Fritzie Ryland

Friendship relations of Southeast Asian immigrant children in Norway

Thesis for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Childhood Studies

Trondheim, May 2013

Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Faculty of Social sciences and Technology Management

Norwegian Centre of Childhood Research

Childhood Studies

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Abstract

The main focus and aim of this master thesis is to write about the nature of friendship and experiences of the Southeast Asian immigrant children in Norway. The overall methodological perspective of this study is based on the philosophy of the new social studies of childhood where children are constructed as social actors, listening to their voices, seeing them as active agents in their daily lives who are able to choose their friends and form friendship in their new country. I conducted semi-structured interview and observation with my participants and informal discussion with the parents. I interviewed eight children from ages 8 to 14 years old.

In the analysis chapter I discussed about my participant's idea of friendship or the meaning of the concept for them, I also talked about the activities they do together to nurture the friendship. I wrote down some quotations from my participants to illustrate their own words on the matter. I also discuss ways my participants formed friendship with the other children, and in doing so, it became evident to me that my younger participants form friendship with other children differently than my older participants. I further discuss the differences of friendship relations of my participants across different age groups, factors how they view friendships. I also discussed my participant's friendship at home, in school and their neighborhood and their parent's earlier influence on friendship formation. I also talked about my participant's groups, their experiences of conflicts and disputes with friends. I also talked about gendered friendship because it is an important area to help us understand the nature of children's friendship.

I conclude my research with the results that among the challenges my participants experienced as an immigrant, learning the language spoken in the country where they live is the most important aspect to enable the children to form friendship with other children. My research also documented that my participants are competent children capable of adapting to a new society by learning the language, making new friends and nurture friendship. This thesis therefore confirm the new social studies of childhood where children are social actors who are active agents in their daily lives able to choose their friends and form friendship in their new country.

LIST OF FIGURES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Beginnings of this study

This study centers on friendship relations of the Southeast Asian immigrant children living Norway. Based on interviews and observations with eight children between the age of eight and fourteen and informal discussion with parents, I wanted to learn about the life experiences of the immigrant children when it comes to their friendship and its meaning, friendship formation and challenges they have experienced when forming friendship relation with other children.

My choice of participants was influenced by several factors. One of these is having a Southeast Asian background, and the second reason is I was an immigrant. Also I was curious about the experiences of my participants when it comes to their friendship relations and formation.

These factors made me realized that this study is personal to me. And as I researcher I have to be reflective, open and transparent.

My primary assumption in the early phase of my study was based on my own experience as an immigrant. I assumed that it was difficult for my participants to make friends with other children in their school or neighborhood. I also assumed that they choose their friends because of the influence of their parents and because of their cultural background.

But I wanted to listen to their stories and learn their experiences from their own point of view and not from what I assumed.

1.1.1 Immigrant's friendship formation

When my participants and their families migrated to Norway they have experienced the loss of family members, relatives and friends. Immigrants leave their relatives, friends and other social ties behind their home countries during their immigration processes (Aronowitz, 1984). In new countries, they face the challenges of rebuilding friendship and other social networks at school and in the community. Immigrant children often rebuild their friendships and other social network after arriving in a new country (ibid).

According to Hsin-Chun Tsai (2006) literature on adult immigrants' social network formation is limited and is even scarcer for immigrant youth and children. Information on immigrant youth and children's friendship is usually embedded in the literature that investigates integration, ethnic identity and adaptation. Researchers have examined factor associated with friendship formation; yet, there have been little research with immigrant populations especially among the children and youth (ibid).

In this research, I would like to focus on friendship relations, ways of forming friendship, the challenges that they have encountered in forming their friendship without touching the broad topic of ethnic identity, integration, adaptation or racism.

1.1.2 Children's perspectives

The theoretical approach in this thesis is based on the social studies of children and childhood, which will be further presented in the proceeding chapters. Within this approach the focus has been shifted and children are seen as social actors and not just passive subjects (Prout & James, 1990). Children's social relationships and cultures are worth studying based on children's perspectives on their lives. Listening to children and acknowledging their opinions and perspectives have been an important part of this research. Applying such view means that children's opinions would be not be taken lightly. It will be given importance as children are now seen as competent social actors (Kjørholt, 2004) with rights to be listened to and have a say in matters that concerning their lives. Listening to children's perspectives can give valuable knowledge to researchers, and leads to better understanding of children.

In this study, my participants will be given an opportunity to talk about their experiences as an immigrant in relation to their friendship with other children. As a researcher, I would listen to them without judging their stories and show respect to them by listening to what they are going to share and treat them as competent individuals capable of expressing themselves.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As Hsin-Chun Tsai (2006) claimed literature on immigrant youth and children's friendship formation are scarcer than adult's. It seems that there is a hole missing on literatures when it comes to friendship formation and immigrant children's conceptualization as being connected, accepted and that he/she belongs to certain social groups. This is the gap which this research will try to explore. This study will focus mainly on the nature of friendship and my participants' experiences around their friendship. The study will try to give us a glimpse of experiences of the Southeast Asian immigrant children and give voice to their experiences.

1.3 Aim

The aim is to unravel the nature of friendship and experiences of the Southeast Asian immigrant children in Norway and to investigate if my thesis confirms the new social studies of childhood where children are social actors who are active agents in their daily lives who are able to form friendship in their new country.

1.4 Objectives

- Identify the meaning of friendship.
- Explore the significance of friendship.
- Explore the ways they develop friendship to other children with immigrant and non-immigrant background.
- Distinguish the challenges they encounter when making friends.

1.5 Research Questions

- What is the meaning of friendship for Southeast Asian immigrant children?
- How do they form friendships with other children?
- What are the influences of their parent's in their friendship formation?
- What are the challenges they have encountered when trying to build friendships with other children?

1.6 Methodology

The overall methodological perspective of this study is based on the philosophy of the new social studies of childhood. Since the matter of interest is children's friendship relation, this study utilized qualitative approach which is particularly suitable for doing research with children (Greig & Taylor, 1999).

Qualitative methods such as interview was used to allow the children a more direct voice and participation in the production of the data (Prout & James, 1990) and informal discussion with the parents and observation was used to help support the data gathered.

My fieldwork took place in one of the municipality in Norway for a period of one and a half month. My informants had lived for some time in Norway and so they experienced how to form friendship in their new adoptive country. Most of the children have started in introduction school where they learned to speak Norwegian.

1.7 Relevance of the study

This research is relevant because it will contribute to bridge some gaps between the previous studies that have been done within the topic of immigration or immigrants. It will represent a different side of the earlier research which focus on women and adults and thus can give valuable insights on the life experiences of immigrant children.

This study will also give insight on immigrant children's social relationship, peer culture and the complexity of their friendship.

This study is in line with the ideals of giving voice to the children which makes them visible in the midst of the adult-driven society. It will allow them to express their feelings, opinions, hopes or frustrations as it will allow us to understand their situations, learn something new from their experiences.

This research will help broaden adult's perspective about immigrant children's experiences and society may learn to acknowledge them as competent social actors, articulate and not just passive 'human becoming'.

The research will also benefit other immigrant families, schools, local communities and social services in understanding how immigrant children form friendship with other children, etc.

1.8 Limitations of the study

This study was delimited to the life experiences of a few numbers of children.

Also, this study was done with a restricted time frame although I used almost two months in my field work.

Due to limited time, methods that were used in this study were also adapted for the time constrain.

1.9 Structure of the thesis

Chapter one is the introduction of the thesis which has given a brief account on the key issues that outlines the thesis, the aim and the objectives, the research questions, relevance of the study and brief introduction of the methodology.

Chapter two is about the background of the study which includes information on immigration from Statistics Norway, country profiles of the Philippines and Vietnam because these are prominent immigrant groups in Norway from Southeast Asian region.

Chapter three is a presentation of theoretical framework for the study and research on friendship.

Chapter four is the Methodology chapter wherein I discussed the methods that I used in gathering data, and different aspects of conducting this research. I also included the before, during and after research activities, ethical concerns and the challenges that I encountered.

Chapter five is the analysis. It is the presentation of the results and analyses of the data gathered.

Chapter six is the summary and conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

The 2013 Population Census of Statistics Norway (Statistisk Sentralbyrå) reveals that the population in Norway is becoming increasingly diverse. It reports that as of January 2013, 12 percent of Norway's total population was immigrants. Statistics Norway also reports that Asia including Turkey is the third largest immigrant group in Norway, with a total number of 231,872 immigrants including Norwegian born to immigrant parents (shown in figure 1).
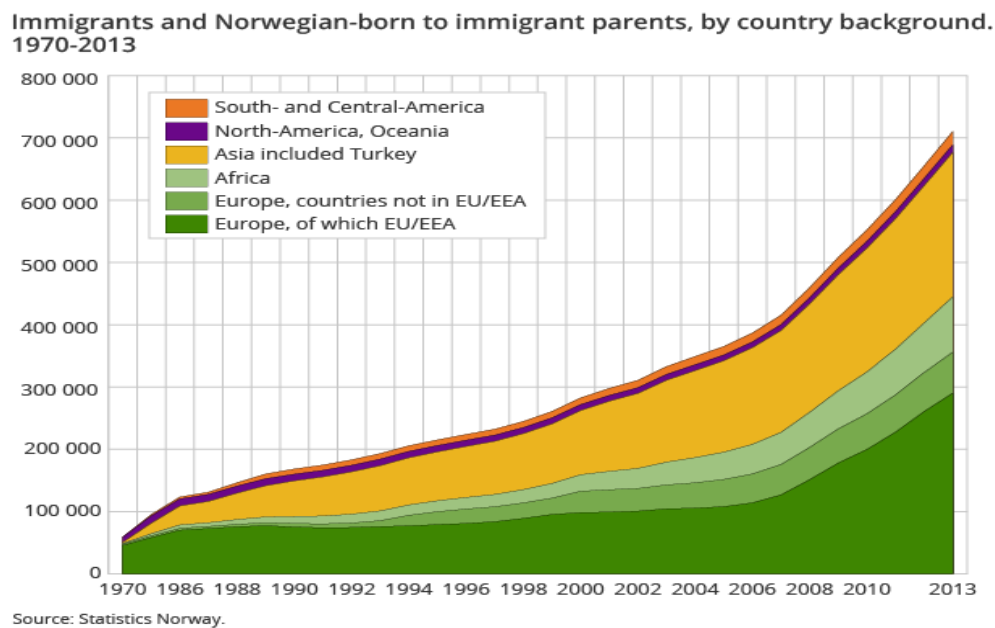
Figure 1. Immigrant population in Norway 1970-2013. Source: Statistics Norway, 1 January 2013.

My thesis will represent the immigrants with Southeast Asian background in Norway. Southeast Asian countries include Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia, East Timor, Indonesia, Philippines and Singapore (shown in figure 2).

Figure 2. Southeast Asian countries

2.2. Immigration

Immigration is one of the most important social developments of our time, a major life decision and has important psychological and social implications for the individual and the family group (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2011). It is a transformational process affecting families and their children. There are different reasons why people migrate: some migrate to escape political, religious or ethnic persecution, while others migrate for economic reasons. Some immigrants are motivated by the opportunity for social mobility, while others migrate in the spirit of adventure. Other people migrate because others – relatives, friends, friends of friends – migrated before them. Furthermore, some families migrate to improve their lives. Families consider immigration as an opportunity and time for personal growth.

Furthermore, Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco (2011) argued that the process of immigration can be stressful, not only for the parents, but also for their children. It removes family members from many of their relationships and predictable context: community ties, customs

and (often) language. Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco (2011) claimed that it is important to have network of social relations in their new land which can help maintain and enhance self-esteem and provide much needed acceptance and approval. They also argued that a well-functioning social support network is linked to better adjustment to a new environment.

There are few challenges immigrant children faces when moving to a new country. In an article written by Hsin-Chun Tsai (2006), she claimed that immigrant children face the challenges of rebuilding friendship and other social networks at school and in the community. Aranowitz (1984) have also mentioned that children who moved were less accepted by their peers. Schools can be an important site to meet other children with immigrant and non-immigrant backgrounds. In schools, immigrant children try to cope up quickly and intensively with the new culture. The quality of schools could ease or complicate immigrant children's transition (Suarez-Orozco &Suarez-Orozco, 2011). They also have to learn the language in order to communicate. According to Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco (2011) speaking the language of the new country is an advantage for the immigrants.

2.3 Filipinos and Vietnamese in Norway

Although there are several countries consisting Southeast Asia, my research will give attention on immigration history from countries such as Philippines and Vietnam since these groups are considered as one of the largest immigrants in Norway from this sub-region of Asia.

According to the Philippine Government, as of 2010, there are around 9.5 million to 12.5 million overseas Filipinos are the estimated count worldwide or about 11% of the total population of the Philippines (Philippine Government, 2010).

More than a million Filipinos try their luck each year to work abroad through overseas employment agencies and other programs, including government-sponsored initiatives. A majority of them are women applying as domestic helpers and personal service workers.

Others emigrate and become permanent residents of other countries. Overseas Filipinos often work as doctors, physical therapists, nurses, accountants, IT professionals, engineers, architects, entertainers, technicians, teachers, military servicemen, seafarers, students, caregivers, domestic helpers, fast wood workers especially in the Middle East and maids.

In 2006, there were nearly 8600 Filipino immigrants in the country, and was the sixteenth largest immigrant group in Norway. Of these, 7600 was the first generation immigrants and 1000 were descendants. Descendants who came from the Philippines were all young, 86 percent were under 20, and 46 percent were under 10 (Henriksen, Norwegian Central Statistics Bureau, 2007).

The Filipino immigrant population is a group which is dominated by women, and many of these have come to marry men of non-immigrant backgrounds. Others have come as au pairs. These women are well integrated into Norwegian society. Many of the men settled in Norway after having been hired on the Norwegian vessels. Filipinos have high percentage of employment, and both women and men participate largely in workplace.

According to the Philippine Embassy in Oslo, the number of people with Filipino background in Norway is estimated to be about 12,000, most of them living in the Oslo urban area. In addition to Filipinos who have intermarried with Norwegians, there are at least 900 licensed Filipino nurses, over a hundred oil engineers employed mostly in offshore projects in the western coast of Norway and Filipinos or Norwegians of Filipino descent working in the government sector, diplomatic missions and NGO's and commercial establishments (Philippine Embassy in Wikipedia, 2012).

As of January 1, 2008, the Norwegian Statistics Central Bureau reported that there were 19,226 Vietnamese people in Norway. Vietnamese Norwegians were the fifth-largest immigrant group.

Norway has received Vietnamese refugees since 1975. They numbered about 18,300 in 2006 and are considered one of the best integrated non-western immigrant groups in Norway

The Vietnamese were among the first from the third world to immigrate to Norway. Eight out of ten Vietnamese have lived in Norway for more than ten years, and nine out of ten possess Norwegian citizenship (Henriksen, 2007).

Around 5,000 Vietnamese Norwegians live in Oslo, where they are the eighth-largest immigrant group. There are also significant groups of Vietnamese living in Bergen, Kristiansand, and Trondheim. They are the largest immigrant group in Kristiansand and the second-largest in Bergen and Trondheim (Wikipedia, 2012).

Of the over 12,200 first generation immigrants from Vietnam, 10,700 had refugee-like backgrounds (as of 2006). It means that they either have come as transfer refugee or granted a residence application for asylum in Norway, or they have come later as family members.

The description of the Vietnamese immigrants provides a picture of an immigrant group that is relatively well integrated into the Norwegian society in many areas, particularly participation in education among descendants is relatively high. The first major influx of refugees from Vietnam took place in the years 1978-1982, after the Vietnam War was over. They were, in common with other refugee groups, scattered in Norwegian municipalities. Such scattered settlement patterns may in some cases seem positive integration (Henriksen, 2007).

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTS, THEORITICAL PERSPECTIVES
AND LITERATURE REVIEWS

This chapter presents key concepts and theories that are relevant to give focus and guide to the research study. Based on the aims and objectives as well as the research questions, concepts such as friendship and immigrant children are presented. The main theoretical perspectives that have been chosen to support this study are the social studies of children and childhood.

3.1 The Social Studies of Children and Childhood

The overarching theoretical perspective of this thesis is based on the ideas and the tenets of the social studies of childhood. In earlier theories, children were seen as something that was not part of the society and to become fully functioning members of the society, children must be shaped and guided by adults (Corsaro, 2005). While adults were seen as human beings, children were considered as human becomings. In an attempt to drift from this marginalization of children and childhood, another school of thought came up with a new paradigm which seeks to treat and see children as persons in their own rights. Prout & James (1990) called the sociology of childhood an "emergent paradigm". According to them children and childhood is a 'fact of culture' that vary and which can be said to make of childhood a social institution. Childhood is both constructed and reconstructed both for children and by children. From this point of view, researchers have begun to develop new approaches to study childhood in attempt to describe and analyze the quality of that experience. This emergent paradigm attempts to give a voice to the children and regard them as people worthy to study in their own right.

