



UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

***MEDIATING CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT THROUGH STORYTELLING AND
PLAY ACTIVITIES: A SOCIO-CULTURAL STUDY OF A WALDORF
KINDERGARTEN IN CAPE TOWN***

Ya-el Joy Levin

Student number 3993048

UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Supervisor: Prof Rajendra Chetty

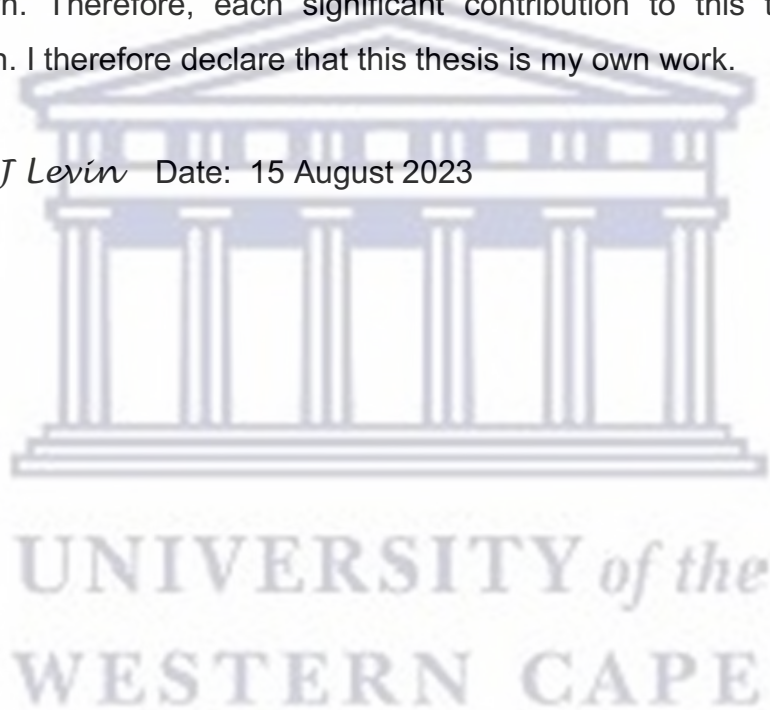
August 2023

DECLARATION

I, Ya-el Joy Levin, declare that this thesis, 'Mediating children's development through storytelling and play activities: a socio-cultural study of a Waldorf kindergarten class', is my personal work and has not been submitted for degree or examination in any other university. All sources I have cited or quoted have been referenced and fully recognised by a complete list of bibliographical references.

I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and pretend that it is one's own. Therefore, each significant contribution to this thesis is my own interpretation. I therefore declare that this thesis is my own work.

Signature: *YJ Levin* Date: 15 August 2023



ABSTRACT

The study focused on a Waldorf kindergarten, investigating the role of storytelling by the teacher, and the free imaginative play of the children. It utilised the socio-cultural theories of Lev Vygotsky as a theoretical lens. The research question centred on how to observe the internalisation of language in a storytelling setting, and whether free play allows for that. If the children expressed the stories in their play and drawings, does this reveal aspects of internalisation? The literature review covered Vygotsky's theories of development, as well as play and storytelling. The neurological aspects of development were also examined. Vygotsky was one of the first to initiate the term 'self-regulation', which has now become one of the leading foci in understanding the development of children emotionally and mentally. This study investigated the roles of language and tools in both storytelling and free play. It also reviewed aspects of the Waldorf philosophy which may have impacted the environment of the study. The children, aged 4 to 7 years, were studied for a year in an ethnographic socio-cultural discourse analysis. Having a socio-cultural lens entailed scrutinising the social role of language in the child's individual internalisation, as well as imagination, zone of proximal development, private speech, self-regulation and identity formation. The study revealed that children internalised language through both the content of the storytelling, as well as the structure of presenting it. The Waldorf kindergarten provided a specific method of oral telling, puppetry and acting stories, with the same story repetitively over days or even weeks. This offered a level of immersion where the dynamics of internalisation could be revealed through the imaginative play of the children.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my son, Kieron Luke, that he may also pursue a life of knowledge and questioning.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank my parents, Merle and Jeff Levin, who without their inspiration and support, I could never have embarked on this journey. And my partner, Andrew Parker for the continual support over the years, and tolerating my busy weekends and holidays.

I also thank my supervisor, Prof Rajendra Chetty, who motivated me through the process, to find my voice and determination, improve on my skills, critique, and joy of the journey.

I thank my workplace, The Centre for Creative Education, for giving me time and support through this study. My hope is that the inspiration can reach the students to further their own journey in academic contribution.

Gratitude to the Imhoff Waldorf School, where I conducted the study and worked for 11 years.

Lastly, I acknowledge Lev Vygotsky. My family were also in Russia at that time, and had to flee the Revolution. Whereas he joined both as participant and observer, with a life ending too isolated and too soon. As the study went on, I found myself realising new reasons for studying Vygotsky, being touched by his words, thoughts, and the strength for the time and place where he lived.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background and rationale for the study.....	1
1.2. Problem statement	2
1.3. The study.....	3
1.4. Research questions.....	4
1.5. Research aims and objectives	4
1.6. Significance and contribution to the study.....	5
1.7. Organisation of the study	5
CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	8
2.1. Introduction.....	8
2.1.1. Vygotsky's education and life	8
2.1.2. Vygotsky's death and legacy	10
2.1.3. Educational psychological research	12
2.1.4. Dialectical materialism as a methodology	12
2.1.5. Peircian Third – the interpretant.....	14
2.1.6. Luria and Vygotsky.....	16
2.2. Socio-cultural theory.....	17
2.2.1. What was development for Vygotsky?	17
2.2.2. Early Relationships and development.....	18
2.2.3. Age-appropriate stages of development and private speech.....	18
2.2.4. Mediation.....	20
2.2.5. Internalisation	21
2.2.6. Internalisation vs participation	22

2.2.7.	Vygotsky defined imagination.....	23
2.2.8.	Vygotsky’s theory of zone of proximal development (ZPD).....	24
2.2.9.	Play and the zone of proximal development – dramatic collision.....	25
2.2.10.	Critiques	26
CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW		27
3.1.	Introduction.....	27
3.2.	Vygotsky defined play	27
3.2.1.	First definition of play: children create imaginary situations	28
3.2.2.	Second definition of play: children create roles	29
3.2.3.	Third definition of play: children create rules	30
3.3.	Dialectic in play	31
3.4.	Perezhivanie and the dramatic aspect of play.....	32
3.5.	Lindqvist and the aesthetics of play	34
3.5.1.	Play worlds	34
3.6.	Other theories of play	36
3.6.1.	Psychoanalytical theories.....	36
3.6.2.	Erikson	37
3.6.3.	Piaget	38
3.6.4.	Fröbel and free play	40
3.6.5.	Brian Sutton-Smith and playfulness of language	40
3.7.	Research on play	41
3.7.1.	Why is play diminishing?	44
3.7.2.	Play and toys in a Waldorf kindergarten.....	46
3.8.	Theory of a Waldorf school	48
3.8.1.	Path of development	50
3.8.2.	Will and thinking as polarities.....	50
3.8.3.	Dream consciousness of the young child.....	52
3.8.4.	Emergence of adult teeth	53
3.8.5.	Imitation as a form of social construction	53
3.8.6.	Rhythm, breathing and self-regulation	54
3.8.7.	Storytelling and young children	55
3.8.8.	Storytelling in a Waldorf kindergarten	56
3.8.9.	Language and imagination in stories.....	58

3.8.10.	Psychoanalytical view of storytelling	60
3.8.11.	The structure of a fairy tale in its aesthetic form.....	61
3.8.12.	Perezhivanie and storytelling	62
3.9.	Imagination and transformative education	63
3.9.1.	The meaning-making process	63
3.9.2.	Binaries of language and concept.....	64
3.10.	Socio-cultural theory and neuropsychology	65
3.10.1.	Influence of neuroscience on the understanding of play.....	66
3.10.2.	Mirror neurons	67
3.10.3.	Attachment theory	68
3.10.4.	Self-regulation and executive functions.....	69
3.11.	Conclusion.....	70
CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY.....		72
4.1.	Introduction.....	72
4.2.	The research questions.....	73
4.3.	Ethnographic studies.....	73
4.4.	Discourse analysis and ethnographic research.....	75
4.5.	Socio-cultural discourse analysis	76
4.6.	Dialectics in Critical Discourse analysis (CDA)	79
4.7.	Triad vs dialectic.....	80
4.8.	Qualitative method	80
4.9.	Data collection.....	80
4.9.1.	Identification of subjects	81
4.10.	Methods of data collection.....	82
4.10.1.	Observation	82
4.10.2.	Interviewing	83
4.10.3.	Document analysis	83
4.11.	Focus on storytelling	83
4.12.	Questions arising.....	84
4.12.1.	Adding questions throughout the research process.....	84
4.13.	Transcription.....	85
4.14.	Data analysis.....	85
4.15.	Data coding and interpretation	86

4.16.	Ethical considerations	87
4.17.	Conclusion.....	88
CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS		89
5.1.	Introduction.....	89
5.2.	Location and subjects.....	89
5.3.	Classroom structure	90
5.3.1.	Table area	91
5.3.2.	Mat area	91
5.3.3.	Imitation area.....	91
5.4.	Nature table.....	92
5.5.	Seasonal festivals	92
5.6.	Rhythmic teaching.....	93
5.7.	The daily rhythm as a binary of breathing	94
5.7.1.	Observation: Transitions and repetition of activity and language.....	95
5.7.2.	Observation from notes: Self-regulation in terms of cloth folding.....	96
5.8.	How rhythm facilitates language	97
5.9.	Ring time, repetition and seasonal rhythm	97
5.9.1.	Types of movements and language which are done in every ring time: ..	98
5.9.2.	Examples where polarities were also considered in the development of the ring time:.....	98
5.9.3.	Progression of the ring time in autumn.....	99
5.9.4.	Puppetry	101
5.9.5.	Cloth puppets	102
5.9.6.	Learning sequencing and structure from a puppet show	103
5.9.7.	Action research: changing the structure of puppetry.....	104
5.10.	Acting out the stories.....	104
5.10.1.	Types of stories to act	105
5.11.	Presenting the data: Storytelling	106
5.11.1.	Aspects and themes in the first term	106
5.11.2.	Stories presented in term one	106
5.11.3.	Aspects and themes in the second term	110
5.11.4.	Review of storytelling in the second term.....	110
5.11.5.	Aspects and themes in the third term.....	113

5.11.6.	Review of storytelling in the third term	114
5.11.7.	Aspects and themes in the fourth term.....	117
5.11.8.	Review of storytelling in the fourth term	118
5.12.	Observing play in relation to the storytelling.....	120
5.12.1.	Play in the kindergarten.....	121
5.12.2.	How the tools of storytelling mediated the structure of play	122
5.12.2.1.	Types of play: puppetry and ‘garden’ making.....	123
5.12.2.2.	Examples of how children incorporated stories into their play	124
5.12.2.3.	Internalisation over time	126
5.12.2.4.	Action research: new aspects of puppetry	126
5.12.2.5.	Types of play: dressing up and acting stories	127
5.13.	Data from parent interviews	128
5.13.1.	Meeting 1.....	128
5.13.2.	Meeting 2.....	129
5.13.3.	Comments from the parents.....	129
5.14.	Document analysis	130
5.14.1.	Creating a storybook from a story told in class	130
5.14.2.	Expressing images from the ring time stories and songs.....	130
5.14.3.	Drawing as a means to express patterns.....	131
5.15.	Conclusion.....	132
CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION.....		133
6.1.	Introduction.....	133
6.2.	Individual development originates in social processes.....	134
6.3.	Exploring Vygotsky’s definition of play	135
6.4.	Types of mediation in the classroom.....	135
6.5.	Three types of social interaction.....	136
6.6.	Mediating storytelling and how this influenced the children’s play	137
6.6.1.	Themes in the stories	138
6.6.2.	Example of a Nature story.....	138
6.6.3.	Remedial story	139
6.7.	Interplay between fantasy and reality.....	140
6.8.	Binaries of language and concept.....	142
6.9.	How tools were used: the example of craftwork.....	143

6.10.	Higher mental functions.....	145
6.11.	Perezhivanie: the joining of environment and self in experience	146
6.12.	Examples of imitation and new creation.....	148
6.13.	Self-regulation and rules	149
6.13.1.	Class rules made by the teacher.....	149
6.13.2.	Rules made by the children.....	149
6.14.	Zone of proximal development and age differences	151
6.15.	Conclusion.....	152
CHAPTER 7 Conclusion.....		154
7.1.	Introduction.....	154
7.2.	Reviewing the research questions	155
7.3.	Hypothesis.....	155
7.4.	Socio-cultural analysis.....	155
7.5.	Private speech.....	156
7.6.	Zone of proximal development.....	156
7.6.1.	Ways that imitation was fostered.....	158
7.7.	Defining mediation.....	159
7.8.	Internalisation of stories in children's play.....	159
7.8.1.	Imitating the archetypal characters	160
7.8.2.	Imitating the structure of storytelling.....	160
7.8.3.	The plot or moods in the puppet shows	161
7.8.4.	Imitation through ring games.....	162
7.8.5.	A story of imitation and discovery.....	163
7.9.	Stories	163
7.10.	The dramatic collision and linking of emotion.....	164
7.11.	Nourishing the foundations for internalising stories.....	165
7.12.	Meaning making	166
7.13.	The dialectic and process.....	167
7.14.	Conclusion.....	167
REFERENCES.....		170

APPENDICES	190
Appendix 1: Sally had made her own pictures out of the Three Little Pigs story ...	190
Appendix 2: Princess and the rainbow	190
Appendix 3: Rainbow and flower	191
Appendix 4: Bird and the tree	191
Appendix 5: Horse and house	192
Appendix 6: The bird visiting the squirrel	192
Appendix 7: Flower mandala	193
Appendix 8: Star and patterns	193



LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Comparison of Piaget and Vygotsky on ideas of symbolic play	40
Table 3.2: Aspects of will and thinking	52
Table 4.1: Daily note chart	82
Table 5.1: Seasons and associated colours and elements for the nature table.....	92
Table 5.2: List of term dates, festivals and themes	94
Table 5.3: Rhythm of the day, pertaining to in-breath-out-breath in activity.....	95
Table 5.4: Transitions and associated activity and language.....	96
Table 5.5: Activities, rhythms and rituals.....	97
Table 5.6: Aspects and themes of the seasonal stories.....	106
Table 5.7: Term 1 story schedule – summer to autumn festival.....	107
Table 5.8: Aspects and themes of the seasonal stories.....	110
Table 5.9: Term 2 story schedule – autumn to mid-winter festival	111
Table 5.10: Aspects and themes of the seasonal stories.....	114
Table 5.11: Term 3 story schedule – mid-winter to spring festival	114
Table 5.12: Aspects and themes of the seasonal stories.....	117
Table 5.13: Term 4 story schedule – spring to summer festival.....	118
Table 5.14: Storytelling processes and play.....	123
Table 5.15: Example of storytelling influences on the children’s puppet plays	125
Table 6.1: Modes of mediation observed in the classroom	136
Table 6.2: The real and fantasy aspects of stories told in the classroom.....	142
Table 6.3: The progression of craft projects.....	144
Table 6.4: Example of duality of play	148
Table 6.5: An example of negotiating rules	150

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure: 3.1 Continuum of adult interaction in play46
Figure 5.1: Outline of the classroom area90



CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and rationale for the study

I had been a Waldorf preschool teacher for a decade when I began this thesis. My Master's degree focused on Grade 1 literacy environments, investigating both brain-based and Waldorf education. I was interested in the transition from orality to literacy that a child underwent, and how this could be understood from a neurological and developmental perspective. The history of writing involved a slow progress from picture to letter, over thousands of years. It struck me how relevant this process was in the wiring of the child's brain and laying a foundation for the love of literacy. The image, or picture, was a bridge between oral listening and written word. I was interested how storytelling provided the opportunity for children to develop this imaginative capacity. As a Waldorf teacher, the role of storyteller is similar to that in days of old, with oral memorised telling, quietly by a candle (fire). This is meant to inspire the children to imagine the stories themselves, using a right-brained consciousness. For both Vygotsky, and Steiner from the Waldorf system, this imagination was essential to the development of the child's thinking capacities.

The year after I completed my Master's degree, I took a gap year from teaching. My purpose was to explore Waldorf schooling within an isiXhosa mother-tongue environment. For a term, I took a post teaching in a small Eastern Cape Waldorf-inspired school; a traditional round hut, holding 10 children. I had an isiXhosa assistant. I was able to observe the effect of Waldorf storytelling and play curriculum on children who lived rurally.

I recognised how their play imitated their home environments. Some of the children who attended the preschool lived with their grandmothers, some of whom worked at a local hotel, and thus were exposed to much adult after-hours activities. This was revealed through the imitative play. Nearly every imaginative game seemed to conclude with the arrival of a policeman, to collect a drunk person. In the ring games, where children danced together in the middle, a little boy danced more like a drunk man. It took me weeks to guide him to dance like a child.

I had developed a system of storytelling with my assistant, in order to tell the stories in both isiXhosa and English. My intention was to bring small pictures in both languages so I was sure they were following the story. Thus, I told a paragraph in English, and she translated it into isiXhosa. I also tried to translate many songs and verses into their mother tongue. Then I watched their play.

Certain stories, such as the folk tale of The Three Little Pigs (traditional), had repeated verses, such as

“Little Pig little pig let me in.

No, no, no...Not by the hair of my chinny chin chin.”

This phrase entered their play, and it made me very curious about the internalisation of language and whether I could study the relationship of language input and further expression in the child’s play. At the same time, a colleague was sending me journals on Vygotsky and his theories of language and imagination. I was inspired by the concepts of self-regulation through imagination and rule-making in play. I could look at the phenomenon of the children, and experience some of his ideas in practice.

This was how this thesis began. Initially I wanted to do the research in a second-language environment, but I realised that transcribing each play session would be very difficult. I took a new kindergarten class, and decided to pursue my study in that environment. My greatest interest was whether one could observe the internalisation of language, offered in stories, in the children’s own play.

1.2. Problem statement

Dahlin (2013:19) critiqued poststructuralism to deem children as a simple assemblage of parts, where no stable individual identity, essence, “I” is involved. Development is now seen as the ability to do activities assumed for an age level, and have missed out on the inner processes which are occurring to get there. Vygotsky, and more modern research, has positioned that play is a developmental activity for the pre-school child. Yet pre-school environments are getting less oriented to play activities and more to those considered teacher-led play and fulfilling assessment boxes in literacy, maths

and life skills. Those teaching pre-school for decades have known how play involves all of these domains, yet teacher training is providing for separate activities, and according to one teacher I was assessing, “There is just no time for play anymore.” (teacher in training, April, 2019).

Dahlin (2013:17) recommended that we bring back some of the grand narratives of child development to support what we have inherited from Rousseau, the Romantics, and the educational thinkers that followed them. He was looking for the transcendent aspects of childhood which can easily be lost in the measuring and testing practices. Vygotsky grasped this as a unit of consciousness, which one can experience in the drama of life, called *perezhivanie*. As skills-based assessment learning encroaches the pre-school age, the need for research on the age-appropriate learning methods increases.

If stories are universal to all cultures, there must be some affinity between a story and the human brain development. Thus, an investigation into how the internalisation process occurs in participating and listening to stories, through watching the children’s play. The Waldorf classroom seemed idea, considering that they offered timeous periods each day for free imaginative play, an environment which supported it, and a full storytelling cycle.

