an active method such as drawing, the children would have had a better option to opt out of the study (Alderson and

Morrow, 2011). All of the children were included in the study due to signatures from their parents and it was difficult to fully obtain informed consent from the child participants. The consent form can be found in appendix A. Due to this element, choosing to use participant observation allowed me to be the least disruptive to their daily lives and compensated for the lack of complete informed consent (Alderson and Morrow, 2011).

I also initially thought I would have formal interviews as part of the research process. I dropped this idea when I realized how much time I had to discuss casually with the adults in the kindergarten and how open this conversation was. I felt that, through informal interviews, I was more able to embody the “traveler” type of researching role in which the researcher “wanders together” with the participants instead of mining for data (Brinkman and Kvale, 2015). In addition, the questions were asked in a more practical manner based on specific situations. I was able to discuss what I thought I had observed with the adults that had their own feelings about different situations in the kindergarten. In this way, many of my situations, included in this text, involved an explanation of what I observed happened, what the adults speculated happened and lastly my personal feelings and analysis of the situations. I felt that a formal interview would have created an unneeded stress due to the hectic kindergarten schedule. The adults did not have time to take out of their schedules to talk to me individually. It would have put a strain on the adult team if I had formal interviews with them individually. Also, often I asked questions when two or more of the adults were present. In this way, I received more of a lively debate or discussion instead of one individual’s answer.

4.4 Choice of Age Group: One and Two Year Olds

The one and two year old age group was important for my research because I wanted to learn what children’s first understandings of rules and routines in kindergarten were. Participating and observing with one and two year olds allowed me to gain a better understanding of a child’s foundation of understanding kindergarten life that they take with them as they experience kindergarten and eventually go to school. In Norway, kindergarten is not school, but rather a time to experience life and to become used to being around other children in new situations (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). It is a unique situation that there is a learning institution created for children between the ages of one and five that prepares them for the first year of school, yet does not teach any formal subjects. This child care institution with trained pedagogues to work with very young children offers insight not only into the ways that a Norwegian kindergarten can operate and chil-

dren's understandings of it, but, also ways that day care centers or parenting values and techniques are potentially understood and internalized by young children and adults.

4.5 Concerns and Ethics in Methodology

Due to the age of the children I was working with, I needed to take extra precautions to be aware of power relations between myself as an adult and the children participants as one and two year olds (Alderson and Morrow, 2011). The one year olds had mainly non verbal communication methods and were learning to pull themselves up and walk. The two year olds had more verbal communication yet were still very much at the beginning of experiencing social skills and kindergarten life. I needed to be particularly cautious to not lead the research in one direction or another that was different from what the children did naturally (Alderson and Morrow, 2011). In the conversation between Abigail and myself about my notebook and pen, for example, I tried to allow the child to use my pen and paper as much as she wanted and not control the situation too much that I was using authority or becoming one of the adults by guiding what she was doing. It was not always possible to completely follow through with the role of being adult-like (Warming, 2005; Corsaro and Molinari, 2008). Of course, I stopped her from writing all over herself but I tried to always allow enough time and patience to allow each child to feel their way around who I was and how I fit into the kindergarten environment. Many experiences for very young children are exploration experiences. I wanted experiences for them involving me to be as natural and child guided as possible (Alderson and Morrow, 2011). Their participation in relation to myself and the kindergarten staff is what fuelled this research project.

In addition to my role in the research, I took precautions in how I viewed the children. Throughout the research period, I kept in the back of my head the idea of children as similar to adults but with different competencies (Solberg, 1996). While this view may have been problematic in determining more designed research methods, I think that it helped me remain focused on the children participants as beings instead of becomings (Woodhead and Faulkner, 2000). As I have experience working in kindergarten with four and five year olds before in Norway, it was important not to be always comparing the one and two year olds competencies to those of four and five year olds. Reflexivity towards myself as an adult in a child world was necessary especially when thinking of the children in the research project as similar to adults but with different competencies (Warming, 2010). Thought processes or methods I used to aid my research process and how I thought of the children in the research project were very important and intentional due to the very young

age of the participants. In many ways they were very vulnerable and reliant on adults in an adult world. In these ways, I hope I was able to enable the children to communicate their views and navigate their place as competent and autonomous yet also vulnerable and dependent.

Throughout the fieldwork process and analysis process, I have taken extra precautions to ensure that I have to my best ability listened to what the children had to say, even when it wasn't through verbal expression. I combined my fieldwork and analysis in many ways to receive input from the kindergarten staff members as I proceeded with the writing process. Careful analysis has presented demonstrated body language and other forms of communication to include the children in the project (Alderson and Morrow, 2011). The fieldwork was also completely conducted in Norwegian so kindergarten staff input on translations from Norwegian to English have been an important part of the method and analysis parts of this project. I discuss my analysis methods in the final section of this chapter.

I have attempted to rein in my previous perceptions of Norwegian kindergarten and my knowledge of one and two years throughout this fieldwork and analysis. My perceptions of children will of course shine through in my methodological choices and role as a researcher, but I hope they have not affected the ultimate findings in a drastic way. Research with children is a constant struggle of understanding their differences from adults, yet not letting those differences overshadow the similarities that all human beings share (Solberg, 1996; Punch, 2002). Children are their own beings with important competencies regardless of what age they are. This is a statement I firmly believe, as I think that one and two year olds have a lot of crucial knowledge to share with adults and aid adults in understanding a child's place in an adult world.

I have discussed many elements involved in the ethics of working with very young children such as informed consent and representing children's views (Alderson and Morrow, 2011; Warming, 2005). I have also presented my researcher role which was designed to limit disturbance and not have a negative impact on the lives of the child participants. In addition, I would like to draw attention to the length of my research period. I feel that I was able to gain rapport with the child participants which lowered the potential negative impacts of my presence in the setting (Corsaro and Molinari, 2008). Also, all interactions between myself and child participants were child initiated. In this way, the children were able to actively participate with me (Corsaro and Molinari, 2008).

4.6 Analysis Process

The first step of my analysis process was to transcribe all of my written data from days in the kindergarten. I did this quickly trying not to inject personal comments or analysis into the typing. Next, I used a coding method (Saldana, 2009). I began to notice general trends in communication as I typed conversation I had heard in the kindergarten. This choice of methods in analysis greatly impacted my writing and created the chapter structures, especially for the final analysis chapter “Adult-Child interaction.” After dividing the conversations and situations into different groups, I went through each individually to catalogue similarities and differences between them. It was at this stage in the analysis that my observations, with my personal emotions towards the situations, began to highlight different ideas or concepts I wanted to address in this project. At that point, I was able to go back to my theory chapter and build on certain ideas that became more crucial to my analysis. In the end, what began as a study of rules and routines became also, if not more, a study of communication between adults and children in my fieldwork setting. These ideas are discussed at greater length throughout the analysis and discussion chapters.

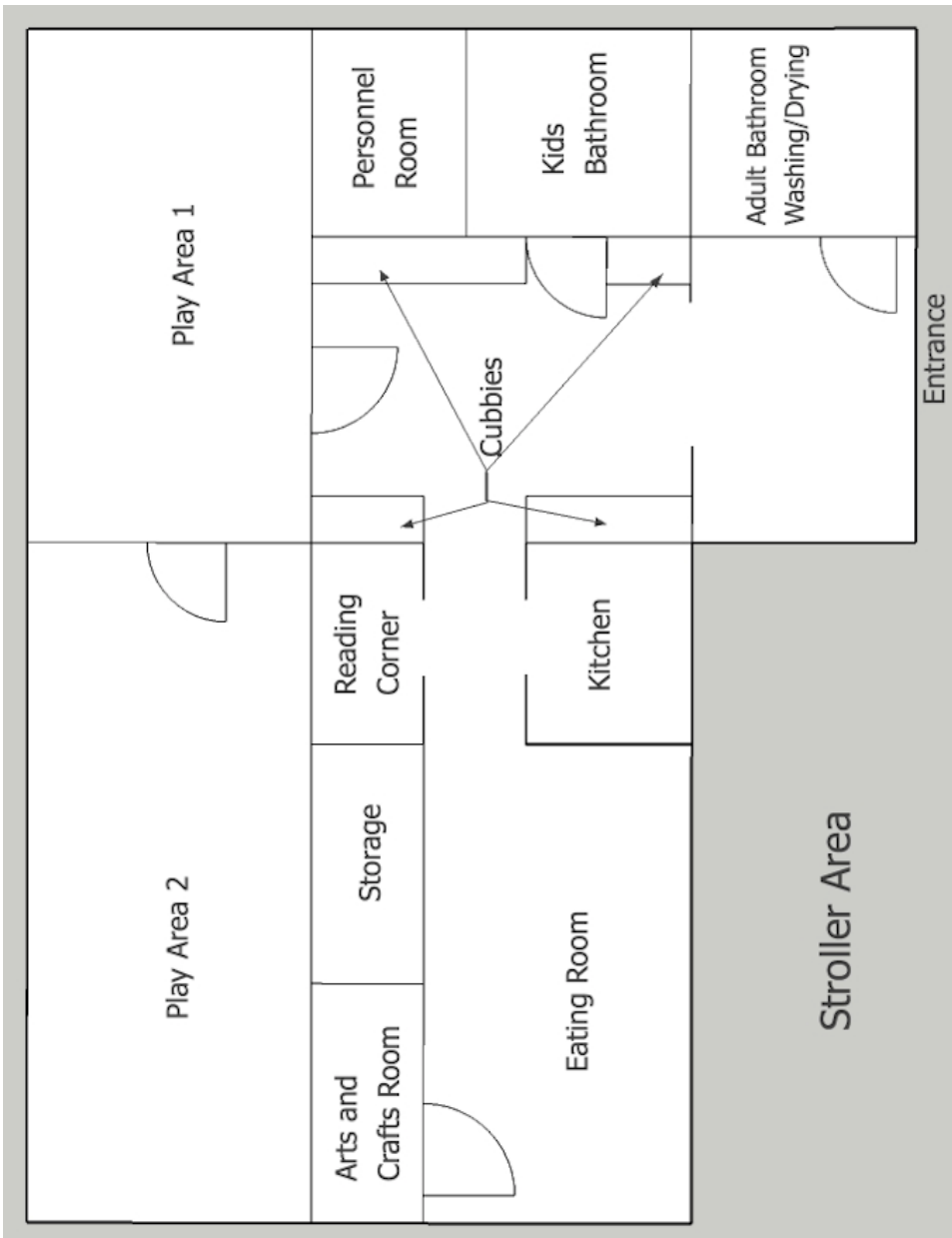


Figure 4.1: Layout of the Kindergarten.

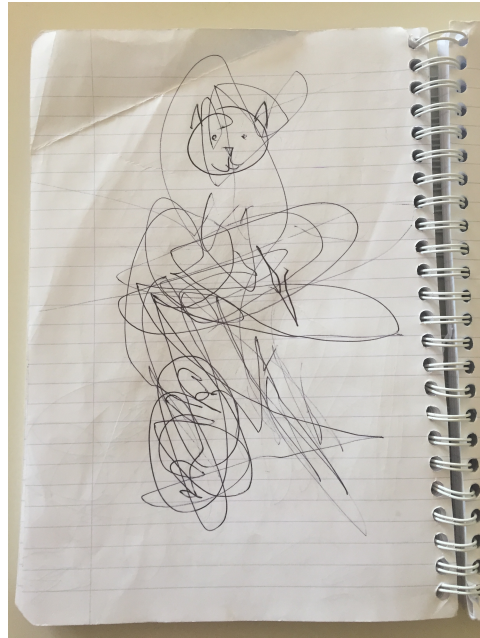


Figure 4.2: Drawing 1.



Figure 4.3: Drawing 2



Figure 4.4: Eating Area.

The Kindergarten

This chapter focuses on the flexibility of the kindergarten space, itself, and the flexibility of the adults. It is divided into three sections “Kindergarten Space and Time,” “Children’s Agency,” and “The First Day of Kindergarten.” The first section focuses on the kindergarten space and how it is used. The planning done by the adults is also discussed. I argue that the adults work together as a group to adjust things that they have planned to fit the individual children that they observe on the given day. I also argue that the actual kindergarten space is designed to support the children and the adults. I witnessed the different things that took place in the morning that seemed to characterize and guide the rest of the day. Every day I observed in the kindergarten was different. Some days were very relaxed while other were more on the chaotic side of the spectrum. The second section focuses on the children’s daily actions more specifically. It was important according to the adults and parents, that the children’s capacities for activities were challenged when appropriate. The title points to the idea that the children often seemingly decided the duration of an activity based on their competencies and agency in the situations. The third section is a case study of how the first day of kindergarten and transferring to kindergarten was at my fieldwork setting.

5.1 Kindergarten Space and Time

In this section, I present first my findings that relate to the actual space of the kindergarten. The design and layout of the kindergarten are addressed. The children had often seemingly emotional connections and experiences with the kindergarten space. Second, I address the planning of routines and activities done by the adults.

5.1.1 Space

The layout and design of the kindergarten seemed to play a large role in the adults' and children's experiences of the kindergarten day. The drawing of the floor plan of the kindergarten can be found in the methods chapter of this project. There are open spaces in the kindergarten but also areas that can be closed off and used for different things. There is also a kitchen so that the adults have an area to wash dishes and water bottles and prepare warm food. A refrigerator was in the kitchen to keep food from home cold until the children were ready to eat. The children and adults expressed often during my fieldwork the importance of the space. In fact, the kindergarten framework plan discusses the necessary amount of space per child and other elements of the kindergarten space (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). The children were used to the space and seemed to have emotions based on the actual space of the kindergarten and how it was used. The adults explained to me that the children would begin visiting the older children's space towards the end of the year to get acquainted with that space as well. Therefore, it would hopefully be a smooth transition to the older group, the next year. The following excerpt describes the emotional response two of the one year olds had to the door into the play rooms.

There is a door separating the play area from the hallway with all of the clothes and cubbies for the children. Normally this door is kept closed so that the children can not wander around the kindergarten space. This was also the room where the children were normally picked up by their parents. Some of the one year olds would start to cry every time the door was opened and closed. The adults speculated that the children were anticipating their parents or upset because one of the adults was leaving. They said this happened frequently. I observed it nearly everyday during the fieldwork period.