The proponent of this paradigm points to some key concepts in the dominant framework surrounding the study of children and childhood which include three themes predominately in relation to: 'rationality', 'naturality' and 'universality'. Prout & James (1990) have argued that these themes have stretched beyond the disciplinary boundaries of psychology but also influencing the socio-political context of childhood.

This approach of studying children and childhood, seek to challenge the dominant framework views and provide a guideline for a different approach of studying children. It gives a methodological direction as to how children are to be studied. This new approach of studying children also sees children as social actors who exercise their agency in a wide range of areas. It emphasize that children are active beings and not passive (ibid).

3.1.1 The key features of the new social studies of childhood

Below are the key features of the social study of childhood by Prout and James (1990):

- *Childhood is understood as a social construction. It provides an interpretative frame for contextualizing the early years of human life. Childhood appears as a specific structural and cultural component of many societies;*

- *Childhood is a variable of social analysis. It can never be entirely separated from other social variables such as class, gender or ethnicity;*

- *Children's social relationships and cultures are worthy of study in their own right, independent of the perspective and concerns of adults;*

- *Children are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live;*

- *Ethnography is a particularly useful methodology for the study of children as it allows children's voices to be heard and participate in the production of social data;*

- *The development of a new paradigm is to engage in and respond to the process of reconstructing childhood in society* (Prout & James, 1990, p.8-9).

This theoretical perspective of sociology of children and childhood is vital in my study because it guide the choice of methodological approach that will be used in studying children and childhood, it will give an opportunity to the children to be studied in their own right and to listen to their voices and concerns that affects their lives.

3.1.2 Agency

Children's agency is one of the most important theoretical developments in the recent history of childhood studies because it is a new way of seeing children as social actors (James, 2009). One way of seeing agency among children is by being active in their daily lives, making their own decisions, choosing their friends or their competence to participate and express their views on topics that could influence their lives. Using their agency, children are seen as '*active participants in society'* (James, 2009, p.34).

3.1.3 Listening to children

Listening to what children have to say is a way of constructing children as competent individuals (Kjørholt, 2004) and *'rational autonomous individuals'* (Clark, Kjørholt, & Moss, 2005, p.175). It is also seeing children as capable of speaking for themselves and that they are able to act for their own interest. Listening to children is also perceived as a way of promoting their capabilities, promoting children's ability to be creative in expressing their experiences.

In doing this research, I will apply the theoretical perspective of sociology of children and childhood by seeing them as social actors who are capable of using their agency. This research is about listening to my participant's perspectives. I consider my participants as competent individuals who are able to express their views and opinions. This study is about their life experiences and I consider them as the best informants rather than their parents or other adult caregivers.

3.2 The concept of Friendship

According to Kvello (2012) theorists often relate four dimensions in defining friendship: 1. it must be voluntary, 2. it must positive, 3. it must be long lasting and 4. and there must be mutuality or reciprocity. Friendship must be based on reciprocity, for example that both friends must regard themselves as friends (Kvello, 2012).

Words such as to have friends, to be social, to be socially accepted and to be socially popular with each other are often mixed up. Social acceptance is about being accepted by a social group. Examples of such groups are one's classmates in school, the football team one plays with, or the members of the gospel choir singing. Belonging to a social community implies not always that you are friends with people in the group. Friendships relations are deeper, and is often regarded as more important than the relationship that the members of the social groups you are a part of (Kvello, 2012).

James (1993) said there are different kinds of friendship among children. One kind of friendship is for convenience. Children choose to be friends with other children because of shared isolation or social exclusion. Children who developed this kind of friendship are expressing a form of solidarity as being seen as significantly different. They team up to play together because they have something in common, not because these children shares mutual trust and intimacy. Another kind is friendship is distinguished by children's investment of emotion and expression of commitment. James (1993) has said that friendship among children is a performative aspect. Being friends with someone, children validate their friendship, confirmed and affirmed through social action. They have to perform certain actions like wearing the same clothes in school, liking the same food or liking the same football team, or liking the same teen stars to show other children that they friends. The friendship has given significant emphasis on conforming to one another and being the same to lessen any difference that they might have. James (1993) called it a visible demonstration of friendship through public performances in which children recognized each other's friendship.

From their study, Boocock & Scott (2005) found out that friendship is usually initiated when for example a child ask the other child's name and followed by an invitation to play together during recess. Once their friendship is established, it is maintained by spending recess and lunch time together; children also share their snacks, money and toys; and they provide comfort and support when a friend was sad or needed help.

On the other hand, Barnes (2003) pointed out that there are two themes to remember when studying children's friendships: The first theme is that friendship is where children may experience many features of their cultural worlds by playing together, sharing experiences

with one another or doing things together. The second theme is that friendship among children can have formative and lasting effect as children experience affection, intimacy, communication, sharing and cooperation. Within and through children's friendships, they get opportunities to discover aspects of themselves by getting to know themselves better, comparing themselves with their friends and achieving an understanding of who they want to be or not want to be, and also who they want to be identified or not identified as friends.

While Corsaro (2005) argued that children's developing knowledge of friendship is closely tied to the social and contextual demands of their peer worlds. '*Children construct concepts of friendship while at the same time linking these concepts to specific organizational features of peer culture or other peer setting. Through their experience, children come to realize that interaction with peers is fragile, and acceptance into ongoing activities is often difficult. Friendships are collectively constructed through children's active involvement in their social worlds and peer cultures.*' (Corsaro, 2005, p.144).

Sharing activities together and guarding that shared activity is one feature in children's friendship (Corsaro, 2005). Children would try to protect their shared activity from other children who could be a possible threat to their friendship. They learned to supervise their own activities and to negotiate who could or could not join in their activities or who is one of them or not.

James (1993) stated that children recognized the value of friendship which is indicated in their considerable and early fluency of terminology of friendship relations. Furthermore, James (1993) has said that young children could distinguish between the words 'friends', 'best friends', 'like'. When children reach the age of nine or ten, children's social relationship evolves on being and having friends; for example children could feel anxiety about changing schools because their friends are not going to be in their new school or children use friendship to threaten or influence a friend's behavior.

But James (1993) also said that although children become competent in their friendship with other children, these interpersonal relations are contradicted with weakness in those relations.

Children experiences constant conflicts, arguments, disputes and falling out in their relation. James (1993) said that it is central in children's social relations to include or exclude, to name or not to name, to signify friendship or to ignore another. Children can control one another's behavior through issuing threat or temporarily terminate a friendship.

Goodwin (1990) maintained that conflict in children's peer interaction often serves to strengthen interpersonal alliances and to organize social groups, while Rizzo (1989) maintained that '*disputes provide children with the opportunity to work out the terms of their relationship. Through these disputes children obtained a better understanding of what they could expect from each other by way of friendship, and the children gained a unique insight into their own actions and role as a friend*' (p.98).

Barnes (2003) has said that children's friendships generally provide them with opportunities for intimate relations based upon forms of reciprocity. *Experience of friendship is one of the ways in which individual children develop a sense of identity, defining who they are in relation to others. By comparing themselves with their friends, children may achieve a developing understanding of who they are and what they aspire to become – and what they aspire not to become. Children may find new and different opportunities to be creative and to come to regard themselves as autonomous individuals in their own right* (Barnes, 2003, p.49).

3.2.1 Friendship in different age group

According to Corsaro (2005) children from seven to ten years of age '*easily generate and sustain peer activities, but they now collectively produce a set of stratified groups, and issues of acceptance, popularity, and group solidarity become very important*' (Corsaro, 2005, p.192). Aside from that, children learn to gradually replace their nonverbal play routines to verbal activities that include planning and reflective evaluation in the nature of their play.

Rizzo (1989) he reported from his study that children appeared to have an internalized concept of friendship. Rizzo (1989) found out that children '*attempted to determine the existence of friendship by comparing the internal concept with specific features of*

interactions with frequent playmates, to act in accordance with this concept when with friends, and to object when their friends failed to live up to their expectations' (Rizzo, 1989, p. 105). What Rizzo (1989) was trying to say was children displays a reflective awareness of what a friend should be and they learn to choose who they want to be as friends. But being aware of what a friend is does not necessarily mean that children could develop close friendships (Corsaro, 2005).

In James' (1993) fieldwork experience with children in a kindergarten, she observed that while younger children defines friendship as playing together and sharing things and activities, older children could define friendship explicitly and abstract reflection was common among them. James (1993) maintained that as children grow older their understanding of friendship begin to change, but also insisted that types of friendships are not dependent on age. Categories of friend could be different depending on each individual child on how they experience friendship with different people. In short, James (1993) was saying that children learn about and experience friendship through its discrete performances, which means that the *'social context in which children find themselves, not simply their age, play the greater part in shaping children's understanding of the concept'* (James, 2003, p.216).

3.2.2 Friends at home, school and neighborhood

At home. At home, many parents have a strong desire that their children should have suitable friends who will have a good influence on them (Barnes, 2003). Parents often exert influence over young children's friendship, encouraging their children to invite one child at home to play, rather than the other. Similarly, a pre-established friendship between mothers may encourage the development of friendship between their children (James, 1993).

In School. Ladd, Kochenderfer-Ladd & Rydell (2011) argued that children who make new friends tend to like school and perform better academically than peers who do not have friends. Devine (2003) also said that children find it easier to cope in school if they have friends who are supportive of them, and were more likely to perceive their schools as supportive environment. In Devine's (2003) study, she found out that membership of

particular groups or gangs was evident in all classes and each gang was attributed certain traits or characteristics. Being a part of a group is empowering for children in terms of providing a sense of belonging.

Break time provides children the best opportunity to have fun in school (Devine, 2003). It is in schoolyard where one can hear the sound of children playing and shouting. It is also where the children feel freedom and liberty from adults' authority.

In the neighborhood. Children can form friendship with those who live in their neighborhood. A study done earlier by Berg and Medrich (cited in Barnes, 2003) showed that children can form friendship with other children regardless of where they live, either in an affluent neighborhood or in an inner-city neighborhood.

3.2.3 *Friendship as cultural construction*

James (1993) has mentioned in her book that the meaning of friendship is culturally constructed. Barnes (2003) argued that Western countries are founded on a belief system that emphasizes personal autonomy and individuality. Children are seen as separate individuals, making or breaking friendships with one or more individuals. Barnes (2003) said that in collectivist culture, group identity and collective responsibility for the welfare of group members are given greater importance. Barnes (2003) also maintained that in collective culture friendships arise in the context of shared activity and are less personalized. Even Corsaro (2005) argued that children's groups are much less age segregated in non-Western societies. He further discussed that children in these societies who are 7 to 10 years old spend much of their lives in mixed-age groups caring for and playing with younger siblings and other younger children in their local communities.

3.2.4   Gendered Friendship

This section will focus on the aspects of contrasting experiences of boys and girls in their friendship relation.

James (1993) stated that the pattern of strict gender separation which develops in children's play is replicated in their friendship relations. She argued that girls' friendship is seen as being reflective in the pattern of intensive one-to-one relationships involving considerable emotional commitment (James, 1993). Even Thorne (1993) claimed that girls typically form pairs of best friends; the pattern is more one of dyads moving into triads resulting in quite complex social networks. Girl's often talk about who is best friends with, 'likes', or is 'being mean to' whom.

Gestures of intimacy, like stroking or combing their friend's hair can be seen in a girl's friendship. They notice and comment on one another's physical appearance such as haircut or clothes. They also share secrets and become mutually vulnerable through self-disclosure. Girls emphasize the construction of intimacy and connection, they affirm solidarity and commonality.

Furthermore, Barnes (2003) also argued that the *common image of girl's friendships is that they are characterized by a capacity for sharing, caring and mutual support and to provide positive affirmation to one's friend personal worth and actions* (Barnes, 2003, p.75). This is of particular significance during the adolescent period when young people are questioning and being questioned about their developing selves in more intensive ways, and when personal identities are being shaped.

Although they talk about being 'nice', Thorne (1993) claimed that girls can be cruel; beneath that overt concern with group harmony lies considerable tension and conflict. Goodwin (1990) found that girls more often talked about offenses of other girls in their absence. Girl's friendship can be less supportive with practices of falling out and exclusion. James (1993)

found out from her field work on girl's friendship that it was full of drama and care-control, that is the power to care for others can, at the same time, construed as a form of control.

In summary, girls' friendships can be fueled with tensions, conflicts as much as by support and care. It is constituted by unpredictable patterns of close and emotional alliances, which in turn are shaped by subtle shifts in power relations (Barnes, 2003).

James (1993) found out that boys of eight to nine years old were less eager to talk openly of their friendship; they rarely allowed others into the world of their friendship. For boys friends were people to play and fight with or members of their sports team. James (1993) stated that it is not because they did not have valued and close friends, but rather because boys had learnt not to speak of them or to be demonstrative in their relationships with one another in a public context.

Thorne also mentioned in her book that boys express solidarity through the ritual hand slap of 'giving five', friendly teasing and through the guise of mock violence – pushing, poking, grabbing- whose context affirms good feelings. Also when a boy discloses a weakness to other boys, it is far more likely to be exposed to others through joking and a kind of collective shaming. Boys tend to be more self-protective. As James (1993) found out, friendship among boys are less publicly binding.

3.2.5   Friendship groups

Boocock & Scott (2005) found out that in groups, membership is obtain by asking the leader if they could join the group. As a member, they have to obey the rules made by their leader. He further discussed that pre-adolescent children's alliances are often linked to changes of positions in friendship groups, providing the children with opportunities to test a series of identities.

In the study of Rizzo (1989), for example, best friends often tried to expand their group by constructing 'clubs', with membership offered to other kids they liked. The children would sometimes give names to these clubs, but the clubs have seldom had any real purpose except to provide a way of expanding the friendship group. Some children were not offered membership, and others were rejected, resulting in the beginning of the development of stratified groups.

3.3 Challenges being an immigrant child

Immigrants are by definition in the margins of two cultures (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2011). They can never truly belong either 'here' or 'there'. '*An immigrant enters a new culture and no matter how hard she tries, will never completely belong; her accent will not be quite right, and her experiences will always be filtered through the dual frame of reference. Nor will she 'belong' in her old country; her new experiences change her, altering the filters through which she views the world*' (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2011, p.92-93).

Immigration is a stressful process not only for the parents, but also for their children (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2011). Immigrating families leave behind other members of their family and many other social relationships and predictable situations and context like their community ties, customs, culture and language. Both parents and children face the challenges of rebuilding their friendship and other social networks at their new community or in school (Hsin-Chun Tsai, 2006).

Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco (2011) claimed that it is important to have network of social relations in their new land which can help maintain and enhance self-esteem and provide much needed acceptance and approval. They also argued that a well-functioning social support network is linked to better adjustment to a new environment.

3.3.1 Immigrant children in school

Devine (2003) maintained that school environment is a highly social one in which children's identities are simultaneously challenged and affirmed. Devine (2003)also considered school as crowded and often pressured atmosphere that being alone without friends can be a terrifying prospect.

As Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco (2011) claimed, schools are important site of cultural contact for immigrant children. The quality of their schools will ease or complicate the transition. It is where they meet teachers, as well as other children. Through schools, immigrant children get greater exposure to the new culture and learn the new language more quickly.

In her study, James (1993) found out that time often has significant part to play in the process of integration in school. According to her, a newly integrated child into class may be regarded by teachers and children as 'special'. S/he may receive extra attention and consideration, that for a while s/he is treated like the class pet. But after a while these children stopped being the 'special' focus of attention; s/he just becomes 'different'. Time exerts its own pressures on sympathy and understanding.

3.4 Language

Language provides such a powerful resource for children and young people in so many different aspects of their lives (Maybin, 2003). Different languages and dialects and language style can also be an important marker of identity. Children use language to manage activities and to pursue relationships with other children. Language is used as a tool to build relationships, to gain social control, to negotiate friendship and to pursue individual goals and purposes.

As Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco (2011) have said that speaking the language of the new country is an asset. However, Maybin (2003) maintained that children who migrate to live in a different country may experience a particularly difficult disjuncture between the world and the language they have left behind and the demands of their new environment.

On the other hand, Narrowe (1998) used the expression home language as it served as a powerful metaphor to position immigrant children in society. Only immigrants were regarded as having a home language. The 'home' of home language was a label that stated immigrant children's home were somewhere else that their new country. Home language, according to Narrowe (1998), '*assumes acknowledges and accentuates the similarity and the relationship of immigrant children to each other and it defines them as different from other children*' (p.34).

Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco (2011) have said that as immigrant children quickly acquire the new language skills, they often become reluctant to speak their original language in public.

Immigrant parents encourage their children to develop the competencies necessary to function in a new culture, while at the same time maintaining the traditions and language at home (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2011). Immigrant children are encouraged to learn the new language, but also they have to keep the new language and cultural ways out of the home.