1.3. The study

The study took place within a kindergarten class on a private farm school in Cape Town, South Africa. Waldorf schools are independent, and do not receive government funding as they follow their own curriculum. The classroom consisted of 18 children between the ages of 4.5 and 7 years old. A child remained in kindergarten for two years, before entering Class 1. Nine children were ages 4–5 years, and nine children 5–7 years. There were 7 boys and 11 girls. A child remained in the kindergarten for two years.

I had the role of both teacher and researcher. This had challenges and benefits. An obstacle was to capture the necessary events and dialogue while also holding the teacher role. This could also potentially affect objectivity on the phenomenon, and I

needed to reflect on my own activity as well. The benefits included the trust the children had in me, in order to reveal their own spontaneous play. The consistent time spent with them to be able to capture observations was a further benefit. The longitudinal span of a full year of research allowed me to recognise impacts of stories over time, which in a smaller time frame may have been lost. Also, my presence as the teacher meant that no extra person was in the classroom, which potentially could have changed behaviour and influenced the research.

1.4. Research questions

The research questions for this study were as follows:

1. How did the mediation of storytelling by the teacher influence the children's play in a Waldorf kindergarten?
2. How did the phenomenon of play lead to insight into the socio-cultural interpretation of internalisation, imagination, self-regulation, meaning making and identity?
3. How did the Waldorf environment influence the findings?

1.5. Research aims and objectives

The main aim of this study is to observe and document the storytelling input which is mediated by the teacher to the Waldorf kindergarten class. This includes:

- 1 The input of storytelling through the language, and what this delivers in terms of image and meaning making.
- 2 The input of storytelling through the structure of the activity, such as oral telling, picture books, puppetry and acting.
- 3 To observe, analyse and document the relationship between the storytelling mediation and the children's own free imaginary play.
- 4 To gain further insight into the nature of internalisation of language, as well as through gesture and imitation, in order to support future language programs for the pre-school age.

- 5 To undergo an analysis of a Waldorf kindergarten through the lens of socio-cultural theory. This includes the dialectical relationships which occur with the children, relating both socially and to mediating tools.

1.6. Significance and contribution to the study

Various researchers have attempted to link methods of imaginative teachings to Steiner and Vygotsky, such as that of Shank (2016), who looked at critical literacies within the model of both Egan, who is a Vygotskian, and Steiner. Yet no analysis has been done to analyse a Waldorf kindergarten through a socio-cultural lens. Also, the role of storytelling in the early childhood classroom has been investigated, but not in relationship to this model of presentation, nor to investigate the relationship between the storytelling and modelling play. Lastly, while internalisation has been discussed at length in terms of how Vygotsky and his predecessors viewed it, this study allowed for a long-term framework of examining it within a play-based classroom.

As Steiner's teachings can be complex to read, and some consider them as dated knowledge, the relevance of bringing these ideas into fresh language and perspectives has potential to mix with more recent findings in the area of neuroscience and early childhood literature. As self-regulation becomes an even greater issue among children of earlier ages, there is purpose in researching methods which can become practically executed in early childhood classrooms.

1.7. Organisation of the study

Chapter 1 introduces the subject of the study, providing information on the background and purpose of the study. It presents the research questions, aims, objectives and significance of the study.

Chapter 2 comprises the theoretical framework of socio-cultural analysis, based on the work of Lev Vygotsky. It covers his life, and how his own education influenced his understanding of the dialectical materialism within education and development. It also looks at the Peircian model of the third, which adds another dimension to the dialectical framework. Through Vygotsky's input, socio-cultural analysis brought forward theories

on development, mediation, private speech, internalisation, self-regulation, imagination and the zone of proximal development. It also examines Veresov's concept of dramatic collision in the nature of development, which play offers opportunity for.

Chapter 3 outlines how Vygotsky defined play, with regard to imagination, roles, and rules. It discusses Veresov's dramatic collision and *perezhivanie*. Lindqvist also put forward the idea of play worlds, and linked Vygotsky's *Psychology of Art* into the understanding of the dialectic relationship of language and aesthetics. Other theories of play are covered, such as those of Erikson, psychoanalytical, Piaget and Sutton-Smith. It presents the current research on play and reasons why play is diminishing in current curricula. The theories and practices behind the Waldorf schooling method, and kindergarten in particular, are covered in order to gain an understanding of where the research was located. This includes Steiner's view on development, his three-fold understanding of thinking, feeling and the will, the role of the teeth in the young child. Then storytelling is investigated as to the role for the young child, and an explanation of the Waldorf methodology of presenting. Egan's concept of the binaries for imagination are presented, and the role of language in image making is explored. This is then related to the newest findings in neurology, and how this circles back to what Luria and Vygotsky began in social construction of thought through language.

Chapter 4 presents the methodology of the study, which is an ethnographic socio-cultural discourse analysis. Socio-cultural discourse analysis is based on the theoretical work of Mercer (2004), with a focus on the social mode of thinking, as a tool for constructing knowledge. This is based on sociocultural theory, more particularly the Vygotskian concept of language as both a cultural and psychological tool (Mercer, 2004:137). The chapter outlines the methods of data collection in the classroom, and how the data was categorised, coded and interpreted. It discusses the ethics of the project, and discusses the three methods of observation, open ended focus interviews and document analysis of the children's drawings.

Chapter 5 presents the phenomena observed in the data. It starts with the classroom and garden set up, preparing the environment for the study. It looks at the rhythm as a model of breathing, and how this influences the daily schedule. Different aspects of

the daily rhythm involving language are discussed, such as the movement ring activity and transitions. How stories mediated in the ring time are based in nature, and how this impacted the children. Ring games are also discussed. It outlines the methods of presenting stories as the basis of the study, and a schedule for all the stories told during the year is given, with a quarterly review. The data from the interviews with the parents, and the document analysis of the drawings are also presented.

Chapter 6 discusses some of the major tenets of socio-cultural analysis, outlining three major categories which influenced my research. Firstly, that all learning can be seen as internalised social relationships. The second was that language was mediated by tools and symbols in the classroom. The third section applied Vygotsky's genetic theory, which postulated that the social becomes the individual, to the observation of classroom activities and the children's behaviour. The phenomenon of the classroom observation is now applied through the lens of the socio-cultural theory. The binaries presented through the stories, as well as in the ring time, are discussed. Tools as mediators are listed and analysed in terms of their role in language and play. This is then related back to higher mental development and *perezhivanie*. The role of rules in the children's play is discussed as well as the occurrence of the zones of proximal development.

Chapter 7 is the conclusion chapter where the data from the classroom, and the analysis through the socio-cultural theory are put together for lessons and understanding. Clarity of whether the research questions were answered is made, in terms of understanding internalisation and the relationship between storytelling and play of the children. An investigation into the role of imitation was made, which adds knowledge to Vygotsky's concept of zone of proximal development and social construction. The concept of private speech and internalisation is then reviewed in light of the research.

CHAPTER 2
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the relevant literature for the study, starting with Vygotsky's life and main theoretical input, involving his version of dialectical materialism within the social environment. It presents his theories of development, and how these are engaged in play and storytelling. Vygotsky was one of the first to coin the term 'self-regulation', which has now become one of the leading foci in understanding the behaviour and development of children emotionally and mentally. The theories of Vygotsky discussed include private speech, zone of proximal development, internalisation, imagination, meaning making and self-identity.

In Vygotsky's developmental, or genetic viewpoint, language has a pivotal role in the emergence of distinctly human forms of thinking and action in the child. The mind did not necessarily express logical frameworks, but rather engaged in a process of endowing experiences with meaning (Bruner, 1997:68). Mental development entailed the mastering of culturally embodied symbiotic structures. This involved not only language, but also a grasp of the cultural context in which that language was being used. Language and development are linked, and take place within a social environment.

2.1.1. Vygotsky's education and life

Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky (1896–1934) was a Russian psychologist from the town of Gomel, in today's Belarus, which was mostly Jewish in population (Kotik-Friedgut & Griedgut, 2008:17). His own father had helped the city to create a defence to the continuing pogroms, and fought for human rights in Russia for the Jewish people (ibid. 19).

Vygotsky was educated by his mother at home, which at that time involved the basic subjects of the Russian language, Russian and world history, literature, and mathematics, as well as fundamentals of classical education, Greek and Hebrew

language, as well as English, The Bible, Jewish history and culture (Kotik-Friedgut & Griedgut, 2008:20). His own education helped to lead him to his theoretical findings. In addition to his mother, he had a private tutor, who had been expelled from the University for protesting; which in itself showed the openness and tolerance of his parents' educational choices. This tutor placed strong value on a student attaining their own answers, using a model of probing with questions (ibid. 15). By asking questions, the student could find where they had omitted answers, and feel that they had come to this themselves.

Why examine Vygotsky's Jewishness and its role in forming his consciousness? Vygotsky's Jewishness was an integral part of his early life and identity. He embraced it wholeheartedly, absorbing Jewish language, history, philosophy, and culture, alongside those of Russia and of the world. (Kotik-Friedgut & Griedgut, 2008:15)

Their household was Jewish but within a cultural and historical rather than religious or national sense (Kotik-Friedgut & Griedgut, 2008:20). He looked upon the cycles of history as mirrored in his own time, with cultures holding the memory of the past as they created the future. He compared the contemporary situation of the Jewish people to that of the exodus from Egyptian slavery. The main battlefield, for him, was in the internal development of consciousness, demanding responsibility and action. "But, he does not take any part in organised revolutionary politics, viewing them as partisan; instead Vygotsky sought the universal" (Kotik-Friedgut & Griedgut, 2008:29).

Later in his life, he took great interest in the role of the Jewish people in Russian life, and especially the theatre. For him, the Jews had been given a role in society as a whole, and needed to find a general solution for the universal human condition. This was essential to the development of his own socio-cultural theory. Yet this aspect of his Jewish studies is widely unknown to many; even an entire issue of the Russian journal *Voprosy Psikhologii* celebrated the centennial of his birth, had no mention of his Jewish background in its 15 articles, despite elaborating on the importance of social and cultural origins in the formation of his personality (Kotik-Friedgut & Griedgut, 2008:16).

Vygotsky started his research career soon after the October Revolution of 1917, which impacted the trajectory of his career, and brought changes to all of Russian life

(Vasileva & Balyasnikova, 2019). The revolution inspired a new ideology based on science, supporting the newly established scientific research which was influential on the trajectory of child development. Limits were imposed on what scientists could claim in their research, according to a defined sense of right and wrong, and how phenomena could be examined and explained.

He concluded in his two papers, “Consciousness as a problem in the psychology of behaviour” (1925) and “The problem of consciousness” (1933), that the Hegelian–Marxist dialectic process showed knowledge of social and mental life not as a natural science, but of consciousness. This implied the possibility of a Marxist psychology (Elhammoumi, 2010:663). It was through this that psychology became a human science.

According to Elhammoumi (2010:662), when Vygotsky died on June 10, 1934, Marxist psychology suffered the loss of a great mind whose work opened avenues in the fields of psychological science. He died of tuberculosis aged 37 years. Yet he was also cast out of the communist party a full seven years earlier (Fu, 1997:15). After his death, his work had been denounced as reactionary bourgeois pseudoscience for sixty years.

Educational reform occurred in Russia and North America, in what was termed the “Vygotskian boom” at the end of the 1980s (Yasnitsky, 2010:4). Yet he was penalised by the communist party for his belief that despite similar learning environments, individual children could perform differently (Elhammoumi, 2010:662). This focus on the individual was not tolerated by an administration vouching for the sameness in all people and environments. Fu (1997:10) relates that he was not known for his Marxist ties in the West, then undergoing anti-communist sentiment. Yet in Russia this was disputed, where he was then considered a Marxist scholar.

2.1.2. Vygotsky’s death and legacy

Not only was Vygotsky considered a talented psychologist, he was also a gifted teacher, who fostered a generation of young scholars (Yasnitsky & Ferrari, 2008:119). Vygotsky collaborated with a number of like-minded researchers, both peers and students, the core of which was the Vygotskian Circle or the Big Three (Vasileva &

Byasnikova, 2019). This was himself, Lura and Leontiev. There was also the Big Five which consisted of the first generation of students of the first three: Zaporozhets, Bozhovich, Levina, Morozova and Slavina. All of them spent years working with Vygotsky and were influenced by his ideas. This cross pollination is often missed in considering Vygotsky as an autonomous, independent thinker (Vasileva & Balvasnikova, 2019).

His closest collaborators, Lura and Leontiev, and their own associates, conducted a wide range of psychological studies, focused on verbal thinking and the intellectual development of children. This also included the development of memory and attention, concept formation, educational psychology, artistic influences, human development pathology, neuropsychology and the ethno-cultural studies of minority groups (Yasnitsky & Ferrari, 2008:119). Although these foci were eclectic, Vygotsky provided a “highly ambitious theoretical and methodological framework” (Yasnitsky & Ferrari, 2008:119). According to Yasnitsky and Ferrari (2008:120), a complete analysis of the complex interrelations among the immediate students of Vygotsky and those who followed, still remains to be conducted.

Vygotsky challenged the behaviouristic thinking within the science of the day, primarily linked to Skinner. His inspiration came from the classroom observation of children from colliding cultures during the Russian Revolution. He accessed cultural nuances not seen in the monocultures of that time. He observed that a uniting aspect among all cultures was their use of tools to mediate communication and knowledge. These tools included signs, symbols, texts, formulas, art, graphics, and even objects (Kozulin, 2003:15). Vygotsky noted that the human mind was not an isolated organ or system, but socially constructed. The essence of human memory is with the help of signs.

Vygotsky (2016) in his seminal 1933 paper, “Play and its role in the mental development of the child”, proposed two fundamental questions:

1. How play arises within development, and
2. What is the role of play as a developmental activity?

This paper became a blueprint for his theories of play, developed further in the cultural-historical tradition (Bodrova & Leong, 2015:372).

2.1.3. Educational psychological research

Vygotsky articulated the importance of the societal context in education and that learning is a step ahead, introducing further development (Vasileva & Balyasnikova, 2019). While undergoing a challenging task, supported by the teacher and peers, a child developed and learned. The theories highlighted the importance of engagement and interaction, rather than a teacher simply relaying decontextualised knowledge. Communication for Vygotsky between individuals was in itself a communication of consciousness, where symbols from the mind of one culture could be comprehended by that of another (Vasileva & Balyasnikova, 2019). The human mind was constructed by active involvement in the environment which it developed, which has also been transferred into the field of neuroscience. A human mind, for Vygotsky, began with the cultural line of development, and the internalised human-specific cultural tools, which were often linguistic signs (Vasileva & Balyasnikova, 2019). For Vasileva and Balyasnikova (2019), his work took place a century ago and since then all science has made advancement. Yet despite the limitations or outdated aspects of his work, there was potential for incorporating his thinking into modern psychological research. For Vygotsky, a developing organism (a human being) could not be reduced either to biological or social environments, but needed a systemic approach to analyse both (Vasileva & Balyasnikova, 2019).

2.1.4. Dialectical materialism as a methodology

For Vygotsky (1978:65), to study something historically meant to examine it within a process of change. He was a fearless opponent of dogmatism, even in the Marxist psychology tradition (Elhammoumi, 2010:662). Vygotsky was determined not to be identified as a Soviet psychologist, but rather considered Marxism as a scientific approach, or methodology (Fu, 1997:10). Veresov (2010a:268) stated that although his Marxism was more than political lip service, he was happy to associate himself with historical materialism.

For Ratner and Silva (2017:2), he was one of the most important pioneers in Marxist psychology, as he utilised the essence of Marxism to “explore the intricacies of psychology as a distinctive order of reality. He informed psychology with Marxism without reducing psychology to Marxist politics or economics” (Ratner & Silva, 2017:2).

Vygotsky drew upon and critiqued numerous theories, solving contradictions by his explanation of psychological phenomena, thus bringing a new element to Marxism (Ratner & Silva, 2017:3). He attempted to create a methodological approach to investigate the human psyche (Mahn, 2012:102). The key to his approach was using the dialectical approach of Marx and Engels, but to analyse complex systems through their interconnections. This perspective was a shift away from children as solitary individuals developing in a vacuum, to individuals within the social milieu. “That is, people create their uniqueness precisely through participating in, contributing to, and co-authoring social practices, while in so doing, gaining their unique voice and identity” (Stetsenko & Ho, 2015:229). Appreciating both the unique and the social was seen as valid.

Vygotsky’s focus differed from Marx and Engels, who were fixated on the external structure of human society, of which individuals were only part (Fu, 1997:10). For him, the first form of intellectual activity was in active, practical thinking, directed towards reality (Elhammoumi, 2010:663). Elhammoumi (2010:663) suggested that Vygotsky desired emancipation from the cognitivist and semiotic heritage, which became socio-cultural theory. The purpose was to analyse the capacity for self-reflection to the extent of human potential. Methodology was not based on a mathematical formula, guiding towards rigid analysis. Instead, he digested it, in his words, ‘internalized’ it and transformed it into his own principle, which dominated his way of thinking and directly his study of human psychological development” (Fu, 1997: 10).

Vygotsky’s goal was to find a scientific explanation for the nature of higher psychological processes. He attempted to make visible processes which were normally hidden within habitual behaviour. The investigators themselves could create processes which could stimulate the actual course of development of a given function.

According to Toomela (2014:315), the way that Vygotskian socio-cultural-historical psychology has been interpreted today has deviated from his original ideas. This is ordinarily not a problem, as it is natural that theories alter owing to new evidence and conceptualisation of phenomena. According to Toomela (2014:315), in the case of cultural-historical psychology, however, contemporary modifications do not always rely on strong evidence or advanced theoretical thinking. There are strong reasons to suggest that Vygotsky's theory has been misinterpreted by contemporary mainstream scholars (e.g. Veresov, 2010a, 2010b; Mahn, 2012). The same can be said for Luria's neuropsychology (Toomela, 2014:315).

In 1978, Vygotsky was dubbed by Toulmin (1978) as the "Mozart of psychology", and Luria as the "Beethoven" (Yasnitsky, 2010:3). This was the same year that Vygotsky's *Mind and Society* (1978) was published. From this publication, the theory of the 'zone of proximal development' became one of his best-known concepts in psychology. Yet his original work has often been rewritten, modified, adjusted and lost in translation (Vasileva & Balyasnikova, 2019). According to Yasnitsky (2010:3), *Mind and Society* (1978) itself was not written by Vygotsky, but was rather a collection of fragments, based on his writings. Zavershneva (2010:64) reviewed personal notes written by Vygotsky, alongside *The Historical Meaning of the Crisis in Psychology* (1927), which was only translated into English in 1997. The notes show, among other things, how much was altered to fit the ongoing administration. While Vygotsky was very committed to the historical situation and society in which he lived, he also showed concerns about the social demands of this new Russia (Hyman, 2012:474).

Vygotsky wrote that the search for method has become one of the more important problems of understanding uniquely human forms of psychological activity. And that method is simultaneously a prerequisite and a product, the tool and the result of the study.