Their emotional response to the space and the act of the door closing speak to the importance of the actual kindergarten space and how it is used. The fact that the door was normally closed and when it was opened something positive, such as a parent's arrival, or something negative, such as an adult leaving, happened seemed to have an impact on the children. They seemed to actively experience the kindergarten space. Another excerpt from my field notes describes how the decorations of the kindergarten were helpful in creating a positive experience.

Throughout the kindergarten, there are things hanging from the windows. There are little stuffed animals and other decorations hanging from strings throughout the kindergarten. There are also strings of light hanging in the different rooms. When one of the children is upset, the adults usually have

them sit on their lap or carry them into a different room to look at the lights or something that is in the windows.

The kindergarten space can sometimes be used as a distraction and comfort. The child can have some individual time with the adult and get the comfort they are looking for from being held or from sitting on the adults' laps. The adults also often sing songs or nursery rhymes to comfort the children. Through my observations, the space of the kindergarten played a large role in the routinized practices of the kindergarten (Os, 2013). These practices are often developed through the ways the space of the kindergarten is used (Os, 2013). The adults were often able to use attentive distance due to the natural barriers the kindergarten created (Os, 2013). For the most part, situations did stay in the location where they started. During my fieldwork period, there was not a gate at the entrance to the reading room. However, there was always an adult who sat there when children were in the room and were going to stay there while the other adults did something else such as clean up after eating or put children individually to sleep for their naps. When I returned in the spring to visit the setting, there was a gate in place instead (figure 5.1). This gate is pictured in this thesis to portray that the kindergarten itself was always changing or making improvements and the importance of the barriers in the kindergarten space (Os, 2013).



Figure 5.1: Reading Corner Gate.

5.1.2 Time

It is important to describe the “flow” of the morning to paint a picture of how the adults plan of the day is created and thought through as discussed in the methods chapter. The beginning of the day was generally very relaxed. There was only one adult at the kindergarten and normally a couple children. The first adult sometimes ate breakfast with the children that were there early and spent time in the eating room doing different activities at the tables. Of the twenty children in the kindergarten section, only five of the children ate breakfast regularly at the kindergarten. However, depending on the day more children ate breakfast at the kindergarten or more children ate breakfast at home before arriving. While they started eating or doing other table activities, the parents that dropped off children would tell the adult present a little bit about the child. They shared how they were feeling or how they slept or if they ate enough. In this way, the parents gave a report at the beginning of the day and the adults gave a report at the end of the day. The information the parents shared with the adults was very essential to the planning of the day. The adults determined the activities of the children based on their general wellbeing for the day. If they were tired, they had more free play, while maybe those who slept well went on a trip to a park around the kindergarten. More about the content of the parent’s report is discussed in the chapter titled “Care.”

After the second adult arrived, the group generally split into two leaving some of the children at the table with the first adult and the other children going into the play room with the other adult. This was the first time in the day when the lights were all turned on and the kindergarten space transitioned from the early morning quiet and relaxed atmosphere to a more lively, awake space. The moment the second adult arrived was very important in deciding how the rest of the day will go. The first adult and second adult discussed what they thought would be best for the day. The first adult filled in the second adult about anything important the parents had said that might affect how their day went.

It was often at this point, deviations from the original plan were made. In the following situation, some of the children had more free play instead of going on a trip because how they were feeling. The adults had planned that all of the children would go on a trip outside of the kindergarten. The two year olds went on their own trip and practiced walking together, while the one year olds went all together in strollers. One of the adults stayed at the kindergarten with Olivia, Kara, Abigail and Mason because they were not feeling their best that day and had not slept well the night before. The adults decided a trip would not be the best for them that day. Instead they had the kindergarten to themselves while

the other children were out on a trip. There was a relaxed atmosphere in the kindergarten. It was not loud and the children could play throughout the play area of the kindergarten more freely than if everyone was there. Cecilie (adult) related to me that these children were also crying a lot during the morning and did not seem up to going on a trip based on that response to being in the kindergarten. The adults seemed to know the children very well so that they were able to make decisions such as this as to when a child was in a good state of mind to do something more challenging and when they could have a more relaxed day. The relationship between the adults and children is later discussed.

Sometimes the adults would plan activities based on the number of children at kindergarten or the weather for the given day. One day during my fieldwork, they decided to go on a trip because there were not that many children in the kindergarten. It was a good day to do something outside and more relaxed with less children. Normally the one year olds all ate their two meals together and the two year olds all ate their two meals together. Occasionally, the two groups ate all together. However, this was a rare occasion that normally occurred when a number of the children were absent or there was a special event happening in the kindergarten. The one year olds ate first and the two year olds ate second. However, sometimes the groups shifted around depending on how the children were feeling.

Harald (child) (group 2) ate his first meal with the first group because he was very tired. By eating with the first group, he was able to eat earlier and then have more time to sleep so that he would have a better afternoon. Even though he ate with the first group, he was still almost falling asleep in his chair.

The adults decided it would be best if Harald ate with the first group because he was having a difficult time staying awake. Even though he ate with the first group, he was still falling asleep which further demonstrates how tired he was. Children often were switched around in the two groups depending on their individual competencies for the day. From the children's perspective, it seemed that they were all one group and did not have distinctions between the youngest children and the oldest children in terms of when they did things.

As the year progressed, the adults switched around the schedules and the groupings to reflect the ages and abilities of the children. The groups became increasingly more defined as the two year olds began more actively preparing to move to the older group of the kindergarten (From three years old to school age). According to the adults, the two year olds should do more activities in general and have more emphasis on self reliance with activities such as getting dressed to go outside. They also needed to divide the group for

practical reasons. There were too many children to have positive free play in the play area all together. The adults planned that the older children could do more table activities so that the younger children could use the play room.

The pedagogical leader in my fieldwork setting made a yearly plan and also a monthly plan for the kindergarten team to follow (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). This was however not always how the days in the kindergarten actually worked. The pedagogical team usually decided on an accurate plan for the day by around 10:30 or 11:00 A.M. They based this off of how the children were and which adults were working when. Overall, the team seemed to work together to plan activities and have positive free play. The schedule needed to be flexible to accommodate the children and adults. The pedagogical team made phone calls to the parents if they had questions about the health of the child or thought that it would be best that the child was picked up early that day because they were not feeling well. The schedule for the day always depended on which children and adults were present in the kindergarten and how the group was feeling. The following list describes some common variations to the set routines and schedule that could easily be done at any time during the fieldwork to have the day run smoother for the adults and children.

- The adults moved the children in between the groups of one year olds and two year olds.
- The adults used the indoor and outdoor areas of the kindergarten to divide the children and spread out.
- The adults made group decisions as a pedagogical team.
- The children had more free play.
- The children took earlier naps.

5.2 Children's Agency

This section presents situations where the child seemingly decided what the activity of the day would be or decided that the activity for the day was finished. The adults catered to the children and worked on creating a positive, balanced atmosphere in the kindergarten by listening to the children and responding to their body language. Sometimes the adults also seemingly challenged the competencies of the children by challenging them with more difficult or longer activities. I observed that occasionally the adults did challenge the

children to a longer attention span. This, however, was based on the children's abilities, not on the work production or formal learning. The first subsection presents the recurring expression that the children often decided activities based on their energy levels. The second subsection describes a case study of an extended activity situation.

5.2.1 Tired and Hungry

The one year olds had activities such as going on trips or having massages (discussed in chapter seven "Care"), among other activities. Going on trips was an activity that all of the different ages groups in the kindergarten experienced during my fieldwork period. While they were on trips they experienced different things such as cars, trucks, garbage trucks, helicopter, planes, trees, and birds. They also practiced how to walk together, how to hold hands, and how to pay attention to traffic. Right outside the kindergarten there were steps, a bridge and a ramp that the children could walk on without worrying about cars coming by. This area was a nice place to practice crossing streets and following the adults instructions for trips. While the children were on trips they also got a change to exercise their bodies and see a different landscape other than the kindergarten. The trips and transportation means were simply adjusted to fit the abilities of the group (strollers for the youngest children). The length and distance of the trip was also adjusted based on the abilities of the group. The following situation exemplifies how the one year olds decided that they were ready to come home through their body language.

The one years olds go for a stroller ride to the play ground to have a change of scenery and to start rehearsing going on trips. The adults take the strollers to the park and all of the children are able to get out and play. Some of the children swing and others play in the sand. After being at the park for a little while, many of the children start to cry. It is clear that seemingly suddenly they are all hungry and tired. It is time to go home. Over half of the children fall asleep in the strollers on the way home and it is very silent during lunch. Afterwards, back at the kindergarten, it is very quiet in the eating room because everyone is busy eating because they were hungry.

Kindergarten in Norway is about challenging the children yet keeping care as the core focus (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). Going on trips is an important part of Norwegian kindergarten (Hansen, 2008). The children in the above episode were unable to enjoy the trip when they started to get hungry and tired. The children decided the length of the trip by using their agency in body language and the adults facilitated a quick return to the kindergarten to eat lunch and go to sleep.

5.2.2 Table Activities

In this subsection, I present an entire morning from my fieldwork data. This morning was very significant to me because it felt very similar to how an American kindergarten morning would be. The children were challenged to do several activities in a row and sit at the table for the entire morning. These two elements made this day different from the rest of the days I spent at the kindergarten. I present the morning in its entirety and then draw attention to some moments that occurred in the morning. The schedule was seemingly rigorous and in my opinion seemingly drastic from other days at the kindergarten. However, it seemed to be planned well and the social and life skills were the focus not the activities themselves.

Fredrik (adult) usually works with the two year olds and had the early shift for the day. All of the children were dropped off in the lunch room and sat at the table doing table activities. Normally when the next adult arrives, some of the children go into the play area. Instead of doing that, Fredrik had all of the two years olds stay at the tables and they did planned Christmas activities with him until they ate their first meal around eleven. This was a very interesting observation day because it was "extra" planned. There was no free play for the two year olds until later in the day. Fredrik was excited for the morning because with the morning shift he felt there was more flexibility to plan the day the way he wanted. Also, there had been some illness and adults missing from work so there had been a bit more free play then he would have liked. Free play is positive and very important but there should always be a balance (Løndal and Greve, 2015), (Synodi, 2010). Fredrik was quite determined to have activities for the entire morning. According to Fredrik, the two year olds needed to practice engaging in activities for longer periods of time. They needed to experience sitting still for longer periods of time and doing an activity until it was finished. In addition, this happened during the "Getting ready for Christmas" period which is a busy time in the kindergarten that sometimes calls for a more hectic schedule. Following is the morning schedule for Fredrik and the two year old group.

Morning Schedule 7.30-11.00:

- Everyone arrives and sits at the table doing table activities of their choice such as eating breakfast, drawing, playing with clay etc. (all of the children arrived between 7.00-9.00)
- Next, they paint on paper bags that will hold Christmas gifts to their parents.
- Then, they draw with special markers on glasses for Christmas 9:15-9:45.

- Then, they have a Santa Lucia circle time with an iPad.
- Then, they have a circle time with songs and running competition.
- Lastly, they eat their first meal at 11.00

Within each activity of the morning there were many elements of rules and routines. Every part of the morning seemed to be a practice or rehearsal. The morning started in the normal routine of eating breakfast and then coloring or beading or playing with clay, and continued more organized table activities.

The children eating breakfast would receive one thing from the lunch box first and then as they ate they got more and more food from their lunch box. This was a general practice I observed during my fieldwork. All of the adults did this for the children while they were eating. This was important for several reasons. The youngest children would try to eat too much at one time and not be able to swallow all the food in their mouths. The older children tended to play more with their food and it was seemingly distracting to have too many food choices at the same time. Sometimes also the children had made deals with their parents that they had to eat their bread first before they could have their fruit dessert. Within every activity, even eating breakfast there was rehearsing and practice for how things worked and how one was to act.

Practicing language such as sentences is a very important component to the one and two year olds' days (Os, 2013), (Løndal and Greve, 2015). They are learning to speak and practicing common phrases is important. The two year olds rehearse using full sentences often and this was an important teaching component of all activities. The following conversation between Kristian (child) and Fredrik (adult) during breakfast exemplifies this idea.

KRISTIAN: More!

FREDRIK: Can I have some more?

KRISTIAN: Can more!

FREDRIK: Can I have some more (with food in his hand)?

KRISTIAN: Can I have some more?

FREDRIK: Finish the rest of what is in your mouth and then you can have some more.

During this morning with Fredrik, there were many different activities. Each activity or circle time required some set up from Fredrik. There were paints to get ready or all the

children needed to clean up before moving on to something else. They were often done with the given activity at different times as well. From my perspective, the morning could have quickly gone from relaxed to chaotic. Fredrik needed to be in several different places at the same time. To avoid creating a stressful environment for the children and himself, Fredrik used the times that the children had to wait or that he needed to do something as experimental moments. Each child had a chance to choose the materials that were needed for the different activities. Kristian got to choose and carry the paints to the table. Martin got to go get the paint brushes. Molly helped Fredrik clean up after painting. Fredrik always explained and talked through what he was doing. The children were engaged and excited even when the activity was watching Fredrik roll up the table cloth and put it away. Fredrik asked a lot of questions and explained his doings such as in the following sentences. "I am going to go in the kitchen and get water for painting." "Can you all sit relaxed while I go and do that?" "Is that okay for you all?" I observed that the in between moments seemed to be just as or more important than the actual activities. The process was more important than the outcome of the activity that they were working towards completing. The children were actively involved in waiting, deciding things, and getting ready for what they were going to do. They had to make decisions for the group. They had to wait their turn. They had to wait for Fredrik to do things and they had to follow his directions the whole time. The children were often trying to climb out of their chairs and had to practice sitting in one place for a longer period of time.

After painting, Fredrik washed all of the plates the children had had paint on. He then brought them back to the table and all of the children helped him dry them. Each child got a plate and a paper towel to dry it with. Such "clean-up" tasks were built into the activities for the day. The children seem to have just as much fun or excitement drying the plates and helping Fredrik as they did actually painting.