CHAPTER 4

Methodology Chapter

4.1 Introduction

According to Clough and Nutbrown (2007) methodology refers to the principles and values, philosophies and ideologies that underpin ones research. As a researcher, I have principles and values which motivate me to carry out this research that forms the basis of my research methodology. The reason why I was carrying out this research was to listen to the voices of children and listen to their experiences and take it seriously. By reflecting this, it will help me to be more aware of my methodology.

This chapter will elaborate on the methods used in the research study of the friendship relations of my participants, Southeast Asian children in Norway. This is a small scale research inspired by ethnographic work using qualitative methods.

I decided to divide this chapter into three different areas: the pre-field preparations, during field work and post field work activities. Doing this division makes it easier to provide a detailed description of the process of the research. Furthermore, I hope that it will present structure and transparency to the development of the study.

The first step was the pre-field work which is basically the planning and preparation of the groundwork of the research study. The second stage is the actual collection of the primary data. The methods that I used in collecting my primary data were semi-structured interview to the participants, informal discussion with the parents and observation. The final step was the post field work activity which examines with the data collected. It also includes the transcription of the data, interpretation and analysis.

4.2 Pre-field work activities

This is the application of the knowledge gained and the insights that has been learned from the philosophy of the social studies of children and childhood, the theories and concepts, the right qualitative research methodology to use while conducting the research. This activity involve planning of the research project which include choosing the research topic, deciding what approach to use, looking for possible participants, writing of the research proposal, developing the research questions and asking for informed consent.

4.2.1 Research Sites

My research was done in one of the municipalities in Norway. In choosing this site, I save time and money, and almost all my participants live in this municipality. There are a large number of immigrants living in this municipality who originally came from Southeast Asia, and some of them I consider my good friends. Although there was a little challenge in finding a good number of participants, accessibility was not a big problem.

I conducted my interview with the children in different places. Most of them I interviewed at home, and some of them in public places like a café and in a fast food chain. In cases where I have to interview my participants in public places, it was decided by their parents because of the parent's busy schedules at work and at home so we decided that meeting them outside was the best solution. This means that I have to be flexible and be ready in time and space, while simultaneously engaging them on their own terms and with their time-frames (Nairn et al. 2003).

4.2.2 Samples and Sampling Technique

My samples were eight children from age 8 to 14 years old. These children came together with their parents as immigrants and almost all of them settled in this municipality. The families came from Southeast Asian regions. There were four girls and four boys who were willing to participate and this proved to be an advantage because it represented an equal

number of participants from both gender. Most of the participants, except for one female participant, started in different introduction schools around the municipality. Some of them started in day cares when they first arrived in Norway.

Both purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used to gather participants. I deliberately choose the participants to the study because particular participants may provide a good example of what the research was studying and could help to answer the research questions (Robert-Holmes, 2011)

In addition, convenience sampling was used because of my connection and accessibility with the Southeast families in this municipality. I am of Asian background, so it was convenient to get hold of the immigrant families with children within the target age.

4.2.3 Qualitative Approach

Since the matter of interest is children's perception of friendship and its role in their social identity, this research will use qualitative approach which is particularly suitable for doing research with children (Greig & Taylor, 1999).

It investigates the why and how of human behavior, not just what, where and when. Hence, the need is for smaller but focused samples.

4.2.4. Methods of Data Collection

The research strategy that will be used to implement the research study is *semi-structured interview*. Kvale (1996) defined it as an interview whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the describe phenomena.

According to the definition, the semi-structured interview is concerned with finding information by exchanging views of the everyday life of the interviewee, or in this case, the participants of the research. It is more than an ordinary conversation that takes place between two people and becomes a careful questioning and listening approach with a purpose of obtaining knowledge.

This method will facilitate my goal to define, understand and explore friendship in the lives of Southeast Asian immigrant children, by talking with each other – to interact, pose questions and answer questions. Through this interaction, the researcher will have a chance to get to know the participants better, get to learn about their experiences, feelings and hopes and the world they live in (Kvale, 1996).

In addition, Robert-Holmes (2011) argued that with this method, it allows the researcher to keep the interview focused to the research participants and at the same time be sufficiently flexible to allow for the interview to change direction if the participants want to. It is giving freedom to the participants to talk issues that they feel relevant to the topic. Furthermore, it shows that the researcher values their opinions and sees them as competent and knowledgeable in matters concerning them.

Semi-structured interview approach provides the focus that is required in this research study as it tries to understand the point of view of the participants and allows them to convey their situation from their own perspective and in their own words (Kvale, 1996).

Furthermore, with this method, I could ask the participants the questions directly and if it is unclear, it can be repeated and can be ask again in different manner. I can also observe the way the participants react to the questions, the intonation of their voices and the facial expressions. This is especially helpful when the researcher's aim is to seek to understand the participants' views on matters concerning their lives and it helps to verify the answer of the participants.

The main language that was used during the interviews was the native language of the researcher and participants. No one decided which language to use, but it came out naturally to use the native tongue because the participants use this every day at home.

I also used *informal discussion* with the parents to get richer data, detailed information and to clarify topics that was said by my participants. Talking to the parents enable me to listen to their point of view which is also important in this study.

I also used *observation* while interviewing the children. According to Ennew et al. (2009) observation is the basis of all good research. It is vital for understanding the context of the data. Observation is a method that takes place every day at all times. It can be brief, but it can still be considered as a systematic process. I used this method in addition to semi-structured interview as a reinforcement to get a better understanding of the data. According to Clark et al., (2005) observation is a valuable tool to get deeper insight into the unspoken words. It was helpful to observe how the children answer the questions and see the way the move their bodies and hands and see their facial reactions, the ups and downs of their voices. These are ways of communicating and expressing themselves in a different language. It was essential to observe their expressions and their reactions to validate their spoken words.

4.2.5 Developing my Interview Guide

A qualitative research interview means that the researcher would develop an interview guide that indicates the main issues. The interview guide helped me direct the conversation, but I experienced that questions could be adapted, expanded and improvised based on context and informants (Eide & Winger, 2003).

I developed open-ended questions to allow the children the possibility to discuss or elaborate their answers and express themselves. I tried making the questions short, clear and interesting and formulated it the way my participants could understand them.

I had to make sure that the questions are within the ethical guidelines for interviewing children by making sure that the questions are acceptable and adapted to the child's emotional and social maturity. It was also important to consider the children's family and cultural background. I had to think what questions to ask and not to ask to consider whether my interview guide answers my research questions.

My questions begins with '*What', 'How'* or *'Can you tell me'*. It was important that the questions are not only open, but as well as inviting in the beginning of the interview and gradually become more precise as the conversation approaches the main topic.

I had to switch between easy and difficult questions so that it would not be boring to the children. I tried to avoid leading questions, and was aware of my expectations and assumptions.

I also prepared probing questions like:

- *I don't quite understand, can you explain it a bit more?*
- *Can you give an example of what you have just said?*
- *What do you mean?*
- *Can you give me more details about that?*

Reflecting from my interview with my participants, I found out that they are capable individuals in expressing their opinions. Some of them needed coaxing, but they were able to communicate and answer my questions. As for my part, interviewing children was not as easy as it sounds. I found out that practice makes a good interviewer. I had to listen to them, follow the thread of the conversation, and at the same time posed the right questions or say some comments within ethical boundaries. It was an educational experience.

4.2.6 Ethical Considerations

During this research work, it is critically important to be aware of the ethical issues concerning this research to conduct a good and within the frame of rules when researching children. Ethical considerations such as informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, listening to children, power differentials, critical reflection, position or role were taken careful consideration.

I sought *informed consent* from the parents (Cree et al., 2002) and participants to carry out the research. It is a part of building trust in the relationship between the researcher and the

participants (Alderson, 2008). Trust requires that as a researcher, one must be honest, reliable and communicate all aspects of the research process.

In seeking informed consent one has to ensure that respondents participate of their own free will and not feel the need to participate because of many different reasons. Furthermore, information about the research must be provided and participants or their parents should be given an opportunity to ask questions, clarifications to the researcher. Informed consent includes explanation about the purpose of the study, the risk involved and their rights to refuse or terminate participation in the study. The researcher must let them know from the start that it is up to them if they wanted to participate or not, and their decisions will be respected, and in any way will not affect any relationship the researcher and informants have.

The first thing I did was to send an informal letter to the parents seeking permission to let their children participate in my research. The letter was written in the native language of the parents. Since I know the parents of the participants, I updated them first of what I am currently studying and expressed my desire to interview their children and to listen to their opinions and perspectives as an immigrant and their experiences with friendship with other children in their new adopted country. Almost all of them responded positively to my inquiry, but I did not have an exact date in mind to execute the interview then. The most important thing for me on the earlier stage of planning was to have their initial consent.

After a few weeks, I sent the parents a text message telling them that I wanted to meet them personally to explain my research study and they could ask me questions concerning the research. I also gave them a formal letter of consent where they can sign their names allowing their children to participate in the research. After going through the informed consent with the parents, the next step was to talk to the children. These children know me as a friend of their parents and considers me as their aunt that was why it was very important for me to be critically reflective (Punch, 2002) of my position. I explained that I am studying in a university and I am in the process of doing a research about children's experiences as an immigrant in relationship to friendship with other children. I informed them that I talked to their parents first for consent before getting to them. I told them about my research and that I wanted to ask their permission to participate in this research. I described my research, the aims and objectives, the purpose of the study. I explained that there were no right and wrong answers and their opinions were respected. I also made sure that they understand that the

conversations between us will remain between us and that I am not going to tell their parents about what we talked about if they don't like me to. It was crucial for me that they understand my situation and I came to them as a researcher and not as a friend of their parents. They could tell me what they want to tell, but at the same time they can trust me to keep their secrets between us.

I both asked the permission of the parents and the children concerning about recording the conversation during the interview. I also explained the reason why I have to record our conversation and I told them that after the research is completed, then I could delete all the conversation and information gathered about them.

Privacy and confidentiality are key features to successful research projects with children (Marrow & Richards, 1996). As described above, participants were briefed that what they have told me will remain between us. Any information disclosed will not be relayed to other person who is not directly related to the research study. I also informed their parents about the issue of confidentiality. It was informed that this research was purely an academic undertaking.

I know my participants and their parents personally, but to protect their privacy, I used fictional names (especially in the Analysis chapter) instead of using the real names of my participants. It was not mentioned in which municipality the participants live. I did not require them to give personal details like birthdates and/or personal numbers. While transcribing my data, I used numbers to identify each child instead of their names. I indicated their gender and age, to help me in the later chapter of analysis. I saved the gathered data in my personal computer which has a password in order to log in. No one has access to this personal computer other than me.

Furthermore, during the interview process, it was either I asked the parents politely to give us a few minutes of privacy or the parents were not there on the site while I was interviewing the participants. It was fine with the parents to give us some privacy.

I informed to the parents and the participants that topics and information discussed during the interview are confidential but they have to understand there is a limit to the anonymity and confidentiality (Robert-Holmes, 2011). This is due to child protection issue. And it is

imperative that before children and other participants give their informed consent and actually participate in the research, they are aware of this.

Listening to children is an essential part in doing this research. As a researcher who grew up from a different culture and came from a belief that children are subordinate to their elders, I have to be aware of this perspective of giving voice to the children and listening to that voice, instead of bringing up my own cultural background in this study. The parents of my participants are my contemporaries and they came to Norway as an adult. This is our culture, children are taught to listen to their elders and not the opposite. It is discouraged from an early age that children will speak their minds and be opinionated.

But at the same time, I am a student of Childhood Studies where I am taught that children are competent social actors and have the rights to be listened to. Aside from that, we now live in a part of the world where children are encouraged to be confident, to participate and be autonomous. They are considered as experts of their own lives.

During my encounters with the participants, I had to be reflective of these issues. I emphasized to the children that their opinions were important to me and they were the best source of information in this particular topic and there were no right or wrong in their answers because we were talking about their experiences and not of their parents or any other adults. In other words, I did encouraged them to speak freely and share with me their experiences and they can talk to me, see me in a different light and not as a mother/aunt figure. I was worried that if they see me as an aunt/mother figure, they would not be as open as I wanted them to be. As one of the participant told me during our interview '*Not everything I can tell to my mom, to my parents'*.

I tried listening carefully to what the participants were saying and 'not' saying, and tried not to interrupt when they were speaking. I noticed that when I showed interest on what they were saying, the children were encouraged to actively participate.

It is vital that the researcher recognizes the importance of the *power differentials* between the researcher and children (Alanen & Mayhall, 2001). The researcher has a responsibility to minimize these power differentials especially if it can affect the outcome of the data.

To minimize power differential (Abebe, 2009), I had to adjust the way I talk. I talked slower and repeated my questions a few times and sometimes in different manners when I was interviewing with my younger participants. I used this approach because I wanted to learn more about their experiences, to encourage them to talk more easily and to gain more substance in our conversation. I also had to approach them in a child-like manner; I used friendlier tone in my voice. I met the children with openness and acceptance. It was an important factor to remember to negotiate unequal power relations (Abebe, 2009).

These children have been calling me aunt as a sign of respect. It was taught from they were young to call certain names to elder people to show respect. And this has been carried on even if these children have been living in Norway for a few years. I could not ask them to call me by my first name just for a few minutes of interview, and back to aunt when we are finish. My question was if the participants were open in sharing their experiences to me as I wanted them to be since they might felt that I was a mother figure to them. This situation is playing of powers between me as a researcher and the children as participants. I could not ask them to change the way they call me since they know me for quite some time. The only thing I could do was to talk to them seriously and treat them as social actors and trust that they understand that this particular situation is different than when they see me in gatherings with their parents.

As a researcher, I had to be *critically reflective* of my expectations, judgments and biases and be aware of the taken for granted assumptions. It was essential for me to remember that during the process of the research project, my role was not an educator or a mother, but as a researcher and has to maintain that professional code.

Solberg (1996) had said that a researcher should listen to the participants' stories and show interest in them, without judging if the content was 'fair' or not. Even if I know these children, and they look up to me as their 'aunt', I could not risk involving any feelings or thoughts that I have in whatever they could say. The interview session could go in two ways: they could tell me openly whatever they want to say because they feel a certain familiarity with me, or they will never be comfortable to tell me anything significant. Either ways, I have to respect them, encourage them to talk and listen to their voice.

Researchers should engage in critical reflection in order to explore the advantages and disadvantages of how they work in practice and the implications for analysis of the different kinds of data that are generated. Reflexivity should be a central part of the research process with children, where researchers critically reflect not only on their role and their assumptions (Davis, 1989), but also on the choice of methods and their applications (Punch, 2002).

Since the research topic is close to my heart, I certainly have my own biases, expectations and assumptions, but it was extremely fundamental to be reflective of these issues when talking to the experiences of the children so that those feelings could not influence my research study. In my head, I was conscious of my expectations and assumptions that we were experiencing the same situation. There are times that I was surprised by their answers because I expected it the other way, but being self-critical helped me to focus on my role as a researcher. By interviewing them, I am telling and writing their stories in an academic way, and it is not my personal story and my own feelings should not be involved.

I also have to be reflective of my own cultural background and of my participants and their family. We all came from the same culture and some things that are considered fine here in Norway, is still a challenge to be accepted in our culture. Here, I wrote down a part of my field note which is in connection with this situation as my reflection and for the sake of being transparent to my disputing backgrounds: (reconstructed from notes).

'I do not know how to react in a situation where the mother says something like 'You know how children are…' Do they expect that I agree with them and say it loud? In my head, I worry that I inclined to agree to what she is saying. I understand her. My excuse is because I came from the same culture as them. I grew up with the same discipline. My parents taught me to listen to them, and not the other way around. I was taught that parents know best because they have been there and done that. So does it mean that they are right all the time? But we are now living in a different country. I have been expose to different way of seeing children. Not anymore as a 'child', but a child who is competent and autonomous. After a few years of studying children, I see them in a different light. I sometimes struggle to reconcile these two conflicting ideas. This makes me more aware of how vulnerable I am with regards to my research project'

This is one of the examples that I have to reflect in my research because of my cultural background. To help me focus and be reflective, I prepared myself by reading articles about this topic. I was conscious of the reasons *why* I choose this topic and to remind me of my role in this research process.

In terms of *position or role*, it was significant to be mindful of my familiarity and connection with the families and the participants. I am researching children of Filipino-Vietnamese background who immigrate to a new country and their story was not far from my own. I am friends with their parents. The children meet me in gatherings.

It was a challenge to distance myself and be reflective and be an academic at the same time. I admit that it was an advantage to be an 'insider' in the community, as it was easier with the access, but it was also a disadvantage with too much familiarity. With too much familiarity, it was challenging to distance myself and for them to understand my role as a researcher because they are used to see me as a friend of their parents. Aside from this, there was a chance that they would not take me seriously and the questions that I was posing to them.

It was helpful to talk to the participants before the interview sessions and explain to them why I was there and doing this. It was helpful that I regarded them as competent individuals from the start. They could see I was serious and sincere and that I genuinely like to hear their stories.