2.1.5. Peircian Third – the interpretant

West (2021:235) proposed a triad based on the semiotic model of Charles Peirce (1931-1958) as opposed to a Vygotskian/Jakobsonian binary system in the role of dialogic thought. Peirce was an American pragmatist and philosopher who viewed

mediating objects, such as people, events and things, to become the triad in the dialogical mediation (Raggatt, 2010:400). Peirce's concept of double consciousness could inform Vygotsky's double stimulation method by providing a clear rationale for the necessity of surprise in the struggle to address new versus old factors, and advocated spontaneity within a dialogic means of apprehending new information. This third component accounted for the transcendence from the social, where a more psychological aspect could influence the thinking (West, 2021:236).

West (2021:237) outlined that within the binary connection between sign and object, the character of the interpretant was not necessarily considered. She posited that there was a pivotal role in the third-ness within the theory of the mind, to include the participant. This was perhaps just pre-supposed, but somehow lost. Raggatt (2010:400-401) proposed that any account of the dialogical self must begin with the analysis of the self as a sign, or 'semiotic self', created by language and symbolic behaviour, and needing integration.

The dynamic nature of the interpreter accounts for the progression from 'I' as ego only, to 'I' as objective speaker, and later to 'I' as unconventional producer of the message (West, 2021:237). West asked whether this third-ness could be linked to the dramatic, social collision occurring in play (ibid. 237).

For the Peircian model, there was constantly a qualitative advancement in taking a perspective. Finding ultimate truth by perspectives, opinions, propositions, and never reaching a completion was an existing process. For West, this could have been a missing piece in how the social became the psychological, and where imagination fitted in (2021:237).

Peirce identified three phenomenological categories in Peirce's concept of thirdness (Raggatt, 2010:401):

1. Firstness involved the immediacy of sensations and feelings. These were purely qualitative, without regard for outside considerations.
2. Secondness implied the perception of something intruding, or an otherness, but not mediated by interpretation rather felt immediately.

3. Thirdness was the mental influence of one subject on another, relative to the third.

This model could allow for multiplicity of complex structures. Relationships between two of the sides led to a greater understanding of the third. Thirdness is expressed in the symbolic relationships that held between others and objects, relative to the person or subject (Raggatt, 2010: 402). For instance, an eagle is a bird, and can have various signs or symbols for it. That is representing secondness. But then, furthermore, that Eagle symbols could have different meanings, such as to a Native American tribe versus a generalised American citizen. For one person that Eagle could denote a tribal animal, as well as holding other meanings expressed through the symbol (Ragatt, 2010:402).

2.1.6. Luria and Vygotsky

Luria and Vygotsky first met in 1924 in St. Petersburg at the Second All-Russian Congress on Psychoneurology. This was a search for a 'new psychology' grounded in natural science as well as Marxist philosophy. At this time, behaviourism and the theory of conditioned responses was the dominant mode of thinking. Goldberg et al. (2016:2) describe that the proponents of this new science had just been in a scientific coup. Vygotsky and Luria later joined with Leontiev, and formed a working group called the Troika. They undertook a critical review of the state of Russia's and worldwide psychological movement, with the intention to create anew. They set a research agenda to approach human psychological processes (Goldberg et al., 2016). They formulated three lines of inquiry, which were phylogeny, ontogeny, and pathology.

Luria travelled to Uzbekistan, to study some of his most important contributions, validating Vygotsky's theories (Goldberg, et al., 2016:4). He dedicated his life to the development of what was termed 'neuropsychology'. He took Vygotsky's notions of language into studying speech development in localised brain pathology. He published two books, and was a major contributor to Russian neuropsychology (Goldberg et al., 2016:5).

2.2. Socio-cultural theory

The following section discusses Vygotsky and what became socio-cultural perspectives on development, mediation, private speech, internalisation, self-regulation, imagination and the zone of proximal development which comprise the essential theories.

2.2.1. What was development for Vygotsky?

For Vygotsky, the human mind was the product of both human history or phylogeny and a person's individual history or ontogeny (Bodrova & Leong, 2007:11). Development for Vygotsky was not simply a function to be determined entirely by X units of heredity and Y units of environment. Rather, it was a complex mixture of historical and cultural influences, which at any stage could reflect this past content. The human mind was not considered as mechanical, but rather qualitative.

Development in a socio-cultural context consisted of the transference of lower to higher functioning. Lower functions were considered as those faculties belonging to both animals and humans, such as sensations, representations, perceptions. Higher functions were specifically human, inclusive of abstract thinking, logical memory, and voluntary attention.

Vygotsky theorised that the origin of thinking was in shared language, within the social environment. Social change was individualised in psychological analysis, with the following essential factors (Vygotsky, 1978:65):

1. The analysis of process rather than object.
2. The analysis revealed real, causal or dynamic relationships, as opposed to the outer features acting as explanatory, rather than descriptive.
3. Developmental analysis which returned to the source and reconstructed the points of development of a given structure.

The result of development would be neither a purely psychological structure such as presented in descriptive psychology. Nor would it be a sum of elementary processes, but rather a new form which appeared in the process of development.

2.2.2. Early Relationships and development

Both Vygotsky and Elkonin understood that make-believe play reached its highest levels of development in the preschool child (Bodrova & Leong, 2007: 29). But these skills did not emerge overnight. Rather they began as infants, where they learn to imitate other people's actions and begin to communicate through gestures and vocalisations. This required forming emotional bonds, and mastering language, where infants then learn from adults as play mentors. Toddlers master simple acts out of daily rhythms and imitate the adults, and then these moves to creating play partners out of toys, dolls, pets and other objects. This is when adults and older children can move the children from being 'toy oriented' to 'people oriented'. Bodrova and Leong (2007:29) translate a quote by Daniel Elkonin (1978:178) writing, "A child starts with feeding herself with a spoon; then she uses the spoon to feed her doll; and finally feeds the doll pretending to be the 'mommy' who feeds her 'daughter'" (Bodrova & Leong, 2007: 29). At this stage the play is no longer about the spoon but the relationship between the mother and daughter.

2.2.3. Age-appropriate stages of development and private speech

Vygotsky classified the process of development in terms of the child's relationships with tools and other humans. It was important for his theory that age did not limit abilities, but rather social appropriation did. Yet he did outline various stages at which children could function in their abilities.

In the first year of life, a child was completely dependent on the adult, placing emotional communication as the leading activity in this time (Karpov, 2003:142). The infant's initial interest in language and the mobilisation of objects was considered a result of that relationship. "Infants become interested in the external world because it has been presented to them by loved adults" (Karpov, 2003:142).

The young child learned differently from the older child or adult, and their ways of making sense of the world relied strongly on play, imagination and exploration (Nicolopoulou, 2010:2). In the Vygotskian framework, not only could development impact learning, but vice versa, within a complex, non-linear relationship (Bodrova & Leong, 2007:13). This shared context implied conversation. Thus, language facilitated the shared experiences necessary for building cognitive processes (Bodrova & Leong, 2007:15).

Between the ages of 1 and 3 years, object-centred activity occurred, often accompanied by non-verbal communication, and evolving into speech (Karpov, 2003:144).

According to Karpov (2003:145), Luria discovered that children in the third year of life would self-regulate their activities by talking to themselves aloud during a problem-solving activity; even imitating the caregiver's voice. This egocentric speech was considered to be internalised and became non-vocal inner speech. This was the genesis of thoughts and learning tools for self-regulation. When speech and thinking merged, there came a special kind of speech, which Vygotsky called 'private speech' (Bodrova & Leong, 2007:68). It could be audible, but was directed to the self, and contained both information and self-regulatory commentary. The directions of the caregivers to regulate behaviour was appropriated and children talked to themselves while acting; sometimes even imitating the caregiver's voice (Karpov, 2003:145).

Around three years old was when object substitution occurred, and Vygotsky utilised the example of the stick becoming a horse, separating the meaning of the word horse from its use as a play object. Object substitution become a means for the child to separate their thoughts from the perceived objects and events, leading to the development of symbolic thought. This began, according to Karpov (2003:145) with imitation of their social relations in play. For Vygotsky, play was the leading activity for the preschool child, and crucial to their development (Karpov, 2003:146).

2.2.4. Mediation

A mediator for Vygotsky was something that stood as an intermediary between the environmental stimulus and an individual response to it (Bodrova & Leong, 2007:51). The role of the human mediator was, for Vygotsky, through the notion that each psychological function appeared twice in development. Firstly, in the form of actual interactions between people, and the second time as an inner internalised form of this function (Kozulin, 2003:19). Hasan (2002:114) used the term 'mediation' to refer to a process which was inherently transitive, thus requiring at least two participants. Semiotic mediation could be paraphrased as mediation of something by someone to someone else by means of the modality of language. For Kozulin (2003:19), there were many forms of mediation, beginning with the adult's own presence providing a secure learning environment.

The basis to this organising system was the engagement of external artefacts, namely, objects, symbols and signs, which had a history independent of their development within the cultural framework (Kotik-Friedgut & Ardila, 2014:380). This complex interaction of functions and external factors, which established connections within the brain system, was in principle universal. Yet different mediators and means, or else significant details within them, could have been developed in differing cultures. Kotik-Friedgut and Ardila (2014:380) gave the example of direction of reading or writing, or the degree of letter–sound correspondence, as how the deciphering of a mediator may carry a historical quality. Kozulin (2003:19) outlined that one of the central concerns of socio-cultural studies was to elucidate how the activities, which began as interaction between child and adult, become internalised as the child's own.

Hasan (2002:113) argued that Vygotsky attached a greater importance to language for mediation than other modalities, yet the term 'semiotic' referred to all modalities. Hasan (2002:113) discussed the varying roles of mediation, including:

someone who mediates, i.e.,

1. a mediator;
2. something that is mediated, i.e., a content/force/energy released by mediation;

3. someone/something subjected to mediation, i.e., the 'mediatee' to whom/which mediation makes some difference;
4. the circumstances for mediation;
 - * the means of mediation, i.e., modality;
 - * the location, i.e., site in which mediation might occur.

According to Hasan (2002:113) these complex semantic relations were not always evident, but submerged below the surface, and brought to life through assessing their systemic relations. These factors functioned in a particular time and space.

2.2.5. Internalisation

The concept of 'internalisation' was never fully explained by Vygotsky, and Bruner (1997: 68) termed this the *deus ex machina* (God out of the machine) in his system. This is because he never intended to explain the mediation between the external and internal as a logical process, but rather one where meaning was endowed from experience.

Mental development consists in mastering higher order, culturally embodied symbolic structures, each of which may incorporate or even displace what existed before, as with algebra absorbing and replacing arithmetic. These higher order systems are cultural products. (Bruner, 1997:68)

This internalisation was understood as how the child integrated social language from the outside world and reformulated it within. Through a process of 'internalisation', 'external' or 'social', speech is transformed from a directly impersonal, communicative means of regulating and directing the child's behaviour into 'inner speech', the medium of the child's own personal consciousness and will and of his or her capacity for purposeful and independent action (Jones, 2009:167).

Because private speech was silent, the ability to observe this was very difficult. Private speech was considered abbreviated and condensed, thus also termed 'egocentric', as it was only meant for the individual self (Bodrova & Leong, 2007:68). For Vygotsky, this egocentrism was not a deficiency of speech but rather an indicator of another function of speech at this age. Jones (2009:169) critiqued that Vygotsky's position

relied on certain assumptions. In theory, private speech must be adapted from external speech, which was created for the purpose of communicating to others. Since it was for the child only, it was freed from the demands of public comprehension. Jones (2009:169) stated that Vygotsky utilised pre-existing theories of language, rather than creating his own. For inner speech to be an instrument for self-regulation, it had to absorb the abstract conceptual content of the external speech by which the adult regulated the child's behaviour (Jones, 2009:170). For Jones, the relevance of this theory needed questioning.

Rohrkemper (1989:143) provided clarity on the emergence of self-directive inner speech, based on a framework of "emergent interactionism". Internalisation was not a replication or mere introjection, but rather a social, interactional form of mastering tools, symbols and language. Veresov (2004:45), in order to formulate concepts in relationship to play and learning, contended that a deeper investigation into the meanings of his genetic theory stipulated that the socially external world was internalised. This included the potential for how it affected play, imagination, and dramatic expression within the zone of proximal development.

2.2.6. Internalisation vs participation

For Hasan (2002:113), the most important aspect of language exchange in discourse was to enable the speaking subjects to internalise the world as they experienced it. Matusov (1998:331) contested Vygotsky's perception of internalisation, placing more relevance on Bhaktin's notion of participation. Matusov (1998:328) outlined how Vygotsky (1978:90) introduced internalisation in order to explain the mechanisms by which socially cultural functions became individual psychological tools. Matusov questioned, "How does the social become the individual?" (Matusov, 1998:331).

Rogoff (2008:65) used the term 'guided participation' for the interpersonal plane of socio-cultural analysis. This focused on the mutual involvement of individuals and those with whom they were socialising, communicating and coordinating involvement. It was these interpersonal engagements which involved participation of all players. His position was that both ends of the mediating continuum were social and individual, and could be viewed as forms of participation (Matusov, 1998:332). He reframed the

question to: “How does social-individual become individual-social?” (Matusov, 1998:332).

Matusov’s (1998:327) critique of the internalisation model was that he saw it as ethnocentric – giving privileges to the mastery of solo activity as the crux of human development rather than traditionally communal events which favoured participation. Although modern Western societies were grounded in both solo and joint activities, they placed societal value more on the individual’s mastery of solo activity than on the individual’s mastery of joint activity.

2.2.7. Vygotsky defined imagination

Vygotsky listed the types of associations between fantasy and reality which were central to his theory of imagination:

1. Everything which imagination created was always based on elements taken from reality and previous experience. This law governed the operation of the imagination.
2. The creative activity of the imagination depended directly on the richness and variety of a person’s previous experience which provided the material from which the fantasy was constructed (Vygotsky, 2004:15).
3. In terms of the final product of imagination, this consisted of transformed and reworked elements of reality and a large store of experience (Vygotsky, 2004:16). There was something new in these constructs of fantasy. For example, a fairy tale had aspects or elements, some corresponding to reality and others to fantasy. But together they created a final product of imagination.
4. A double mutual dependence existed between imagination and experience. Firstly, imagination was based on experience, but experience was also based on imagination. For instance, if I went swimming and first studied all the fish in that river, then this information and corresponding images would influence my swim. In the same way, by having swum in a river, my appreciation of learning about the fish would be enhanced, compared to never having been in that environment.

5. Imagination and reality corresponded with emotions. Every feeling sought specific images corresponding to it. Thus, emotions possessed a capacity to select impressions, thoughts and images which resonated with a mood of that moment (Vygotsky, 2004:18).
6. In the same way, images could create emotions.
7. All forms of creative imagination included affective elements (Vygotsky, 2004:18).

In analysing a fable or story, Vygotsky concluded that poetic fables used logical thought and moral substance only as a poetic device (Daemmrch, 1972: 565).

2.2.8. Vygotsky's theory of zone of proximal development (ZPD)

The zone of proximal development has been referred to as one of the most used and least understood constructs in educational literature (Palincsar, 1998:370). Yasnitsky (2010:4) stated this to be Vygotsky's most famous concept, yet far from central to his entire system of thought, only occupying a few dozen pages within six volumes of his works.

Vygotsky theorised that in the ZPD the novice acquires semiotic skills from the more developed other. This transference helped to regulate the children's behaviour (Karpov & Haywood, 1998:27). In this space, the young child became capable of more skills and thinking processes by means of working alongside someone more experienced.

Veresov (2004:43) highlighted two levels of development of mental functions in Vygotsky's analysis of the zone of proximal development.

1. The actual level, detected by the learning tasks the child can solve individually and independently.
2. The potential level, detectable by the tasks the child could solve, in cooperation with a teacher or more competent peer, with limited assistance.

Thus, the zone of proximal development became the distance between the two levels, actual and potential (Vygotsky, 1978:86). Proximal meant something which was close, near or beside; thus, measuring the minimal distance between the two levels of development (Veresov, 2004:43).

2.2.9. Play and the zone of proximal development – dramatic collision

Veresov (2004:43) consulted the original text (1935) by Vygotsky on zone of proximal development (ZPD). It is understood that Vygotsky focused more on the intellectual aspect of the skills transfer, such as a cognitive task in school. Thus, he questioned how ZPD applied to a preschool setting, which lacked formal learning tasks (Veresov, 2004: 45). Veresov found Vygotsky's own words were an indication that ZPD also applied to early childhood (Veresov, 2004:45).

Play creates a zone of proximal development of the child. In play, the child always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behaviour; in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself. As in the focus of a magnifying glass, play contains all developmental tendencies in a condensed form and is in itself a major source of development (Vygotsky, 2016:20).

Veresov (2004: 43) argued that proximal meant close, and thus the two states of being were always near each other. Thus the dramatic collision was the place where the growth occurred between the two levels. This dramatic collision, mentally and emotionally experiencing contradiction, is the form in which the relation between the child and social surroundings (social situation of development) exists (Veresov, 2004:46). This emotional collision occurring in dramatic experience was then re-experienced in a psychological way, such as in reflection. Such an emotionally experienced collision brought radical change to the individual's mind, making them able to reflect about their own behaviour. "Without internal drama, an internal category, such kind of mental changes are hardly possible" (Veresov, 2004:46). This led to the regulation of thoughts and actions. The fact that Vygotsky referenced the ZPD within play gave Veresov an indication that ZPD did indeed occur within a preschool environment.

2.2.10. Critiques

A common criticism is that Vygotsky placed too much emphasis on the role of speech in cognitive development, not adequately exploring other types of symbolic representations (Bodrova & Leong, 2007:35). There was criticism, especially in Soviet psychology discussions, that Vygotsky placed too distinct a separation between lower and higher psychological processes. Also, that he considered lower processes as 'natural' and 'passive' (Van der Veer & Van Ijzendoorn, 1985:1).

Another critical analysis was that Vygotsky himself, as well as his followers, placed too much emphasis on the role of social interaction with the child, at the expense of understanding the impact of biological factors such as heredity and maturation (Bodrova & Leong, 2007:35). There was concern that he over-focused on others in the shared activity and not enough on the child who had to learn to be an active participant.

It could be that some of the misunderstandings actually came from translations and editing, as he lived at a time where information was very political. Translations of his works have been a de-contextualised aggregation of texts, which underwent a complex history of publications in the original Russian language (Vasileva & Balyasnikova, 2019). According to Van der Veer & Yasnitsky (2016) cited in Vasileva & Balyasnikova (2019), a complete and accurate bibliography of his work is yet to be compiled, as existing ones often have significant limitations. His texts themselves were not written fully at times, consisting only of roughly written notes (Vasileva & Balyasnikova, 2019). A significant portion of his work has not even been published at all, with archival work only becoming accessible recently (Zavershneva, 2010:61).

CHAPTER 3
LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Introduction

This literature review outlines Vygotsky's own definitions of play, with regard to imagination, roles, and rules. It then discusses Veresov's dramatic collision, in terms of the opportunity for development. This is then related to Vygotsky's term *perezhivanie*, deriving from Russian theatre and attempting to understand the dramatic moment or experience. Lindqvist also put forward the idea of play worlds, and pointed to Vygotsky's *Psychology of Art* into the understanding aesthetics within the dialectic relationship. Other theories of play are covered, such as those of Erikson, Piaget and Sutton-Smith. The theories and practices behind the Waldorf schooling method, and kindergarten in particular are covered, in order to gain more understanding of where the research was located. This includes Steiner's view on development, his three-fold understanding of thinking, feeling and the will, and the role of the teeth in the young child. Then storytelling is investigated as to the role for the young child, and an explanation of the Waldorf methodology of presenting. Egan's concept of the binaries for imagination are presented, and the role of language in image-making is explored. This is then related to the newest findings in neurology, and how this circles back to what Luria and Vygotsky began in the social construction of thought through language.