The whole morning reminded me of a virtual game that had several levels. If the children were able to do one task then they got to move on to the next one. Fredrik was constantly reminding them of all the things they were going to do. At several points the children started to joke around ("tulle"). There were consequences to not sitting calmly and following along with the activities. Fredrik often said "When you all are able to sit calmly, you can be with. Molly and I will continue on to the next activity." They then went into the next room and started with something else. Fredrik came back into the first room again and asked "Are you all able to sit calmly?" They all answered "Yes!" and were allowed to continue on to the next activity.

Next, the group decorated glass jars with markers. The markers were especially designed to write on glass and had a paint tip, meaning that if you pressed down on the glass with the marker more and more liquid came out. Also, because they were special markers there was only one of each color and everyone had to take turns. A conflict situation arose out of this and Fredrik handles it a different way than he or other adults had during other times in my fieldwork. He does not approach the situation by saying that they need to share or that what the children are doing is wrong. He addresses the situation from a more practical perspective. The following excerpt describes the conflict situation.

Martin wants one of the colors Isabella is already using. He starts to try to take the color away from her and Fredrik steps in to help them navigate the situation. Fredrik says "Martin, you do not have a glass yet. Maybe Isabella will be finished with the marker when you get a glass." He gives the marker back to Isabella. He does not spend time talking about how it is not okay to take things from other children. He focuses on the reality of the situation that Martin has nothing to draw on yet and needs to wait until he does.

Halfway through the activity, the children were acting more careless and Fredrik needed to reel everyone in again. This was one of the only moments of "rule telling" in I observed the kindergarten. The following excerpt describes how Fredrik explained the rules with the glass markers.

FREDRIK: Everyone put down what you have, all together. So we have to go through the rules again. You all need to listen and put your hands on your knees. First, one marker at a time. Second, you have to put the top back on. Third, when we are finished you will have more time to draw. Has everyone listened and understood?

CHILDREN: Yes!

After all of the arts and crafts activities were finished, the group went into the reading corner to have a circle time about St. Lucia. They were one by one allowed from the table to the reading corner based on how they are sitting. During this process, Fredrik needed to talk to one of the girls, Katherine, because she was not sitting calmly at the table and all of the other children were following her lead. While Fredrik was talking to Katherine, Kristian tried to get his attention. He called "Fredrik!" over and over again. Fredrik turned to him and said "You are not called Katherine and now I am speaking to Katherine, Kristian, I will speak to you after. It will be your turn, you do not need to bother me ("mase")."

For St. Lucia they will go around the kindergarten in a parade and sing the St. Lucia song. This is a common tradition in Scandinavian kindergartens. For circle time, they all sit against the wall and practiced waiting while Fredrik gets the iPad ready to watch a clip from youtube of children doing what they are going to do for St. Lucia day. At this point in the morning the children were beginning to loose focus and were not as engaged as at the beginning of the morning. It was visible to see that the dynamic of the group was shifting and there was more joking and everyone was not focused. Fredrik continued and said “Every time someone starts making noise I have to stop what I am doing.”

Finally, they all went into the play area and had a last circle time before lunch. They started with a water break and did some stretches. They hopped and danced on the carpet. They ended with a running contest from one end of the room to the other. It was time to eat lunch at eleven. Instead of having one main activity before lunch they had four main activities with small activities in between.

5.3 First Day of Kindergarten

In this section, I use the process of starting kindergarten as an example of how the institute of kindergarten is built around the child. The child is assisted in getting used to the new kindergarten setting. The kindergarten design is created with the children in mind (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). The process of starting kindergarten was like a built-in flexibility for the child to get used to the new environment they will be spending a lot of time in.

In my fieldwork setting, there was a process over time of starting kindergarten. The children and their parents spent time getting used to the kindergarten setting and staff. Parents and children were not expected to say goodbye to each other for the first time on the first day of kindergarten. According to the adults, when a child starts kindergarten, they first visit the kindergarten with their parents and spend a couple hours their with the adults and their parents. They then work up to spending a couple hours alone without their parents there and then eventually begin with a normal kindergarten day.

5.3.1 Starting Kindergarten at Nine Months Old

Mason started kindergarten during my fieldwork period. Luckily, I was able to experience how he began kindergarten and speak with his mom. He had had a kindergarten position from August but was still quite young so had waited to begin a bit later in the year. Start-

ing kindergarten is a gradual process at this kindergarten. Mason had spent some time in the kindergarten over the past weeks to get used to the space. He was accompanied by his mom who helped look after him while he was visiting the kindergarten. During this period, Mason was able to get to know the other adults and get used to be in kindergarten away from his parents. The adults explained that this process was different depending on the personality of the child. However, having time in the kindergarten and easing into going to kindergarten took away some of the pressure of suddenly dropping off your one year old with strangers at kindergarten for the first time as is typical of some American kindergarten settings. It is a big transition from being home all the time to suddenly being in kindergarten. It is important that that transition is made as smoothly as possible. The adults filled me in also that they generally recommended that before a child started kindergarten that they should practice being around other adults besides their parents and playing with other children. They were also advised to visit the kindergarten after hours to get used to the space. These tips acknowledged the difficulty of getting accustomed to a new place and being away from parents for the first time. The process of starting kindergarten was meant to be a smooth, positive transitions that left the parents, the child, and the adults comfortable with the new situation.

Mason was very comfortable from the beginning in kindergarten and did not seem to have any problems being around the other adults and children. When his mother left for the first time, the adult said “Ok now you can say goodbye to Mason and leave the room.” She said goodbye and tried to have some kind of goodbye moment (“Ha det kos”) but Mason was too ingrained in what he was doing to realize that his mom was leaving. He was seemingly already comfortable with his surroundings that he did not need to rely on his mother’s presence to feel comfortable. He seemed to be comfortable on his own in his own way. I feel that he had the agency to control the situation for himself and maintain his autonomy with the adults in the situation (James, 2009). There was not a more extreme imbalance of power that can easily occur in situations involving adults and children (Os, 2013).

Not all children experienced this easy of a transition to kindergarten. According to the adults, there is generally a lot of crying and confusion at the start of a new kindergarten year due to new children and adults. There are a lot of transitions and everyone is experiencing a lot of change. However, it does not have to be that way for all children. The adults in the kindergarten explained to me that the process of transition and change of beginning kindergarten should reflect the personality of the child not the difficulty of the situation they were forced into.

5.3.2 Transferring Kindergartens

During my fieldwork, there was also a one and half year old, Liam, who transferred to the kindergarten from a different kindergarten. His parents attended kindergarten with him for the first week. They spent time together in the kindergarten and met all the adults and other children. During this transition period, one of the adults in particular at the kindergarten was with him the entire transition period. This way he was able to bond with one of the adults and felt safe in the kindergarten even when his parents were not there. Gradually, after spending more time in the kindergarten, he got to know the other adults as well. This process from parents to one adult to all of the adults and children aided Liam in making friends and developing relationships that made him feel safe and comfortable. The following situation exemplifies this aspect.

Kristina (adult) is standing at the entrance of the first play room talking to Fredrik (adult) who is in the hallway with some of the other children. Kristina has Liam in her arms. Fredrik is having a hard time understanding what Kristina is saying because of the distance between them. Kristina puts Liam down to go and talk to Fredrik.

KRISTINA (to Liam): I'm sorry, but I need to go talk to Fredrik. Will you be okay?

Liam looks up at her. Kristina goes out into the hallway and closes the door. As the door closes, Liam begins to cry. Beth has him on her lap. She sings a song and tries to comfort him. Shortly after, Kristina comes back into the play room and walks over to Liam.

KRISTINA (to Liam): I am so sorry. I did not mean to leave you here. I had to talk to Fredrik in the hallway. Do you want to read a book?

This situation is taken from one of the first days Liam was without his parents in the kindergarten. Kristina is the adult that he has gotten to know so far and she had to unexpectedly leave the room. When she returned she expressed that she was sorry that she had to leave him. This conversation expresses the idea that Kristina seems to think that Liam should not be expected to be on his own with the new children and adults just yet. He can have some more time to adjust to the new space. It is seemingly Kristina's job to make sure that is not a stressful transition for Liam.

Chapter 6

Life Skills

This chapter focuses more heavily on the experiences that occur in kindergarten through rules and routines. One of the focuses in kindergarten daily life is social competence (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). The children learn different skills that will help them have a positive experience of living life. They learn how to talk to each other and how to get along and play with each other. They learn about their emotions and what to do when they are upset or happy. They learn to have empathy for the children and adults around them in the kindergarten (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). The parents in my fieldwork setting were very concerned or interested in which children their child was playing with or how they were getting along with the other children in the kindergarten. The title of this chapter is “Life skills” because in Norway kindergarten is an institution of experiencing general competence over formal subjects (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). Kindergarten is a place to learn life or social skills and school is where children learn formal subjects (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). This chapter discusses the adult perspective of what children do experience in kindergarten and how kindergarten is a place of learning without being a school. The emphasis of kindergarten not being like a school changes as the children get older in the kindergarten and begin to more actively prepare for school (Synodi, 2010).

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section “Activities” discusses some of the different activities the children did in kindergarten and their relation to life skills. The second section is titled “Natural Consequences.” This section discusses use of natural reasoning with the children. For example, one has to wear a coat outside so that he or she is not cold. The third section is called “We Manage Just Fine” and discusses how self

reliance is an important learning value in Norwegian kindergarten (Hansen, 2005). The fourth section, "Help," discusses situations in which the adults assisted the children or children assisted each other.

6.1 Activities

While a lot of the day was spent with routinized practices such as mealtimes or nap time, the mornings generally had an activity planned. Often, they had some kind of circle time, as discussed in the morning activities with Fredrik. The circle time always started by having the children practice sitting together in a group. Usually they would sing songs to start and then the adult would tell a fairytale or they would talk about a topic such as an upcoming holiday. During my fieldwork, I often observed that it was difficult for the children to stay put in one place. The adults and the children would work together on this component of circle time. However, sometimes the adults would also have the children all sit along the wall so that it was easier for them to sit in one place. Along the wall, everyone had a place and everyone could see what was going on. The act of using a wall created a balance between challenging the children and creating a fun, positive experience. The children, all together, first practiced sitting together on the carpet, but then they moved to against the wall so that it was less of a challenge to sit all together. The children were able to enjoy the circle time as well as practice the social skill of sitting relaxed in one place while someone else was talking. Other times, the activity for the morning was more relaxed and a simple play situation such as in the following situation.

Kristina (adult) puts a blanket over one of the tables and gives the children two handheld disco ball flash lights to play with under the table. Everyone goes under the table and begins to play. They crawl in and out of the tent and think it is a lot of fun to hold the disco balls in the dark under the blanket. There are only two disco balls and five children. They practice sharing and letting each other have turns with the disco balls. Isabella (child) does not want to share, to Katherine (child) she says "It is mine!" Kristina says "You cannot run away, you need to talk to each other."

Free play is a large part of Norwegian kindergarten (Greve, 2013), (Løndal and Greve, 2015), (Bae, 2009). A lot of the day is reserved for child led or adult led play time. Throughout the field work period the phrases "Now you need to find something to play" or "What would you like to play?" or "I can help you find something to play" were used very frequently. Often the children would instead run around the play room and pick up different toys and then abruptly decide they wanted to play something out. It was a large

part of being an adult to help the children find something to play. In finding something to play, they were deciding on an activity and sticking too it. They were also then not disturbing the other children by running around the play area. According to the adults, it was important in my fieldwork setting for children to practice to have the patience to play one activity before moving on to the next activity. “Good play” was when children were peacefully playing together for an extended period of time. The adults would remark that it was a calm day with lots of good play going on when the children were involved in something for an extended period of time before moving on to the next thing.

Part of daily life in the kindergarten I observed frequently was practicing doing activities for enough time before switching to a new activity. This was a particular focus with the two year olds that would move up to the older group the next fall. The following situation describes this kind of expression.

The two year olds should focus on one thing for a little while and then they have permission to do something else.

KRISTINA (adult): You can have permission to bead a little but but then you have to actually sit and bead a little bit. You cannot just take a bead out and then say that you are finished.

MOLLY (child): Ok!

After two minutes, Molly starts to dump out all of the beads.

KRISTINA: Stop!

MOLLY: I do not want to bead!

KRISTINA: You have to bead a little bit and clean up these beads.

6.2 Natural Consequences

The situations that are analyzed in this section relate to situations of conflict between an adult and a child mainly in reference to getting dressed and going outside. I discuss more situations involving getting dressed in the next section as well to describe children’s agency in the kindergarten setting and how they experience that life skill in kindergarten. The heading of this section refers to the reality that if one is not properly dressed to go outside, they will be cold. In the following situation, Kristina (adult) uses this argument to explain to Kristian (child) why he has to be properly dressed to go outside.

KRISTINA: Kristian, now you have to put your buff on.

KRISTIAN: No! I do not want to! I do not want my buff!

KRISTINA: You have to have it on, so that you will not get cold outside. You could get sick.

Kristina does not say that Kristian has to have the buff on because it is the kindergarten rule or because he was told to put it on. She says that he has to have it on because if he does not have it on he will be cold outside and could get sick. The message is that it is important to wear the right clothes and enough clothes when going outside so that the body is protected and does not get sick. This is the reasoning that is used in the situation where Kristian does not want to get dressed fully to go outside. The conflict here is not between the adult and child then, but instead an internal conflict for the child that it is important to wear the right clothes outside for himself, so that he does not get sick. The adult does not want the child to get sick but it is ultimately the child not the adult that will have to face the consequences of whether or not the buff is worn.

Kristian continues to not put on his buff, so, after helping some other children with mittens and finding their clothes, she comes back.

KRISTINA: Now we will put your buff on so that you are ready to go outside. You need to learn what is correct to wear outside.

Kristina puts the buff on Kristian and sends him outside. Kristian goes outside.

There is not discussion in between the instance of the first instruction of “You have to put your buff on or else you will be cold” and “Ok now we will put your buff on so that you are ready to go outside.” However, Kristian received time to relax and contemplate the situation while Kristina helped the other children. Instead of escalating the conflict in the moment, the conflict was allowed time to breath and in the end the adult was able to put the buff on and send the child outside to play. The situation did not seem to change into an argument between Kristina and Kristian. The issue remained that Kristian had to be dressed warmly to go outside.