4.3 During Fieldwork and Challenges

I noticed at first that the children were a bit nervous. So I started talking and giving information about my research. I talked to them in a low voice, slower and I repeated the information several times. I put them at ease by saying that there were no right and wrong answers, or these were not graded questions. All they were going to tell me were relevant information so nothing is less important. One of the participant said at the end of the interview that she was expecting really difficult questions, but was really glad that the questions were not that hard.

According to Nilsen & Rogers (2005) constructing home as a research site brings fort interesting dimensions of ethical demands and challenges. One of the challenges that I encountered while interviewing the children at home was that, even if the parent said that they would give us privacy, it was not completely private. Some of the participant's siblings pass by when we were conducting the interview. I had one encounter where the mother had to come and go to where I was interviewing her child, and at one point, she motioned as if she was kicking something when I asked her child what kind of leisure activities she likes to do with her friends. Maybe she thought that she was not disturbing us because she did not say any words, she just gestured something to me. I had to remind the mother if she could give us a few more minutes to continue the interview. Although our culture teaches us to respect the elders or do not correct other people especially when you are a guest at other's home, I had to remind her in a nice way that we needed privacy. This was not correcting in my part, and I have to be careful not to hurt the feeling of the mother. I was in front of her daughter and I do not want to embarrass her or her child or me. I thought that she also did that because she felt comfortable with me as her friend, and not seeing me as a researcher. Our common culture played an important part in the research site, and it makes it more challenging because home had become a research site.

Interviewing the participants in a public place was a bit of a challenge. It was a lot of people coming and going and it can be distracting. Fortunately the children were in their element, they answered the questions well. They seemed eager to answer my questions. They asked questions and clarifications. Even if I already said and explained that I am recording our conversation, one of my female participants asked me why I record the conversation or what I am going to do with the conversation. I had to repeat my explanation again. It might be that the first time I said it was unclear. I was glad that they asked questions like this because it means to say that they were curious and they can express themselves. This was a good sign for me because it is easy to assume that since I am an adult and their parents said they can participate on the interview, the children can just go along from what adults have decided.

I interviewed the children in the language they were most comfortable with. But after a while I noticed that although the children can speak their native language fluently, there were certain issues that they needed to switch to Norwegian language to explain and express themselves. The children were comfortable with both languages (Norwegian and their native

language) that it looked like they do not mind changing from one language to the other. So during the interviews we used different languages to understand and express ourselves better.

Another challenge for me as a researcher was my interview method. I understood fast after my first interview that interviewing requires methodological awareness, insight into the methods characteristics and knowledge of how to plan, implement and interpret the interview (Eide & Winger, 2003). Interviewing children can be a constructive way to understand children, their experiences and how they look at the world. But it needs planning, constant reflection on the researcher's part, concentration and practice. I realized that a researcher could not be a good interviewer with only a few interview sessions, but it takes time and I learned that listening is very useful when interviewing. It does not help even if you know the person you are going to interview. I learned that it was important to be 'present' with the interviewee and not think of what I am going to ask next.

During my fieldwork, there was one situation which I also consider as a challenge for me as a researcher and as an adult. My participants were playing together in front of the computer, and one boy who does not belong to their group was left out even if he tried to join their game. I felt sorry for the boy, and my first reaction was to get the attention of my participants and tell them to include this boy in their game. But since I was studying children's friendship and their relationship with one another, then I have to be strict to myself and remember my role as a researcher in that situation.

I would like to I also observed the participants facial expressions, body languages and intonation of their voices. It can give me more idea of what they are really saying to me, it is a way of communicating their non-spoken languages. I noticed how engaged they were to tell me about their friends and what they like to do together. I noticed how they tried to recall the first few months when they arrived in Norway. I also noted that the children were not shy to talk about their experiences. They looked at me straight when I was talking to them. The younger children, especially the boys, needed a bit of encouragement in a form of rephrasing my questions. It seemed that they were having a good time and liked that someone was interested to listen to them about their experiences. During the interview, they laughed when they share something funny and seemed very enthusiastic to talk about computer games, a favorite activity to do with their friends.

4.3.1 Field Notes

During field work, I took down notes to record what I have observed during the interview with my participants. These recordings will help me support my data in the analysis chapter. I mostly scribble down words on my notes as a quick description of what I have noticed and observed. I also wrote down what I thought I missed in our conversation. I thought it was also helpful to include some of my feelings, expectations and assumptions and my surprises upon hearing what my participants had to say in answer to a particular question.

I took note of their facial expressions and body language, movements of the eyes. I was particular if they were looking at me or they were looking somewhere else when they were trying to convey to me or explain to me what they mean to say. I also noted their different kinds of laughs: in the beginning were there some nervous laughs. In the middle of the conversation, I noticed some enthusiastic laughs while they were engage in sharing what they like to do with their friends. I also noted the seriousness of their voices especially when they were telling me the challenges they encountered in making new friends when they just came here in Norway. I took notice of the movements of the hands, was it in the same place the whole time we were talking or were they making a lot of gestures while talking.

4.4 Post-Field Work Activity

This part of the research work involves listening to the voice recorder over and over, transcription of the data, looking for similar patterns, categorization, interpretation and completing the thesis.

4.4.1 Data Transcription

I gathered rich and good amount of data after my field work. The interviews with the children were transcribed the way it was said in the tape recorder. It means to say that I transcribed my data in the native language of the participants. I deliberately did not to translate it in English language because I myself is not a native English speaker, and I am afraid that in doing so, I will lose the real meaning of some words that I could not find in the English vocabulary or vice versa. It was important for me that I understand what was being said in our interview to help me later in my analysis.

I had to listen to the recorder many times to get the exact words in the conversation. I also wrote down the '*ahhh', 'ok'* and the *'uhu'* as well as the nervous laugh and the long pauses. It was a long and boring process, but I had to do it because there are benefits in doing one's own transcription (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). I get to know my data and understand it better which might help me in making a good interpretation of it.

4.4.2 Analysis

Analyzing the data is often the central part of the research study (Robert-Holmes, 2011), it is meant to interpret the meaning and understanding from a set of data (Silvermann, 2011). This is a crucial chapter since it brings together and combines all the data you have collected with the literature review. This is where the researcher will build and write an argument using both the data and the literature. This is the part where the researcher has to make sense of the data. Important to remember when making sense of a big amount of data is to generate key themes, concepts and organization of the data.

When analyzing my data, I had to read and re-read the interview data and look for distinct themes. I also look for interesting quotes – things that my participants said and things that I saw which I felt that it was significant to the project. After reading the data a few times, I found out themes that I can develop. I separated the themes and put it under one category. I also look for patterns and find the similarities and differences. After doing all categorizing of my data, I was able to work more on it, understand my data and connect it to theory.

I also re-read my field note to help me understand my data.

4.4.3 Validity and reliability

One of the challenges in validity and reliability of this study is my participant's memory of what they have experienced in the first years that they came in Norway. The children came when they were young and it might be that some of the details of their story were not complete or it might be that it is the other way around.

I know that my participants knew each other and visit each other; it could be that when they met, some of them who I have interviewed earlier have told the other participants the questions that I am going to ask during the interview which makes the other participants more prepared to answer the questions.

Some of the factors that could influence the reliability of my study could be that I know my participants and their families. It could be that the participants themselves initially did not want to participate in the study, but was asked by their parents to do so because of familiarity. It might also be that the children tried to please me when answering the questions and answer to questions that they think I wanted to hear.

Also I have to consider the way I asked the questions; since I am not a veteran interviewer, it might influence the way I asked the questions, and it could be that it was unclear for my participants, thus influencing the way my participants answer my research questions.

The setting in which the interview took place could also influence the answers of my participants. It might be that some of them were distracted when I interviewed them in public places, or even at home when one of the mother was present during the interview even if I asked for privacy during the interview.

I order to test the validity of the participants' stories, I had to ask the same question in different ways, sometimes giving example or rephrasing the questions. I was looking for the consistency of their story. I also talked to their parents for clarification of some stories. Kvale

& Brinkmann (2009) said that to validate qualitative questions, the researcher has to ask in different ways or rephrase the questions.

I also had to listen to myself with the first recorded interview and tried to be critical about the ways I pose the questions to my participants, and tried not to repetitive.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS CHAPTER

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analyses of my research. The aim of my research is to understand the friendship relations of Southeast Asian immigrant children in Norway. The chapter begins by presenting the personal and family profile of my participants to establish their background. The chapter is further organized according two main thematic areas that were deduced from the data. These major themes includes: friendship and immigrant children in Norway. The structure of the chapter is guided by the set of objectives and research questions of the study.

In this chapter I will analyze the accounts of my participants, and presents some insights that I gained after my observations, interviews and conversation from the parents.

The analysis will mostly answer the research questions that are related to the concept of friendships: the meaning of friendship for Southeast Asian immigrant children, their formation of friendship with other children, the influences of their parents in their friendship formation and the challenges they have encountered when trying to build friendship relations with other children.

5.2 Informant's Profile

As my participants are all children from Southeast Asia, I would like to present some personal and family profile. They have certain similarities as a group, but they also have differences when it comes to age, gender and individual experiences.

I have in all eight participants, and are all equally divided into four girls and four boys.

Female informants. The ages of my female informants ranges from 14, being the eldest and nine as the youngest of the girls. The girls did not know each other before they came in Norway, except for the two sisters in the group. The eldest girl came when she was around eight years old (now 14), the second one came when she was seven years old (now 13), the third one came when she was six years old (now 12), and the youngest came when she was

three years old (now nine). The two older girls began their schooling in an introduction school to learn Norwegian language, while the other one started in an ordinary school with the help of an interpreter. The youngest girl started in daycare when she first came in Norway.

Male informants. The ages of the male informants ranges from eight to 12 years old. They also do not know each other, except for the two siblings in the boys group. The oldest boy came when he was six years old and started in an introduction school nearby where the family settled down, while the other three boys came when they were much younger so they started in a daycare center when they first came.

5.2.1 Informants' family profile

Although the families of my participants came in Norway in the year 2006, they came in different months. The reason of their migration is family reunification. The parents said that they came together as a whole family. There were family relations who have lived here in Norway for many years and have financial means to be their sponsor and helped them process their papers to migrate in Norway.

The size of the family of my participants varies; some of them have five siblings, others have one sibling, and the other is an only child. The families are either practicing Catholicism or Buddhism.

As what I mentioned in Chapter 3, immigration is typically motivated by the idea of substantial gain for the people who move. These families' motivation in migrating to Norway was the parents wish to have a better life and to give their children a brighter future, although it was unclear for my participants why they emigrated in the beginning. The families came to know each other after they arrived here in Norway and settled in one of the Norwegian communities. A Norwegian group of people came to welcome them and help them as their guide in the first weeks of their arrival. The group organized activities and programs that could help them get to know each other, the community and to introduce them to the new culture. The group became one their support system. It was easier for the parents to form a group of their own because all of them felt that they were in the same boat. They have the same reason of immigrating to Norway, they have children of the same ages, they speak the

same language and the fathers were also glad to find some countrymen. It was also good for the children to find new playmates and came the same year as they did and they did not felt so alone.

5.3 Listening to children's voice

This research project was concerned with what the children have to say with their experience as immigrant children in relation to their friendship formation with other children. Listening to the participants voices is also seeing each child as 'beings'. As a researcher, I have to understand that these children are competent and they know what they are talking about as it pertains events that happened in their lives. Clark et al. (2005) also argued that listening to children does not mean giving up adult responsibility, but on the contrary it gives adult a responsibility to construct the culture of listening through attention to caring relations and emotional well-being.

I would like to say from the start of this chapter that I was aware of the challenge that I encountered making this project. I personally know the participants and their parents from before. I can say that I understand the point of view of both parents and children, since I grew up myself in the same culture. I would also like to point out that the children look up to me as their aunt. Calling someone aunt even though they are not relatives shows respect and reverence. I have to be reflective and conscious of what I ask the children and parents. I do not want to be there as a family friend or a mother figure of the children (Solberg, 1996), but have to keep in mind that I am a researcher and I have to listen to the voices of the children and be very careful that my own assumptions, opinions, expectations are kept in check and made it transparent. Reflexivity (Punch, 2002) is very important research process with children. I am telling their story and not my story.

5.4 Participants' idea of 'friendship'

The first question that I asked the children when I interviewed them was *'what is the meaning of friendship for you?'* I got different answers from the children according to their point of view. I noticed that I did not get a direct answer of what is friendship for them. They told me what they think friendship is or their idea of friendship. Two things became visible in their answers: first, some relate friendship with emotional investments and expression of commitment, and other participants talk about teaming up with other children and enjoying the same activities together; a visible togetherness with other children.

Participants also answered that friendship is having someone they can trust, they can be with, someone who cares for them, comfort them when they are sad or who is nice to them.

They also associate friendship to a person, a connection to a person who has these ideal characteristics they wanted to be within a friend, characteristics like trustful, kind, thoughtful, caring; and friendship for them is having friends who can go out with them and do fun things together like watching movies, hanging out or playing toys or games. This reflects to what I mentioned in chapter three that friendship among children is a performative aspect (James, 1993). The participants group together with other children showing a public display of sociality. Children relate friendship to actions or gestures their peers can do for them and vice versa, or activities they do together to nurture friendship.

Through my interview with May (14 years old) one of my participants, she mentioned to me that it was important for her that she and her close friends have the same likes. She recalled an incident where they bought the same t-shirts and agree to wear them in school. It was significant for them to show it to their classmates and other children that they wear the same clothes to symbolize their friendship and how close their friendship is. It seems that my participant and her friends wanted to confirm to others that they are friends and that 'they belong' in a group. I understood it as an affirmation for her that she is not alone. It is a performative act of friendship by demonstrating that they wear the same t-shirt.

My participants do activities together to nurture their friendship. It is not only saying to one another that they are friends but it involves actions. The actually perform things to confirm, to nurture and to show others their friendship. Below are some varieties of activities my

participants engage to nurture their friendship. As I mentioned in my Methodology chapter, all participants' names are fictional.

Tran, an eight year old participant talked about the activities he and his close friends often pursued: *'Well, sometimes we invite each other over and we can play videogames, but after we get tired with playing video games, we go out and play outside. But sometimes, I go and visit my friend at their place'.*

Lyn, my female, 12 year old participant said: *'I call my friends and we agree to have sleepovers or go to movies. Me and my friends plan some things we can do after school. At sleepovers we usually talk about many things, we rent a movie sometime, stay up late. We go to the mall and do shopping.'*

Lyn's younger sister, Ann, an eight year old girl, described her activities with her friends as involving the following: *'I call Hanne or Sine after school or on weekends if I can come and visit them or I ask if they want to come. They also call me sometimes to visit me.'*

In my research, I have noticed that among the male participants, activities like playing sports and computer and video games are popular, whereas girls like to visit their friends and do some activities at home like talking or hanging around.

Another participant told me his idea of friendship, for him it is having someone who cares for him, and he to his friends, and they 'stick together'. When I inquired further what does he meant with 'someone who cares', he said that someone he can talk to and trust and cares for his feelings and not betray him by telling others his secrets. He also said that he will not betray a friend by talking bad against his friend's back. My participant emphasized that it involves reciprocity or mutual understanding of what a friend can do or cannot do to his friend. It seemed to me that my participant has an understanding of what a being good friend is.

One of them said that friendship for her is one of the most important things in life because a friend is *someone who is there whenever her family is not around*. Two of the female participants answered that friendship is like a family, and one child additionally said that friendship is the third most important thing in her life next to God and to her family. One of the girls also said that she treat her friends like a sister. These were all answers from the girls when asked about the meaning of friendship for them. The relationship is more complex and goes deeper than being with someone.

My female, fourteen year old participant May said that with her friends can tell them almost everything that she could not tell her parents. Trust is an important factor for the participants in friendship relationships. Some of them mentioned that with their friends they were able to talk about their problems or secrets. They stressed that not every topic can they discuss or talk with their parents, but it is much easier to do it with their friends. One of the topics the children did not want to discuss with their parents is crushes they have in school or things that they did in school. She felt that there are some topics that parents might find boring and not important, but when shared with her friends, it is exciting.

The participant's concept of friendship confirms what Barnes (2003) pointed that friendships with their peers provided an arena for many aspects of their cultural world. Children like to spend time with their friends on an ever day basis, and wants to have a sense of control of their lives.

The participants like to do things together with their friends either in school or at home. In school, they get together during recess or break time and play together and do different activities. Even after school, the participants would find time to do things together with their friends by playing computer games, chatting, and sending text through their phone or even communicating on social networks. One of the advantage of using their mobile phones is they could contact each other directly without having to go through parental intermediary at any time of the day. They also like to visit their friends at home if they are allowed to after school or on weekends. One of the boys told me that he visits his friend 'almost every day' after school.