3.2. Vygotsky defined play

The next section discusses theories of play, as well as specifically how Vygotsky defined it.

Vygotsky outlined dramatic play as having three components, which differentiated it from other activities:

1. Children created an imaginary situation.
2. Children took on roles and acted them.
3. These roles required a set of rules to play them. These rules emerged out of the play itself (Vygotsky, 2016:8).

Each of the three components of play: imagining situations, playing roles, and following internal rules, had a valuable function in forming the children's mental capacity towards abstract and symbolic thinking. In turn, this influenced their ability to act internally and control behaviours. The children began to withhold instant gratification, such as playing other games, in exchange for existing imaginary experiences (Bodrova, 2008:361). Every advance from one age level to another was connected with an abrupt change in motives and incentives to act (Vygotsky, 2016:7).

Vygotsky believed that many accepted educational theories disregarded children's needs: from their inclinations, to interests and motives for action. For the small child, these needs and incentives arose and were spontaneously expressed in play. For a younger child, these desires had to be satisfied immediately, but as children grew older, the imagination contained in play allowed them to delay this gratification (Vygotsky, 2016:8). This was essential to the development of the concept of self-regulation.

3.2.1. First definition of play: children create imaginary situations

Imagination was considered a new consciousness arising in the early preschool child, which was not present in the very young child, and was absent in animals. He did not believe that imagination was innate and relatively stable, but rather in a state of continual process (Gajdamaschko, 2006:34). Critical to imagination was the role of culture and history in the child's development of the personality, alongside the biological brain development. Therefore, Vygotsky noted that the incentive leading a child to play was not symbolisation to begin with, but the desire for an imaginative situation. Imagination did not develop all at once, but slowly and gradually, and from simple to complex forms (Gajdamaschko, 2006:36). For Vygotsky, imagination was not an antithesis of memory, but rather supported its development. The adult's own and others' experiences support the imaginative process for the child (Lindqvist, 1995:46).

Vygotsky (2004:7) proposed that any human act which gave rise to something new was referred to as a creative act. This was regardless of whether that was a physical object or a mental or emotional construct. He considered imagination and thinking

processes as forming a special unity that helped the child to make sense of the world (Gajdamaschko, 2006:37).

Imagination described a circle, taking fragments of reality and transforming them, where the new fragments re-entered reality. Therefore, imagination was both emotional and intellectual, supporting the development of creativity (Lindqvist, 1995:46). Vygotsky cautioned against an over-intellectual approach to viewing play. He contended that if play was considered only for its symbolic purpose, it would be likened to algebra in action, and this was a misunderstanding (Vygotsky, 2016:9).

An action within an imaginary situation released the child from situational coherence, where not only did he or she learn from direct perception of a situation, but also gained from the meaning behind it (Veresov & Kulikovskaya, 2015:570). In order to influence the child's imagination, it first needed to be expanded, through experience and language (Lindqvist, 1995:46). Emotions and reality were so closely linked, and the images of imagination provided the emotions with an internal language.

3.2.2. Second definition of play: children create roles

Play was understood to develop self-regulation, in the inherent relationship between the roles the children played and the rules they adhere to within the game (Bodrova et al., 2013:113). Dramatic play from a socio-cultural perspective is seen to help children overcome their own 'cognitive egocentrism', and build upon empathy for others. Playing different characters also allows them to put themselves in the position of others, viewing events or experiences from another's perspective.

Play requires the child's ability to transform objects and actions symbolically, which lays the foundation for future academic skills such as reading comprehension, use of mathematical symbols, and abstract thought. The private speech which is used in pretend play is seen to affect the regulation of behaviour, eventually transforming into self-regulation through internal thought (Bergen, 2002:2).

Children bring their abilities for forming relationships from earlier experiences into the play. Those who carry an internal working model and coping strategy where they have

experienced negative intentions, will be more likely to attribute the same to another in play (Schousboe, 2013:23). Within play, children encounter conflicts which emotionally can challenge them, both within the storyline being played, as well as in social relationships.

Children, from a socio-cultural perspective, are constantly mediating each other in the act of play. This is seen as experiencing each other's point of view, as well as that of the imaginary characters (Karpov, 2003:147). Because socio-dramatic play utilises substitutes, such as objects that stand for other objects, this is seen as leading towards the development of symbolic thought. As play becomes more mature, there is an extension of planning time, resulting in shortened versions of the play. For instance, a younger child pretending to feed a baby, will take great care not to miss a step. Whereas an older child will conduct some symbolic gestures, and proceed to the next episode. Imagination has become more complex (Bodrova et al., 2013:113).

3.2.3. Third definition of play: children create rules

Nicolopoulou, Barbosa de Sa, Ilgaz and Brockmeyer (2009:44) stated that what was most illuminating in Vygotsky's characterisation of play was elements which previously were considered contradictory were fused. This included imagination and spontaneity, with rule-governed action. For Vygotsky (2016:10), play contained rules, both implicit and explicit, which determined the imaginary play situation. These were rules which set limits on the child who performed the roles, and supported the child's development of self-regulation of their own and other's behaviour. An imaginary situation was already laden with rules, as play and reality collided.

An example of implicit rules is if a child played a game where she was a mother with a doll; she would adhere to unwritten laws of being the mother. In this, she was relinquishing desires she might have to perform this role; only actions which reflect the rules of the characters will be acceptable. The rules were not spoken, but implied. This could also spontaneously involve imitation, which would dictate the activity of the child in the pretending role. These rules the children imposed on themselves rather than receiving them from others. Thus, the rules of self-constraint became those of self-determination (Nicolopoulou et. al., 2009:44).

Just as an imaginary situation contained rules in a concealed form, so was the reverse – that every game with rules contained some imaginary situation (Vygotsky, 2016:10). Yet according to Vygotsky, the rules of play differed from the rules that a child learned in life, such as sitting quietly at the table.

Piaget and Vygotsky differed in their analysis of the role of rules within play. For Vygotsky, every play world was guided by rules and imagined situations, and the question is how much those rules dominated (Winther-Lindqvist, 2013:30). In pretend play, the imagination dominated and rules were implicit. As the child grew older, games with rules became more explicit, and the imagination was subordinate. Many curriculum compilers have based assessments on play as rule based, more reflective of this later development.

Piaget saw this as two different activities, play and games with rules, whereas Vygotsky viewed it as two versions of the same phenomenon (Winther-Lindqvist, 2013:33). In the socio-cultural understanding of play and rules, they were the norms and implicit contracts for how to interact in an activity. These norms could be followed, violated, reworked and challenged, as in reality.

3.3. Dialectic in play

The roleplay of a child supported the experience of taking on other perspectives through the roles played. Kravtsov and Krsavtsova (2010) cited in Fler (2013:75), discussed how children took a dual role in play, both within and outside the play. They could achieve enjoyment in playing, while also pretending to be a patient in hospital, in pain or crying. This contributed to the child's ability to master their experience and self-regulate (Fler, 2013:76). Children could overcome unpleasant hinderances and emotional experiences when given the opportunity to work collectively with topics of serious emotional importance (Schousboe, 2013:26). The contradiction between imagination and reality created a movement allowing the consciousness of concepts to be experienced and potentially contemplated by young children (Fler, 2013:82).

Children gave new meaning to objects through play; changing the purpose of an object, and moving away from reality. When they did this together with others, there was a

collective imagining occurring (Fleer, 2013:77). In role play, children moved closer to reality in their exploration of rules of everyday life. For example, a mother, or bus driver, has a complex set of rules governing his or her behaviour (Fleer, 2013:77). These two movements, where they became closer to reality through imitation and role play, and further away by object substitution, allowed for both collective and individual imagination – the child as an individual, while simultaneously playing the roles of his/her society. Therefore, play contributed to a dialectical relationship between collective and individual imagining (Fleer, 2013:77). This dual or dialectical relationship in the play became essential to development. For Vygotsky, there was not an opposition between imagination and reality, but a dialectic. For Lindqvist's interpretation of Vygotsky, the dialectic theory was a materialistic one: the external, human activity reflected in their internal consciousness (Lindqvist, 1995:44). Therefore, in order to influence the child's imagination, it must be first expanded (Lindqvist, 1995:46).

Kravtsova and Kravtsova also noted this “second expression” with the focus on the child's dual positioning or double subjectivity in their play (cited in March & Fleer, 2016:73). They explain that children occupy two positions simultaneously. They are both in the fantasy situation and the visual field, flickering tension between the two. This is how Vygotsky described the imaginary situation (March & Fleer, 2016:73). Both feeling and thinking came to the fore as the child experienced the emotions and actions of the fairy tale characters in relationship to this *soperezhivanie*, or co-experiencing.

3.4. Perezhivanie and the dramatic aspect of play

The concept of *perezhivanie* was discussed by Vygotsky in his early work, *The Psychology of Art*, completed in 1925 but translated and published only later (1971). This work was the product of his research between 1910 and 1922 (Lima, 1995:490). Vygotsky described the individual way children internalised their environment through the metaphor of a prism (Hammer, 2017:72). Although children could share the same experiences, all had their own individuality in internalising them. This was likened to the refraction on the angles of a prism; the child absorbed the environment in a unique way, building on memories, emotions and thinking, and experienced it accordingly

(Hammer, 2017:72). Originally a Russian word, *perezhivanie* has numerous interpretations, both in Russian and English.

Perezhivanie was an attempt to quantify consciousness into a unit which defined the unification of emotion and thought (Meshcheryakov, 2016:32). The dialectical method prompted Vygotsky to critique aesthetics and psychology, revealing the internal contradictions in existing theories and procedures, and confronting the idealist and empiricist approaches (Lima, 1995:491).

Dewey (1939) promoted the English interpretation of *perezhivanie* as “having an experience” directed at the experience of activities (Ferholt & Nilsson, 2016:297). It related to what humans do and suffer, strive for, believe and endure. The action of a subject had its own plot and rhythm, or personality. In Russian, the word was more expressive of the emotional–personal content of consciousness. Vygotsky interpreted it as the connecting link between internal peace of mind, and the reality which surrounded it (Meshcheryakov, 2016:32). A common Russian explanation of the word is ‘a unit of personality’ and Vygotsky saw it as a process of ‘aesthetic creation’ (Meshcheryakov, 2016:34).

The typical translation of *perez* was experience, or more specifically, emotional experience (Blunden, 2015). The word derived from the verb *perezhivat*. *Zhivat* meant ‘to live’ and *pere*, to carry over something, or let something pass underneath it. So *perezhivat* could actually be defined as being able to survive after a disaster. This could also be linked to the act of development itself. Often it was considered from the perspective of an adult state, having moved through childhood and through conflicts, and therefore finding one’s personal ability to achieve harmony or completion (Blunden, 2015).

Critiques of Vygotsky and his followers understood *perezhivanie* as primarily an intellectual process, where the subject was able to comprehend their own social system. This is contrary to Vygotsky’s idea, where first the subject had a sense of wholeness, and this determined their development and response to a situation. As an adult this would become mature, including a depth of personal understanding of

experience. When younger it would be less analysed, a purely subjective experience (Blunden, 2015).

3.5. Lindqvist and the aesthetics of play

Lindqvist (1995:35) argued that aesthetic qualities such as artistic, cultural and social structures were reflected in consciousness (Lindqvist, 1995:40). Her focus was on drama pedagogy; drama having roots in play. The dramatic instruments of tension, contrast, symbols, rituals and rhythm were important both to role play and drama. She recognised from Vygotsky's theories that humans were always in a dialectical relationship between themselves and their environment. The child developed concepts of the world through a process which was reproductive and creative, or interpretive. This is considered the dialectical theory or influence in pedagogy (Lindqvist, 1995:40).

Play was based on the young child's poetic, rhythmic approach to objects and language. From an aesthetic view, these forms were regarded as part of a lyrical and musical pattern. Basic elements such as sound, movement and rhythm affected a person throughout life (Lindqvist, 1995:136). Play tended to follow a similar structure to drama, having an introduction, escalation, climax, descent and crisis. The dramatic situation was play in the making, where the actors played characters for an audience. The oscillation between the players and spectators made for the drama; the subjective and objective united. There was seen to be a continual dialogue, resulting in a transformative experience (March & Fleer, 2016:70).

3.5.1. Play worlds

Lindqvist developed the concept of play worlds, which was an educational practice which included adult-child dramatisation of texts from children's literature. Through involving children in joint play, the idea was to interpret and dramatise the themes (Lindqvist, 1995: 70). The pedagogy of play worlds was framed through telling or reading of the story, where the children and teacher worked together to play the narrative. The notion of play worlds could support significantly the understanding of the dramatising of stories.

Fleer (2020:38) outlined six aspects underpinning Lindqvist's study of play and culture in preschools, and how play worlds differed. They were:

1. Lindqvist (1995:37) argued that in role play, all are free to make their own interpretations, whereas in drama everyone participated in a common fiction. Thus, play worlds differed from free play owing to a defined plot and dramatic narrative.
2. In play worlds, the adult takes an active role within the children's play. Nilsson and Ferholt (2014:942) concluded that play worlds increased the ability of the teacher to listen to the children, thus increasing the narrative competence of the children.
3. Fleer (2020:39) wrote that the use of drama pedagogy to inspire children's play was rarely discussed in early childhood education literature. Lindqvist (1995:38) suggested an expansion of drama pedagogy into play, rather than an over-reliance on psychology, thus developing an aesthetic play pedagogy as unique to the play worlds.
4. While Lindqvist (1995:4) expressed concerns about the overemphasis on psychological understandings of play and children, she did explain that consciousness was the key concept and principle of individual development. Thus, she advocated for a cultural perspective on play uniting art, culture and social processes. The assumption is that play actions act as the window into a child's imagination, and this gives insights into the cultural development of the child in becoming conscious of the world (Fleer, 2020:39).
5. According to Lindqvist (1995:4), play did not divide emotion, thought and will but rather united them. It was through the interplay of emotion and intellect where imagination arose; which she substantiated through Vygotsky's *Psychology of Art* (1971).
6. In play worlds, the dialectics between the world of the child and adult created a contradiction, which acted as a productive force of development. Children, while seeking to reproduce their world in play, end up producing their own version and scripts, thus coming to understand the roles in society in which they live (Fleer, 2020:40).

3.6. Other theories of play

Göncü, Pratt and Kouba (2002:418) defined pretend play as a pleasurable and intrinsically motivated activity in which participants transform the meaning of objects, identities, situations and time. Yet they stated that developmental psychology has been ambivalent in embracing the study of children's pretend play, and yet publications on pretend play since 1983 have revealed enormous research directed that way. The prior work of Göncü (1987 cited in Fleer, 2009:283) coined the term 'free flow play', which could also be thought of as imaginative, free, fantasy, or pretend play. This is in contrast with more structured forms of play such as guided play, games, practice or directed exploration. Beardsley and Harnett (1998), as noted by Fleer (2009:283), used terms such as pretend play, role play, fantasy or imaginative play, as well as dramatic or socio-dramatic play.

Play is considered a multidimensional construct with many potential meanings across time, culture and contexts (Fisher et al., 2008:306). A diverse range of behaviour can be considered play, from individual play to group games, which makes it difficult to articulate an all-encompassing definition. Cognitive theories of play such as those of Piaget (1962) or Smilansky (1968), or social theories of Parten (1932/33) were more prevalent in Europe than in Russia, than theories of Vygotsky (Fleer, 2009:306). The development of play theory occurred concurrently with other developments in education.

3.6.1. Psychoanalytical theories

Psychoanalytical theories of play, based on Freud and his colleagues, supported healing of emotional problems, leading to the emergence of play therapy (Fleer, 2009:283). Freud saw play as wish fulfilment, which assisted children in mastering their fears and anxieties (Berk, Mann & Ogan, 2006:75). He maintained that our feelings, emotions and experiences create behaviour, and these influence children's play. He argued that in playing, the child uses objects to recreate both pleasurable and unpleasant experiences from the real world. The child seeks equilibrium and pleasure by determining their own play to gain a sense of mastery over events that in life they

may have very little control over. He regarded play as the pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain.

3.6.2. Erikson

Erikson based his theories on Freud's psychoanalysis: the social aspects which influenced human development were more significant in shaping a person's identity. He argued that children's play was much more than the sum of its functional parts (Hoffman & Miller, intro to Erikson, 2019:254). In varying stages, a child found a sense of regulation as a result of the interplay between the inner voice, physiological and emotional urges of the individual, and the nature of surrounding social influences (Batra, 2013:250). In varying stages of development, children learned to grapple with new instincts and means of comprehending themselves and others, supporting a sense of identity and regulation.

Two years prior to publishing his most famous work, *Childhood in Society*, where he first developed these psychosocial stages within development, he wrote a brief essay, "The meaning of play" (1948) (Erikson et al., 2019:253). In this, he explored the nuances of children's play and how play related to psychological and physical aspects of development. Although he had a long-standing interest in play, this went relatively unnoticed compared with his other work. Trained as a psychoanalyst and working in child welfare in California, he had ample opportunity to observe children's play, and considered it a functional tool for understanding children's thoughts and emotions. He regarded it not only as symbolic and meaningful, but also diagnostically helpful, like a window into the child's psyche, for it lacked the mendacity that words often contained (Erikson et al., 2019:254). In his obituary, the following was quoted:

You see a child play, and it is so close to seeing an artist paint, for in play a child says things without uttering a word. You can see how he solves his problems. You can see what's wrong. Young children, especially, have enormous creativity, and whatever is in them rises to the surface in free play (*New York Times*, 1994, in Erikson et al., 2019:262).

For Erikson, the third stage of his psychosocial model of development, 3–5 years old, was related to the internal grappling between initiative versus guilt. This was a time when children interacted with their peers and engaged in pretend and social play. Where Freud had viewed play as equivalent of adult fantasy, Erikson believed that children used play for more than expression and enjoyment, but also to work through conflicts and find potential solutions (Hoffman & Miller, in Erikson et al., 2019: 262).

3.6.3. Piaget

Closely after Erikson, the cognitive development theories of Piaget (1962) and Vygotsky (2016, originally published in 1933) emerged, emphasising play as a cognitive, voluntary activity which contributed to development, cognitive and creative thought (Erikson et al., 2019:262).

Piaget saw play as the means of the preschool child to practise and solidify symbolic schemes. Central to his theory of intellectual development were the complementary processes of assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation was likened to a digestive process, where the world was made part of the organism, or child. In a similar way, information was also internalised. Play occurred when what was already known through assimilation predominated (Berk et al., 2006:78). Accommodation occurred when the child adapted to the external world. Piaget theorised that both processes allowed the child to be in equilibrium, helping the child adjust to new environments and information. This was seen as fundamental to the development of intelligence and adaption.

Sutton-Smith (2008:98) critiqued Piaget's theories of play in his 1966 article in *Psychological Review* entitled "Piaget on Play: A Critique". He positioned that Piaget's writings were a distraction from a focus on play itself, as an existential, separately motivated reality, rather than just in terms of its' role in cognitive development.

The most unfortunate consequence of Piaget's rationalisation of children's imagination was that it served to make the imaginative function and the play function become confused in much modern, rationalistic, pro childhood thought about play (Sutton-Smith, 2008:98).