Getting dressed to go outside seemed to be an instance of more heightened conflict or stress. All of the children were generally in the hallway and the adults wanted to get

them outside so that they had enough time to play outside. It was not fun to spend the whole morning getting dressed. The children were also just experiencing getting dressed by themselves so they did need more time and guidance to get ready. Getting ready to go outside was also one of the few instances where there were quite a few things that the children did not have a choice with. They were going to go outside and could not do that without the correct clothing. The following situation explains another instance of getting ready to go outside.

Molly (child) has her snowsuit on, but she wants to take it off again because she does not like having it on and does not want to go outside. Molly starts taking off her snow suit.

MOLLY: I do not want it on! I will be in (inside)!

KRISTINA (adult): Molly, we have talked about this before, you have to have your snowsuit on to go outside. You cannot take it off after you already have it on.

Molly rolls on the floor.

MOLLY: I do not want to have my snowsuit!

KRISTINA: You need to let it stay on, now we will put your arms back in and take the rest of your clothes on.

Molly starts taking it off more and has her arms out of the sleeves. Kristina steps in and puts Molly's arms back into the sleeves one at a time. Kristina explains what she is doing as she goes on getting Molly ready to go outside.

During my fieldwork, Molly normally got dressed by herself, but in this situation she received help with her snow suit from Kristina. It was taking a long time for her to get dressed and she was starting to take everything off again. In this situation, Molly does not have the choice of whether or not she wants to put on her snowsuit and whether or not she wants to go outside. She has to do these two things whether she wants to or not. Instead of having a long discussion about this dilemma, Kristina helps Molly to put on the snowsuit because she is not doing it on her own. Perhaps, if there were less children in the hallway or Kristina had more time to spend with Molly, she would have discussed in more depth why she does not have the choice to be inside or to not have the snowsuit on. But with the

time on this day and the number of children, this was not the case. She does not seem to try to force a conversation that does not have sufficient space and time to be finished.

6.3 We Manage Just Fine

This section discusses how being able to do things yourself is celebrated in Norwegian kindergarten (Hansen, 2008). As discussed in the previous section, life and social skills are a focus of Norwegian kindergarten. Rules and routines ensure that the children are in a safe, positive space and experience how to conduct themselves. They experience what it is like to peacefully coexist with other adults and children and how to understand themselves better (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). Being able to get dressed or put shoes on is an important accomplishment. Being able to find your own diaper and give it to the adult to change you seems to be an important accomplishment. The children are able to experience themselves as capable, self-sufficient human beings.

The majority of the two year olds during the fieldwork period were able to dress themselves to go outside. They were experiencing being self reliant. Self reliance is a very important and common theme in Norwegian kindergarten (Hansen, 2008). The children were always practicing and improving on this skill. For the two year olds, it was important that they were expected to put on their clothes themselves. This way, they could ask for help if they needed it. The adults were there to help and guide the children but they were not there to do the work for them. Some days, getting ready to go outside could take a very long time and the children spent more time in the hallway getting ready then they did outside. This was not negative according to the adult participants because the act of getting ready and learning how to do that had important value. Being outside has a very important role in Norwegian kindergarten as well (Nilsen, 2008). However, getting ready to go outside is a very large component of this activity.

When a child asked for help the adults were careful to ask the children if they had tried first by themselves. If they saw that the child had done this then they took time to assist instead of doing for them. The adults explained the motions as they go along.

During my fieldwork, there were many situations where the children were able to do things themselves and these situations were seemingly highly praised. The adults had the patience to wait while the children did things themselves. Often I witnessed the children sitting peacefully on the floor working to put their shoes on or to pull their snowsuit up. I

believe these situations were the result of practice from the beginning of being in kindergarten. Many of the one year olds could not yet verbally communicate or walk steadily, but they were already practicing getting dressed to go outside. The following situation exemplifies how this took place in my fieldwork setting.

The one year olds are going to go for a trip outside and need to get dressed with their fleece or wool pants and jackets, snowsuits, mittens, buff, and hat. Beth (adult) goes out into the hallway to gather up all of the clothes to the children and takes them into the play room. One by one she begins to help the children into their clothes. They are able to follow directions and follow along as Beth explains what is going on. First, it is Haley's turn to get dressed.

BETH: Haley, come to me.

Haley looks at her.

BETH: Haley, here, you can come to me.

Haley crawls over to where Beth is sitting with her clothes.

BETH: So good, now we can get dressed. We can sit here calmly and put on clothes.

Beth is in a position of assistance in this situation but she is already rehearsing with Haley the different elements of getting dressed. She talks through what she is doing and has Haley enter into the act of getting dressed herself. Haley seems to know what is going on and has in her actions decided to participate.

That is not to say that there were never moments when the children did not want to put clothes on and were unhappy about going outside. In my opinion, having lots of clothes on can be annoying and uncomfortable. Often, the one year olds had a hard time walking or using their hands with mittens and snow suits on. The two year olds sometimes did not want to put clothes as well. Depending on the situation, the adults were more forceful or more laid back about this. For example, if they were going outside it was not an option to not have shoes on. While inside, if the children took off their indoor shoes, there was less of an issue. The following excerpt displays this idea.

The children all wear slippers or indoor shoes in the kindergarten. The two year olds can all put on their shoes by themselves. Sometimes, however, they

are tired and do not want to put them on. It is very popular to take the shoes off in the play area. They normally need to put them back on themselves and practice keeping them on while they are inside. Kristian (child) did not want to put on his shoes and continued to sit on the floor with his indoor shoes after he had received several messages to put them on.

Beth (adult) comes over to him after already talking to him several times.

BETH: You are able to do this yourself.

Kristian shakes his head and looks away.

BETH: Do you not want to try to put them on?"

Kristian looked away again.

BETH: Okay then, you can try it yourself next time.

KRISTIAN: Yes.

BETH: Very good.

Beth puts the shoes next to Kristian.

6.4 Help

While self sufficiency, as I have discussed, was a very important skill that was emphasized throughout the kindergarten day, it was also important that the children had support for how they were in the moment. The adults and children work together to create a balance between challenging each other and deciding when something was too difficult or something to save for another time.

The following situation demonstrates the adults's use of pedagogical tact in respecting a child's skills and abilities, but not stressing the child (van Manen, 2008). The adult in the following situation is able to find the balance between helping the child but not taking away from her agency and self sufficiency.

One of the one and half year olds, Kara, wants to sit in a chair at the table. Cecilie (adult) holds the chair steady while Kara begins to try to climb up.

Cecilie shares words of encouragement and tells Kara where to put her feet so she does not fall. Kara attempts to climb up into the chair and does not quite have skills necessary to make it all the way. After a few minutes of attempting to climb into the chair and not quite managing it, Cecilie says “Ok, now we are done with that, what would you like to do?” At the same time she pushed the chair back into the table and looks at Kara. “You can go and read a book if you would like?” Kara begins to wander away into the other room as Cecilie is distracted by one of the other children saying they are finished eating.

In this situation, Cecilie is helping Kara practice climbing into the chair on her own. She does not hold on to Kara and in the end she does not lift her into the chair. She simply holds to chair steady and talks Kara through what she needs to do to get into the chair.

It was also common to experience the children helping each other during my fieldwork period. Being self sufficient is important, but also caring for the younger children and helping your peers was a very praised activity. The following example happened frequently during the fieldwork period.

Alex and Molly (children) are drawing together at the table after they have both finished eating breakfast. Alex takes all of the pencils out of the container and has them scattered across the table. Molly decides to help him pick them up and they take turns putting the pencils back into the container. “Alex, I can help you!” says Molly.

Helping each other in this situation becomes more exciting than drawing was in the first place. Overall, throughout the fieldwork period, there were instances of help between the adults and children and between children and children. These moments stood out to me as important in the setting due to my knowledge of Norwegian values of self sufficiency (Hansen, 2008). It is also important to help one another.

Chapter 7

Care

This chapter discusses one of the most important aspects of the adult’s role in my kindergarten setting, care for the children (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). There are elements of care interwoven in every section of this project because the goal or thinking behind everything done in the kindergarten is to create a positive environment for the children (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). This chapter discusses some specific elements that demonstrate the central position of care in my fieldwork setting. The first subsection describes how the child aids in their own care with their agency. The second section describes how the adults in the kindergarten view care and work always to be positive care takers for the children with pedagogical tact. In a subsection, I also discuss the set up of the kindergarten and other small, yet important elements of Norwegian kindergarten that ensure children are well cared for. In the third section, “Adult, Child and Parent Relationships,” I discuss the central role of the relationships between the actors involved in my research setting. Lastly, in a subsection, I discuss the specific example of parents reports.

7.1 “I’m Teething.” Body Language

The title of this section was inspired by the recurrent condition of the children being upset due to their teeth coming in that I observed during my fieldwork. According to the adults, the children were often a bit more “moody” or emotional due to this process. Throughout the day Sarah continues to put her hand in her mouth. She has also been crying quite often on and off throughout the day for seemingly no apparent reason. The adults quickly realize that she is having pain in her mouth from new teeth coming in. They get her something to

soothe her gums and have her on their lap for extra time during the day.

During my fieldwork period, the pedagogical team was very aware of the children's body language and body movement. The children were more new to the experience of controlling their bodies and their emotions. They were able to control how and where they moved about the kindergarten space. The adults focused a lot on these movements so that they could tell if the children were feeling well or why they might be upset if they began to cry. The following excerpt from my field notes about Olivia (child) exemplifies this situation. Olivia, one of the one year olds, was often very active in the kindergarten. She liked to crawl around the play area and often played with the door in between the two play rooms. There are door stoppers underneath the door that she enjoyed taking out and playing with. She was very interested in what the other children were doing.

Today Olivia has spent a lot of time sitting on the couch looking at a book and around the room. She is very quiet and is not very responsive to the other children. Cecilie (adult) comes over and asks Olivia if she wants to read the book with her and sit on her lap. Cecilie takes Olivia on her lap and rubs her back. She asks "Are you not feeling well today?" Cecilie realizes that Olivia is quite warm. She has a lot of clothes on. Cecilie mentions to me that a lot of the parents dress their children in too many clothes. Cecilie takes off one of her pairs of socks and a sweater and waits a few minutes. She then asks Kari (adult) if she can go get the thermometer to check if Olivia has a fever. Olivia does have a fever. Cecilie and Kari see if Olivia cools down a bit and then call her dad to come pick her up.

Because the children begin at a young age in kindergarten there are many things that they experience and learn how to do in kindergarten in addition to at home. For example, the children learn how to walk and pull themselves up in the kindergarten. They also experience elements of growing up such as teething in the kindergarten. The adults tell me that there can be stress or more instances of crying children because the children are experiencing pain in relation to growing and adjusting to their bodies. The adults need to follow this up tightly so that they can help the children when it is needed and provide a safe environment. Care and comfort are the first and most important things that the adults consider throughout the kindergarten day. The children should be comfortable and safe at all times in the kindergarten (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011).

Many of the children used pacifiers for their nap time. After their nap was over, they came back into the play room and the adult there helped them take off their outdoor clothes and

re-enter the play time. The children become seemingly more comfortable in the kindergarten through relationships with the adults. The children used their pacifiers more at the beginning of being in the kindergarten and less and less as they got used to the environment and older. The following situation exemplifies how Beth (adult) worked with James (child) to not need his pacifier in the play room, but did not pressure him. She watched his body language to gauge how he was feeling after his nap.

BETH: Can you give me your pacifier?

James first turns away and starts to run away.

BETH: Okay, you can have it for five more minutes.

Five minutes go by.

BETH: Okay James, now I am going to take your pacifier.

James starts to run away but eventually runs right into Beth. He waits a little bit while Beth has her arms around him. After thirty seconds he puts his pacifier in her hands.

BETH: Thank you, I will put it in your cubby (in the hallway).

Throughout my fieldwork process, I would always make a note of which children were teething or which children slept poorly the night before. This way it was possible to see how those children behaved differently and the teaching staff behaved differently towards them to create a safe, positive, care centered kindergarten experience.

7.2 We're Pretty Good: Care and Comfort

The inspiration for the title of this section came from one of the plan days I took part in at the kindergarten. During one of the meeting the adults were asked by the director of the kindergarten what they thought they were good at in the kindergarten. What was the focus of the kindergarten? Everyone was silent for a moment and then they began to make a list of the things that the kindergarten did well. The number one thing on the list was care. Care was the most important thing and what they did best, according to the adults. This was followed with play, social competency, outside time and trips, parent relationships, and music. This list is very telling of the adult perspective of what makes a

”good kindergarten” and what values are important in Norwegian kindergarten (Hansen, 2008). There is very little mention of learning or subjects. The focus and importance was care. The following situation exemplifies how one of the adults centers an activity around care.

The one year olds all have baby massages with Beth. She turns down the lights in one room and has each baby take a turn with her. She has baby oil and massages there legs while they lay on their backs in their onesies. The one year olds can hold the bottle of baby oil if they want to. Beth talks to them while they are being massaged. All of the children, even those who are often very active are relaxed and very calm while they are being massaged. The one year olds go to eat after everyone has had a massage. The eating room is very quiet and relaxed as they all eat calmly. There is not as much noise or crying as usual. The whole atmosphere of the group seems calm. The massage activity is very basic and does not take a long time. One of the adults is in one room of the play area while the other adult is in the other side doing the massages.

This small activity affected the rest of the day in a very positive way according to the adults. I also observed that the children were much more relaxed for the rest of the morning after having the baby massage activity.

7.2.1 Practical Care

Throughout the fieldwork process, I kept a list of general things the adults did or were part of the kindergarten routine that I felt related to general care for the children. In a way, I feel that these ideas could be easily implemented in other kindergarten settings outside of Norway and have a positive impact on kindergarten life. The following list presents these ideas.

- There are always water bottles filled up for the children to drink when they are thirsty (figure 7.1). There are frequent water breaks during activities. This is beneficial because it helps ensure that children are not upset because they are thirsty. Having enough food and also having enough water are important throughout the day.
- All of the lunch boxes are kept in the refrigerator until the children are ready to eat their food. The food is kept cold so that it is preserved until the children are ready to eat. This way the children do not have to eat food that has been sitting in their lunch boxes all day at room temperature.