After talking to the participants with their idea of friendship, I realize that it is not really easy to define the meaning of friendship. The concept is often used and each of us has generated a fairly complex and somewhat individual idea of what friendship is or should be.

To understand further about children's conceptions of friendship, Rizzo (1989) was interested to study children's practical or working knowledge of friendship. He recorded interactions among friends and identify instances where their practical knowledge of friendship seemed to be affecting their interaction. Rizzo was trying to understand what children know and think about friendship from what they say and do with their friends. According to Rizzo (1989), there are three factors children view friendship: mutual recognition of friendship, time together and continuity.

Mutual recognition of friendship involved the written and verbal acknowledgement of friendship by both children. They usually marked their friendship with a phrase, 'We're friends, right?' (Corsaro, 2003).

Time together involved the children establishing a pattern of interacting with each other whenever the opportunity existed. This was shown when participants told me that they usually play together in school during breaks and again sit together during lunches. They find time to be with their friends. And as I said earlier, even when they are at home, children find time to get connected. Friendships among the participants have developed through time. As Tan (8 years old participant) have said: *'at first, I am not friends with them (his classmates), but after meeting them a few times and playing together, we got to know each other and became friends.'*

Continuity of friendship refers to the length of time before they consider themselves as friends. This factor is shown when I asked Phan (8 years old) if he is friends with his classmates and he replied to me *'in the beginning we were just classmates, we do the same school activities. But we started hanging out and play together during breaks. I found out that*

we like the same things like football and hide-and-seek, and computer games. We play together every day in school. I invited him at home and he sometimes invites me.'

I would like to mention that one of the ways that my participants could continue their developing friendship with other children was the approval of their parents to whom they could have friendship with. Here is where you can also see the influence of parents to how their children choose their friends.

I will talk more in detail about parent's influence on friendship in the later part of this chapter.

5.5 Friendship formation

When participants were asked how they formed friendship with other children, they answered that they either asked other kids if they could play together, join their game or they were asked to play with the other kids or join their game. The participants told me that it also started with 'hi' or 'hello' or a smile. They approached other kids, and then they just started playing with each other.

From the study of Boocock and Scott (2005), they have discovered that friendship usually initiated by one child learning another child's name (often during classroom activity) and inviting that child to play with her during recess. They learned that once friendship is established, the children sustain their friendship by spending recess and lunch time together; sharing snacks, money, toys; and providing consolation and assistance when a friend was sad or needed help.

With my younger participants (ages eight to ten), I noticed from our interview that it was easier for them to make friends with other children. In one of the example, my male participant (age eight) was approached by a boy who went to the same daycare center. They

greeted each other and after a while started playing with each other. Although playing together is not yet considered as friendship, it would take at least a few times before considering themselves as friends. This is an excerpt of my interview with one of my participants.

Fritzie: What did you do to make friends with other children? Like with Erik?
How did you become friends with him?
Phan (9 years old): In daycare. We met in daycare.
F: So, you met each other in daycare. Was it you who talked to him first?
P: It was him who made the first move.
F: What did he do?
P: He said 'hi', and I said 'hi' back to him.
F: And then what happened?
P: He asked if I wanted to play, and I answered yes.
F: What did you play?
P: Drawings and many other things. Then I also asked him if he wants
to play, and he also said yes.

In this interview, it was Erik who initiated the first contact, but the participant also asked Erik if he wanted to play with him. I do not know if the participant asked Erik the same day, or the next day they were in daycare. But this illustrates that their friendship started in reciprocity. It was not only Erik who asked if they could play, but both children had the desire to play together, and thus developing friendship between them.

The younger participants came to Norway when they were in their preschool ages. Children this age socialize with other children through play. From Corsaro's (2003) studies, he maintained that despite being young, children have a clear understanding of friends and friendship, and already started forming small groups among them.

With my older participants (ages from 11 to 14 years old), they told me that it took a while for them to be friends with other children. My participants agreed in saying that it was not difficult to say 'hello' to other kids, but they felt that it was not easy to join their games. May (14) recount that she was shy to approach other children. Other children usually greet her, but the transition from simple greetings to joining their games and be included in the group took time.

> *'I just sat in the playground alone while the other girls were playing. I was watching what they were doing. I tried to amuse myself. But it was not fun. They approached me and greeted me. They were not rude, but it was not easy to be included in their group. When I came, they have already a group.'*

Another female participant, Shena (13 years old) said that: *'When I was new, the other children in school were nice to me. I tried to communicate with them. I talked in English. But it was not so easy. Sometimes they did not understand what I meant.'*

It appeared that my participants were hesitant to approach other children to ask if they could join the game or play with them. It might be that my participants were unsure how to present themselves to the others and felt unsure how the children would accept them.

I noted that language and time matters in developing friendship. The participants have mentioned the challenge of communicating and the need of time to get to know the language and the other children to be included in their game and in the group.

5.6 Differences in friendship across different age-group

From my interviews with my participants, I learned that there are certain variations in friendship relations across different age groups. Some of my participants (from seven to eight years old) like to have friends with children who live nearby. I also noticed that they have common activities and similar expectations. They also like to be friends with children who can do something for them. Example below is an interview quotation from my eight year old participant.

> *Fritzie: Who is your best friend?*
>
> *Tan (8 years old): Aleksander.*
>
> *F: What do you like in Aleksander? Why are you friends?*
>
> *T: because he likes almost everything that I like. We like to play football and go in the forest. He plays with me many times.*
>
> *F: yes..*
>
> *T: Because he likes to play with me, and sometimes he waits for me until I finished putting on clothes to go out in our break time.*
>
> *F: What do you think you can do to make a good friend yourself?*
>
> *T: Do the same thing like Aleksander, wait for him, play with him, etc. But I also like Sigve. Sometimes he sits with me. He is neat with his pens. And I get to borrow crayons from him.*

Here is another interview between me and Ann, another eight year old participant to illustrate how my younger participant value kindness among their friends:

> *Fritzie: Tell me about you best friend Sine and Hanne?*
>
> *Ann (8 years old): I met them when we were in daycare. They were really nice to me.*
>
> *F: In what way were they nice to you?*

A: When I was new in daycare, I was a bit nervous. But Hanne and Sine talked to me. They asked me if I wanted to play with them. You see, we sat together that was why I got to know them first.

My younger participants' expectations were fairly straight forward. They value kindness, politeness, sharing and lack of aggressive tendencies. The children in this age group also judge their friends in terms of how they deal with others. Most of my younger participants say that they wanted friends who they can play with and have fun with, to care for you, and to share things. No fighting and have respect for each other.

For my older participants, in the 12 to 14 year old group, I detected a wider range on what they value or expected from their friendship with their peers. The range extends from the moralistic views to the loyalty and genuineness.

Shena (13 years old) have said: *'they should like you a lot, be kind to you, tell you their problems and secrets. Be loyal and will not talk bad things about you behind your back. Someone you talk to and share your thoughts and still care about you. Play games with you. They are considered as a family.'* From my research, friendship also features understanding, self-disclosure and common interest.

Trung, my 12 year old male participant had told me: '*Friends are there to give support to each other and you care for your friends.'*

Furthermore, most of older participants expected loyalty, particularly with regard to the confidentiality of information. There is also an increasing awareness of the role of friendship in personal growth and social development as well as a more realistic outlook toward friendship.

May, my 14 year old female participant had said that: *'I do not need to change my personality to be friends with someone. If others really want me to be their friends, then they (other children) must like me the way I am and no need for me to change anything to be friends with them.'* She also stressed that the same goes with others for her. They do not need to change their personality to be her friend. She can accept others the way they are as long as they are not a negative influence to her.

It was evident that friendship for May is something that she values. This corresponds to the argument of Barnes (2003) that children's experiences around friendship are closely tied to the development of their personal identity. Following this conversation, I can see that some of my participants are developing their self-awareness, self-worth and the realization of the kind of people they wanted to hang out with. Having friends is also choosing someone who they share the same qualities, have the same values and beliefs that represents who they are. *She likes to get along with her classmates in school or other children, but she does not expect to be friends with everybody.*

Another excerpt from my interview with one of my participants that demonstrates how she thinks when it comes to friendship:

> *May (14 years old):*   *A friend that I would like to have is someone who has something in common with me, then we can do many things together.*
>
> *Fritzie:*   *hmmmm..ok.*
>
> *M:*   *Well, I mean, maybe it is ok that we do not have many things in common because maybe as we get to know each other, we will learn to like things together, we can learn from each other. Then we discover that we like the same thing. Yes, I guess it is like that..*

The older participants were clear who they want to be friends with. One of the girls said that it was important for her that she is friends with other who does not smoke, does not do drugs or

wore all black clothes. It was important that they choose their friends who were not bad influence on them. Another one said that it was important for her that they are not rude or they do not curse. While one of the boys said that cursing is fine as long as they do not do it often. These qualities that the participants mentioned showed their moralistic view on friendship.

5.7 Friends at home, school and neighborhood

At home. Since the families arrived almost at the same time, and the parents had a support group where they can meet and get to know each other, the children also had an opportunity to be friends with one another. They children formed a group of their own. I could see it the way that they made friends together first, before making friends with other children in other localities like in school or in the neighborhood.

At first their group was somewhat protected from other groups in Norway. This was due to the influence of their parents. The children would only play with each other and visit each other and their parents obviously encouraged their friendship.

Most of the participants met other children in schools and daycares, but other children were not invited at home. The development of friendship outside schoolyard was slow. Since friendships among parents were pre-established, they usually arranged their own get together almost every weekend with the same group of people. They allowed their children to visit the same kids after school and they can decide how many times their children can meet their friends outside school. From my conversation with the parents, they told me that it gave them a feeling of security that they knew who their children's friends. It was very important for the parents that their children would form friendship with children who they think are 'suitable' and would not be a bad influence.

I could see that the influence of the parents when it comes to choosing their children's friends was fairly obvious and the parents themselves were quite outspoken about who they want their children to invite home or what kind of people they want their children would hang out

with. I noticed that the children have no reaction about this arrangement. They seemed contented being friends with the children of their parent's group. It appeared to me that the reason the children grouped themselves together was because the parents met often and they did not know how to speak the language at first. It appeared that being friends together was the only option being presented at that time.

5.7.1 Parents' influence on children's friendship

As a researcher, I look at my participants as competent beings able to decide and who can choose whoever they wanted to have any friendship with. But at the same time, I understand the participant's situation and the situation of the parents from a collective culture's perspective. I already mentioned some examples earlier where the parents decide for their children how many times to meet their friends, or who to invite at their places or what kind of qualities in a friend do they wanted their children to have friendship with.

In an interview with my participant, Tran (8) he said that one of his best friend who goes in the same school with him, lives in the same area where he lives. He plays with him almost every time when they are together in school. *But he is not allowed by his parents to visit him at home*. The child did not elaborate why he was not allowed, but there was no indication that he was sad about the decision made by his parents not to visit some friends after school. He simply said that if he is not allowed to visit, then he can just find other things to amuse him.

I asked the mother why her child was not allowed to go and visit his best friend, and she told me that he has to go over the street where there are many cars passing by and she thinks it was a bit far and she is uncertain if it is safe. She also said, *'You know young children are'*. In this situation, I felt that the child was transported from 'being' to 'becoming'.

The child above is not allowed by his parent to visit his neighbor-best friend, while the other participant like Phan (9), Trung (12) and Tam (8) told me that he is allowed to visit his friends

or to invite them at their house. He told me that he prefer to visit his friends at their places. His parents drive him to his friends' house so that he can play there.

This is also an example of how parents could influence the friendship of their children to others. They sometimes limit the access of their children to meet their friends. They have an authority to choose who they like their children to be friends with, to visit to. They can encourage their children's friendship, but they can also put restrictions.

In school. The children told me that they have many friends in *school* now compared to the first time they came. They like going to school and they look forward to meet their friends there. One factor which had a marked influence on the children's relationships was desk or physical proximity. From my interview, I have noted that my participants made friends easily with children who sat nearby. The children started greeting each other at first, then they talked and they agree to play together during breaks.

According to the children, they used their time doing something interesting with their peers and friends, and they play different games together during breaks. They informed me about what games do they play. The boys like to play hide and seek, running after each other, climbing the monkey bars, and different equipment in the play area.

From my interview with Trung (12 year old), he told me that he is almost always together with his two friends in school except when they are absent. But when I asked him what happened when they are absent I assumed that he will be sad. But on the contrary, he told me that he does not feel that way. He said that he could play with other children in his class while either Alejandro or Petter is away.

In this conversation, it showed that although Trung (12) are together with his friends almost every day and invest his time and emotion with his friends, it is not a crisis whenever Trung's close friends are absent. It seemed to me that their friendship is not based anymore on being

able to play together every day. Based on this situation, I can say that when children have bonded and developed friendship over time, the children shows confidence that even if their friends are absent in class; they can still trust that they are still friends when they are back in school. But for the meantime they can play and have fun with other children in their class. No longer did Trung select his close friends on the basis of quantity of contacts, but he became increasingly discriminating, placing more importance on the quality of those contacts (Adler & Adler, 1998).

"When Alejandro and Petter are absent or one of them is absent, I just play with other kids in school. I can still be friends with other kids, and I can still be friends with Alejandro or Petter when they are back in class. It is not that I am not friends with them any longer because they were absent for a few days. They are my best friends."

This made me realize that in this situation my participant can show that he can be an independent individual and competent. Trung know how to negotiate peer relationship with other children. It shows that even if his best friends who can be his support and comfort are unavailable, he does not feel scared or threaten to socialize with other children who he does not normally hang out with.

My participants also told me that they have group of friends, mostly with the same sex. Both my male and female participants belong to a group with varying numbers of members. They tend to belong to a big group of ten to fifteen other children. Some told me that they also play with the opposite sex. Here I noted that gender can play a role in children's relationships. I will come back to gendered friendship in the later part of this chapter.

In the neighborhood. Barnes (2003) has mentioned in his book about an earlier study that has been done that says children can form friendship with other children regardless of where they live or in their neighborhood. I found out that forming friendship in the neighborhood depends on children if they wanted to have friends in their area. It is their choice. This is not a matter of course if the children will find friends because I found out from my other participants that

they usually form friendship with the neighbor children. But the important thing to remember is that children choose it themselves if they want to establish friendship with the neighboring kids or not.

Friendship formation in the neighborhood regardless of where they live is not the same for all of my participants. One of my participants told me that she does not have friends around their area. It was her choice not to go out and hang around. She would rather stay home and do other things or meet her friends from school in her place or their place or they agree to meet somewhere else. She also claimed that unlike other children, she does not have time to go out especially when it is school days. She would rather use her time studying and she also feels that it is not her 'thing' to hang out outside the house. She further said that she meet her 'friends' in school.

The way this child talks about how she wants to do with her time after school or things she would prefer to do shows to me that a child can exercise their autonomy. My participant in this example seems to me is capable of showing that she is a rational autonomous individual (Clark, et al., 2005). She knows what she wants and is capable of formulating her own needs. This is an example where my participant have shown that she is a 'being' (Qvortrup, 1994), and not 'becoming' and can decide for herself what she think is good for her.

5.8 Family members' role in friendship

I would like to touch briefly the relationship of family to friendship because after talking to my participants it became clear to me that their family members has some role in their friendship relations. It seemed that coming from a collective culture, friendship is not exclusive with other children, but my participants can be friends with the other members of the family. According to James (1993), in collective culture contexts the sentiments associated with friendship may be overlaid on to or combined with other kinds of social, political or economic relations through kinship (p.205). Punch (2003) found out that children in Bolivia played with their friends at school, but at home they played with siblings, cousins

and neighbors. Barnes (2003) claimed that the significance of extended family in collectivistic cultures has the potential to provide the emotional support, advice and practical help that is a core function of friendship.

After observing and talking to my participants, I can see that they do not have a single kind of relationship with their siblings. I can also see that they can play together and have fun together just like friends do.

Another excerpt from my interview with Phan (9) to illustrate the siblings can also be friends:

> *Fritzie: What kind of games do you like to play in the computer?*
> *Phan (9 years old): We are playing Adventure Quest World.*
> *F: Is that a child game?*
> *P: yes.*
> *F: Is it the same game you are playing with Erik?*
> *P: No. Only me, An and Tam.*
> *F: Who is An and Tam?*
> *P: Tan is the son of uncle and auntie. Tam is my brother.*
> *F: Ok, so Tam is also your friend?*
> *P: Yes. He bought Pokémon cards to me and we share and play together with it.*

Phan, his cousins and his brother shows that relationship exhibits features like sharing toys with one another, teasing each other and sometimes arguing which is also common in friendships. Through my observation, I noticed that it was an advantage for Phan to be older than the cousins and the brother because he can decide over rules on their games, the kind of game they are going to play, etc. I can see that the younger ones follow him eagerly and they were ready to impress him by showing what they can.