Sutton-Smith (1966:104) argued that Piaget's concepts of assimilation and accommodation derived from his original studies of lower organisms such as molluscs. He believed that what applied to them could also be transferred to the higher organism, leading to his notions of adaptive intelligence, imitation and play. These were formulated as particular types of relationships between accommodation and assimilation. When the accommodation of external reality was dominant over assimilation, there existed imitation. When assimilation of the external reality to pre-existing concepts occurred, this constituted play.

For Piaget, imitation and play were polarised examples of activity of intelligence (Sutton-Smith, 1966:105). This is very different from what has been observed and theorised by Vygotsky as well as others, that imitation and play are linked in activity and not opposed.

Both Feuerstein (1980) and Vygotsky (1986) developed their theories under the influence of Piaget, who was called the 'father' of cognitive developmental psychology, yet both were dissatisfied with aspects of his approach (Presseisen & Kozulin, 1992:6).

Gaskins and Göncü (1978:104) outlined that Piaget and Vygotsky had differing perspectives of focus and views on the role of symbolic play. Piaget's concern was the origins of symbolic play, which included the step-by-step progression of how the child uses a symbol and what place play holds in their structuring. Vygotsky focused on specific characteristics of play, which influences the development of thinking. They presented a chart which outlined the differences between the two theorists on these issues.

Both Piaget and Vygotsky recognised a new ability in the child occurring at the onset of symbolic play, which allowed a separation of mental contexts from the object or symbol. Yet Vygotsky believed this separation of the field of vision and meaning was necessary but not sufficient in explaining symbolic play (Gaskins & Göncü, 1978:104).

Table 3.1 gives a comparison of Piaget and Vygotsky on critical issues of symbolic play (Gaskins & Göncü, 1978:104).

Table 3.1: Comparison of Piaget and Vygotsky on ideas of symbolic play

Perspectives	Piaget	Vygotsky
Origins of symbolic play	Change to representational assimilation due to the development of symbolic function.	Need for imaginary situation due to unrealisable tendencies and desires.
Developmental outcomes of symbolic play	Temporary mechanism for consolidation of schemas; action-based support for not-yet independent mental representations.	Zone of proximal development; separates meaning from objects and actions.
Functions of symbolic play	Consolidation, but also the pleasure of mastery, recapturing and reconstituting experience.	Generalised tension reduction and wish fulfilment; developmental.

3.6.4. Fröbel and free play

The term 'free play' is associated with the German pedagogue Friedrich Fröbel (1782–1852), who opened a Play and Occupation Institution, on which many kindergartens were based (Lindqvist, 1995:24). Children's play was one of his central tenets, and even the word kindergarten is fashioned from his perspective of children and nature. He considered play as the highest stage of a child's development at this time, allowing for an active representative to their inner world (Fröbel, 1885:30). Fröbel recommended that nature and surroundings should be brought to children clearly and purely. Play and speech formed the element where the child lived, imparting capacities for life. He asserted: "Play is the purest, most spiritual activity of man at this stage and at the same time, typical of human life as a whole – of the inner hidden natural life in man and all things" (Fröbel, 1885:31). For Fröbel, play had great significance, representing the budding of what the child would experience in the future.

3.6.5. Brian Sutton-Smith and playfulness of language

Sutton-Smith emphasised that play could be both pleasurable and scary, and create as well as destroy social order. Over a long period of research, starting in the 1940s, he studied the relationship between children's play and the use of teasing, racy rhymes, and cruel jokes. These were all considered a form of play, and eventually developed into emotional regulation (Sutton-Smith, 2008:91).

Sutton-Smith stated that play began as a child's training in social duplicities; a dualism in human thought between responses to danger and uncontrollable emotions which affect the amygdala of the brain. Play supported the transcendence of life's distresses and boredoms, and was filled with dualities for Sutton-Smith (2008:118). It allows the individual or group to substitute their own enjoyable fun for other representations of reality in order to feel that life is worth living. He reflects on the work of Greta Fein (1995), when he suggests that play creates shared subjective worlds, where ordinary social rules about people in life can be violated, where the players can enjoy these deviations (Sutton-Smith, 2008: 118)

For him, the act of teasing offered strategies for children to struggle with the dangers of society, experienced by and between parents and children. He reflected that teasing his own children was just fun, until he realised it was also a form of socialising, and even developing them cognitively (Sutton-Smith, 2008: 110). Sutton-Smith, reflecting in 2008 on the development of technology and media stimulation in children's lives, where they provide some socialisation but mostly focus on highly cognitive learning. Yet in a civilisation which invests so much on entertainment, children have lessened ability to playfully join or lead their own entertainment or others. Children's own private pretending counteracts these subjective drives with their own autonomous energy (Sutton-Smith, 2008:119).

3.7. Research on play

According to Göncü, Pratt and Kouba (2002:419) most of the studies on the development of social pretend play utilise a combination of Parten's (1932) categories of social participation, and Smilansky's (1968) categories for cognitive play. Both of these researchers revealed that preschool children spend a good deal of their play time in cooperative dramatic play. There have been attempts to understand the emergence of cooperation in social pretend play, and to explain inconsistencies in results on solitary and parallel play (Göncü, Pratt, & Kouba, 2002:419). Research has also been devoted to understanding how children make transitions to and from social pretend play and how they maintain it.

Bodrova et. al. (2013:115) noted both Vygotsky and Elkonin's standards of what constituted mature play. As play advances, the need for substitution becomes less, as children replaced objects with gestures or words. Even the ability to take on roles, engaging in specific actions, speech and interactions which fit that character, required a certain level of maturity. The mature play is characterised as producing high quality scenarios which integrates many themes and can span several days or even weeks (Bodrova et. al. 2013:116). If the level of maturity is not reached, then play has been considered not to fulfil the level of development which Vygotsky outlined. Bodrova et. al. (2013: 117) stated that 7 year olds in the time of their research no longer exhibited the same self-regulation levels, and were more similar to 5 year olds in the 1940's.

In today's classrooms, even an hour or two of uninterrupted play has become a rarity, and many of the activities that teachers considered to be 'play' were actually teacher-directed activities (Miller & Almon, 2009:18). A report by the Alliance for Childhood on the situation of play in the US states:

Too few Americans are aware of the radical changes in kindergarten practice in the last ten to twenty years. Children now spend far more time being instructed and tested in literacy and math than they do learning through play and exploration, exercising their bodies, and using their imaginations. Many kindergartens use highly prescriptive curricula linked to standardised tests. An increasing number of teachers must follow scripts from which they may not deviate. (Miller & Almon, 2009:15)

Examination of the effects of academically oriented programmes in kindergarten revealed that they do not necessarily guarantee future academic success, especially in the long term, and actually may exacerbate children's problems in the social and emotional realms (Bodrova, 2008:358). Socio-dramatic play requires the skills of good intervention, interactions and flexibility, which potentially contribute to skills needed for school. With this single-minded academic focus, the emphasis on didactic, content-based approaches comes at the expense of more child-centred, play-oriented, and constructivist approaches (Nicolopoulou, 2010:1). Achievements in academic realms can replace those in self-reliance, problem solving and spatial thinking (Curwood, 2007:30). Curwood gives the example of when the block area is replaced by a maths centre, where similar lessons can be learned, but in more fun ways for the children. These more enjoyable approaches are then dismissed as obsolete or crowded out by

other priorities (Nicolopoulou, 2010:1). Nicolopoulou (2010:1) reported the same tendencies transforming pre-kindergarten preschools as well. The risk is that by the time children enter school, they are already burned out by third grade (Curwood, 2007:30).

There has been a great deal of research over many decades on play, showing links between creative play, with language, physical, cognitive and social development (Almon, 2004:87). According to a study by Smilansky (1968, cited in Almon, 2004:87), children showed a greater capacity for social make-believe correlated with a greater imagination and less aggression, greater ability to express themselves through language, and understand others.

Smilansky's study (1968) found that disadvantaged children played fewer socio-dramatic, thematic and fantasy games, which limited them in the future. There was reduced creativity expressed through skills in the school years, as this required imagination (Almon & Miller, 2011:3). According to Barblett, Knaus and Barrat-Pugh, while there has been considerable literature on play-based learning, a limited emphasis has been on educators' views of play and its current state (Barblett et al., 2016:37).

A longitudinal study of three types of kindergarten curricula (one academic and skills-based, the other two play-based) revealed that high-risk children participating in the direct instruction programmes had a greater need later for special education. Research into their lives later, as 23-year-olds, showed more arrests for more felonies, emotional and marriage problems, and less likelihood of engaging in volunteer work (Almon & Miller, 2011:3).

Lessons were learned in the 1970s in Germany. A longitudinal study comparing 50 play-based classes with 50 cognitive early learning centres, found that by age 10 the children who had played in preschool excelled over the others in various categories. They were more advanced in reading and mathematics, as well as being better adjusted emotionally and socially. The children who had play-based preschool also surpassed scores in creativity and intelligence, oral expression and a sense of

'industry'. As a result of this study, the German kindergartens returned to being play-based (Miller & Almon, 2009:7).

Research is consistently backing up imaginative play as a catalyst for social, emotional, physical and moral development in young children. The children are given time to lay the critical groundwork for later understanding in literacy and numeracy (Curwood, 2007:32). The majority of research has been centred on the role of learning within play to support the increasingly cognitive curriculum and outcomes (March & Flear, 2016:69). What has been missing from recent research, according to March and Flear, has been a holistic focus on children's engagement in play, combining emotions, creativity and other forms of development concomitant with learning.

3.7.1. Why is play diminishing?

Although the provision of play in early childhood curricula has its pedagogical establishment in both research and practice, there is an increasingly strong emphasis on accountability and assessment, leading to a corresponding decline in understanding play's contribution to child development (Bergen, 2002:2).

According to Almon (2004), one of the reasons for play disappearing from the early childhood curriculum was that it was difficult to assess. Some teachers and policy makers fear that prioritising play may result in lower academic success. There was also an increasing demand for higher levels of achievement in activities deemed 'school ready'. What used to be expected of a Grade 1 or 2 child, is now delegated to kindergarten, and kindergarten to playgroup (Singer et al., 2006:4). Increasingly lessons are delivered in direct instructional methods instead of explorative ones. And although most teachers agree that play is important, time has decreased to about 30 minutes a day, and many teachers and administrators are unable to articulate the relationship between play and learning (Miller & Almon, 2009: 25). The pressing need to meet targets means that for many institutions, play is either marginalised or used exclusively as a learning tool (Jenkinson, 2004: 95).

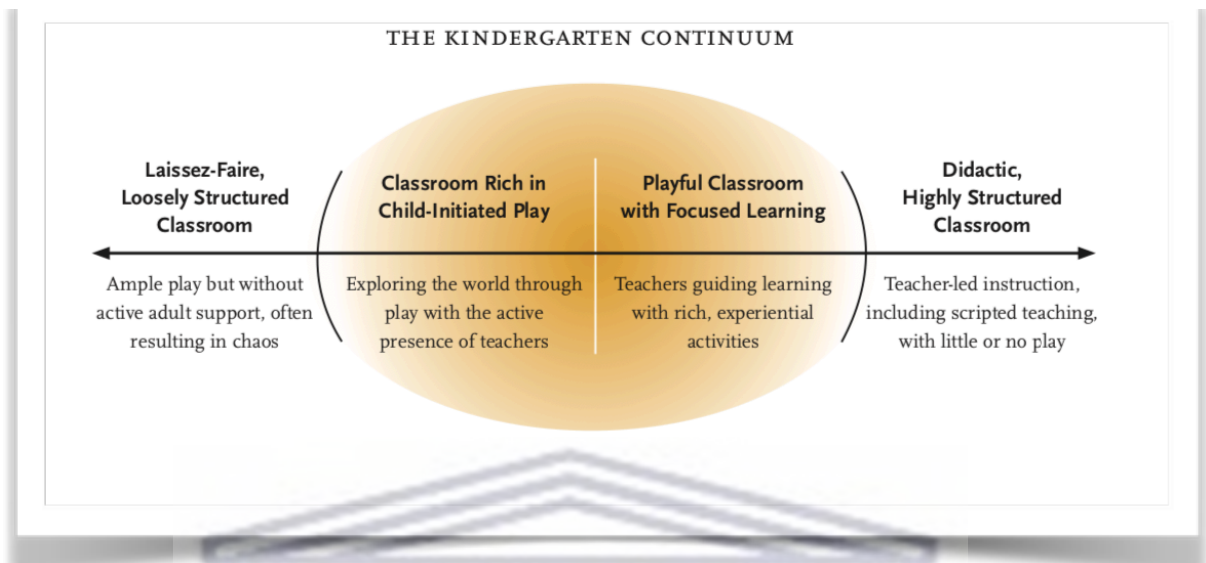
Childhood educators in Western Australia asked, "Whose agenda does early childhood knowledge serve and for what purpose?" (Barblett et al., 2016:36). This trend was

confirmed by research of 200 Western Australian early years educators, who discussed their greatest concerns in early childhood pedagogy. What emerged was the erosion of play-based learning and the tensions around using play as a legitimate pedagogical tool. The results of the study furnished various reasons the teachers perceived as contributing to the erosion of play, among others, the curriculum, with the focus on results for entry to Grade 1. One teacher in the study claimed: “They are wasting all this wonderful time that they could be playing and socialising, learning the oral language, and we’re hammering away at robotic skills” (Barblett et al., 2016:38).

Figure 3.1 shows a continuum between loosely structured and highly structured play (Miller & Almon, 2009: 11). This perceived formalisation has been termed ‘schoolification’. Many participants in the study described the drive for direct instruction, where children sit for long periods and the teacher provides a scripted programme (Barblett et al., 2016:39). Those interviewed felt that play was misunderstood, undervalued and not explained well by colleagues and staff in leadership. This included support from principals and the greater school system (Barblett et al., 2016:40). One participant in the study stated:

We sort of feel like we’re fighting an uphill battle to keep it going [play] and you can learn through play-based [education] and trying to prove ourselves over and over and over again; it’s really, really difficult. (Barblett et al., 2016:40)

Another issue around play in the classroom is that children’s imaginative play rarely followed the logical, anticipated path that adults would expect (Wisneski & Reifel, 2011: 182). A common critique around educators and their understanding of play is that it is too rigid and scripted. Miller and Almon (2009: 11) created a scale from teacher directed to only free play. It is also a misinterpretation that play requires no adult mediating or intervention at all.

Figure: 3.1 Continuum of adult interaction in play

As play has diminished, anxiety, depression, suicide, feelings of helplessness and narcissism have also increased in children, young adolescents and young adults (Gray, 2011:443). Half a century ago, children would play for hours outside with other children, with parents trusting that they would return at dark. Although a generalised vision, it extends to many post-modern cultures. Gray (2011:443) argued that parents' fear of others (strangers or acquaintances) causing danger to their children, as well as injuries due to play, has influenced children's time outdoors. This in turn has driven children to electronic media.

Physical exercise has also diminished, leading to many health-related issues, including an increase in obesity, diabetes, and poor coordination. The value of play in children's experiencing a sense of risk has been lost, such as climbing trees or exploring, thereby allowing children to access a world beyond the immediate (Almon, 2013:9). Even recess at schools has become a debated topic. Current kindergarten conditions are contributing to high levels of frustration, stress and even aggression towards other children (Miller & Almon, 2009: 48).

3.7.2. Play and toys in a Waldorf kindergarten

One of the first Waldorf educators, Herbert Hahn, wrote a book (1930) titled *On the Seriousness of Play*. Playing, for Hahn, was not just a distraction from more important

tasks, but rather a place where children could follow their own impulses and create a world around them, without any particular purpose (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:81). Steiner called play 'the work of children', as when they are playing, in their own mind they are working. Free play was contrasted with guided play, where it was not directed from the outside by educators, and was the foundation of later development (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:82).

From the perspective of Steiner education, play is also viewed as an activity through which important physical, intellectual, and emotional (body, soul, spirit) development can occur, as play allows a forum for children's internal creative impulses to unfold (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:82). Steiner education emphasised access to sufficient space in the classroom environment and time in the daily rhythm for play, as well as unrestrictive materials in order to allow a child's individuality and creativity to unfold through play.

The ancient Greek philosopher Plato (as cited in Johnson, 1907:27) discouraged too many toys in a nursery as they detracted from originality. He advocated pretend tools for carpentry and encouraged free play. Frödén and Rosell (2019) conducted a study of toys and toy play in a Swedish preschool. They investigated the triadic relationship between the children, toys and education, and how this contributed to the children's imagination. They stated that toys in the Waldorf preschool were primarily utilised to strengthen the child's creativity by stimulating imagination (Frödén & Rosell, 2019:186). They reference Steiner's views that imagination is not in contrast to cognition or perception, but rather a binding link between them. Toys for a Waldorf child consisted of simple objects, such as plain dolls, blocks with shapes or pieces of wood, other aspects of nature, and cloths. Steiner stated (1906/2007) that it is a mistake to give a child a beautiful doll with realistic features; they would be happier with a piece of wood or anything that stimulates the imagination. Toys in their study are defined as physical objects intended to be played with (Frödén & Rosell, 2019:187). Using the word 'toy play' refers to free play using toys, which is self-chosen and initiated by the children.

3.8. Theory of a Waldorf school

Rudolf Steiner is best known for his pedagogical thinking, the founding of Waldorf schools in the early 20th century, as well as his connection with Goethe (Cain, 2016:5). He is often overlooked in respect of his great contribution to modernist thinking, the visual arts, art theory, history, and architecture (Cain, 2016:6). He developed anthroposophy out of his conception of Goethe's worldview (Muschalle, 2019:3). This involved Goethe's concept of 'judgement through intuitive perception' or rather, the 'intuitive power of judgement' (Muschalle, 2019:3). Waldorf schooling is seen as an artistic education, based on Goethe's ideas of humanity and nature (Nobel, 1996:11). Steiner believed that the aesthetic could be accessed as a form of spirituality in a threefold way, using Goethe's influence:

1. Firstly, there are objects which we observe through the *gateway of the senses*, the phenomena we see, hear, taste, touch and smell.
2. These then make *impressions* on us, which elicit an emotional reaction.
3. Lastly *knowledge* is acquired about these objects. (Steiner, 1994:24)

For Goethe, the intuitive understanding was a type of thinking which perceives an ideal-spiritual content of the world, and not only the sense perceptible elements. According to Muschalle (2019:4) it involves using an inner gaze, rather than a type of thinking which visualises, but rather one free of any sensory impressions and therefore open to receive.

Waldorf or Steiner schools are based on the teachings of Rudolf Steiner in Germany, 1919, when the first post-war school opened. Steiner observed the realities of how easily people entered the First World War, and wanted to develop an education which would inspire an inner freedom. His first school was in 1919 in Stuttgart, for the children of the workers of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory (Rawson, 2022: 1). Avison (2008:87) discussed Steiner's agreement with John Stuart Locke, that the government should not have a role in the curriculum development of children, as the need for critical thinking would always surpass the desire for governmental control.

His intention was a school available to children of all classes. Sadly, these days Waldorf schools are private and mostly expensive, although they are spreading throughout the world and in many areas. Today there are about 3000 institutions, in 70 countries; some of which are called Steiner schools, others Waldorf schools, and some others different names (Rawson, 2022:1). There are 16 official schools in South Africa, and many Waldorf-inspired schools which are not registered, but follow the curriculum. After 1994 in South Africa, there was a huge interest in Waldorf education in the townships (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:xiii).