- The adults record all diaper changes so that the parents are aware of their children's rhythm and their patterns can tracked between home and the kindergarten. Keeping track of the children's diaper changes allows the adults and parents to quickly notice if one of the children is not feeling well or may have eaten something that did not agree with them.
- There is no discussion of trying to stay clean, for example during mealtimes. The adults wash the children after the given activity. In other words, the adults do not restrict the actions of the children during an activity. While painting, the children get paint on themselves or while eating, they get food on themselves. The adults wash them after the event, instead of trying to keep them clean during the event.
- When they go outside, the children and adults have the correct clothes for the weather. In this way, the children are not too warm or too cold.
- The noise level in the kindergarten is controlled through the adult planning of the day. For example, the children are divided into groups or go outside to address this aspect. It is not necessarily the children's responsibility to limit the noise level in the kindergarten. In other words, the adults work to divide the group and use the kindergarten space effectively to maintain lower volume levels. They seem to do this more frequently than telling the children to "be quiet" or use "inside voices."

7.3 Adult, Child and Parent Relationships

Throughout my fieldwork, I experienced several instances where I observed a closeness between the adults and the children. They seemed to have very tight nit comfortable relationships that allowed for the kindergarten experience to be more positive for everyone. The adults had presented themselves in a way that the children were able to come to them for comfort when they needed. I present a couple different situations to describe this relationship with comfort.

Alex (child) was crying when he was dropped off at the kindergarten. It seems he did not want his father to go to work. He sits with Kristina (adult) in the play room. She rubs his back and sits with him while he gets used to the kindergarten setting. Shortly after, Kara comes over with a car for Alex but he elbows her away.

KRISTINA: Kara, Alex did that with his arms (makes motion) and that means



Figure 7.1: Water Bottles.

that he does not want to be a part of the play right now. He can be allowed to sit a little bit by himself with me.

In this situation, the most important component seems to be that Alex is comfortable and feels safe at kindergarten. Kristina focuses on him and lets the other children play on their own. She tells Kara that she needs to find something else to do because she is busy with Alex right now and Alex does not want to be a part of the play just yet. Kristian does not address that it was nice of Kara to invite Alex to play. After Kara goes back to her play, Kristina asks Alex if he wants to read a book. He nods his head and they moved to the couch to read a book. When the book is finished Alex was ready to join the other children. Other times in the fieldwork period, the children did not know that they wanted to be comforted. Even then, the adults were able to be there for them and create a safe space to be upset and ultimately feel better.

Henry (child) is very upset and crying a lot. He cannot figure out a way to calm himself down as he has been crying for a long time and he does not want

anyone to be around him. He shows this through his body language of pushing people away and turning his back. The adults try to have him on their laps and sit with him on the sofa but nothing works. Cecilie (adult) expresses that he needs to find a way to calm himself down a little bit in order for someone to help him. The adults do not know what it was that upset him. Cecilie comes over to Henry and lays him down on a floor mat on his stomach and rubs him on his back with her hand. The other children come by and ask what is wrong with Henry and if he wants to play. Cecilie tells them that Henry can have permission to be left a but alone now. He needs some time to be in peace by himself. After a few minutes on his back Henry stops crying and Cecilie asks him if he would like to play with cars with her. Soon he is back to playing cars with Alex. They drive the cars together back and forth across the kindergarten.

In this situation, Cecilie does not try to use words to soothe Henry and instead leads him to a position on the floor where he can seemingly calm himself and figure out his emotions. Sometimes it is okay to have some time to cry and to calm oneself down. I observed that Henry seems to be able to do that knowing that Cecilie is there to help him if he wants her but she is not going to push him into a situation that stresses him more.

Another common occurrence in the kindergarten was someone falling down or getting bumped into. This was not a pleasant experience for the children and they would often begin to cry when something like this happened. The following excerpt from my data describes the adult-child relationship when something like this happened. There is little verbal communication and little to no dramatic response.

Kara (child) fell in the play room of the kindergarten and started crying. Cecilie (adult) came over to her and picked her up and held her. She started stroking her back but did not say anything. There was no discussion of what happened or how bad it was that she fell down. The focus was strictly just about making sure Kara felt better and nothing else. Shortly after being picked up, Kara was ready to get back to her game and did not want to be held any longer.

This situation was not a big happening and the emotions that were brought out from falling were quickly deescalated. This occurrence happened daily during my fieldwork and more “typically” exemplifies the comfort level in the adult-child relationship. I include one last excerpt of my “morning notes” that exemplifies a more close type of relationship between

the adults and children in the kindergarten that does not involve the need for comfort but just a familiar relationship.

Kara was often one of the first children to arrive at the kindergarten during my fieldwork period. She would walk around the kindergarten and help the adult get ready for the day. They would fill up water bottles for all of the children and get the tables ready with activities or breakfast for the other children when they arrived at the kindergarten. Because it was relaxed and quiet with only one child at the kindergarten, there was more freedom given to Kara in terms of what she wanted to do. Kara hits her head on the table, she doesn't start crying but is a bit stunned. Beth (adult) walks by and says "You are a little active today, you are here and there, over there and back again." Kara starts pushing a rolling (adult) chair around afterwards like a walker. Beth walks by and says "Wow you are going really fast." Beth eats her breakfast at the kindergarten with Kara. She has a piece of bread with avocado on it. Kara asks her what she is eating and she offers for her to try it. Kara decided to try and Molly, who has just arrived, does not want to.

These instances portray several elements that give a sense of a casual atmosphere with people that are well acquainted with each other. Beth is quite relaxed with what Kara is doing because there are not that many children in the kindergarten yet. She does not address that Kara is actually breaking one of the rules in using the adult chair. Beth lets Kara push around the adult chair which is really not allowed in the kindergarten. She lets Kara walk around the eating room and follow her around instead of sitting in her chair. Lastly, she eats her breakfast with Kara and offers for her to try some of her food.

7.3.1 Parent's Reports

I mentioned the parent's reports in reference to the planning of the day. The section discusses briefly the nature of what the parents said and how the adults responded. Each day of my field notes had a page reserved to notate what parents said and how they interacted with the adults to set up their child to have a positive day. Some excerpts looked like the following:

Kristian's father stops in on his way to drop off his older daughter and tells the adults that Kristian will not be at school because he was throwing up all last night. Kara and Sarah's parents say that they have been having a little bit of pain because they are teething.

Henry's father tells the adults that he was awake from four in the morning. It is very possible that he will not be in the best mood today. Thomas and Haley also did not sleep well the night before. The adults will most likely take them for their naps first so that they can have a little bit of extra time to sleep.

Kristian was sick last week but now he is back in the kindergarten. His mom explains that he has been feeling better but today he has not been in the best mood. They should call her if they need anything or if he needs to go home. Henry slept well until six so should be in a good mood today. Alex is very excited because he is going to a water park next weekend.

Emma's dad tells the adults that she slept poorly so she might be tired. Cecilie (adult) says that they can eat a bit earlier and have her sleep first. Her dad just says it is okay and that they can see how the day goes. Haley arrives and her dad says that she is not sick but has had a vaccination so she might not be feeling the best. The adults should just call if there is anything they need or if he should come pick her up or get her early.

These kinds of reports to the adults at the beginning of the day were consistent throughout my fieldwork period. The parents were always prepared to tell the adults about their children. Even if there was not something big to discuss, there as a discussion. The parents and adults had a seemingly close relationship and told each other stories and chitchatted at the beginning of each day. This gave the children some time to get acquainted with school again and start their day. The parents also seemed comfortable to give their children to the adults at the kindergarten even if there was some crying or disagreement due to these established relationships. The following excerpt describes how Molly and her mother entered the kindergarten and started the day.

Molly (child) and her mom come into the kindergarten to deliver her to school. Her mom has her "matpakke" with extra food for breakfast in her hand and asks Molly where she wants to sit. Molly decides where she wants to sit. She climbs up in the chair and opens her box and says good bye to her mom. Her mom gets her into the day by starting her eating breakfast.

Molly's mom leaves Molly in an activity. This was common during my fieldwork process. The parents did not try to sneak out and there was always some sort of good bye or transition into being at kindergarten. Sometimes there was crying but the parents said their

goodbyes and left their children with the adults. In the following situation, Olivia (child) does not want her dad to leave but she is happy to sit on Beth's (adult) lap in the eating room.

Olivia begins to cry when her father says goodbye and begins to leave the kindergarten. He seems to be unsure of what to do because of his body language and hesitation to leave. It seems he does not want his daughter to cry but he also knows that she will be okay and that he needs to get to work. Olivia buries her head more into his shoulder as he holds her. Beth asks him if she can take Olivia. Beth holds out her arms and asks Olivia if she would like to sit on her lap. Olivia goes to Beth and they begin to draw at the table with the other children.

Beth communicates with Olivia's dad to facilitate the morning drop off process. She is able to do this because there is an existing level of trust between her, Olivia and Olivia's dad. If that relationship had not been created the situation could have potentially been a much more stressing event for all of the individuals involved.

Adult-Child Interaction

This chapter is divided into four sections, “Ikke Lov and Lov” (not allowed and allowed), “Once is Enough,” “Det er ikke greit” (It is not okay), and “Rules and Routines Tips.” The first section focuses on the topic of permission and the different ways it was used in my fieldwork setting. The second section focuses on the word choices or more often choice of few words in conflict management in my fieldwork setting. The concept of pedagogical tact is very important in this management. The third section focuses on explanations of why things are not allowed or okay in the kindergarten. The fourth section focuses on concluding comments about rules and routines in my fieldwork setting. This section argues how rules and routines do not necessarily coexist with authority and discipline or a competition of respect between children and adults.

8.1 “Ikke lov” and “Lov”

The use of the words “lov” and “ikke lov” which mean allowed and not allowed is examined in this section. “Lov” is the word that is used for having permission to do something or being allowed to do something. There is not a strong distinction in the Norwegian language between the two ideas of having permission or being allowed. Ideas about my translations of some Norwegian words to English is discussed in more depth in the discussion chapter of this text.

“Lov” is a word that was used very often in my fieldwork setting. For example, children have or get “lov” to be alone or have or get “lov” to be a part of play (å ha lov/å få lov). During the fieldwork process, I often heard adults say “Molly can have “lov” to be a

bit by herself now. You can find something else to do.” In this phrase, “lov” seems to be used in a very nonthreatening or extreme way. The adult seems to mean that it is okay if Molly wants to have some alone time. We (the adult and child) can let her do that. In this way, the use of “lov” in situations does not seem to encompass rules or routines directly, but rather letting children do as they want. In some ways, I think this seems opposite to how rules tend to function. Rules can be sometimes in favour of what the child wants to do or not depending on the individual situation. Permission and allowance are normally associated with rules and things that children do not like. For example, it is not allowed to run inside. It is not allowed to use outside voices while we are inside. These “common” examples of allowance and permission are also present in the kindergarten, but they seem to be softened by the wider use of “lov” in other situations. It is possible for children to give “lov” to each other. Beth (adult) explains in the following situation that Molly (child) can allow the other children, Kara, Kristian and Alex to use some of her pencils and that she does not need all of them.

Kara, Kristian, Molly and Alex are drawing. Kara and Kristian are arguing over the same pencil that they both want. Molly has a stockpile of pencils and Alex does not have anything to draw with. Beth comes over and takes away the pencil Kara and Kristian were arguing about and tells Molly that she can share with the other children. They can have permission (“lov”) to use the pencils as well. She does not need to save pencils while she is not using them.

The focus in this situation seems to be on sharing instead of who started the argument or who had the pencils first. The important point of the conversation was that there were enough pencils to go around and that it was possible to share them amongst the group. Beth explains to Molly that she could give permission to the other children to use her pencils. Beth does not deny that the pencils are in Molly’s possession in the moment. Permission and being allowed to do something can be experienced in an interaction between adults and a child, but also between children in that they respect each other.

“Lov” was often used in the context of conflicts between children that adults helped to resolve. The adult would explain that the child did not have permission to do something because it was upsetting to the other child. The use of permission was not used in a context of authority but instead being respectful of one’s peers. This idea was demonstrated in a situation between Cecilie (adult), Katherine and Kristian (children).

Katherine is playing with legos building a tower and Kristian comes over and takes the top of the tower off and starts to walk away with it. Katherine begins

to cry and Cecilie comes over to help them navigate the situation.

CECILIE: Stop (short and firm but normal voice volume)

She takes the legos away from Kristian and gives them back to Katherine.

CECILIE: Here you go. It is okay. (to Katherine)

CECILE (to Kristian): You, I'm sorry, but you know that it is not allowed to take toys away from other children while they're playing with them. You see now, how Katherine is quite upset.

Kristian looks at Katherine and back at Cecilie and has a look of distress on his face.

CECILIE (to Kristian): You can play with these blocks or maybe you would like to read a book?

Kristian nods his head.

CECILIE: Okay, then lets read a book, would you like to read about firetrucks again? Kristian nods his head and finds the book he wants to read and sits on the sofa ready to read.

This situation demonstrates a very common occurrence during my fieldwork. The children were constantly working on how to play together and also how to allow each other to play on their own. It is of interest that the adult using much more time to help the child that took the toy from the other child instead of consoling the first child who was interrupted. The adult recognized that it was really the second child that took the toy who was having difficulties finding something to do not the child who was already pleasantly playing even though it was that child that begun to cry and was seemingly initially in distress.

Also, the adult first "fixes" the situation, by giving the toy back to the first child, before discussing the situation with both children. The adult chose words and timing carefully as to not repeat the same thing many times and to wait until the children were ready to concentrate on what she was saying instead of on the toy they are arguing over. These elements to the conversation allow the children to have a less stressful experience in how to share and take turns. There is no yelling or harsh instructions and the children are both

guiding back to positive activities. The children both received guidance in social competence seemingly without realizing it.

In my fieldwork setting, “lov” had a sort of abstract ownership. It was not the adults that said to the children that something was not allowed. It simply was not allowed. It was very common in the kindergarten to hear an adult say “I’m sorry, but it is not allowed to run in here” or as in the previous situation “I’m sorry, but you know that it is not allowed to take toys away from the other children.” The adults often expressed the sentiment that they knew it was not allowed and they understood how fun it would be to run around. Maybe if they had more space that would be possible, but sadly in this case they could not do that. The adults and children were then on the same page feeling upset that they could not run inside. It was not the adult’s fault that it was not allowed. It just naturally was not allowed. Nevertheless, it was the adults who set the rules in the kindergarten. The adults were generally more the enforcers of rules not the children. The unwritten rule book that guided children’s and adult’s actions in kindergarten stated that it was not okay to run inside and the adults and children had to go along with this even if they did not want to.