Barnes (2003) talked about the contrasting roles of family members and friends where children are concerned. He suggested that extended families have a greater scope for relationships which parallel – and maybe conflict with – friendship with peers. Barnes (2003) mentioned that children from family oriented countries friendship relationships were more

stable and children demonstrate superior skills at negotiation and compromise. It was interpreted that children with more extensive contact with members of the extended family afforded them greater exposure to compromise within relationships.

I have to remind myself that I have to be careful in this part of my analysis when it comes to how I see the family and extended family's role in children's friendship. I can be bias with how I interpret my data because I am also from a collective culture.

5.9 Friendship Groups

My participants belong to a group of friends and these groups enable them to be together with others who possess similarities with them, but at the same time separate those children who they think are different from them.

This is an excerpt from my interview to show that my participant belongs to groups of friends:

> *Fritzie: How many friends do you have?*
> *Shena (13 years old): I have 10 close friends.*
> *F: Are they all your close friends?*
> *S: yes*
> *F: are they friends in school?*
> *S: no, not only in school. They are my friends from all over the place. But I also have a group in school.*
> *F: So you belong also to a group in school?*
> *S: Yes. There are a few groups in our class. But my group is fine with the other groups. I am friends with everyone.*

When Shena (13) said that she is friends with everyone in her class, it indicated that even if my participant belongs to a group of friends, she can be friends with anyone in her class. It also says that she is a friendly child who has friends not only in school but also outside her school.

Having groups of friends enables a child to develop a sense of his or her *social* self (Barnes, 2003). They realized who they are and what they want, they try to compare themselves with the other children. They befriend children who have the same likes and dislikes and they choose who will be their friends. Through their friendship, the children develop an understanding of who they are, who they want to be and not to be.

Shena (13) also said that her group is composed of girls and they have a group name. When I asked her if her group was popular, she told me that it was 'Ok'. She said that there are some popular groups in her class, but she does not want to belong in that kind group because they are acting way over the top. That 'kind of group' does not represent who she is, and belonging in that group *'is not me,'* as what the girl told me. It seems to me that Shena (13) is aware how to position herself in her social world, and how she wanted to be seen by other children.

My participants' group is mostly composed of children of the same sex. Their groups differ in size; it is as few as three children in a group, or as many as 15 children. I noticed that my participants' association to their group exists in two different levels.

- In smaller groups – they all consider themselves a best friends
- Within bigger groups, they tend to divide themselves into smaller groups which is called primary groups (Rizzo, 1989).

Usually in the smaller group of friends, I found out from my interview with my participants that they consider themselves as having a closer friendship relation with one another and share a common set of likes and dislikes which ties their group together.

This is quoted from my interview with my male participant, Trung (12 years old):

> *'There are many groups in our class, but I like to be with Alejandro and Petter. We like the same things. I like that they are sporty. We like to play football and computer games. We talk about girls. I think they are nice.'*

It seems to me that Trung (12) is aware of what kind of friends he wants to have. He wanted to be friends with children who have the same likes as him. He seemed happy with his group even if there are not many of them. He also said that their group is one among the many in their class. But he became friends with these two particular boys and not with other children. He is positioning himself in relation to other children in his class.

I noted that within the primary group, there is more intimacy and sharing between friends, but as a whole group, it is more of hanging out together. The older participants told me that with their group, they get involved with sports, go to movies together, or visit each other.

My participants group's create and share activities together that can be seen as a time for them to just be themselves with their friends, relax and have a good time. I asked my participants if they feel that there is a hierarchy in their group or a feeling that someone has an authority in their group, they dismiss this question saying that they feel that everybody has a voice in their group. They feel that they are equal with the other members despite disputes and disagreements they encounter sometimes.

5.10 Protecting friendship groups

Barnes (2003) said that within and through their friendships children have opportunities to explore dimensions of experience which can have formative and lasting effects. For example, my participants experience affection, intimacy, communication and sharing with their friends. But at the same time, in their friendship, they can have opportunities to experience how to feel being angry, betrayed, frustrated or even excluded. Having friendship relationship is not only experiencing positive feelings, it is also a place where you can feel the negative feelings.

Here is an example where the children have shown being protective of their own group of friendship. This incident is from my observation:

When I went home to visit one of my participants, most of my participants were already there to play together. I already mentioned in the earlier part that before my participants became friends with the other children in school or neighborhood, they became friends first because of their parents. I noticed that the younger participants play together, while the older girls sit together in one corner and was talking. The boys were playing outside the house and once in a while came inside and went to the bedroom. I heard them talking and laughing.

When I went to look at what they were doing, the male participants were huddling with each other in front of the computer and playing a game where they shoot soldiers. I saw that they were aware of my presence, but they did not give me so much attention. I also noticed that while playing together, the children were using two languages, their native language and Norwegian. After a while, another boy came. This boy is not a member of their group. My participants came to know this boy because their fathers are colleagues at work. I can see that the boy wanted to play with them. At first, he sat on the bed and watched them play. He did not talk much, but he smiled and made some comments. I could see that he tried to be noticed and be included in the group. But the children were so engrossed with what they were playing, that they barely noticed him. They did not tell the boy directly that they did not like him to play with them, but they also almost ignore him. As I also heard them talking in both languages, I could see that the boy was having difficulty to comprehend the converasation, and no one cared to translate what they were talking. My participants were talking in an excited tone, and were talking fast. At the end, the boy just left the room and did something else.

I can relate this to what Corsaro (2005) discussed about children producing shared activity together and protecting their play from the intrusions of others. It looked like my participants did not deliberately ignore him, but I could not rule out the idea that maybe my participants just did not want an insider to be with them. My participants were sharing the same space with their group of friends, and were protecting that interactive space by ignoring one possible playmate. Corsaro (2003) summarized the incident as follows: "*the kids you are playing with are your friends, while those not playing are often seen as a threat to friendship*" (p.40).

Continuing my observation with what my participants were doing, I could see that the boy who owns the computer was obviously the leader of the group. I could see that he decide what game they would play, and he was the one holding the mouse of the computer, while the other boys were actively participating, and watching what was going on. The other boys were trying to suggest to him what he would do to shoot the enemy soldiers, where he would go and what to do so that he would not hit himself with bullets from the other soldiers. But when he was hit many times, one of the participants decided in what I heard as a bit forceful voice that it was time for him to hold the mouse the other time around. So the position of leadership in the group was changed from the boy who they visited, to the boy who came to visit.

5.11 Conflicts, disputes and negotiations

Conflicts, disputes or negotiations activities in friendship were brought up in our interview session. Goodwin (1990) declared that conflicts or opposition activities provide an effective way to seek opportunities to test or realign the current arrangement of social identities among their peers.

Evaldsson (2003) claimed that disputes among children are mainly related to claims. One example of this was when I asked my one of my participant (boy, 12 years old) if there was a time when he and his friends fight among them. He answered that he and his friends get into arguments or dispute sometimes, but he also stresses that they seldom quarrel or have any disagreement. He further answered that what they argue most is who is right or wrong. He told me that they often could not settle down who is finally right, and in the end they just 'compromise'. He expressed that it was like a competition between him and his friends. My participants display conflicting perspectives on what and who to be considered as right and wrong. They typically arrange themselves in large group activities. Evaldsson (2003) maintained that in children's arguing activities, some of the children can be audience, potential members or participants of the activity, and during the course of an event the positions might change.

Tran (8 years old), one of my participants told me that he sometimes gets into discussions with his friends about anything. He told me that: *'we sometimes argue about who has the nicest house, the biggest cars, who can throw the longest, if witches or trolls exist, or who are best friends with whom.'*

They are capable in expressing themselves and children have different opinions of what is good or what is bad and try to argue what they believe in to other children (Corsaro, 2003). Corsaro (2003) also stated that children's play and games are marked by complex verbal negotiations, disputes and conflicts through which the children organize their peer culture. Corsaro (2003) maintained that children debate things that are important for them and in the process they develop a shared sense of control over their social world. I also noted that through disputes or conflicts, or any opposition activities children engage, they become friends with other children who have the same opinions as them at that moment. They experienced a kind of 'mutual understanding' between them which is expressed through having the same point of views and they are united in debating to the other group which may be also a part of their bigger group. In a way, oppositional activities make smaller groups within a larger group. It often serves to strengthen interpersonal alliances and to organize social groups (Rizzo, 1989). Although children form smaller groups depending on issues they argue at the moment, it appears to me that the group is not lasting. The small groups within a group can be unstable depending again on who agree or disagree with them.

Below is an interview excerpt with Ann (8) to illustrate that my participant experiences argument with her group:

> *Fritzie:*　　*Do you argue with you friends?*
> *Ann:*　　　*Yes. Sometimes.*
> *F:*　　　*Can you tell me the things that you argue about?*
> *A:*　　　*(Pause, thinking) We sometimes argue about games. What kind of games we will play.*
> *F:*　　　*Hmmm.. can you tell me more about it?*
> *A:*　　　*Well, some of my friends do not like to play the game that I*

like to play. They want to play another game.

F: *So what do you do?*

A: *I tried to persuade them and I get upset when they do not want to play,*
            but luckily other friends will play with me. But after a while, we all play
            together again.

Through this conversation, I could say that Ann (8) belong to a large group of friends and it seemed that the children have sometimes difficulty in agreeing what kind of game do they wanted to play. Ann invited her friends to play with her a particular game, but some of them did not want to do it which made her feel bad. What surprised me was that even if at first the situation was not in her favor, the she saw that it was really fine if other friends will play something else because there are others who wanted to play with her. And the 'sad feeling' that she felt did not last long and she played again with her friends. I also noticed that with this kind of dispute among young children, it does not last a long time. It looked that they are creative to find something to entertain them that can break the ice between them. It is easier for them to be friends again.

I also noted that in friendship group disputes, it seems that there are two contradictory factors present at the same time. One is the element of cooperation where the children agree with one another and the other is forming their own alliance towards the other group (Rizzo, 1989).

Trung (12 years old) who also belong in a large group of friends told me one day that they have had discussion in their group. Trung and his friends like to play football and he told me that they used a lot of their time playing this game. Their discussion was focused on who is better in their group in playing football. They have had different opinions about it. He said that they name names of their friends who can play football and some of them agree about it, and some of their group feels that it was not true. So at the end, the finally have to divide themselves to small groups to children who have the same opinions of who they think are good or bad.

My participants display 'mutual understanding' with each other. But as the spirit of cooperation between them is present, they also display the element of competition with one another. The dispute is often between two groups who have competing opinions or ideas. Through my interactions with my participants, I could say that there is constant negotiations happening in their everyday lives which could helped them obtain a better understanding of what they could expect from each other as friends, but it also brought about interpersonal reflection, resulting in their development of unique insight into their actions and roles as friends.

I also realized that when my participants display a contradictory opinions and ideas and they associate themselves with other kids that depicts the same character as them, it brings them closer with one another. Evaldsson (2003) said that children involved in disputes acquire a notion of social differentiation and ways of accepting competing positions.

I talked in length about conflict and dispute, but I also had an example where my participant (Tran, 8 years old) agreed to what his friends want to avoid conflict or dispute.

My other younger male participant (Tran, 8 years old) have told me that when he play with his friends, he sometimes agree to what they are going to play. He said that there are days that he wanted to play in the playground, but the other boys in his group would like to go play hide and seek. And I asked him what did he do in that situation, he said that he choose to play hide and seek with them because he does not want to argue with his friends and he does not want to play alone in the playground.

Tran here went with the majority. Maybe he felt that he was impelled to play at that time because of the fear that he would be left out. This made me see how important for my participant to do the same things as the majority have decided. The feeling of being not included is not fun. It is safer to play and go with the group rather than provoking the sense of belonging to the group. By agreeing to play with them it gives a feeling of security that he is not alone.

5.12 Gendered Friendship

I include this topic in my research because not only this theme was recurrent in my fieldwork, but I also think that gendered friendship is an important area to help us understand the nature of children's friendship.

During my field work, it became evident for me that although my participants enjoy playing together with children of opposite sex, it was also clear that they have more friends with the same sex. When I asked one of my participants (boy) to name his best friends, he started enumerating boys' name. It was almost the same with my female participants when asked to name few of their friends. But there was a girl participant (Lynn, 12 years old) in my study who named a male best friend instead of a typical girl best friend. But I will elaborate this part later. I also observe from their stories that children of mixed sex group can be together in structured play or certain work activities in school, but with friendship relationship, most of them share it with the same sex.

It was interesting to hear from most of my participants that they are friends with the same sex and their friendship exhibits certain characteristics. James (1993) had pointed out (confer Chapter Three) that friendship relationships with girls are more reflective and intimate and even Barnes (2003) pointed out that girl's friendships are more shared in an emotional level with the capacity to share, affirmed each other, and support each other.

As I have presented in earlier excerpts with my participants, the girls were able to show me that their friendship are shared in a deeper level. They treat their friends more than as mere friends, but consider them as a family member. They share secret together and do things together even outside school. I noticed that my female participants have *permanent* friends. They are friends with the same people from school and even outside school hours. As I already mentioned earlier, most do not have friends in their neighborhood. I take this as one of the many reasons why my female participants have the ability to share a deeper emotional level with their friends. They are almost together in school and after school hours, and in this way they have more opportunities to get closer with one another. It seems that my female

participants have a more stable friendship because they have the same set of friends from school and outside school.

5.12.1 Difference between close friends and best friends

Although one of May (14 years old) my female participants told me that she has ten 'close' friends in her group, and another girl (Shena, 13 years old) told me she have seven, all of them are girls, they told me that 'close friends' are different from 'best friends'.

This excerpt is taken from one of my female participants (May, 14) trying to make me understand the difference of best friends and friends for her.

'I have ten friends. Yes, they are like my closest friends. We are a group in this teen-ager world. My friends are also my group mate. We are together every day. But when I say friends, I am not… I am not saying they are my real best friends.'

It looked like May (14) has this notion that having a 'close friend' is someone she can do things together and be more than friends because they belong in the same group. But for her being 'best friends' is something more profound. Best friends are also considered as true friends. They can share each other's' thoughts and secrets. For my female participants sharing secrets and keeping those secrets are important in their friendship and not worry that their friends would tell on them.

I have not heard my male participants differentiate their friendship with their friends like the girls. In a way they based their friendship with kids who play with them.

This is an excerpt of my interview with Trung (12 years old) about the topics they usually talk about.

> *Fritzie: What do you talk about with your friends?*
> *Trung: We like to talk about games like football. We also talk about*
> *sports.*
> *F: Do you talk about girls?*
> *T: (nods and smiles) but we do not talk about it often. It's not the topic we*
> *usually talk about. We talk about computer games.*

From this interview, I understood that Trung (12) and his friends use more time to discuss about sports and games, than talk about emotional things and girls. I realized that my Trung (12) and his friends do not talk about serious topics, but can sometimes talk about their crushes. They use their time to play together and do things together. It appeared like male participants are less demonstrative of their feelings. I noticed during our interview sessions that they get a bit shy when I asked about crushes and did not want to talk about emotions as well. I took it that boys would like to be seen as tough.

James (1993) has mentioned that for boys they consider people they play with as friends. I also noticed with my male participants that they can have friendship relationship with people they play with in school, in the neighborhood, in the clubs or friendship with the other member of their football team, etc. Another thing that I observed with my male participants is that they like playing outdoor games and games that involve actions like climbing, running, and a little violence by slapping or pushing each other. They can 'play' with anyone. My male participants can bond with other children through games, sports and activities they think they have the same interest or something they have in common with.

I also observed that my younger male participants welcome the presence of female playmates in school. I asked some of them about having friends with girls, and they said that they play with them and some of my male participants are friends with them. But although there is some kind of friendship relationship there, I still see through my observation that the boys much prefer the company of their male friends. I noted that they only play with the opposite sex in school, but at home and in their neighborhood, they like to play with children of the same sex.

5.12.2 Drama on girls' friendship

I included this topic to show that girl's friendship can be full of drama (James, 2003), and the word 'drama' was mentioned a few times by my female participants. It made me curious why my female participants would describe their friendship with the other girls as that.

Here is an excerpt from what Lynn (12 years old) have told me when asked about her friendship with the opposite sex.

'I have mostly male friends. My best friend is a boy in school. I use to play football with them. It is boring with only girls. I like to hang out with boys. It is less drama with them, than with girls.'

Lynn (12) was the only one among my participants to express that she is more comfortable being best friends with the opposite sex. She told me that she has some female friends as well, but she likes better the company of her male friends. They come and visit her at home, they play sports. I did not get the impression that the girl is a tomboy.

She was the only one who told me that she is friends with boys. And she made a conscious decision to become friends with them instead with girls. Her friendship with her male friends meets her needs when she wants to be sporty, but she can also enjoy the company of her female friends. The thing that she does not like with her female friends is the controversy, or drama, which maybe she does not experience with her friendship with the boys.