During its 100-year history, Waldorf has changed and adapted to each new stage of its life. Yet its devotion to a well-balanced education based on a deep understanding of a child's development has remained constant (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:xiii). Steiner has been omitted too often from educational discourse, possibly owing to a spiritualised language, an extensive understanding of the material and energetic world, and large developmental concepts. Steiner never intended Waldorf education to be a "neat system of educational ideas and principles", but rather an impulse to awakening (Dahlin, 2017:v).

The theory behind Steiner is called spiritual science, or anthroposophy, derived from Greek and meaning (anthropos) human, (sofia) wisdom (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:7). Steiner intended his epistemology to complement other approaches to knowledge. He created an approach to understanding the world and self, downwards into the details of existence, and upwards into more hidden workings, and laws of the universe. In his last years of life, Steiner defined anthroposophy as a path of knowledge and development which attempted to lead the spiritual in the individual, to the spiritual within the world (Suggate & Suggate, 2019: 8). Steiner's theories reached towards nutrition, biodynamic farming, architecture, care of those with special needs and education. Education, for Steiner, was not abstract idealism or unreflected pragmatism, but needed to be based on careful contemplation and inquiry, both on the nature of the human being and the purpose of education (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:11). Steiner stated that one can become a great philosopher, but without knowing how to sew a button on trousers, there is no merit (Nobel, 1996:17).

3.8.1. Path of development

Steiner laid out a path of development of the unfolding soul attributes of willing, feeling and thinking, which emerged in 7-year cycles of growth (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:62). Early childhood was the first and crucial stage, from birth until the emergence of adult teeth, occurring from the age of 7 years. There was a strong emphasis in the first stage on the development of the body (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:63).

The cycles are presented as follows:

0–7 years: The development of the will

7–14 years: The awakening of the feeling

14–21 years: The awakening of thinking

The full 21-year cycle was considered the development of the person and the individual Self, or 'I'.

Steiner outlined a threefold existence: through the body we link to the objects around us; through the soul we experience them; while through the spirit insights are disclosed to us (Steiner, 1994:24). Observation and thinking are the two points of departure for human spiritual striving, used both in activities involving common sense and complicated scientific research (Steiner, 1979:23). Steiner's philosophy divided the soul's experience into three parts: thinking, feeling, and willing, relating to both physical and psychological capacities (Harwood, 1967:9). The will is connected to the limbs and digestion, the thinking to the head, and the feeling to the trunk.

3.8.2. Will and thinking as polarities

Steiner presented the polar aspects of the unconscious will in activity, and conscious thinking in stillness, in his 1919 lectures to the first Waldorf teachers (Steiner, 1996a: 40). The child under seven years old is seen to be developing the will, which means a focus on movement, activity, and a 'dreamlike consciousness'.

Steiner also wrote about two countering energies within the human: sympathy and antipathy (Steiner, 1996b:53). Sympathy is the connection to the will, the movement of the body, and the blood. It is also connected to imagination. Sympathy is a force which seeks to do and connect. The will is linked to the limbs, as well as the digestive system, 'willpower' and activity (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:28). Steiner cautioned that many tend to describe the will in terms of thinking (Steiner, 1996b:52). Rather he saw the will as a seed which was unconsciously working towards something in the future.

Thinking was the other polarity, seen in pictures, as an act of reflection. "Everything that evolves through thinking is the metamorphosis of pictures" (Steiner, 1996b:50). He considered this to be similar to holding a mirror, which presented only a picture of reality. Thinking involved reflections on representations, requiring a sense of being awake, whereas the will was involved in activity and a sense of unconsciousness. An example of this was how the digestive system conducted itself almost without our feeling it, unless there were digestive issues and pain was involved. Day-to day-digestion, however, was conducted unconsciously.

Thinking, or what he termed 'antipathy', correlated with the nerve system, the head, and the ability to reflect and be objective. Sympathy is connected to warmth and activity, whereas antipathy to coldness and stillness. For Steiner, you could grasp human nature without understanding the sympathetic and antipathetic polarities (Steiner, 1996b:56). Table 3.2 outlines the different aspects of will and thinking in the human being.

Table 3.2: Aspects of will and thinking

Qualities	Will	Thinking
Nature	Sympathy	Antipathy
Temperature	Warm	Cold
Parts of the body	Limbs, digestive system, blood, sexual organs	Head
Movement	Active, in constant movement	Stillness
Where it lives	Activity and deed	Mental picture
Level of Consciousness	Unconscious	Conscious
Experience	Experience	Reflection

In between the will and thinking, is the emotional aspect of feeling. This is related to the chest, and is rhythmic. It encompasses both conscious and unconscious activity, and therefore is seen as a dreamy state balancing the two. For Steiner (1996b:79) feelings were related to the will; feeling was the will made active. He understood that thoughts were more conscious than feelings, and early feelings were more felt in the body, in response to the environment, such as hunger or beauty (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:27). Steiner was inspired by the work of Goethe and the role of art in education. For Steiner, the world of art and aesthetics allowed freedom of the human being (Nobel, 1996:101). For Steiner, when the spiritual and sensible were woven together, this allowed a freedom for creative and artistic expression. It was in these moments that the human could desire and act morally and out of love (Nobel, 1996:103).

3.8.3. Dream consciousness of the young child

Steiner stated that when we look objectively at what constitutes thoughts, they come to us through pictures. In the activity of thinking, we have only pictorial activity, and other than that, thoughts do not exist (Steiner, 1996b:50). In order for children to find the inner image, they need to access a dreamy consciousness. In this state of mind, there is a weaving together of concepts, words and descriptions to form a picture (Glöckler, 2004:73). Children have a different perception from that of adults; they are

not yet awake. They cannot separate the inner from the outer world, and consciousness is therefore comparable to a dream state. Their dream consciousness of fantasy life is like being in a theatre where thoughts come alive. Yet within that awareness is an alert self, taking everything in (Glöckler, 2004:80).

3.8.4. Emergence of adult teeth

The emergence of adult teeth is a landmark stage of development according to Steiner, and a transformational period for the human being (Steiner, 1996a:50). Not only are new, permanent teeth emerging, but the substance of these new teeth is very different from that of the milk teeth – much harder. For Steiner, prior to the emergence of adult teeth, the spiritual qualities of the child are still active within the body. Around this time, children pass into the period of imagination and fantasy. Life forces previously needed for building up the physical body are now freed for the use of the feeling realm and imaginative thinking.

3.8.5. Imitation as a form of social construction

The first seven years of life are dedicated to the development of the body, as the will has an affinity with the limbs and digestive system (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:63). Steiner understood the dangers of curricula becoming too intellectual and abstract, and that children's hearts, hands, and feelings should also be educated (Steiner, 1996a:22). He proposed that children should be given the opportunity to imitate life directly (Howard, 2006:9). A child is as open and vulnerable as a sponge, absorbing all their surrounding impressions. Their will is malleable in this stage, giving them an extraordinary capacity to imitate their environment (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:63). In a certain way, the whole child is considered a sense organ (Steiner, 1996a: 36). Much of the learning occurs in the young child through this imitation (De Souza, 2012:51). The task for the kindergarten or early childhood Waldorf educator is to adjust their work by doing the practical daily tasks of life in a way that is suitable for imitation by the children (Howard, 2006:9).

Mathison and Thorjussen (2016:19) outlined four major themes in Waldorf kindergartens: sensing, movement, imitation and play. The mood, words and gestures

of the teachers are imitated by the children in their play. Sensing is a way that children experience both the external environment and their own physical body; movement is a means of expression of this. Through imitation, children internalise their surroundings, while expressing their interpretations and responses to those events (Mathison & Thorjussen, 2016:19). Imitation is considered as nourishing the child's physical and emotional development – a form of bodily and situated thinking. In this view, doing meaningful acts becomes the foundation of independent thinking. Steiner believed that children who are able to imitate good adult behaviour are better prepared socially and democratically when they grow up (Steiner, 1996a:45).

3.8.6. Rhythm, breathing and self-regulation

Rhythm was understood to be a contributor to children's sense of regulation in their habits and activities (De Souza, 2012:51). These include washing hands before eating, setting a table, putting away toys after playing with them, and other aspects of caring for the environment. Preschool is a period when children are most open to learning, and therefore an appropriate environment for teaching the foundations of a healthy life and body (De Souza, 2012:51). Activities which can be participated in and imitated, train the child for the future.

Steiner stated that the main focus of the early education of the child is in teaching the child to breathe (Steiner, 1996b:41). Thus, the rhythm in the Waldorf kindergarten is likened to the activity of breathing, with in-breath bringing focus and out-breath release. Certain activities more focused and teacher-directed are considered as in-breathing, such as crafts, art, ring time and stories. Free play represents the out-breath activity, and is not directed from the outside by the educators, but rather child-directed. This is understood as laying the foundation for later development (Suggate & Suggate, 2019:82).

Chen (2017:133) studied the formation of emotional regulation in young children through family routine. Her study ascertained how family routine formation, in the relationships between parents and children, creates conditions for emotional regulation. She found that at the beginning of routine formation, parents' demands on the child change their social situation. At times this requires conflict resolution, where

contradictory relations between parents and children occur. These relations affect both parties, where the parents learn to be calm, use pre-emptive reminders, and children begin to regulate their emotions. Chen noted that this is the social situation of development, the true zone of proximal development, which contributes towards emotional regulation in young children.

3.8.7. Storytelling and young children

Stories for young children invite them into an experiential world rich in language, beauty, feeling and intention. When told from the heart, stories can be easily internalised. Storytelling supports the child in developing concentration and memory (Shank, 2016:2).

Stories in olden days were the lifeblood of oral cultures, and the storyteller was the heart of the tribe or group (Sanders, 1995:5). The rhythm and rhyme of stories in pre-literate cultures helped preserve their knowledge base and stimulated vivid mental images (Egan, 1986:7). Stories reassured people of their identity, and bound a group together (Sanders, 1995:5). Just as they provided a bond for people in the past to align themselves with complex societies, so they provided young children with the security of knowing how to feel about what was learned; they offered affective direction. In early language development, oppositions or binaries were created, including size, speed, temperature, and morality (Egan, 1989:456). Stories and fairy tales served to bring the child's most scary thoughts and fears into the open, where they could be experienced, discussed and transformed (Sanders, 1995:11).

Egan (1986:2) contends that most reflection on children's mental life had been conducted by those interested in education, while neglecting aspects of the child's own psychological state. The first area of neglect was the role of orality in literacy (Egan, 1986:3). Zipes (1979:6) stated that one must grasp the socio-historical forces which played a role in the transition from the oral folk tale to the literary fairy tale. Fairy tales were often considered subversive, taking history into their own hands. Zipes (1979:5) also suggested that fairy tales were gathered from petit bourgeois society, and questioned how that supported a capitalistic society. Today, many known fairy tales have been altered, so that the modernised versions are nothing like the prior ones

(Zipes, 1979:7). Originally a fairy tale was oral, expressing the way people viewed nature and their social order; telling tales of wishes to satisfy needs and wants. Therefore, storytellers were both carriers and transformers of a social order in a given epoch. Each epoch and community altered the story as necessary. Today we live side-by-side with both oral and literary traditions, yet according to Zipes (1979:4) there are differences in the roles in the past.

Egan (1986:7) reflected on the Romantic views of childhood, namely those of Rousseau, who expressed contempt for the over intellectualisation of children. Their ruin, he stated, was in the

... apparent ease with which they learn...you fail to see that this very facility proves they are not learning. Their shining, polished, brain reflects, as a mirror, the things you show them, but nothing sinks in. The child remembers the words and ideas are reflected back: his hearers understand them but they are meaningless. (Egan, 1986:7)

Originally the folk tale was, and still is, an oral narrative form, told by non-literate and literate persons, expressing the way they perceived nature and social order, while satisfying needs and wants (Zipes, 1979:7). Gerhard Kahlo demonstrated that most folk tale motifs could be traced to rituals, habits, customs and laws of primitive pre-capitalist societies. Even the ideas of kings and queens could be considered more archetypal in a time where “the kings in the ancient folk tales were the oldest of the clan according to the genuine, original meaning of the word” (Zipes, 1979:7). Yet Zipes is critical of the changes which occurred in the stories that promoted capitalist societies.

Traditional storytelling has its origins in prehistory, and has been considered the oldest known teaching tool (Bryndova, 2018:7). Feeding the imagination through storytelling has been negated in school curricula, possibly as a consequence of assessments and the increase in digital technologies in the classroom (Faulkner, Kirkby, Manley & Perrin, 2014: 68). Some argue that speaking and listening have long been undervalued in the curriculum.

3.8.8. Storytelling in a Waldorf kindergarten

Since the study takes place in the Waldorf kindergarten, focusing on storytelling and play, it is relevant to know the philosophies and practices surrounding the activity. According to Egan (1986:9), psychological research has focused on the features of young children's intellectual activity. Yet he referred to the mental life in oral culture to be similar to that stage of the young child. "If one takes Rationality as the 'natural' way of thinking, then clearly most of humanity most of the time have been involved in massive confusion" (Egan, 1986:11). Rationality, for Egan, was not the natural way to think for humans, but rather an effective means of taking practical control over the world. Instead of seeing myth and expressions of oral cultures as failed attempts to be rational, we should consider them powerful and positive techniques for making sense of the world in the absence of writing (Egan, 1986:12). In oral cultures the lore of the social group had to be preserved in living memories (Egan, 1986:13). Faulkner et al. (2014:70) considered that Waldorf practices engaged students to become both listeners and tellers of stories.

Waldorf education has long supported the notion that stories and storytelling provide a moral education (Rahiem, Abdullah, Krauss & Rahim, 2020: 476). There was a stage in human development, according to Steiner, when a picture consciousness was common to all (Meyer, 1988:13). Fairy tales arose out of a mode of early thinking that was pre-logical and pre-abstract. It was, one might say, concrete 'picture thinking'. In other words, it was the type of thinking one finds in young children (Peterson, 2002:36). Thus, stories mirror children's own awakening, bringing meaning to their own challenges, hopes, fears and longing (Peterson, 2002:36).

Telling a story to a child at the right age with the appropriate archetypes supports growth and points to the next stage of development (Peterson, 2002:36). Peterson referred to the story of Little Red Riding Hood (or Little Red Cap) which has been accused of violent images, for instance involving the wolf eating the grandmother. While this image is very powerful, he stated, it was not the bloody gore and severed limbs which the children were receiving. Rather, it was an image of the forces of 'wolfness' completely taking over 'grandmotherliness' that spoke to the children. The characters become part of them, and they have an opportunity to meet their inner being (Peterson, 2002:37). "Understanding a fairy tale is similar to interpreting one's dreams.

In fact, the dream world and the fairy tale world are essentially identical” (Peterson, 2002:37).

According to Goldshmidt (2022:27), Steiner introduced stories as one of the most relevant means of fostering educational and teaching processes. The curriculum first recommended by Steiner has undergone many changes as it expanded to many cultures, languages, peoples and countries around the globe. In each setting there was an attempt to link to local mythologies and stories, while at the same time incorporating universal principles of child development. For Steiner (in Goldshmidt, 2022:28), students should gain content of the world through story and parable before these internal images are permeated with abstract understandings and thinking which only emerge in adolescence. The purpose was to first create a bridge for the child to their own soul or inner world (Goldshmidt, 2022:29).

3.8.9. Language and imagination in stories

Rawson and Rose (2002:97) discussed the archetypal qualities of language, which has three innate qualities. Firstly, it enables expression of feelings and intentions, which is apparent even in a pre-verbal stage of development. Secondly language provides through syntax, certain structures which enable a person to order the relationships they experience in the world. Without this syntax, we would not be able to understand the world, and the relationships of mental structures for thinking reflect those used to formulate thoughts through speech. They outline (Rawson & Rose, 2002:98) that it is possible to use words without understanding the concepts behind them, as well as to think without words. Yet underlying both thinking and speaking are laws of a universal nature. The third innate quality of language is that words themselves, and in meaningful combinations, reveal something of the being of nature of the real and living world. Names also reflect intrinsic qualities, origins, and cultural meanings.

For Meyer (1988:13), the characters in fairy tales were not allegories or symbols, but real figures with well-defined destinies and transformations. In all this there is more psychology than ordinary self-analysis can yield. But this soul reveals itself only to a vision which proceeds beyond sense-perception and sequential thinking to a direct

experience of the formative powers in nature and in the life of the soul. Steiner called this 'imagination', because of its link to creative pictures; an inward experience which renews the soul's life of feeling and perception (Meyer, 1988:13).

Almon (1992:76) related how the development of the imagination was an essential step towards thinking. Approaching academic subjects without it was a "dull affair at best"; without imagination one could not picture an event in history, a verbal problem in mathematics, or a character in a book. And those needing to master academic subjects at a kindergarten level would suffer an even deeper problem: that this imaginative process would be aborted before even being born.

For Armon (1997:8), the concept of moral imagination for Steiner meant that each person already possessed a morality within that only needed to be awakened. The teacher was to awaken and yet not touch an inner, free individuality. "A proper foundation during the early years enables children to develop moral impulses from which they can form their own moral judgements in freedom after puberty" (Armon, 1997:8). This was through a sense of interest and artistic attitude which the teacher built in the children's moral imaginations.

Shank (2016) investigated Waldorf education and imagination, linked to critical literacies as a way of bringing transformative education into mainstream schools. Steiner schools worked from the understanding that reading and writing are built on strong oral foundations, and that thinking emerged from clear speech. Thus, Waldorf kindergartens provided an environment rich in oral language, where the story brought children into an imaginative world filled with feeling, beauty and intention.

In addition to the rich oral language, development was supplemented with recitation and internalisation of imagination-rich poems and verses accompanied by meaningful gestures (Shank, 2016:5). Action songs and singing games contributed to oral language development, while also nurturing a reverence for the beauty and active quality of language. Overall, Waldorf approaches to language and literacy development reflect a conceptualisation of literacy that extends beyond cognitive processes to acknowledge the centrality of the imagination, the body and emotions in

the construction and representation of knowledge (Shank, 2016). Thus meaning, through imagination, exists in the combining of word and action, thought and picture.

3.8.10. Psychoanalytical view of storytelling

Bettelheim (1977:8), who worked therapeutically with fairy tales, described the use of contradiction from a psychoanalytical perspective. He described the function of psychoanalysis very much in the way one could view the fairy tale itself:

Psychoanalysis is seen as having the purpose of making life easy. But that is not what Freud intended. Rather it was created to enable man to accept the problematic nature of life without being defeated by it, or giving into escapism. Freud's prescription is that only by struggling courageously against what seem like overwhelming odds, can man succeed in wringing meaning out of his existence. (Bettelheim, 1977: 8)

He stated that almost every fairy tale has both good and evil manifested in physical form, showing both good and evil as omnipresent in life and every human. The journey of the fairy tale was shown through the duality, presented to humans as a moral problem, which one struggled to resolve. Characters in fairy tales were not ambiguous like humans, combining both good and bad aspects simultaneously, but rather were polarised.

Bettelheim (1977:10) suggested that the child identified with the hero, not for their goodness, but rather their condition within the struggle that made a deep and positive impression on them. For Bettelheim (1977:10), the valuable experience was whether one met life with the belief of the possibility of mastering the difficulties presented, or with the expectation of defeat. Bettelheim (1977:11) considered that these deep conflicts existed in children, which most modern literature denied, leaving the child unable to cope with what life presented. Children were faced with desperate feelings of anxiety, loneliness, isolation and even mortal fears, usually difficult to express. These could become transferred into fears of darkness, or animals, as well as body issues. Parents could become uncomfortable from the child's conflicts, even attempting to belittle or distract them. The fairy tale, on the other hand, confronted these anxieties and dilemmas very seriously, directly addressing them. It offered characters, tests, qualities and solutions which the child could easily grasp at their level

of understanding. Here is an example of the two levels, that where the child is, and the child could become, within the zone of proximal development.