In this manner, the expression that adults do not have ownership over whether things are “lov” or not explains one of the ways that children and adults in kindergarten navigate their relationship and do not create additional reasons to be at odds with each other. If the child does not follow the rules or breaks away from what is allowed, they are not doing something disrespectful to the adults. I have observed the sentiment of disrespect in teacher-child settings in American settings through my experience as a teaching assistant in an American kindergarten. However, children, in general, are just doing something that is not allowed or something they have not received permission yet to do. Receiving permission for things is something that takes place in kindergarten daily life. While adults do not have to ask permission to leave a table as a child would have to do in kindergarten, adults have to ask for permission in different situations. In my fieldwork setting, the adults and children seemed to coexist under the same set rules that often had roots in natural consequences. The below excerpt from my data exemplifies these ideas about “lov.”

Molly (child) and Cecilie (adult) are in the eating room. Molly is dropped off at the kindergarten by her mom. She picks a place to sit and begins to eat breakfast. She then quickly decides that she is not hungry and would instead like to play with one of the other girls.

MOLLY: I am finished! (almost immediately after sitting down)

CECILIE: You have not eaten your bread slice yet. You can have permission (lov) to go from the table when you have finished your piece of bread. You cannot just eat the toppings off of it. It does not go.

MOLLY: I do not want to!

CECILIE: You will be hungry later. I can tell that your body needs some more food for today.

Molly starts to get upset. She twists in her chair and seems to want to get out. She starts trying to climb out. Cecilie comes around more to her and puts her arm around her and calms her down by giving her a hug.

CECILIE (in a lower voice): I'm going to put away the rest of your lunch box. you can be finished and be allowed to go from the table after you finish this piece of bread.

Molly eats one more bite and again starts to get upset.

CECILIE: are you full?

Molly nods her head (to say yes).

CECILIE: Do you want more food?

MOLLY: I do not want to have! I do not want to have! I do not want to have!
I do not want to have!

CECILIE: Ok, I can not force you to eat. I hope you will not be hungry later.
what would you like to do now?

MOLLY: Play with Isabella.

CECILIE: Okay, then you can have permission ("lov") to go down from (the table).

In this situation, Cecilie starts out from a place of authority. Molly has to eat her breakfast. She will be hungry if she does not and Cecilie tries several times to have Molly eat her breakfast. However at the end of the conversation, Cecilie shifts to a position of more equality. I cannot make you eat your breakfast just as much as you cannot make me eat my breakfast. People cannot force other people to eat. This shift is a very important experience and action in this conversation. Based on the body language of the child, the adult seemed to decide that it was not worth it to continue down the path of "You cannot go

from the table before you eat your bread slice.” The adult tried to do this at the beginning to create some boundaries, to practice the act of sitting at a table to eat breakfast and having to wait to do other things until you have finished, and make sure Molly is not hungry.

Molly, on the other hand, starts from a position of simply not being interested in eating. Some of the other children are drawing and playing. She would rather be a part of that instead of eating her breakfast. She seems to feel stuck and unable to move because she has her legs through to the two openings of the chair making it difficult to get out. She needs an adult there to help steady the chair or hold on to her while she climbs down. She begins to cry and is more and more distressed by the situation. Cecilie shifts from a place of authority to a place of equality in relation to Molly’s level of distress. It is not necessary for Cecilie to place Molly in distress only to practice the routine or rule in kindergarten that when we eat, we sit peacefully in our chair until we get permission from an adult to do something else. It is even seemingly not worth in the light of the fact that Molly is going to be hungry later. Once she sees that Molly is not in a position that she is willing to eat she lets go of the moment and moves on to something else.

This situation describes the use of “lov” in a seemingly recognizable example. The child has to get permission from the adult to leave the table or to be done eating. The element that stood out to me was that in this setting the use of “lov” is not extreme and does not create extra conflict between the adult and child. Cecilie does not seem to be personally offended that Molly does not want to eat her breakfast or feel threatened that her initial command of having to finish some food does not actually play out in the end. Cecilie acts in a governing role not an authoritative role (Os, 2013),(Bae, 2012). Molly’s wishes are in the end respected and she gets to do something else. She is permitted to use her agency to decide for herself whether or not she is hungry (James, 2009). Cecilie cannot decide for her whether or not she is hungry even though Cecilie suspects this due to Molly’s actions.

Cecilie uses pedagogical tact and thoughtfulness to manage the conflict of Molly not eating her breakfast in a positive way instead of creating a conflict between herself and Molly. As discussed in the theory chapter, pedagogical tact refers to the concept of having a level of awareness of how to behave in different pedagogical situations (van Manen, 2008). Molly experiences that it is important to be able to practice having to wait and having to finish one activity before moving on to the next one. However, she does not experience the distress of being misunderstood or being too confined. She knows in this situation that Cecilie is there to comfort and help not to be mean or overbearing. Cecilie knows that Molly will

be hungry from not eating enough breakfast but cannot force this concern on her. There is a balance of adult control and child chaos in that Cecilie first attempts to guide Molly towards eating her breakfast (Os, 2013). However, in the end she gives into what Molly wants and does give her permission to do something else even though she has not finished her meal.

Lastly, it is important to mention in this situation that there seems to be a natural process at play. It is understandable that the child wants to play with the other children even though she is not finished eating breakfast. The adult notices this and tries to prolong the breakfast activity so that the child is not hungry. It is natural that the child will be hungry if she does not eat enough food. It also seems natural that the adult cannot for certain decide if the child is hungry or not. Only the child has control over that. The child experiences the difficulty of not being able to do exactly what you want when you want to. However, the child is also not pressured to eat when she voices clear distress and opposition to this idea. The adult shifts focus from "You have to eat" to "Okay I cannot force you to eat." This shift is an example of a repeating trend in how adults interact with the children. The fact that a child is in disagreement with something an adult said is not misconstrued as disrespect for the adult, yet rather as a disagreement that can be solved or compromised depending on what it is. It is in this way that the relationship to adult control and child chaos is often navigated in a Norwegian kindergarten (Os, 2013). The same situation with Molly and Cecilie happened frequently in the kindergarten with all of the adults and children. The following is the same situation between Beth (adult) and Kara (child), yet without the use of "lov." I include it here to present that the children expressed significant agency over what they did and how their days were in the kindergarten setting.

Beth and Kara are the first two in the kindergarten this morning. Kara is eating her breakfast while Beth gets ready for the day. Kara does not want to eat and refuses to eat her food.

BETH: Kara, you need to eat or else today is not going to be a very good day. You will be hungry.

KARA: No!

Kara tries to get out of her chair and does not want to eat. Beth and Kara continue this for a couple rounds and eventually Beth gives up on trying to get her to eat.

BETH: Okay you have to decide yourself to eat for yourself. I cannot force you.

I have presented different elements of permission that describe how the concept can be used in many different situations. Adults in my fieldwork setting also stuck to a more straightforward use of “lov” and “ikke lov.” The following example is a message Kristina (adult) gave the group of two year olds. There was also a place for adult leadership. The children followed the leadership of Kristina by doing what she told them to do.

KRISTINA: Now I am going to tell what we are going to do. We will all together go out, but we cannot all do it at the same time. So some of you will have permission to go out in the hallway and the other will sit here at the table and have permission to draw. Martin, Alex, Kristian you all can come in the hallway with me.

Kristina is clear and concise and uses permission to describe exactly what is going to happen so that there is no confusion for the group.

8.2 Once Is Enough

The heading of this section refers to the frequent observation during my fieldwork period that the adults often did not repeat themselves or talk at the children to a great extent. When it was necessary to intervene in a situation, the commands or messages were clear and concise. The child was given time to respond and react to what the adult had said. To describe and explain these observations I draw from the work of Greve and Løndal (2015) and the terms they use to describe the adult-child interaction in her project. As described in the theory chapter of this text, they use the terms surveillance, initiating and inspiring approach and participating and interactional approach. Anne Greve uses these three terms to categorize the different situations in her research. In my fieldwork, I found that it was very common to observe surveillance as the first approach to many situations. Depending on the severity of the situation the surveillance period was shorter or longer respectively. The important component was that the surveillance was almost always the first step. It was seemingly important to observe the situation in order to know how to handle the situation. Surveillance was the moment in each situation where the adults took a moment to use their pedagogical tact to decide what to do next. Sometimes surveillance was enough because the children were able to resolve what was going on on their own. Other times, the adult needed to interact with the children. At this point, the adult intervention could be categorized as initiating and inspiring or participating and interactional. Each of the

different approaches works well in different situations. None of them were negative in their own right. However, they could become negative when used at inappropriate times. The following situation describes how Cecilie (adult) used the surveillance method first before intervention and then limited word use to diffuse a situation with Molly and Kara (children).

Molly and Kara are sitting at the table eating their breakfast. There is a chair in between them that they start banging on it with their feet. Cecilie is behind them watching what they are doing but waits a little bit to see what happens. The two girls start yelling “mamma! mamma!” and laughing and still banging their feet on the extra chair. They think this is very fun and continue to get louder and louder. Cecilie intervenes.

CECILIE: You guys, we sit peacefully (“rolig”) when we eat, you need to wait to play until later.

They continue with the game of yelling and banging on the chair. Cecilie ends the situation by taking the extra chair away from the table.

CECILIE: I have to take the chair away because you two are not able to do (“klare”) what I said we do while we are eating.

In this situation, the banging on the chair naturally stopped because Cecilie just took the chair away. It was often hard for children to immediately stop something. Instead of using energy and creating a conflict situation, Cecilie just took the chair out of the situation and solved the problem. She could have easily continued down the path of telling the girls again to stop banging on the chair but that would have potentially escalated the situation. The banging also needed to be stopped immediately so the noise level and atmosphere of the room was maintained. There was no need to create a situation for the girls to “disobey” unnecessarily. This type of response happened frequently during my fieldwork period. The adult assessed the situation, said once what they wanted the child to do, and then fixed the situation so that the child and adult were back to a balanced situation. The following excerpt is another example of this response from adults in my fieldwork setting.

Kara (child) is finished eating and is walking around the eating room and goes into the room next door where there are lots of art supplies stacked up. There are also some aprons hung on hooks on one of the walls. Kara starts taking all the aprons off of the hooks and putting them on the floor. Cecilie (adult)

sees what is happening and goes calmly over to Kara and says “Those can stay where they are, now you can let them be there.” Kara and Cecilie walk together out of the room and they close the door.

The important moment in this situation is that, after addressing what Kara was doing with the aprons, they walk out of the room together and close door. Thus, they eliminate the possibility and temptation to go back into the room. Since the door was originally left open it should have been okay to take things out and play with them. Kara and Cecilie were mutually responsible in this situation.

These two examples have shown how using surveillance and limited word use can help ease a situation and not increase a level of conflict between the adult and child involved. I also experienced this same method used to give children enough time to make up their own decisions about what they wanted to do in a situation. The following excerpt describes a situation in which the adult did not repeat herself yet she also gave space for the child to come to his own conclusion instead of removing the situation of the conflict.

Kristian and Martin (children) begin fighting over a toy and Kristian begins to push Martin and takes the toy. Kristina (adult) looks at him sternly and says once in a firm, strong voice “That is not okay.” Kristian looks at her with his eyes and turns his body. He then looks back at the toy and back at her again and knows that it is not allowed what he did. He contemplates for a little bit while Kristina holds eye contact with him. In the end he decides to give the toy back to Martin. Kristina never said anything again after the one stern “That is not okay.”

The adult, Kristina, gave Kristian the time he needed to decide what he was going to do. Instead of jumping into the situation too quickly, she gave him the time he needed to process what he had done was not right. He seemed to think for himself that is was not okay that he took the toy and he himself seemingly decided to give it back to his friend. Because Kristina gave Kristian enough time to think in the situation, the situation became a more important experience for him. He was seemingly in control of what he did and he decided to do what Kristina told him to. He used the information he had already learned in kindergarten to navigate the situation with assistance or guidance from Kristina not simply directions from her. At other times during my fieldwork, the directions were more explicit but the delivery and time used was the same. In the following situation, Cecilie (adult) tells Kristian what to do but she does not repeat herself and waits for him to decide to do what she told him.

Kristian took a purse from Henry. Henry started to cry because he had lost his purse. The adult, Cecilie, intervened to help the boys navigate the situation.

CECILIE: Kristian, you have to give the purse back to Henry.

Kristian waited a bit but decided to give the purse back. Henry immediately stopped crying when he had received his purse again.

CECILIE (to Kristian): Do you want to find a purse for yourself? We can do that together. Kristian nods his head. They go to look for the box with different purses and dress up clothes.

In this situation, again, the adult does not focus on the child that lost something but on the child who decided to take a toy from the other child. The adults in the room speculated to me that the reason he took a toy from his friend is because he did not know what to play and was looking for something to do. It looked like fun what Henry was playing. The adult guides Kristian out of the situation of taking something from his friend into a situation of finding something else to do. Kristian starts his own play with his own purse he can put things into. He had to give the other purse back which was a difficult thing, but he had help from the adult to find something to do. The adult could have spent more time with Henry because he was upset from losing his purse. However, he did not need any guidance because he was only naturally upset from having his purse stolen from him while he was playing with it. Once it was returned, there was not a problem anymore.

8.3 “Det er Ikke Greit”

During my fieldwork period, I often heard the phrase “That is not okay (Det er ikke greit)” to explain situations. This evoked for me a sense of neutrality or status quo. What the child was doing was not okay and disruptive in the given context with the given actors. The adults in my fieldwork setting started by saying something was not okay but then they went further to say why the action that was not okay was happening. They recognized that it was not okay and addressed it with the child and helped to come to a conclusion with the child for why he or she was doing something that was not okay. The following excerpt from my field notes displays this practice.