I maintained that girls do not like drama per se. But they are passionate and share a more intimate relationship with their friends. Girls' friendship is more intense (Rizzo, 1993) that is why when they do not agree with each other, there is a tendency that their disagreement can get ugly. Girls can ignore each other from few hours to days.

Barnes (2003) maintained that friendship relations can be the site of powerful negative emotions. There are romantic notion about girl's friendship that they are capable of sharing,

75

caring and mutual support, but as Goodwin (1990) claimed girls like to gossip and talk against each other especially when one is not around.

Gossiping was also mentioned by one of my female participants (May, 14 years old) during our interview.

> *'Last year, after I got to know them, and it became normal (to be friends with them), and then came our arguments, and then we become friends again, and then we try to build up our friendship again.. Last year, all my friends were drama queens, and then of course there were arguments and disputes. There was gossip, and back stabbing. Now we do not fight anymore, but one girl irritates me. I do not talk to her…'*

When May (14) said that all her friends were drama queens last year, I interpreted it that her friendship was with arguments and fights. It seems that friendship among girls may involve the playing out of negative emotions. Although it gives positive feelings of support and care, it also involves bitching, falling out and rituals of exclusion (Barnes, 2003).

5.13 Challenges

I asked the participants if they encountered challenges in making friends and what are those challenges when they newly arrived in Norway. There were few things that they mentioned to me that could be combined under three themes: place, time and language. I also found out that under place, my participants' experience challenges in making friends in school and in their neighborhood.

5.13.1 Place

Schools a place where my participants meet their new teachers and other children from other backgrounds. It is also a place where immigrant children, like my participants get exposure and learn to cope up with the new culture.

Most my participants first went to an introduction school where they had to learn the lesson to help them keep up with the normal school and to learn the Norwegian language. Some of them stayed for a few months, others stayed for a year. One of the participants (Lynn, 12) did not go to an introduction school at all. She went directly to an ordinary school, and got helped from an interpreter. The other younger participants went to daycares.

The participants who went to an introduction school were put in a class together with children from different countries that have different languages. The children recalled that it was not easy communicating with one another, thus difficult to established friendship aside from being classmates. They tried to speak English to the other children, but some of them could only speak little English and others do not understand at all. And on top of that, all of them had to learn Norwegian language as well. They also said that they felt shy to approach the other kids, so some of them end up playing alone during breaks or sitting alone on the playground while watching other kids playing.

May (14) revealed to me in our interview what she felt alone during her first months in school. Other children were nice, but for her, she felt that they did not make an effort to include her in their game.

Below is an excerpt where May (14) tells me about the challenges she met in school:

May: For me their environment was different. I did not know anything about Norwegians, unlike in the country where I came from, someone will try to talk to you and will try to understand you because you are new or someone will try to help you. But they are not like that here. There in my first new school, there is one for Norwegian class and one for the introduction class. And I was there in the introduction class for three months, after that I transferred to the Norwegian class, and then I saw how they were. When I transferred in the Norwegian class, they did not talk to me.
Fritzie: At first they did not talk to you? So what happened?
M: I played with the children in the introduction class.

F: So even if you already transferred in a normal Norwegian class; you still played with the children in the other class?

M: Yes. I played with the foreigners, because I did not know the language and my Norwegian classmates did not say to me 'Yes, come here and we will help you', like that.. or they did not tell me 'Hey, come and talk to us'. And I was very silent because I was new. It was like six or seven months that I did not talk to them, but only played with the foreigners.

In this conversation, I noticed how May (14) compared her cultural background with her new adoptive country. She was disappointed that no one would make the first move to make friends with her in the first months when she started in school. And although she had already transferred to the normal class, she still played with the foreigner children and not with her classmates. Being foreigners in an introduction class is something common for them.

May (14) tried to explain to me why she felt it was difficult for her to form friendship with other children in her first regular class.

May: I understand that children influence each other. When one kid in class says let us do it, then another kid would agree with that kid. Like for example in my school, one of the kids there would say 'yes, let us talk to her'. Then suddenly, everybody in class was talking to me. It is sort of like that…

May (14) sum it up that children influence one another. It looked like that she was also talking about other children practicing conformity. This is worth further investigating in children's friendship among immigrant children.

She also told me that after a year in her first school, she transferred to a new school near where they lived. In that new regular school, she told me that it was much easier for her to talk to other children in her class and develop friendship with other girls. She told me that since she speak the language, it was also a lot easier for the other kids to approach her and ask her if she wants to join their games. After a few months, she found a group of girls and they became close friends.

The participants have also mentioned that when they came to Norway, it was difficult for them to get to know other children from the *neighborhood*. The parents told me that they were first housed in a communal housing. It was a challenge to meet other children because my participants seldom see or meet other children in the street.

Lynn (12 years old): *'In our place where I came from, the children play in the street. If you want to play with them, you just go out in the house and children will play with you. Here it is different. It is seldom that you see children in the street.'*

Lynn (12) was comparing how easier it was for her to play with other children outside her house in her native country. In Norway, she realized that it was different. She rarely sees other children play outside in the street. It presented a problem for her to get to know other children or to play with them. I also understood that living in a communal housing was different experience for her than when she lived in a house with many neighbors and many children in the streets.

Another male participant, Phan (9 years old) said: '*I remember when we came here, I asked my mother to bring me to my friends' house because I wanted to play. I do not have friends outside in the neighborhood at first. I sometimes play in the playground alone or with my siblings.*'

Phan (9) was talking about the children of other Southeast Asian families when he means 'friends'. Maybe it was also one of the reasons why my participants' friendship developed faster because even if they lived in different places in the municipality, they do not have playmates or friends in the neighborhood. They have to ask their parents to bring them to their friends' house to play.

Shena (13 years old) also mentioned about her challenge in getting to know some friends in the neighborhood:

'When we first came here I did not know any children in our neighborhood. I sometimes saw children outside, but it was not so easy to just go out and ask them if I could join their game. When I was in the introduction school, someone came to help us to get started with sports or activities. So I started swimming and I meet some friends there.'

Shena (13) informed me that she did not find friends at once in her neighborhood, but she got help from someone in the introduction school to get started with leisure activities to meet other children. This arrangement for the newly arrived foreign children looked like it helped Shena (13) meeting other children. It was a good way for her to get into motion and be active, at the same time for Shena (14) to be social.

I noted from these conversations that my participants had a difficult time finding friends in the neighborhood. Lynn (12) compared her experience in Norway with the life she was used to in her native country; Phan (9) was not successful in finding friends in the neighborhood either. He even asked his mother to bring him to his friend's house, while Shena (13) saw some children playing outside her neighborhood but it was a challenge for her to approach them.

5.13.2 Time

During my interview with my participants, it became evident for me that time has a significant part to play in the process of forming friendship with other children. Some of participants have experienced that since they were new in class they felt that they were regarded by teachers and their classmates as special. James (1993) has mentioned that when children are newly integrated in a class, they may receive extra attention and consideration and that for a while they might be treated as class pet.

This is an excerpt from my interview with May (14) to illustrate the importance of time in friendship formation:

Fritzie: Are there any other challenges that you encountered aside from language?
May (14): after I learned the language, I became friends with them, right?

Fritzie: ok.

May: At first they are really nice. If you are new, your classmates are better.

Fritzie: What do you mean better?

May: I mean, they are sort of nicer and do things extra to feel you welcome.

Fritzie: ok.. this was when you were a new student?

May: Yes, and they were different. And once they got to know you, and you got to know them. It was not difficult anymore, but it became normal. Then they started treating you just like everybody else.

Fritzie: So you mean to say that are you friends with them that time?

May: Not yet. But it was easier to make friends with them.

As May (14) said she was treated positively after she learned to speak the language. She was given special attention, but she also realized that after some time that they got to know each other, the treatment of her classmates to her became normal. She stopped being 'special'. She was now considered as 'one of them'. It seems that time plays a role in understanding her situation. The other children would not forever treat May (14) 'special' or with understanding or consideration because she is new in the class. After a while, her classmates have treated her like the rest of them and not different from the rest of the class.

It was for May's advantage that she learned the language within the time frame because it was her key to make new friends in class and be integrated and be treated as one of them. James (1993) said that being 'special' is a transitory stage, and if being 'special' threatens to take longer time it becomes permanent. May (14) being a newcomer in school and could not speak the language, but work hard to learn the language rather than getting consideration and understanding from her classmates. Then it is better for her to be treated as one of them, than to be treated 'differently', as it might be considered as 'marginal' to the social group (James, 1993).

Aside from the example mentioned above, Shena (13 years old) have another challenge which is also related to time:

Fritzie: Aside from the language barrier, have you experience other challenges when you came here?

Shena (13 years old): yes, I did. When I came to school, the children have already friends; they already belong to group of friends. Their friendships were already established. A year after we arrived, I felt that they suddenly grew up and became mature. It looked like they became teen agers overnight. It's difficult to explain..

I related Shena's challenge to time because when she arrived in Norway, she found out that her classmates belonged already in groups. It is her way of telling me that she did not have that time to form any group with them, and she needs time to get to know them and find out which group she thinks she can belong to. When she said something about her classmates being grown up and mature after a year, I am assuming that she was comparing how her new classmates are from the girls in her country. It might be that she was holding on to her previous belief that girls on a certain age should act in certain ways.

5.13.3 Language

As I already illustrated, all of my participants expressed that language is one of the biggest challenge they encountered when they arrived. It became an important result of my study. It became a challenge to meet new playmates, or friends. They said that it was not so easy to communicate to other children, or it was not easy to be understood because of the language barrier.

Here are some of the excerpts of our interview to demonstrate my participants' difficulties with the language barrier:

> *Fritzie: How did you make friends in school?*
> *Trung (12): At first, I did not speak Norwegian.*
> *F: Yes…*
> *T: And then, I went there, someone will talk to me, I talk back to them.*

But it was difficult because I do not know how to speak Norwegian. I have to learn the language, then I started talking to them a bit.. But still it was difficult if you do not talk to them first. They were just standing there. And then I suddenly knew their language.. but I cannot just go to them and start talking. It was only 'hi' and 'hello'.

I could see that because of the language barrier, it limits their chance to get to know each other or get pass the 'hi' and 'hello' stage. Trung (12) experienced that the other children would like to talk to him, and I could see that he also tried to talk back and communicate. But having limited knowledge of the language, I could see that he was stuck. He also said something that after he can speak the language, another challenge came up for him. He could not easily go and jump into the conversation of the other children. It might be that Trung (12) waited for the right moment to be included in the conversation and experienced that it was easier to get access once he knew how to speak the language.

Trung (12) not only talked about his challenge in language, but also in breaking into the already formed groups in school. It gave an impression that it was not so easy for him to form a friendship relation with other children despite speaking the language. In school there are already groups of friends that tend to solidify over time (Rizzo, 1989) and being a new comer is not easy to join in any group.

Ann's (8 years old) had different opinion about her lack of knowledge of the Norwegian language. Here is the extract of our conversation:

Fritzie: Was it a challenge to make friends with them?

Ann: No, it was not difficult, but it was difficult to talk to them.

F: How did you overcome this challenge? How did you make contact with other children since you do not speak their language?

A: They speak English or an adult would help to translate. But we have a neighbor who is my friend who translated also. The first time we came here, we talked like robots (laughs). We also used sign language.

She told me that she came in Norway when she was young, and for her it was not difficult to make friends even if she could not speak the language. As I have discussed earlier, it was easier for my younger participants to form friendship with other children. Ann is one of them who experienced that it was easier to make friends with her classmates. She especially had a good contact with her seatmate. She said that even though she could not speak Norwegian, she could use sign language to communicate with her classmates, and she also got help from the adults.

Ann's older sister, Lynn (12) for her part admitted that it was difficult to for her to find friends because of her lack of knowledge of the language. Here is the excerpt of our interview:

> *Lynn (12 years old)*
> *Fritzie: When you just arrived here in Norway, did you experience any challenge?*
> *L: Yes, it was difficult to talk in Norwegian. It was a bit difficult to find friends because I could not speak Norwegian. I tried to speak English, but they did not understand.*
> *F: What do you mean?*
> *L: They did not speak English.*
> *F: So what happened?*
> *L: I got help from my teachers.*

As I mentioned earlier, Lynn (12) did not go to an introduction school just as the other participants. She went directly to a regular school. It might be that she experienced it as more challenging compared to the other participants. Maybe she also had a tough time catching up with the lessons in her class because of situation. She mentioned that she got help from her teacher to translate the language.

Here is Shena's (13) experience with the language barrier:

Shena (13 years old): The children in my class first approached me because I did not know how to speak Norwegian. It was difficult to communicate. I went to introduction school to learn their language..

Fritzie: so it was them who took the initiative to be friends with you?

S: yes, but I choose not to be friends with them because of the language barrier. It was difficult to understand.

F: So what did you do?

S: I waited for a few months until I could speak their language and after I master their language, it was much easier to be friends with them.

Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco (2001) mentioned that speaking the language of the new country is an asset. From this conversation, I learned that Shena was the one who decided not to make friends with the other children because of the language barrier.

CHAPTER 6

Summary and Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

The final chapter will present the summary of the study and concluding remarks. It will also include answers to the research questions which relates to the objectives of my study. Lastly, I will include some recommendations for future research.

In summary, this study has been focusing on the Southeast Asian immigrant children's friendship relation with other children. The main aim of the research is to unravel their friendship experiences to have a better understanding of their relationship. Furthermore, the study has been concerned with listening to my participant's voices with regards to their idea of what friendship is, the formation of their friendship, etc.

The main theoretical perspective that guides this study is the social studies of children and childhood which sees children as competent, autonomous individuals capable of practicing their agency by being active in their daily lives, being aware of what kind of friends do they want to have or their competence to participate and express their views in this topic.

The research was conducted using qualitative method. Data were obtained through semi-structured interview, observation and informal discussion with the parents to help me understand the experiences of my participants.

6.2. My participant's idea of friendship

When I asked my participant's the meaning of friendship for them, they gave me different answers based on their ideas of what friendship is. I learned that some of my older

participants (age 11 to 14) relate friendship with the feeling of trust, commitment, and emotional investments, while my younger participants (age 8-10) relate it with someone who they can play with and do things together.

I also learned that my participants like to show their friendship by doing same things together, liking the same activities. Their friendship becomes a performative act (James, 2003) where they confirm and reaffirm their friendship to others. I also learned that being friends with someone, it entails variety of activities to nurture their friendship. The usual activities that my participants do are sleep-overs, visiting each other, going out, playing together, hanging out together, watching movies in the cinemas, shopping, calling each other on their phones, among other things.

I also noticed that some of my participants see their friends as someone who is a 'member of the family'; others said that having friends is having someone you can trust and share secrets without being afraid that their friends will reveal it to others.

6.2.1 Friendship formation

I learned that my participants formed friendship with other children in two ways: asking others if they could join their game and being asked by other children to play with them. It seemed easy, but I learned from my participants that it took courage for them to approach other children and asked if they could join the game. They said that they were first shy, unsure of how other children would react because they were new. I also realized that time and language are important aspects in developing friendship.

6.2.2 Parent's influences on participant's friendship

In my research, it was shown that parents of my participants have had influence on their children's friendship with other children. They tried to influence how their children choose their friends, limiting the access of their children meeting their friends outside school,

encouraging their children to be friends with children who they think are suitable and they encouraged their children to be friends with the children of their friends.

6.2.3 Conflicts that they experienced

I discovered that although my participant's friendship with their friends involve trust and commitment, it also consist of conflicts, disputes, arguments, disagreements. Typical disputes that they have experienced were related to claims. Example of this was claiming who is right and wrong, displaying competing perspectives, disagreement on what game to play, etc.

I also learned that as my participants experienced conflicts among their group, they also experienced mutual understanding and cooperation with children who have the same opinion as them. They learn to associate themselves together, thus also acquires a notion of social differentiation.

6.2.4 Challenges that they encountered

I categorized the challenges that my participants experienced in making friends into three themes: place, time and language.

Places that children experienced challenges in making friends were in school and in their neighbourhood. In school, my participants experienced difficulty in communicating with other children because they were put together in an introduction school, where all of the children came from different countries who speak different languages and with different cultures and values. My participants also told me that it was difficult to join their classmates' group because it was already established when they came. They felt that other children were nice, but did not make an effort to help them to join their group.

In the neighbourhood, I learned that my participants had a difficulty finding some playmates and friends because most of the children were nowhere to be seen. They were used in playing

with other children in the streets in the Philippines, but when they came to Norway, they had to register themselves in organized leisure activities to meet other children.

Time is also significant in forming friendship with other children. It takes time to learn the language, but when the participants learned how to speak it, it was easier for them to communicate with other children and to form friendship.

Learning the language was the biggest challenge my participants had to experience. Because of the language barrier, it hindered their friendship formation with other children. Without the knowledge of Norwegian language, my participants could not get past 'hi' or 'hello' to other children. But all of my participants agreed that when they learned to speak the language, it was easier for them to make friends with other children in school and in their neighbourhood. Speaking the language opened opportunities for them to be part of a group as well.