An underlying theme of the fairy tale was an eventual state of happiness; that reaching an emotional security of existence was to achieve a truly satisfying bond with another (Bettelheim, 1977:11). This supported the child in beginning to separate the strong attachment to the mother or caregiver, and reach out to another. This developmental step in the strength of the stories teaches the child that only by going out in the world and facing strife, can they find themselves.

3.8.11. The structure of a fairy tale in its aesthetic form

Bettelheim (1977:57) stated that while a fairy tale may have many dreamlike features, its value was also a consistent structure, with a definite beginning. This evolved into a plot which moved towards a satisfying solution. Hohr (2000:92) investigated how the structure of fairy tales, as written literature, combined simplicity of form and content, making them a powerful tool for experience and emotional reflection. Hohr (2000:92) referred to the theories of Meletinsky et al. (1969), proposing that the classical fairy tale could be seen as a sequence of tests and challenges which the hero had to face. This structure often followed the following pattern:

1. The initial action was triggered by a *negative test*, consisting of a misfortune or a desire for an object.
2. After passing this test, the hero was imbued with some *magic object or qualities* which helped him pass the main test. According to Meletinsky et al. (1969), the actions of this test restored a balance, but usually on a higher level (Hohr, 2000: 92).
3. In addition, there were often two supplementary tests. The first consisted of the disappearance of the hero, or appearance of an imposter. The second was the re-appearance of the hero or punishment of the imposter.

The structure of the fairy tale was a hierarchal sequence of action-reactions which converged at a wedding as a formal goal (Hohr, 2000:92).

Joseph Campbell's *The hero with a thousand faces* (1993) was first published in 1949 and outlined the 'Hero's Journey' as an archetypal structure within stories and fairy tales. He discussed eighteen stages which the protagonist undergoes within a story structure, in order to face challenges and transform the self. Often the main character arrives at the adventure through a blunder, and is even resistant to it (Campbell, 1993:51-59). The Kings and Queens are considered conscious parental images within the journey (Campbell, 1993:63). Whereas other characters make up the role of allies, protectors, friends and enemies; all these are reflective of an archetypal pathway of development and transformation. Rahman (2014) conducted a thesis on the archetypes of the hero and the hero's journey within five different Grimm's Tales.

3.8.12. Perezhivanie and storytelling

Imagination was considered the essence of the concept of perezhivanie in early childhood development. For Vygotsky, the fairy tale was possible, both intellectually and emotionally. Since the preschool child lived in the present moment, both past and future collided; time and space appeared spatially (Vygotsky, 2004:90).

Zaporozhets took Vygotsky's work further by bridging art, fairy tales and perezhivanie, coining the term 'emotional perezhivanie' (Zaporozhets, 1986:72, cited in March & Fler, 2016:71). This did not refer only to a subjective meaning to themselves, but also to those around them. It involved successes and failures, victories and defeats; the experience of the individual, or the 'I'. This generated an 'empathic perezhivanie', playing an essential role in the development of pro-social motives of behaviour (March & Fler, 2016:72). Zaporozhets understood this as the emerging of empathy in the child, who could experience another person without fully reflecting on themselves (Zaporozhets, 2004, cited in March & Fler, 2016:73). This notion was extended into the Russian term *soperezhivanie*, which translates as 'co-experience'.

Dramatic perezhivanie is related to the nature of human development, where no growth occurs without contradictions (Fler et al., 2017:249). Zaporozhets drew on the work of the Russian psychologist Gal'perin to describe how emotional images reflect reality in relation to human needs and interests (March & Fler, 2016:71). Emotional imagery, or "emotionally coloured field of reflection", carry with it a motivational force. The child

emotionally empathises with the hero, living through the characters of the storyline. Here the child can anticipate and experience emotions at an intra-psychological level.

3.9. Imagination and transformative education

Shank (2016) integrated both the work of Steiner and Vygotsky, utilising Egan's theories of imagination and practising in a Waldorf environment. She studied the relationships between imagination, literacies and transformative education. Imagination extends beyond the production of mental images, to include engagement with human experience and possibilities well beyond the domains of the learner's own experience. Imagination is the tool of meaning-making, and the humanising of abstract concepts. It is not only a rich tool for learning, but also a conduit of identity formation, divergent thinking and envisioning of preferred futures (Shank, 2016:1).

3.9.1. The meaning-making process

The purpose of understanding the role of the image-making capacity, imagination and creation in the young child is to elucidate the role of making meaning through education, and particularly for this research, through storytelling.

According to Mahn (2012:105), Vygotsky's exploration of the unification of speaking and thinking with meaning at the centre has remained relatively unexplored. Vygotsky believed that children constructed meaning through shared activity, thus shared cues and adult strategies for interpreting the child's actions built on meaning (Bodrova & Leong, 2007: 70). Vygotsky referenced the words *znachenie slova* to represent the 'unit' or "meaning through language" (Mahn, 2012:105). The development of perception, attention and memory as an early social interaction provided a foundation for the development of later communicative abilities and basis for symbolic representation (Mahn, 2012:106).

Fleer and Hammer (2013:243) stated that despite extant research on play and emotional regulation, this should be expanded to fairy tales. The significant factor of the fairy tale is that it provides emotionally charged imagery. While the situations are

often different from a child's personal experience (such as meeting a wolf along the road), the imagery has a predictable nature, while also being contained.

3.9.2. Binaries of language and concept

Egan and Gajdamaschko (2003:89) described how cognitive tools of learning gave the educator a "focus of attention that could make better sense of the task before us". This was significant in education for the emerging self-awareness or developing personality of the young child. Egan (1986:282) discussed the use of binaries in the language of stories in order for children to make sense of the world and find their own middle path.

The basic structure of a fairy tale or folk story contained powerful binary opposites, such as good/bad, brave/cowardly, security or fear. Foster (2000:38) described how every story had a moment of transformation which shifted a binary from one polarity to another. Vygotsky (1971) called this transformative moment the melodic curve of the story (Ferholt & Nilsson, 2016:296). Stories always began with a critical moment involving a collision, conflict, or contraction. The dramatic moment was seen as an analytical tool of development: participants of the story or drama are not passive observers, but are personally and emotionally involved until the crisis is resolved (Fleer et al., 2020:130). Every story begins with a need, which is then fulfilled through a journey.

By experiencing the polarities of binaries within the stories, children could create an inner picture of the story. Binaries allowed for the categorisation of information, considered to provide the basis of thinking (Foster, 2000:38). They also allowed the child to experience both polarities and intentionally find the centre; thus, finding their own consciousness or sense of self. A typical example of this is the 'too hot, too cold, just right' concepts in the folk tale of Goldilocks and the Three Bears (traditional).

Egan confronted in his work, *Teaching as Storytelling* (Egan, 1986:2), the general assumption that children's understanding emerged from the simple and concrete to the complex and abstract. He argued that these assumptions lacked a true understanding of the early child's imaginative capabilities. He stated that imagination was not a "sugar-coated adjunct to learning" but the very heart of it (Egan, 2005:36).

Egan's idea, which was integrated in Shank's (2016:2) approach, was that binary opposites supported children to make sense of stories far removed from their own concrete experiences. His method or model required teachers to identify what was most important about a topic in their 'human dimensions' in order to affectively engage with it (Shank, 2016:2). The human emotions and intentions made the content meaningful. These binaries included good or bad, survival or destruction, or greed and generosity, which are polarised aspects of emotional qualities.

In oral cultures, people only could know what was remembered. Thus, techniques such as rhyme, rhythm, and meter assisted the memory in order to preserve tribal lore (Egan, 1986:282). Similarly, all oral cultures discovered that if lore could be encoded into stories, they were more memorable than any other technique. "It is not too much to say, then, that the story is one of the most important social inventions" (Egan, 1986:282). Not only do stories ensure memorisation, they also stimulate an emotional commitment to that lore, the social group and individual's sense of identity (Egan, 1986:283).

3.10. Socio-cultural theory and neuropsychology

A full circle has been made from Vygotsky's initial theories confronting behaviourism. Between him and Luria's influence on neuropsychology, he has initiated and added to knowledge of the connection between brain and emotions, self-regulation and neurological programming. Goldberg, one of Luria's students, referred to Vygotsky and Luria as "Russian mavericks" (Goldberg, 2005:98) for their non-conformist dedication to work in cross-cultural research and formulating how culture and language shape individual cognition.

Luria went on to do ground-breaking work in neuropsychology (Kotik-Friedgut & Ardila, 2014:380). Cognitive neuroscience has only recently gained respect and appreciation for its ability to combine both culture and psychology. Luria has been described as one of the most referenced psychologists in the world, and yet he paid the most credence to his teacher and colleague, Vygotsky (Goldberg, et al., 2016:2). The fundamental postulates of Luria's contribution were that the brain, or rather higher cognitive

functions, developed through social interactions, as well as being neurological biological systems (Goldberg, et al.,2016:2).

Stetsenko (2019:250) outlined new developments in the interdisciplinary field of human development where the nature–nurture argument is still ongoing. The resolution is through “interactionist consensus”, where both genetic and environmental influences are considered to interact. Yet as Stetsenko (2019:250) cautioned, assumptions could still be biologically reductionist, thus perpetuating inequalities and injustices.

3.10.1. Influence of neuroscience on the understanding of play

The 1960's had the first efforts to apply cognitive psychology to education, both in the way information was processed, as well as constructed (Ferrari, 2011:31). Studies of child development gained momentum, concluding that the stage of infancy and early childhood was the optimum period of development (Frost, 1998:1). By the late 1990's an attempt for a comprehensive model emerged, inclusive of the greater context of family structure and culture. This led to the neuro-scientific revolution at the turn of the century (Ferrari, 2011:31). In 1996, the USA had over 3000 brain researchers, calling the 1990's the 'decade of the brain' (Frost, 1998:1). Yet it became apparent that promising neuroscience to cover all educational ideas is not a solution, but only a support. Notions of brain plasticity spread from physical basis to spiritual, altering the prior paradigm that the brain cannot change in adulthood (Schwartz & Begley, 2009:7). This is a circle back to Vygotsky's own attention on the earlier behaviouristic models into his developmental one.

Vandervert suggested that human play evolved from animals, which helped them deal with unexpected circumstances. “As animal play evolved toward human play, rule-governed imagination allowed play to help predict events through sequence detection” (Vandervert, 2017:202). He referred to Vygotsky, concluding that although play and culture appear different, they actually developed from the same brain mechanisms. Culture was defined by Vandervert as the beliefs and activities which are learned by socialisation, then shared by members of a group. Socialisation was the process where one learns the meanings and practices that enable one to make sense and behave within a group (Vandervert, 2017:203). He considered the role of the cerebellum in

repetitive and predictive activities, learning internal models which could then serve as a base for creative expression (Vandervert, 2017:205).

3.10.2. Mirror neurons

Recent models integrating the psychological and biological view the brain system as a product of the interaction between genetic code and environmental influence. Early experiences form our characteristic means of relating to others and coping with the flow of emotions. This is the invisible history of each individual (Gerhardt, 2004:15).

Mirror neurons are found in macaque monkeys, firing up while watching an activity of another, experienced in the brain the same way as doing it themselves. Their discovery has been seen as the great leap forward in the study of human evolution (Ramachandran, 2000). These neurons fire up when watching a significant activity such as grasping, movement of hands or mouth, while being immobile.

Mirror neurons are, in effect, the ultimate 'as-if body device'. The mirror neuron system achieves conceptually what is hypothesised. However, it is not the only way a person can process actions. According to Giudice, Manera and Keysers (2009:350) other visual processing mechanisms enable humans to view and understand movements that are not within their action repertoire. But the mixture of observing through the mirror neurons and then performing the action help to solidify the experience. It allows the child to better predict future movements and potentially replicate actions alongside somatosensory feelings (Giudice et al., 2009:350). While acknowledging the relevance of mirror neurons in developmental psychology and neuroscience, there is also little which has been known on the ontogeny of them.

There are researchers who are still sceptical, favouring explanations involving genetic predisposition (Giudice et al., 2009:351). From an evolutionary standpoint it is reasonable to link survival mechanism with action recognition, and that learning through observation may be pre-programmed or innate. But the critical issue becomes how they could be programmed and this controversy remains unsolved.

3.10.3. Attachment theory

One of the most progressive fields in child development is the work of John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth in the 1960s, in attachment theory. They attempted the integration of scientific development with psychoanalytic thinking in order to comprehend emotional life within its biological content (Gerhardt, 2004:4).

Attachment theory considered the early communication between the infant and caregiver, and how this contributed to developing the affective realm of the child. Bowlby and Ainsworth studied the effects on personality development due to separation from the mother in early childhood (Bretherton, 1992). The proposition was that for children to emotionally thrive, they needed a close and continuous caregiving relationship which laid the foundation for trust in further relationships.

Attachment theory introduced secure, insecure, and avoidant relationships with the caregiver, known as an attachment style, and further influenced relationships and feelings of trust in life. This could also be influenced by parents' feelings and their situation as new parents or caregivers (Gerhardt, 2004:25). Bowlby described secure attachment as the warmth in infancy from an intimate and continuous relationship with the mother, bringing satisfaction and enjoyment (Bowlby, 1951:13). The opposite was the intense depression potentially experienced from feelings of abandonment by the person they dearly loved and needed, and all the behaviours that came with that. This could result in avoidant attachment, where the child who does not feel their needs are met, rejects the parent and relationships in the future (Bowlby, 1951:57). Attachment theory proposed that infants and young children organise their proximity-seeking and exploratory behaviour with reference to one or a few adult figures by the end of the first year. This is an evolved system designed to promote the survival of the child as well as enhancing feelings of well-being (Birmingham et al., 2017:107).

Page (2017:5) focused on the significance of attachment-based relationships among adults, infants and toddlers in early childhood education. The underlying principle is that young children thrive from positive close relationships, which are challenged by a history of abuse in the field. She wished to provide appropriate training to early childhood practitioners on contemporary perspectives of attachment theory. In the past

it was used as a form of 'stick and carrot' in relation to toddler day care, using Bowlby's theories to guilt trip the parents (usually mothers) for going to work so early in their child's life (Page, 2017:6). She coined the term Professional love in early years settings (PLEYS) for her research and training, guiding caregivers on an internal model for securing attachment in early childhood education.

Muscat (2022:21) integrated symbolic representation with attachment theory by recognising that the first signs of symbolic substitution tend to be transitional objects to which children become attached. These objects were physical reminders that the child was loved by their attachment partner. Although the object itself was concrete, the child's meaning assigned to it was a process of symbolic substitution. The conventional meaning of the object was gone and replaced by the one they attached to it. This was a new way of bridging Vygotsky's higher mental capacities with the true emotional needs of a child in that early stage.

3.10.4. Self-regulation and executive functions

The term 'executive functions' (EFs) has been defined as an umbrella term for a highly complex set of cognitive abilities, describing the psychological processes involved in the conscious control of thought and action (Fleer et al., 2020:125). Most researchers agree that executive functioning encompass a variety of higher-order cognitive processes under continuously changing and multiple task demand. Before children are able to self-regulate their behaviours, they gain control through 'other regulation' whereby their behaviour is guided by others as they learn to initiate desired behaviours (Bodrova & Leong, 2007, 22).

There has been recent interest in children's emotional regulation and its influence on children's social competence (Spinrad et al., 2004:40). Attachment researchers have proposed that caregivers initially act as the external regulators of the infant's rhythms and feelings, leading them gradually to their own capacity (Bernier et al., 2010:328). Bernier, Carlson and Whipple, investigated the connections between early infant experiences on brain development and executive functioning, such as working memory, impulse control, and set shifting (2010:326).

Research indicated that children with secure attachments had fewer behavioural problems, compared with those with insecure attachment styles (Fearon, Bakermans-Kranenburg, Van Ijzendoorn, Lapsley & Roisman, 2010:436). It is important to note how self-regulation is embedded in and shaped by primary relationships. Drake, Belsky and Fearon note the importance of mechanisms by which these relational processes support the child's broader adjustment to his/her environment (Drake, Belsky & Fearon, 2014:1350). The ability of a person to be conscientious or aware of surroundings as a stable trait is enhanced by secure attachment.

Spinrad et al. (2004:52) investigated regulation strategies with mothers and infants, thereby laying the foundation for social competencies in the future. Attempts at communication such as talking, distraction and soothing during interactions of negative and positive emotions were related to children's later self-regulation abilities, especially around 30 months. A human infant brain and body systems are dependent on these experiences, where the caregiver acts as an 'external psychobiological regulator' (Schore, 2001:13).

3.11. Conclusion

Vygotsky, and then Luria, laid the foundation for what is now known as neuropsychology (Kotik-Friedgut & Ardila, 2014:378). For Vygotsky, higher psychological processes emerged when individuals acted within their cultural environments. The external factors, considered as stimuli, mediators or symbols, established the functional connections between brain systems, which was a universal process for the human being. Vygotsky highlighted the important relationship between brain development, social world, and individual identity and regulation. In some ways his theories were in contradiction to biological determinism, as found in behaviourist theories of the time. Yet through his research into the social language, he arrived at a new version understanding self-regulation and development, which led to a biological-neurological-psychological theory.

This literature review covered Vygotsky's life and how this impacted his theories. including his methodological approach to Marxism, using the dialectical method. In the case of Marxism, this dialectic focused on society, while Vygotsky's lens was on the

transfer from foundational skills to higher thinking, through language. Although Vygotsky has become known for a focus on language, thus at times critiqued as over emphasising thinking, he also understood that development occurred according to both social and biological ages. His recommendation was that children, until age 7 years, learned through play. A strong element from Vygotsky, often overlooked, was his concept of *perhizhivanie*. This was discussed in both storytelling and play.

Shank (2016) presented a theoretical basis for linking Egan's work on binaries with Waldorf imaginative teaching. Veresov (2004:42) emphasised an understanding of Vygotsky's genetic experimental theory, and how it involved a dramatic contradiction. This application to self-regulation brought a complex element to the notion of internalising of language. Storytelling is also a way in which the child engages with the binaries, and thus contradictions. The function of language as painting internal pictures while using imagination could be a key to the internalisation process.

The literature covered Vygotsky's theories of zone of proximal development, self-regulation, imagination, and emotional identity. It also examined the role of storytelling in education, including factors of the brain hemisphere which develop during the early childhood years. An elucidation was provided of Waldorf kindergarten, as this was the curriculum of schooling in the study. Bridges between the socio-cultural analysis and Steiner or Waldorf education are presented in the findings.

CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This project is an ethnographic study of a Waldorf school kindergarten classroom, with the focus on socio-cultural discourse analysis. Ethnography investigates a culture within real-life circumstances, over time, using observation, interviews and document analysis. Both methods and data are triangulated against each other for reliability. Analysis consists of organising data into categories of coding, and these units of analysis need to be identified early in order to construct the framework (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982:39).

Socio-cultural discourse analysis is based on the theoretical work of Mercer (2004), with a focus on the social mode of thinking, as a tool for constructing knowledge. This is based on sociocultural theory, more particularly Vygotsky's concept of language as both a cultural and psychological tool (Mercer, 2004:137). The method is a means of assessing the contribution of language to collective and personal thinking.