Kara goes up to Haley (children) and takes away the toy she was playing with. Haley starts to cry and Cecilie (adult) comes into intervene. First she takes the toy and then takes Kara a little bit away from Haley and says she needs to

wait. Cecilie then gives the toy back to Haley who immediately stops crying once she has her toy back. Cecilie then turns to Kara and has her on her lap while she comforts her by rubbing her back. She continues like this and then says that it is not okay to take toys from other children and to disturb them. This same situation happens a couple more times in a row that Kara takes a toy from one of the other children and then walks away with it and goes and disrupts another group playing. The adults discuss that maybe she is not feeling her best today. They discuss that she has had a lot of emotions and does not normally go around taking toys from other children without having her own play idea. She will sleep a bit earlier today and they will call her parents if she is still not feeling well after they have eating their first meal.

The adults often used “It is not okay” to begin explaining why they do the things they do in kindergarten. Things, in general, had a reason that made sense. Many things came down to respecting the other children and adults in the kindergarten and being kind to one another. The children learned through understanding their emotions in kindergarten. The adults had different emotions they focused on in their monthly plans and dealing with emotions on a general level is something the adults focus on with the children (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). The following situation uses the term “it is not okay” in relation to understanding emotions. It was not an okay situation because it resulted in someone being upset and angry.

Katherine (child) is sitting in the play area building a tall tower out of big legos. Kristian comes over and knocks down her tower. Katherine is upset and Kristian starts to run away.

KRISTINA (adult)(to Kristian): That is not okay. Now Katherine is angry and upset. You can ask her if you can be a part of her play. and now you can help her build the tower up again.

Kristina makes it clear in these directions that it is not okay to tear down someone’s tower because then someone is angry and upset. Katherine was crying in this situation. Kristina showed Kristian that Katherine was crying because her tower was knocked down. That was the reasoning for why it was not okay to tear down a tower. There was no discussion of it not being allowed or that it was a rule. It was not okay because Katherine was upset and angry with Kristian. It is not a good situation when others are angry and upset with you.

8.4 Rules and Routines Tips

In the previous three sections, I have discussed different forms of communication that took place in the fieldwork setting in order for adults to manage conflict and for children to experience and learn kindergarten rules. In this section, I would like to emphasize or summarize a couple of different elements that were very consistent in how children and adults interacted with each other in conflict situations. First, the adults always worked together to resolve conflict. Second, they used direct words and careful word choice. Often, as I have explained, this meant few words. Third, they also chose carefully who they talk to first. They comforted the child that needed the most help in the situation. The following example was one of the more hectic situations in the kindergarten during my fieldwork that exemplified these three components to addressing conflict in a kindergarten setting.

Katherine, Martin, and Kristian (children) are arguing. From my perspective, all of a sudden a conflict had erupted. Katherine has taken a train from Martin but also somehow Kristian had gotten in the mix and is kicking Martin. Martin starts to cry. Cecilie (adult) comes and intervenes by removing Kristian from the situation. She physically removes him and says “You cannot kick.” She tells Katherine and Martin that they can play together because she can only take one conflict at a time. After taking Kristian out of the situation, Cecilie says to Martin “You do not need to hit (he had hit Kristian back when Kristian had started to kick him) or scream, you can talk with one of the adults, we can fix it.” At this moment, Kristina (adult) comes into the room and takes Kristian into the other room to talk to him and Cecilie stays with Martin and Katherine and helps them further to find a way to play together. Katherine and Martin were able to continue playing together.

The adults are not looking for respect in the “olden days” idea that children should respect their elders or that the adults are good teachers based on their abilities to demand respect from the children. The adults in my fieldwork setting do not seem to need a strict authority to do their job and to guide children. The children do not seem to need strict discipline to learn life and social skills. This separation is essential to working with young children in a kindergarten setting. This is the key to creating a positive balance of adult order and child chaos (Os, 2013). Rules and routines can be positive in that they guide children and adults and are important in school like settings (Os, 2013). Due to my fieldwork, I would argue that the authority and discipline do not have to accompany rules and routines as I previously thought. In fact, excess rules and routines could potentially create more stress

and conflict between adults and children.

It is the responsibility of the adults and the children to exist together to experience kindergarten in a positive way. They have to respect each other. The following situation exemplifies how adults and children have to work together to facilitate each other and respect each other.

All of the children are playing in the kindergarten indoor play area. Two of the children, Isabella and Kristian begin to run in between the two rooms with purses on their shoulders. Eventually the play accelerates into running and also singing and screaming and going back and forth between the two rooms. After one lap of the play, Kristina decides to intervene because they are getting too loud and are beginning to disturb the other children's play. Kristina puts her hands on the shoulder's of Isabella and Kristian. Isabella and Kristian look up at Kristina.

KRISTINA: You two cannot run and scream because we are inside the play room and it is disturbing the other children. If you want to scream then you need to go into the hallway.

Isabella and Kristian look at each other and decide they do not want to go out alone in the hallway. Fifteen minutes goes by and the play has returned of running around yelling with dress up clothes on, except this time two more boys are included in the play so there are four children raising the volume of the play area instead of two. It is also not long before the four of them are in disagreement over who gets to carry the red backpack. Kristina stops the children.

KRISTINA: Now we will go out in the hallway because you all are fighting and not sharing. We will go outside and play because your game is not okay when there are so many children in the play area. Now all of you can come outside in the changing room with me and get dressed to go outside.

Kristina takes the group of children out of the play area and starts getting them ready to go outside. This lowers the volume level in the room and allows the one year olds to have a more peaceful play area. Also, the work for the two adults is then divided. One adult is left in the play room and the

other adult is out in the hallway getting dressed to go outside with the other children.

All of the situations described in this section relate to the relationship the adult has with the child and the adult's use of pedagogical tact. The adults had to react to the individual children and the individual situations. The following short conversation exemplifies one of the ways pedagogical tact was used. Fredrik relates to Harald.

Harald (child) was slamming the door and running around the play area. Fredrik (adult) took him to the side and had his arm around him. He said "We need to take it easy when we open the door." Harald had been slamming the door between the two play areas. Fredrik said "I know that you don't have the best time..." Harald was trying to keep running and did not want to talk to Fredrik. Fredrik said "...So we will just try to talk a little bit."

Fredrik acknowledges that Harald is busy and has other things he wants to do instead of talking to Fredrik. He puts his arm around him to create more of a connection and to get his attention. He also does not say that he has done something wrong even though slamming the door is not the best thing to do. One of the other children could easily be standing in the doorway. Fredrik tells Harald to take it easy. He does not have to be in such a rush.

One last situation I include in this section relates to situations of adult control and how the adults and children navigate that type of situation refers to one of the adults telling the children what to do.

Fredrik (adult) was in the hallway helping the two year olds get ready to go outside. He took a couple of children one by one out of the playroom so that it was not too much going on in the hallway. In this situation, he was calling Molly into the hallway to start getting dressed.

FREDRIK: Molly (child), now you can come to me.

MOLLY: No.

FREDRIK: It was not a question. It was a message.

MOLLY: No.

FREDRIK: Now you have to come in the hallway and get dressed.

Molly looked at him and still did not want to go into the hallway with him. Fredrik came over and walked with Molly into the hallway.

In this situation, Fredrik was uses his position as the adult in the situation and telling Molly what she needed to do. Molly first rejects this action and does not want to come with him. She quickly however realizes that she does not have a lot of choice in the matter as all of the children are getting dressed and everyone is going outside. Fredrik uses short sentences and "too the point" directions with Molly. She voices her dislike for the situation, but Fredrik then comes and gets her and ends the situation instead of debating with her in the playroom.

Discussion

This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, I go through each individual research question and evaluate how I have been able to answer them. I am ultimately unable to make conclusive answers, but I concretely describe what I have discovered through my analysis. In the second section, I justify my approach to the project and analysis of my field notes. In the third section, I critically evaluate the project and examine some areas that could have been further examined. There were limitations within this project and there are areas in need of further research. In the fourth section, I discuss some of the difficulties and thoughts I had throughout the process in relation to language. Translating from Norwegian to English with the empirical data and translating from my English speaker norms to Norwegian norms is discussed. Lastly, I reflect on this project in its entirety.

9.1 Research Questions

9.1.1 How do children experience kindergarten routines and rules?

This research question and the question relating to how children learn kindergarten routines and rules were both answered from a more adult centered position than child centered position. Many of the child research participants were not yet talking and observing how they experienced kindergarten rules and routines was a more difficult endeavor. I feel that I observed a sense of “Naturalness” in how rules and routines were explained and experienced in the kindergarten setting due to the little data I had in the end about exactly how the children felt about the rules and routines. In other words, I did not actively observe many situations of resistance from children. From my perspective, the children seemingly

ate when they were hungry and slept when they were tired. The routines were created based on the daily rhythms of the children. I also feel that the rules were not seen as rules for the children. The word “rule” was not used in the kindergarten setting very often. I am not sure that the one and two year olds have a clear understanding of what a rule is. They reacted more to an understanding of things not being okay to do or not being allowed to do something. I feel that the rules and routines described in this project in this kindergarten present a picture of daily kindergarten life. In other words, there is not a sense of rules and routines, there is a sense being at kindergarten. There is a certain way of being when one is in a kindergarten setting. Due to the ages of the child participants, the text describes more instances of adult perspectives. However, I feel I was able to observe many interactions between adults and children in the kindergarten setting that did display children’s agency and active participation in kindergarten life. To summarize, children experienced kindergarten routines and rules as a “natural” part of daily kindergarten life.

9.1.2 How do children learn kindergarten routines and rules?

As I have mentioned, this question was also observed and examined from a more adult centered position. The adults in the kindergarten were there to take care of and guide the children. It was most often that the adults described and put in place kindergarten rules even when they did not voice specific ownership for the rule or routine. It was still mostly the adults that reminded the children of different rules and routines. It was also the adults that were aware of the time and seemed to have more awareness of how the children were feeling or acting. The routines and rules in place were there to uphold a type of life in the kindergarten. The children learned the rules and routines as a way of life in the kindergarten setting. In other words, the rules and routines were the guidelines for how to be in the kindergarten setting. There was not a feeling of active learning, rather a sense of the rules and routines as daily processes. I feel that they did not have an active understanding of the adults as teachers. The children had an understanding of the adults as “the adults.” The adults were older than the children or simply different from them. Their role was not understood as an active teaching position. To summarize, the children learned kindergarten routines and rules through adult example and the constant activity of balancing coexistence between the children and adults in the kindergarten setting.

9.1.3 How do adults handle conflict?

This question of handling or managing conflict was the most essential question for this research project. This question narrowed the focus and drew my attention to many situa-

tions of adult-child interactions. I was able to answer the other three questions more easily through the focus of this question. I was able to describe some concrete, consistent ways that the adults handled conflict during my fieldwork period. The adults used the concept of permission, things not being okay, and a "less is more" tactic when communicating issues with children. These three methods or styles were possible in the kindergarten setting through the adults use of pedagogical tact and their relationships with the children. Adults in my kindergarten setting handled conflict in much of the same ways as adults interacted with children in the work of Løndal and Greve (2015), Os (2013) and Bae (2009, 2012). One of the main deviations or elements that struck me in answering this question was the adults prolonged use of surveillance as a method. The adults consistently assessed the situation before actively participating. They chose their words carefully and did not create more situations of conflict. The majority of the situations I described related to the adult-child interaction being very effect in toning down the conflict and resolving it in a seemingly "stress-free" manner. I feel also that the adults handled conflict by respecting the abilities and agency of the children. They did not expect too much from the children. They did not expect them to be able to easily stop what they were doing or give a toy back to another child when they really did not want to.

9.1.4 How do children and adults understand their relationship in kindergarten?

In answering this question, it is important to refrain from over analysis and speculation on my part as a researcher. In the end, I feel that I had little insight into how the children viewed their relationships with the adults. They saw the adults as safe people as exemplified in situations of help and comfort. The children visibly were comfortable and calm around the adults. I do feel also that the children had an understanding of the adults being older individuals. On the other hand, I feel that the adults used a lot of energy to define and actively think about their position as adults in the kindergarten. They often spoke to me about what their job in the kindergarten was and that in turn created the relationships they had with the children. The main goal or task for the adults was to care for the children. This goal created an understanding or basis for a caring and close relationship between the adults and children. I was told by the adults that it was important that all of the children had at least one strong connection with one of the adults. To summarize, I feel that the adults had a much more active understanding of their relationships with the children than the children in return had with the adults. This understanding was based on the goal of the adults to best care for the children in the kindergarten. The caring and close relationship between the adults and children was important for a positive kindergarten environment.

9.2 Justification of Approach and Analysis

In this section, I would like to address some of the elements of the project that were positive and helpful towards answering my research questions and gaining an understanding of a kindergarten setting in Norway. In the next section, I address some of the areas of the project that could have been improved. First, I feel that my researcher role was very productive in the fieldwork setting and analysis process. I was able to maintain my position as an outsider, yet was informed enough about the Norwegian language to pick up on conversation in the kindergarten. I feel that my researcher role was very well related to the project. In addition, with this personal positioning, I was able to break down situations in context and describe the importance of space and actors together.

The organization for the project, specifically the analysis chapters was straight forward to write due to the coding I explained in the methods chapter. After going through all of my field notes and transferring them from my notebook to my computer, I had a clear idea of the main elements I wanted to include in this project. I feel that describes a well developed relationship between my research questions, the research setting and the way I approached them in the field. It was positive to have four general, yet narrow questions to guide the project. Lastly, I feel that my position as an American led me to remember the broader context of Norwegian culture and values and how this played a part in the project and analysis. This position was also problematic in some ways as I will discuss in the next section.

9.3 Evaluation of Approach and Analysis

Throughout the project, I had to pay close attention to my somewhat romantic and comparative view of the Norwegian kindergarten setting. My interest in Norwegian kindergarten grew through my amazement of the institution and the inspiration I had from it. These opinions had to be reeled in throughout the writing process. I often had a difficult time not dipping into a more comparative form of writing. It was very difficult to not overplay my American experiences in analysis of the Norwegian kindergarten setting. It is inevitable that one's background will influence analysis. However, it is also important to maintain a neutrality in approaching research material. On the other hand, it was, in some ways, very positive to have an American background to be able to make unique observations.