6.3 Findings

After doing this study, I learned a few things. One of these is the nature of children's friendship is complex and elaborate. One has to use time to get to know and understand children's friendship relation with other children. It is not the same experience for every child. One friendship is unique from one child to another. Friendship is an arena where children experience different feelings towards other children; it could be a positive emotion such as compassion or love or it could be a negative emotion such as jealousy or hatred (Barnes, 2003). Friendship has many components; it is not exclusive between two children as my study has proven. It can also be experienced by many children at the same time; it can be experience in a group of girls or group of boys or mixed gender friendship.

Through my participants' friendship, I learned that they had opportunities for self-evaluation by knowing who they are, what kind of people they want to be or not want to be and what

kind of friends do they want to have. Through their experience of friendship, they develop their sense of identity (Barnes, 2003) by defining who they are in relation to others. Through their conflicts and disputes, my participants learned to associate themselves with children who have the same opinions and ideas as them. They learn to negotiate their social identities, their role as a friend and their expectations from one another (Rizzo, 1989).

My study has shown that having friends could help immigrant children enjoy school life. Devine (2003) has said that it is easier for children to cope up school life when children have friends that can support them. It became easier for them to adapt to the new place. They enjoyed their time in school, they look forward to meet their friends and do activities together. Their friendship with other children helped them in easing their way from being alone to have an active social life.

I also noted in my research that language is the key to gain friends, to form friendship with other children. Learning the language takes time. In the beginning it was shown that because of the language barrier, it hinders their ability to be friends with other children, but after some time, the children learned the language, and their friendship relationship develops as well.

This study also validates to what I believed that my participants are competent social actors because even if they had experienced challenges in their immigration process, they finally found their position in their class, in the community. I saw them happy and contented with their friendship, and they enjoy living in Norway. They have learned the language extremely well and have made friends not only in school, but also in the neighbourhood.

It was shown in my study that at first my participants had limitations in practicing their agency. They could not make friends because they do not know how to speak the language, and their parents tried to influence their choice of friends. But after giving them time to learn the language, they have also shown that they capable of exercising their agency (James, 2009) by choosing their own friends, by being active in their daily lives, by meeting with other children and make new friends.

As I researcher who was curious of my participant's experience in making friends here in Norway, I assumed that it was difficult for them to make friends with other children as it was in my experience. But aside from the usual challenges they had encountered, mostly in language, which I also experienced, I could say that my participants had an easier access to make friends with other children.

I was surprised and happy that my participants never experienced bullying and racism due to their cultural background. I found out that it was not an issue if they came from Southeast Asia. I learned that my participants have to prove themselves worthy to be treated just like anybody else in the class. They had to learn the language, they had to adapt to the culture and they had to be active as a student just like everybody else in class. At first they were given consideration because they were new, but it did not extend on making it easy for them to form friendship with other children. The friendship formation had to come later after some time.

On a personal level, it was particularly interesting for me to know that my participants are able to form friendship easier in their new country. As I said earlier, I based this research on my experience as an immigrant who had difficulty in making friends, but my study contradicts my earlier assumptions that it was difficult for my participants to make friends with other children in their school or neighborhood and that they choose their friends because of the influence of their parents and because of their cultural background.

6.4 Conclusion

The study concludes that my participants have different ideas on the meaning of friendship. My younger participants consider teaming up with other children and enjoying the same activities together and playing together as their idea of friendship, while the older participants likes to have friends who they can trust, share secrets with and relate friendship with emotional investments (James, 1993).

They all do activities together to nurture their budding friendship. Some invite their friends at home for sleep overs, they call each other, they go to movies, etc. My study showed that my participants' friendship relation was complex and has many dimensions. They share friendship with their group mates, but at the same time they share it with only few children. They are capable of sharing friendship with opposite sex. My study has shown that my participants share friendship with their siblings and cousins.

This study has also documented that my participants experienced conflicts and disputes on their friendship with other children. In big groups, they experienced competition with one another. But along with conflicts and disputes, they have also experienced mutual understanding and cooperation with children who share the same ideas.

Furthermore, my study has illustrated that my participants are competent children capable of adapting to a new society by learning the language, making new friends and nurture that friendship. They have shown that they are capable of choosing what kind of friends they want to have, and not just whoever they meet. I have recorded that my participants have certain standards in choosing in their friends which is also a way of showing their autonomy

6.5 Suggestions for future research

I would like to say that time is essential in studying friendship relation among children. A researcher needs a good amount of time in order to collect comprehensive and more profound results. I suggest including methods like focus group or more extensive participant observation to gather richer data and to get a wider perspective in children's friendship and to understand more children's relationship with other children.

A better interview situation could bring more in-depth results.

Friendship with opposite sex is a worthy topic to pursue on its own.

Hurtado & Silva (2008) claimed that social identity is that aspect of self derived from the knowledge of being a part of social categories and groups. I say that studying friendship's role in identifying children's social identity is also an interesting topic to look into in the future as children's friendships consist of groups and categories and group conformation.

Further study on immigrant children's social relationship with focus only in school is also an interesting topic because school is one of the first places where they meet other children outside their family.

It is also interesting to include in future research the programs and activities that the municipality is organizing for immigrant children to help them integrate easily.

References

Abebe, T. (2009). Multiple methods, complex dilemmas: negotiating socio-ethical spaces in participatory research with disadvantaged children. In: *Children's Geographies* 7 (4): pp. 451-465

Adler, P. A. & Adler, P., 1998. *Peer Power. Preadolescent Culture and Identity*. USA.: Rutgers Univeristy Press.

Alanen, L. and Mayhall, B. (2001). *Conceptualizing child-adult relations*. London: Routledge Falmer

Alderson, P (2008). *Young Children's Rights: Exploring Beliefs, Principles and Practice,* 2nd ed. London: Jessica Kingsley

Aranowitz, M. (1984). The Social and emotional adjustment of immigrant children: A review of the literature. *International Migration Review* 18, (2): p. 237-257.

Barnes, P. (2003). Children's Friendships. In: Kehily, M. J. & Swann, J. *Childhood. Children's Cultural Worlds*. Open University.

Boocock, S. S. & Scott, K. A. (2005). *Kids in Context. The sociological study of children and childhoods.* USA: Rowman and Littlefields Pub., Inc.

Clark, A., Kjørholt, A.T. & Moss, P.(2005). Beyond Listening: future prospects. In: Clark, A., Moss, P., & Kjørholt, A.T. (eds) *Beyond Listening. Children's Perspectives on Early Childhood Services.* Bristol: The Policy Press, pp. 175-189.

Clough, P. & Nutbrown, C. (2007). *A Student Guide to Methodology,* 2nd ed. London: Sage Publication

Corsaro, W. A. (2005). *The Sociology of Childhood.* 2nd ed. Indiana: Pine Forge Press. Sage Publication Com.

Corsaro, W., (2003). *We're friends, right? Inside kid's culture.* Washington, D.C.: Joseph Henry Press.

Cree, V., Kay, H., and Tisdall, K. (2002). Research with children: sharing the dilemmas. *Child and Family Social Work*, 7. 47-56.

Davis, J. (1989). Understanding the meanings of children: A reflexive process. *Children And Society.* 12 (5): 336-48.

Devine, D. (2003). *Children, Power and Schooling. How childhood is structured in the Primary School.* UK: Trentham Books Limited.

Eide, B. J. & Winger, N. (2003). *Fra Barns Synvinkel. Intervju med barn – metodiske og etiske refleksjoner.* Oslo: Cappelen Akademisk Forlag.

Ennew, J., Abebe, T., Bangyai, P. K., Kjørholt, A. T., Noonsup, T. (2009). *The right to be properly researched. How to do rights-based, scientific research with children. Knowing Children.* Thailand: Black on White Publication.

Evaldsson, A. (2003). *Play, disputes and social order: everyday life in two Swedish after-school centers.* Sweden: Linkoping University.

Greig, A. and Taylor, J. (1999). *Doing Research with Children*. London: Sage Publications.

Goodwin, M. (1990). *He-said-she-said: Talk as social organization among black children.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Hsin-Chun Tsai, J. (2006). Xenophobia, Ethnic community and Immigrant youth's Friendship network formation. *Adolescence.* 41 (162): p.285-298.

Hurtado, A. & Silva, J.M. (2008). Creating Social identities in Children Through Critical Multicultural Media: The case of Little Bill. In: *The Intersections of Personal And Social Identities.* Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

James, A. (2009). Agency. In: Qvortrup, J. Corsaro, W.A. & Honig, M.S. (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies.* London: Palgrave. Ch. 2, pp.34-45.

James, A. (1993). *Childhood Identities. Self and Social Relationships in the Experience of the Child.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd.

Kjørholt, A.T. (2004). *Childhood as a social and symbolic space: discourses on children as social participants in society.* PhD Thesis, Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology Management, NOSEB/Department of Education, NTNU Trondheim, Norway.
.

Kvale, S., (1996). *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. USA: Sage Publication.

Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, (2009*). Interviews. Learning the craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing.* London: Sage Pub.

Kvello, Ø. (2012). *Oppvekstmiljø og sosialisering*. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk.

Ladd, G.W., Kochenderfer-Ladd, B., & Rydell, A. (2011). Children's Interpersonal Skills and school-based relationship. In: *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Childhood Social Development.* Blackwell Pub. Ltd.

Morrow, V. and Richards, M. (1996). *The Ethics of Social Research with Children: An Overview*. Wiley-Blackwell

Maybin, J. (2003). Language, Relationships and identities.. In Kehily, M. J. & Swann, J. *Childhood. Children's Cultural Worlds*. Open University.

Nairn, K., Panelli, R., & McCormack, J., (2003). Destabilizing dualisms: young people's experiences of Rural and urban environments. *Childhood* 10 (1): 9-42.

Narrowe, J. (1998). *Under One Roof. On becoming a Turk in Sweden.* Stockholm: Elanders Gotab.

Nilsen, R.D. & Rogers, B. (2005). 'That's not a good idea, Mom': Negotiating children's Subjectivity while constructing 'Home' as a Research Site. *Children's Geographies* 3 (3): 345-362.

Prout, A. & James, A. (1990). A New Paradigm of the Sociology of Childhood? Provenance, Promise and Problems. In: James, A. & Prout A. (eds) *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood.* London: Falmer Press, pp. 7-31.

Punch, S. (2002). Research With Children. The same or different from research with adults? *In Childhood* 9 (3): pp. 321-341.

Qvortrup, J. (2002). Sociology of Childhood: Conceptual and Liberation of Children. In: Mouritsen, F. & Qvortrup, J. (eds) *Childhood and Children's Culture.* Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 43-76.

Qvortrup, J. (1994). *Childhood matters: an introduction: Social Theory, Practice and Politics*. UK: Ashgate Publisher, Ltd.

Rizzo, T. (1989). *Friendship development among children in school*. USA: Ablex Pub. Corp.

Robert-Holmes, G., (2011). *Doing Your Early Years Research Project. A step-by-step Guide*. 2nd ed., London: Sage Pub.

Silvermann, D. (2011). *Qualitative Research,* 3rd ed. London: Sage Publication Ltd.

Solberg, A. (1997). The Challenge in Child Research: From Being to Doing. In: James, A & Prout, A. *Constructing And Reconstructing Childhood. Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood.* UK: Routledge Falmer.

Suarez-Orozco, C. and Suarez-Orozco M.M. (2001). *Children of Immigration.* USA*:* Harvard University Press.

Thorne, B. (1993). *Gender Play: girls and boys in school.* Rutgers University Press.

Website Sources:

Philippine Government. General Information. (2010)
http://www.census.gov.ph/data/pressrelease/2012/pr1265tx.html accessed 26.09.2012

Philippine Embassy. (2012): http://www.cfo.gov.ph/pdf/statistics/Stock%202010.pdf (accessed 27.09.2012)

 Norway Statistics. Kristin Henriksen, (2007):
http://www.ssb.no/emner/02/rapp_200729/rapp_200729.pdf (accessed 27.09.2012).

Vietnam Government. (2012): http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overseas_Vietnamese#cite_note-24   (accessed 08.10.12)

APPENDICES

1. Interview Guide
2. Informed Consent
3. Informal Letter to the Parents

Interview Guide:

Research Questions

- What is the meaning of friendship for Southeast Asian Immigrant children and how important friendship is in shaping their social identity?

- How do Southeast Immigrant children form friendships/social networks with other children?

- Are there challenges that Southeast Asian immigrant children encountered when trying to build friendships with other children? If yes, what are those?

-No answer is right or wrong

Interview questions:

1. What is friendship for you?
2. Can you tell me how important friendship is for you and why is it important?
3. Do you have friends in school? In the neighbourhood?
4. How do you make friends with other children?
5. How many friends do you have?
6. What activities do you like do with your friends?
7. How many times do you meet them?
8. Do you meet your friends outside school hours?
9. Do you choose who will be your friends?
10. What kind of friends do you want to have?
11. Can you tell me why you choose your friends? Can you tell me why it is important?
12. What characteristics/qualities do you like in a friend?
13. What do you think makes a good friend?
14. Have you experienced challenges/difficulties when making friends?
15. What do you do to overcome these challenges?

Probing questions:

1. I don't quite understand, can you explain it a bit more?
2. Can you give an example of what you have just said?
3. What do you mean?
4. Can you give me more details about that?

Parental Consent

My name is Fritzie Ryland, a graduate student in MPhil Childhood Studies NTNU and is now writing my master's thesis. The theme of the thesis is the Friendship relations of Southeast Asian Immigrant children in Norway and the aim is to unravel the nature of their friendship and experiences.

The objectives of this research are the following:

- Identify the meaning of friendship.

- Explore the significance of friendship.

- Explore the ways they develop friendship to other children with different and non-immigrant background.

- Distinguish the challenges they encounter when making friends.

I am interested to know:
-What is the meaning of friendship for Southeast Asian Immigrant?
-How do Southeast Immigrant children form friendships/social networks with other children?
-Are there challenges that Southeast Asian immigrant children encountered when trying to build friendships with other children?

To determine this, I want to interview 8-12 Southeast immigrant children aged from 8 to 14 years old. The researcher will use a tape recorder and will take note while the interview is going on. The interview will take about an hour on an agreed on the time and place.

It is voluntary to join and participants have the opportunity to withdraw at any time along the way, without having to explain this further. The information will be treated confidentially and no individuals will be recognized in the completed task. The information is anonymous and the recordings are deleted when the task is completed.

If you would like to be part of the interview, it's nice if you sign the enclosed consent form and send it to me.

If you have any questions please call me on my mobile number 41187861 or send an e-mail to fryland07@gmail.com. You can also contact my supervisor at Norwegian Centre for Child Research, NTNU (Dr. Randi Dyblie Nielsen) at the telephone number +47 73596248.

The study is reported to the Norwegian Social Research, Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD).

Sincerely
Fritzie Ryland

Norwegian Centre for Child Research (NOSEB)

NTNU

Consent Statement:

I have received and read the information, and are willing to let my child participate in
this research project.

Name and signature ....

Date and Place …..

Phone ....

<center>**Informal Letter to the Parents**</center>

Dear Friends, ginawa ko ng forwarded ang message ko para isahan explanation na lng.

As you know I am currently studying my master's degree in NTNU (Masters of Philosophy in Childhood Studies). Ang pinag aaralan ko ay about rights, perspectives, opinions and views ng mga kabataan about things that concerns their lives.

Ang title ng thesis ko is "Friendship relations of Southeast Asian Immigrant children". Ang research ko is about friendship, pano nag build ng friendship ang mga anak ninyo sa mga kabataan dito sa adoptive country natin, Norway.

Gusto ko sana i-ask yung permisyon ninyo kung pwd na maging participants ang anak nyo sa interview na gagawin ko. Walang personal and damaging questions. Walang questions about sa parents or sa family nyo. It will only take 1hour interview. Kung ok lng sa inyo.. Importante lng tlga na mgakaron ako ng participants na mga anak ng immigrants dito sa Trondheim and Sør-Trondelag area or else walang silbi ang research study ko kung wla akong participants na iinterviewhin. Ako lng ang mag iinterview. Tagalog or Ilonggo ang gagamitin ko na language.

Please sana matulungan nyo ako sa research ko. It will be helpful in the future to understand more the experiences of immigrant children..kung ano ang naging experience nila as a newcomer sa Norway, kung mahirap ba or madali maghanap ng new friends..

Seryoso ito and i hope na email nyo ako kung ok lng sa inyo na sumali anak nyo sa interview for 1 hour. Ang ages ng mga bata is from 8 to 14 years old. Kelangan ko ng 8 to 10 participants. kung may kakilala kayo na taga Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos, Burma na pwede maging participants sa study ko is most welcome basta anak din ng mga immigrants.

Thank you tlaga and thanks for reading my email. Good day!

PS. mobile number ko is 41187861.

Regards,

Fritzie Ryland