It would also have been beneficial to have more time to use the participant observation method. The kindergarten setting is always changing as the children get older and have

different competencies. It would have been interesting and informative to return to the kindergarten and observe how the end of the year differed from the beginning of the year. I also attempted a very broad project. I wanted to learn about a Norwegian kindergarten setting, but also specifically analyze the adult-child interactions in the kindergarten. This project could have easily been narrowed and specialized further. In order to make connections and present results more definitely, I would have needed to spend much more time in my fieldwork setting and time in other kindergartens. In the first section of this discussion, I summarize an “answer” to each question. However, I cannot definitively verify the answers as they are based on limited research in one kindergarten setting.

9.4 Norwegian and English Language

A unique element of this research project was the mixture of English and Norwegian language. My understandings of what happened in the kindergarten setting and how I analyzed them were affected by my English speaking mind. Throughout the analysis process and translating of data, a number of words jumped out to me as “not English.” They could be translating directly to English, but I would not have used them in the same context in the same way. Conversations from fieldwork I have included in this text have used these words and my non traditional translations. In other words, it was important for me that my fieldwork data sounded translated from Norwegian to English instead of simply English. While a Norwegian reader may not hear or see the difference, I feel that an English reader would find some of the conversations to be a strange English. In this section, I discuss each of these words individually and express the thoughts and discussions that arose around them as I worked through the analysis of this project. I also share how I approached them in the process of translating and understanding my field notes.

9.4.1 “Lov”

The first word that struck me as very Norwegian was “Lov,” which means permission. Permission is a word that is used in English and Norwegian in education settings and with children, but in different ways. “Lov” is used much more frequently in Norwegian than in English and in a variety of different ways. A child can have “lov” to do something or another child can have “lov” to be left alone and not bothered. I will suggest that “Lov” in Norwegian speaks to a way of being and how things are allowed or okay to be. In English, the word permission speaks to me as something that is attached to adult control and order. An adult can give a child permission to do something. The child does not just have permission because they are doing something that is acceptable. “Lov” has a much

more neutral tone than “permission.” “Lov” can be given to a child but a child can also just already have it. “Lov” can be something that just is, while permission is something that is given by another person.

9.4.2 “Å klare”

“Å klare” means “to be able to.” This verb was used a lot during my fieldwork period and was seen as an important element of what children are experiencing in kindergarten. In the setting of my research, the children were learning to be able to do things themselves. It was not as important what they were learning but that they were experiencing to be able to do it on their own. The frequent use of “å klare” in the field felt very “Norwegian” to me and signified that self sufficiency and independence were two very important components of growing up (Hansen, 2008). Self sufficiency and independence were praised very often during my fieldwork process. To “klare” something is very important for a child in kindergarten (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011).

“Å Klare” was also used in the context of conflict management. The adults would often say a variation of “We are going to put away that toy because you all cannot ‘klare’ to share.” Sometimes the adults said “We are going to go outside because you all are not ‘klare-ing’ to play calmly inside. It is not possible to run and shout inside.” This use of “å klare” was also very interesting and important in my analysis process as it seems to not blame the children for doing something wrong or not allowed. Instead, the adult seems to be saying that it is okay that they are doing what they are doing because they have not learned or experienced life enough to do it another way. It is the adult’s role then to put away the toy in dispute or to take the group outside to play. It is not the children’s fault that they were not able to play calmly inside.

9.4.3 “Rolig”

“Rolig” seemingly means “calm” or “calmly.” It was used often during my fieldwork period to describe how the adults wanted the children to sit while they were eating, to play while they were inside or how they wanted the older children to treat the younger children. For example, a common occurrence during mealtimes was an adult telling a child “while we eat we need to sit ‘rolig’.” It was often expressed by the adults that “We (everyone) need to treat the younger children in a ‘rolig’ manner. They are just learning to walk.” Throughout the fieldwork period, one of the most frequent comments was “We need to play ‘rolig’ so that we do not bother the other children.” The word ‘rolig’ creates a sense of the need for a

calm and relaxing environment. The children and adults benefit from a such environment because they do not disturb each other. It is a way for all the children and all the adults to exist together in a positive way in kindergarten. I liked the use of this word also because I felt that it imparted a reasoning for why it was important to do things a certain way in the kindergarten. We need to be calm so that we do not bother the other children. This was much more frequently expressed than “Stop bothering him/her.” Such sentences were rarely to never expressed during my fieldwork period.

9.4.4 “Å Tulle”

“Å tulle” is a fun verb that was used frequently during my fieldwork process and others have found it used often in other Norwegian kindergarten settings (Løkken, 2000). This verb means “to joke” or “to fool around.” This verb encompasses teasing, messing around, and overall goofing off. I think that the English language does not have a good word to compare to “å tulle” because none of the mentioned words in English really can be used simultaneously or to describe different situations. Teasing or messing around often seem to have negative connotations regardless of the circumstances. “Å tulle” rarely has a negative connotation in it of itself. It can be negative when it is done in excess or when the person should be doing something else. I often heard the adults in my fieldwork setting describe situations as just a bit too much “tulle.” “Å tulle” itself is not a bad thing but when it is done instead of listening to people around you or getting ready to go outside it can be a negative thing. If there is too much “tulle” in the dressing room when the children are getting ready to go outside, it takes a very long time to get outside and the children who were quick getting ready have to wait a longer time in their warm clothes before they can go outside. In that case, too much “tulle” is not being courteous of fellow children. It was also very common that adults would “tulle” with the children by saying outrageous things that were not true or surprising them.

9.4.5 “Å Mase”

It was very hard to find a correct translation of “å mase.” Translations of “å mase” would have to be to bother or to nag. However, both to nag and to bother have strictly negative connotations to me and I think that “å mase” can have a more neutral tone. This verb describes when a child or adult asks someone the same thing over and over again instead of being patient and waiting for their answer. An example I think of is the picture of someone trying to talk on the phone and the other person is asking them over and over again what they want to do instead of waiting for them to get off the phone to answer. This

verb deals with having or lacking patience in communication situations. I added this word to my list of Norwegian words because I like the way it deals with patience and "more or less." I often heard adults say to children "You do not need to 'mase', I heard what you said and will answer you when I can." This sentence to me sounded balanced in the sense that the adult understands the child's impatience and excitement but also responds in a way that tells the child that asking once was enough and they were heard.

9.4.6 "Beskjed"

This last word is included in this list because whenever the adults wanted to address all of the children together they would say that they had a "beskjed" or message. They would say "I have a "beskjed" so I need everyone to listen to me." I like how it sounds in English to say "I have a message to everyone." It sounds very neutral and simply an imparting of information from one individual to another. It does not have the hard sound of a command even if it is in fact a command that the children have to listen to. It also has a reciprocal quality to it. I did not hear children say to the adults " I have a 'beskjed'" but I did hear them say things like "I have to go to the bathroom" or "Out! (to get out of a chair or to be done eating)." These phrases were also messages to the adults that they needed to do something in relation to the children's wishes. Giving each other messages seemed like a way of respecting each other's wishes of what they should do.

9.4.7 Concluding Norwegian to English Remarks

This list of Norwegian words that I have compiled have some things in common. In general, all of them seem to have a more neutral undertone or connotation. In English, the words seem to be more different depending on whether or not the situation is positive or negative. The neutrality of the words lends them well to conflict management and balancing adult order and child chaos. They are not loaded and do not imply more than what they are. This concept holds true in many instances of trying to understand different people or different cultures not simply in facilitating understanding between adults and children. Using heated words or "trigger" words in a discussion with someone can quickly turn the discussion from a light conversation into an argument in my experience.

I would also like to acknowledge my love for the, in my opinion, "simplicity" of words such as the ones I have described. The same word works in many different situations and describes many different things. The remarks I have made about how each word exemplifies how my understanding of English and Norwegian has directly impacted my analysis

of adults and children in my fieldwork setting. It is very likely that readers will disagree with me depending on their relationships to the two languages or have their own emotional responses. Because of the two languages in this project and my personal relationships with them, it is important to bring to light some of the thought processes I have had in realizing what these words mean in the context of my data and ultimately assessing my research questions in this project.

9.5 Final Reflections

The overall difficulty for me in this project was to not “go too native” and write an idealistic account of a Norwegian kindergarten setting. However, I believe that my outsider role and therefore unfamiliarity also worked as an advantage in this project. Warming writes that with participant observation “The researcher uses her unfamiliarity with the culture being studied, as this unfamiliarity makes her capable of becoming amazed by what is taken for granted by ‘the natives’- what is familiar to them may seem strange to her” (Warming, 2010 p. 56). In this way, my own experiences, feelings and reactions have affected the way I have participated in this project and conducted my analysis. My interest and attention to the language used in my fieldwork setting led me to write and learn more about communication styles and specific language styles in adult-child interactions. As I was listening to a second language during my research, I was able to pick out recurring phrases and different uses of words in comparison to their English definitions. This is a positive component of my research that allows it to offer an interesting perspective on adult-child interaction and a portrayal of daily life in an individual Norwegian kindergarten setting.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

To conclude, I would like to summarize and reiterate the analysis of this project and present areas of further research from unanswered questions that arose through this project. I addressed four research questions pertaining to adults and children and rules and routines in a Norwegian kindergarten setting: “How do children experience kindergarten routines and rules?” “How do children learn kindergarten routines and rules?” “How do adults handle conflict?” and “How do children and adults understand their relationship in kindergarten?” These questions were in the background of each analysis chapter in this project. This project presented a description of a Norwegian kindergarten setting as well as shed light on the guiding research questions.

The main overall finding of the project was that in many different situations adults seemed to be able to use effective pedagogical tact and children seemed to be able to use their agency to guide kindergarten situations. Chapter five, “The kindergarten,” presents the kindergarten space as one of the components that allows for the use of pedagogical tact and agency. Both chapter five and chapter six “Life Skills,” present many instances of children’s agency in a kindergarten setting. In this way, I have argued that children are able to use their agency in kindergarten. Chapter six also discusses the “naturalness” of adult’s explanation of rules and routines. This seems to be a large part of co-existence between adults and children in kindergarten. This chapter also describes characteristics of spacious patterns in these descriptions (Bae, 2012). Chapter seven, “Care,” discusses the large focus on care that I observed during my fieldwork. This chapter describes first how there were many instances of care and comfort and how these instances seemed to be possible due to the relationships between the parents, children, and adults and practical considerations.

Chapter eight “Adult-Child Interaction,” describes certain forms of communication that stood out to me during the fieldwork process. Chapter eight argues how these forms of communication seemed to allow for a more balanced adult-child relationship or in other terms a balance between adult order and child chaos. This chapter discusses components of speech involved in conflict situations when the adults are using spacious patterns and pedagogical tact to guide their actions. The children also then are able to use agency in conflict situations in a kindergarten setting.

Through the work of this project, several areas of further research have presented themselves. I have not discussed at length the impacts of being in an institution from one or two years old (Gilliam and Gulløv, 2017). The children in the Norwegian kindergarten setting begin kindergarten in general earlier than in many other countries. In addition, I have not compiled research on what rules or routines are in the kindergarten or which ones are most important. I have looked at conflict situations and the kindergarten day and how these components relate to kindergarten rules and routines. In other words, rules and routines are used in a more general sense to describe components of conflict situations and daily kindergarten life. Further research and more research methods would be necessary to understand fully how the adults especially design and implement rules and routines in the kindergarten setting. Overall, it is important to create more research data with more research participants over a longer period of time and in different locations. More research in Scandinavian settings conducted by foreign researchers would also be a positive and eye-opening addition to the body of research in childhood studies in Scandinavian settings.

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Consent Form

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjekt

“Lek og Læring: Rutiner og Timeplaner i en Norsk Barnehage - Hvordan barn opplever og forstår barnehageliv”

Bakgrunn og formål: Prosjektet er en ett års masteroppgave som en del av programmet “Master of Philosophy in Childhood Studies” på NTNU i Trondheim. Målet med prosjektet er å forstå hvordan barn blir eksperter i barnehageliv. Forskingen skal være fra oktober til desember og oppgaven er planlagt å være levert mai 2017.

Forskingen handler om spørsmålene:

Hvordan lærer barn hva som er lov og ikke lov i barnehagen?

Hvordan former forholdene mellom voksne og barn seg i barnehagen?

Hvordan opplever barn barnehagerutiner?

Hvordan forandrer barns forståelse av barnehageliv seg?

Hvordan fungerer timeplaner og rutiner i en norsk barnehage?

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

Forskingen skal bestå av observering i barnehagen et par dager hver uke. Datainnsamlingen vil bestå av å skrive ned historier fra barnehagen, skrive ned ting barna forteller meg, samt skrive ned barnas fornavn og alder.

Hva skjer med informasjonen?

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Jeg og veilederen min vil ha til-

gang til personopplysninger som blir samlet inn. Dersom individuelle sitater blir brukt i oppgaven, navnene vil bli anonymisert. Barnehagen vil få en kopi av den ferdige oppgaven. Det skal ikke være mulig å kjenne igjen barn eller barnehagen i oppgaven og personidentifiserbare opplysninger vil slettes.

Frivillig deltakelse

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om ditt barn bli anonymisert. Dersom du har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med Jorie Kowalski, tlf: 98886573. Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, NSD - Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS.

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien: Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig at barnet mitt skal delta.

Navn til barnet

Signatur av forelder, dato

Interview Guide

Jordyn Kowalski
Intervjuguide

Mastersoppgave i barneforskning
“Lek og Læring- Rutiner og Timeplaner i Norsk Barnehagene
Hvordan opplever og forstår barn barnehageliv?”

Intervju skal være mellom meg og voksne som jobber i barnehagen i begynnelsen av forskningsperioden. Jeg skal følge opp intervjuer i senere perioder basert på forskningsprosessen.

1. Planlegging av barnehageår:
 - Hvordan bestemmer dere timeplanen til dagen?
 - Hvor mye blir timeplanen forandret i praktisk?
2. Rutiner og daglig aktiviteter
 - Kan du fortelle meg om levering og henting?
 - Hvordan er garderobetid forskjellig gjennom året?
 - Hvordan er aktiviteter planlagt i forhold til fri leketid?
3. Lek
 - Er du fornøyd med leke modellen i norsk barnehager? Synes du det burde være mer planlagte aktiviteter?

4. Forhold med barn

- Kan du beskrive hvordan du lager eller bygger forhold med barna i barnehagen?
- Er det viktig at de begynner på barnehage når de er ett år?

5. Konflikt

- Hvordan er konflikt håndtert i barnehagen?