Socio-cultural research is not a unified field, but what does reflect in all of it is an interest in the processes which are shaped by culture, and contribute to the thinking and learning experience (Mercer, 2004:138). Mercer described the primary function of language as a cultural and psychological tool for getting things done. From the perspective of this study, language also has an aesthetic capacity, which is developmental in itself; contributing to imagination, individuation, self-regulation and expression.

Socio-cultural discourse analysis also investigates the mediating objects alongside language itself, such as tools being utilised to tell the stories. This includes puppets, toys, costumes, signs and symbols.

In socio-cultural discourse analysis, it is understood that language is internalised through private speech, yet this is a silent process and difficult to document without disturbing the event itself. Thus, this study held an underlying hypothesis that if a child

is playing out the stories which have been told, or using aspects of them, that this would reveal a process of internalisation.

4.2. The research questions

The research questions for this study were as follows:

1. How did the mediation of storytelling by the teacher influence the children's play in a Waldorf kindergarten?
2. How did the phenomenon of play lead to insight into the socio-cultural interpretation of internalisation, imagination, self-regulation, meaning making and identity?
3. How did the Waldorf environment influence the findings?

4.3. Ethnographic studies

Ethnographic studies focus on groups of people by studying their way of life in everyday activities (Henning et al., 2004:42). The purpose of ethnography is to conduct a study within natural settings, with no manipulation of variables or addition of externally imposed structures (Wiersma & Jurs, 2005:244). It is a means of capturing the rituals and actions which bind a group of people together (Henning et al., 2004:42). The focus in this thesis was on a classroom, considered to be an organisation or community that interacted in regular and structured ways (Wiersma & Jurs, 2005:246).

Ethnographic research differs from positivistic research in the method of data gathering, as well as the procedure of hypothesis formulation (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982:43). In ethnographic research, the hypothesis was often derived or revised from the data. The frame of research was inclusive of the subjective perspective of both the researcher and participants, which had the potential of providing "a depth of understanding lacking in other approaches to investigation" (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982:43). These potentially subjective aspects need to be outlined for transparency and for an understanding of the conclusions.

An interpretive ethnography for the next century is one that is simultaneously minimal, existential, auto-ethnographic, vulnerable, performative, and critical. This ethnography seeks to ground the self in a sense of the sacred, to dialogically connect the ethical, respectful self to nature and the worldly environment (Denzin, 1999: 510).

There has been controversy in defining ethnography. Some regard it as a philosophical paradigm, others as a method used only in research when appropriate, with variations in between (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994:248). This controversy has resulted in various schools of ethnography, with some favouring a greater 'scientific stance' in their methods, and others rejecting this "in favour of an engaged advocacy and a critical stance" (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994:249).

Atkinson, Okada and Talmy (2011:86) concurred, citing Geertz (1973) who argued that ethnography was more of a viewpoint than a matter of methods. This perspective emphasised the following:

1. The complexity and particularity of the social scene studied.
2. An understanding of the scene from an insider's viewpoint.
3. The researcher's awareness was a constitutive part of the final analysis

These pointers came together to classify the term 'thick description' (Atkinson et al., 2011:86).

The researcher herself was now seen as a co-creator of meaning within the studied reality (Henning et al., 2004:18). This challenged the ethnographer, and questioned the validity of social scientific research itself (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994:252). The researcher became the meaning maker of the enquiry, attempting to create a balance between the reality 'out there' and a narrative of her own subjective knowledge of this reality (Henning et al., 2004:39).

Hammond (2011:298) stated that classroom research raised questions of how much time is needed in the classroom to do justice to observing the micro-culture. From an ethnographic perspective, for Hammond, this must have been substantial, enabling the researcher to become familiar with the broader contexts. These included the school,

routines, patterns of interaction, and interpersonal features. Research showed that time spent in the classroom generated large quantities of data which potentially created a challenge for analysis (Hammond, 2011:299). The socio-cultural discourse analysis became a lens in which research was both collected and analysed. Thus, data was categorised early, in regard to episodes which reflected socialisation, and inclusive of dialogue of the children during play.

4.4. Discourse analysis and ethnographic research

Henning et al. (2004:36) noted that the distinction between methods and methodology is that methods constitute the way of doing the research, whereas methodology comprises the coherent group of methods which complement each other and fit together in order to deliver the data and findings. They reflect the research question and suit the purpose of the research. They also need to triangulate and challenge the data.

Ethnographers and discourse analysts have debated whether their approaches are complementary or oppositional (Atkinson et al., 2011:87). Historically, ethnographers did not collect verbatim spoken interaction data from people they studied, or even focus on language at all. Classroom and pedagogical research took a linguistic turn in the 1970s and 80s, when researchers began to analyse the fine details of interactions in the classroom (Lin, 2011:67). These two approaches are now combined in highly effective ways (Atkinson et al., 2011:89). Evidence of conversations has been able to enrich the knowledge of social interactions, and behaviours, norms and values.

Ingram and Elliott (2020:4) maintained that almost every researcher working in discourse analysis would have their own conception of what it actually was. Broadly, it could be used to describe the data which was being analysed, including any spoken or written expression of meaning, interaction, or forms of communication such as gesture, eye gaze, or even the way someone dresses. It could also imply the outcome of the discourse analysis. While traditionally discourse analysis referred to texts, it also included all language exchange, and even non-verbal communication.

Mercer (2010:4) compared linguistic ethnography with sociocultural research. Ethnography provides a rich, detailed description of observed events through the researcher's continual involvement within the social environments studied. Mercer (2010:3) stated that both methods agreed on various issues, including that classroom education could be understood through the nature and function of qualitative talk. Also, that cultural and local norms shape the process of teaching and learning, and that classroom meanings are continually negotiated. Categorisation systems can either be developed by the researcher or taken off a shelf (Mercer, 2010:4).

Classroom discourse analysis refers to analytical texts in classroom contexts, but also to the talk which occurs in a classroom situation, inclusive of spoken interactions (Hammond, 2011:294). Hammond investigated the theoretical, methodological and practical issues and procedures arising in classroom discourse analysis. There was a distinction between approaches of classroom talk with a focus on "turns, sequences and meaning" rather than actual grammatical patterns of speech (Hammond, 2011:294).

There was also a contrast in features between conversations which occurred during classroom instruction compared with those about everyday events or taking place at recess. Common features of classroom interaction included initiating topics, turn taking, asking and responding to questions, all of which highlighted the roles and responsibilities of teachers and students (Hammond, 2011:293). Therefore, although large quantities of data may have been accumulated through the research, the focus was on accounts of specific discourse features which took place in social interactions.

4.5. Socio-cultural discourse analysis

There is no single coherent, unified socio-cultural approach to research on language and education. Researchers consider education and cognitive development to be a cultural process, where knowledge is not only known individually, but shared among members of communities, as people construct understandings together (Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003:100).

To utilise a socio-cultural methodology means focusing on those aspects of the theory that are essential to data collection. Social cultural methodology has been used to analyse both the teacher's talk with students, and their talk among themselves, both in paired and group activities. Mercer (2004:137) defined the term 'methodology' as referring to an integrated set of methods and procedures. The term 'sociocultural discourse analysis' was used to refer not only to one particular method, but several, both qualitative and quantitative.

The dialectical methods of Vygotsky centred around his explanation of dynamic interdependence of social and individual processes. John Steiner and Mahn (1996:192) outlined three major analytical themes which they considered the basic tenets of socio-cultural analysis:

1. Individual development, including the development of higher mental functioning, has its sources in social processes.
2. Human action, undertaken independently or socially, is mediated by tools and signs.
3. The above themes must be examined through genetic or developmental analysis, which Rogoff (2008:58) termed guided participation.

Data from the classroom observations and dialogue in this study were analysed using this approach.

Rogoff (2008:58) recommended three planes of analysis relating to personal, interpersonal, and community processes. She referred to developmental processes which corresponded to these planes as apprenticeship, guided participation, and participatory appropriation. These were inseparable concepts which reflected differing planes of focus in socio-cultural theory. For Rogoff (2008:60), the process of participation in these domains prepared the child for later participation in related events. She proposed that Vygotsky's interest in the mutuality of the individual and socio-cultural environment was apparent in his focus to find a unit of analysis which preserved the essence of the events rather than splitting them into elements which no longer functioned as a whole. Thus, parts making up the whole activity could be

considered separately as foreground, without listing their interdependence on the whole.

For Mercer (2004:140), the design purpose of socio-cultural discourse analysis was to understand how spoken language was used as a tool for thinking collectively. It represented the interface between theory and particular research questions. This determined not only how the data was analysed, but also what kind of data was gathered.

Mercer (2010:6) noted that qualitative methods revealed the nature, patterns, and quality of spoken interactions. Methodologies included ethnographic, sociolinguistic and conversational analysis, with ethnographic and sociolinguistic methods often combined. Sociocultural discourse analysis was less concerned with the organisational structure of spoken language, and more with the content, function, and means of shared understanding that was developed within the social context over time.

According to Mercer (2010:10), one of the toughest methodological challenges lies in appropriately recognising that talk functions in a temporal context. Classroom education generally exists in a continuing, cumulative experience for the participants, which researchers, even in a longitudinal timeframe, can only partially share. Thus, understanding what occurs in talk within the classroom needs an appropriate timescale as well as methods. While there is an urgent need for empirical evidence, there is also the need for strategies for teachers who benefit from the learning. This line of educational research could contribute to educational policy and training (Mercer, 2010:11).

Gough and Bock (2001:95-96) cited Gee (1990:150), who defined discourse as “socio-culturally determined ways of thinking, feeling, valuing and using language in different contexts in our day-to-day lives”. They identified two types of discourse: primary discourse resulted from face-to-face interactions, while secondary discourse was learned through social institutions beyond the family, such as schools, workplaces (and currently, the internet). Some degree of specialisation was required to participate in secondary discourse (Gough & Bock, 2001:96).

Jones (2011:9) described the ethnography of communication as a study of how language is used in sociocultural contexts. Originally this was developed in the 1960s and 70s by anthropologist Dell Hymes, and was communicated as a primary unit of analysis – the speech event. This was a communicative activity comprising one or more speech acts, within a contextual frame. This was considered the connection between ethnography and discourse analysis. Jones (2011:9) focused on data collection and transcription as cultural practices of discourse analysis. At the same time, he questioned how the cultural tools for data collection (voice recorders and video cameras as examples) supported the creation of new forms of analysis. Central to his perspective was that all actions, including thought, were mediated through cultural tools. Mediated discourse analysis allowed the consideration of data collection and transcription as situated practices, tied to particular times, places and configurations of cultural tools, and to a particular kind of people with disciplinary narratives (Jones, 2011:10).

4.6. Dialectics in Critical Discourse analysis (CDA)

Fairclough (2001:231) presented critical discourse analysis (CDA) as the analysis of the dialectical relationships within discourse, inclusive of language as well as body language, gesture, visual images, and other social practices. Every practice is an articulation of diverse social elements within a relatively stable configuration, the two coming together in a dialectical fashion. These elements are recognised as different, but not discrete, or fully separate, and therefore never fold into each other.

Fairclough (2001:233) outlined three broad categories within social practices which support the methodology of analysing the dialectics in discourse.

1. *Discourse is part of social activity within a practice.* For instance, if one works in a shop, one needs a specific language to do the job. (*Place*)
2. *Discourse figures in representations.* Social actors within any practice produce representations of other practices, as well as reflexive representations of their own. They decontextualise other practices, which means they incorporate them into their own practice. Different social actors will represent them differently according to how they are positioned within the practice.

Representation is a process of social construction of practices, inclusive of reflexivity (Fairclough, 2001:232). These representations then enter and shape social processes and practices. (*Object*)

3. *Discourse figures in ways of being in the constitution of identities.* For instance, a teacher or leader would use a specific language. (*Identity*)

4.7. Triad vs dialectic

West (2011:665) outlined the sense of identity within a triadic-based system of semiotic analysis rather than only two points. While Vygotsky put forward a dialectic or binary connection between sign and object, according to West (2011:665) he did not consider the changing character of the interpretant. This could also have been the 'missing link' in the zone of proximal development for Veresov (2004:44). Veresov contended that the *perezhivanie* or dramatic collision allowed for development and unfolded hidden aspects within the social interaction. Thus, not only were the events relevant in the documenting, but also in the colliding or transformational aspect of that event.

4.8. Qualitative method

A socio-cultural discourse analysis within ethnographic research methodology entailed a qualitative study. Observations were continuous and involved all potential interactions (Wiersma & Jurs, 2005: 252). All the record taking during the observation period was considered field notes. The emphasis was on capturing perspectives of the individuals being observed, entailing picking up subtle cues and nuances (Wiersma & Jurs, 2005: 253).

4.9. Data collection

Wolcott (1987:40) noted that data collection in an ethnographic study involved both data collection and interpretation, each informing the other. Ethnography did not entail only 'thick description', but that the researcher be able to discern what data needed to be collected (Wolcott, 1987:41). Culture, according Wolcott (1987:41), was not waiting to be discovered, but could be inferred from the words and actions of members in the group under study. For Frake (1964:134), describing a culture was not exclusively

about recounting the events, but specifying what was necessary to make those events probable. One had to become discerning in the cultural patterns within the behaviour being observed (Wolcott, 1987:44). The socio-cultural lens supported this discernment, outlining what kinds of events to look out for. Wolcott (1987:48) discussed the role of the participant-observer in educational ethnography. The disadvantages of being an insider, such as teacher as well as researcher, included the potential for lack of objectivity. Also, one could neglect valuable events owing to the concurrent teaching role. These obstacles were potentially compensated for by the potentially qualitative insight into the culture and individuality of the children, as my presence was over a longer period of time. Wolcott (1987:48) stated that those who study a group of which they are members potentially benefit from a deeper understanding of the complexity of the system. I had the benefit of proximity to the children's play and the ability to take notes in real time. Hedegaard (2009:80) encouraged research being done by teachers as they tended to have a closer insight into the classroom practices and reactions of the children, aligned with the social values and activities. Both the negatives and potentials needed to be considered within the reflection of the data.

4.9.1. Identification of subjects

The study took place at a Waldorf school in Cape Town, located in the South Peninsula region. The subjects of the study were located in a kindergarten class of children, mixed ages 4–7 years old. There were 18 children in the class, and I myself, as the researcher, was also the teacher, with a permanent assistant teacher. The school was located in a region with three surrounding formal/informal settlements, and had an active sponsorship programme. The class had one sponsorship child who was an isiXhosa language speaker.

Each day descriptive notes were taken during class. This included all conversations or events which occurred during the research. Documenting of all mediation of the day as well as play events was done daily. One hour of reflection two days a week provided an opportunity to connect developing theories, reflect on events afterwards, and create new research questions. Mind maps were drawn of categories and connections.

4.10. Methods of data collection

Three main means of data collection can be attributed to ethnography. They include participant observation, interviewing, and document analysis or archival research (Sangasubana, 2011:568).

4.10.1. Observation

This was understood as the act of perceiving activities and interrelationships of people in the field, and taking rich descriptive notes. I had the benefit of being present with the children, without imposing another person who may have altered the data. While they were playing, I would take notes without them noticing.

An example of the daily journaling of observations and thoughts is indicated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Daily note chart

Date	
Notes taken during classroom observations, forms of play, dialogues with children	
Ring time: theme, songs, story	
Storytelling: story, form of telling	
Forgotten episodes	
Contributions to theory, analysis, methodology, spontaneous ideas	
Subjective feelings, personal impressions	
After-school reflections	

4.10.2. Interviewing

This consisted of a focus group with the parents, occurring twice in the research year to communicate the project and assess their perceptions. Notes were taken during these meetings.

I conducted two focus-group interviews with the parents. The first was to introduce the purpose of the research and gain their written permission. This was done at the start of the school/research year (2016), in the capacity of myself as the teacher. One parent from each child in the class was present, thus 18 parents. My assistant was present and also took notes. The meeting took two hours. An opportunity to raise questions and concerns was given to the parents. I requested that they also observe their own children's play throughout the year, whether stories told in class were enacted at home also.

The second focus-group interview took place in August, 2016. Once again 18 parents attended. I presented a puppet show to the parents as an example of what the children experienced in the classroom. They had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and the research process, as well express their own observations from home regarding stories. Notes were taken.

4.10.3. Document analysis

Document analysis in this study included the children's drawings, paintings, crafts and transcripts from the stories they told in their play. This was done each term by observing all their work from that time period and relating it to the content presented.

4.11. Focus on storytelling

The focus was on how the expression of the children linked to the stories being told or their play. By observing their play, and knowing the storytelling which was offered to them, it enabled me to recognise patterns and connections. This could have included the following categories:

- a. The theme of the story being revealed in their own play or puppet shows.
- b. The characters of the stories become those of their stories and play.
- c. Language of the storytelling gets repeated during the play or storytelling.
- d. Artefacts used symbolically in the mediation of the storytelling are used in their play, and for the same reason.

4.12. Questions arising

As the study proceeded, questions arose from the emerging data. I recorded these in my journaling.

1. How did the storytelling of the teacher influence the children's play?
2. In what ways is this revealed?
 - 2.1. Do the themes of the stories or the specific characters most influence the play?
 - 2.2. Do the children enact the storyline during play?
3. When doing a puppet show for the story, do the children set up their own puppet show? If so, which aspects of the story told by the teacher model their own?
 - 3.1. Do they set up the puppet show in a similar way?
 - 3.2. Do they use the same characters?
 - 3.3. Do they use similar language?
4. How did these events reveal aspects of socio-cultural theory, such as private speech, internalisation, imagination and self-regulation?

4.12.1. Adding questions throughout the research process

As the research process progressed, more questions arose from the data. These included:

1. If I leave out the puppet show from the day before, will the children enact the same story with it?
2. How did the costumes mediate the children's imaginative play? Do they pivot actual language from the stories?

3. What is the time frame between a story told and children playing it on their own?
4. Document analysis: do the stories told appear in the drawings of the children? (This includes ring time stories, as drawing is immediately afterwards.)
5. How do second-language children react to the stories and language use in the class, and how does this emerge in their own play?
6. What other aspects of my storytelling were reflected in the children's play? For example, rituals done before and after the telling, modes of behaviour, discipline techniques?

4.13. Transcription

Mercer (2004:147) noted that for all kinds of discourse analysis, the faithful representation of what was said is important. I tried to get the basis of the conversations down in real time, and then in the reflecting time afterwards, would work to illustrate the events more clearly. At this time, I would also try to find background influences on the events which were hidden.

4.14. Data analysis

Analysis in ethnographic research involves the synthesising of information from observation, document analysis and other data sources. Often data collection and data analysis occurred together (Wiersma & Jurs, 2005:206). The data itself may have suggested categories for analysis, and through sorting out information and categorising, some data could be reduced. Comparisons could be made between the data and earlier theories.

Throughout the research process, further means of categorisation arose, according to the principles of socio-cultural discourse analysis. These included the following categories which emerged:

1. The types of play the children engaged in.
2. Incidences of zones of proximal development (ZPD) among children of multiple ages.

3. The role of the teacher as a mediator with the children, one on one, or as a whole group.
4. The use of cultural tools or artefacts, such as toys, equipment, costumes, and aspects of nature, as symbolic language mediators.
5. Rules set out during the play, by the children themselves, and how they related to these rules.
6. Self-talk during the play, and how this manifested in the children.
7. Cultural practices within the classroom and pedagogy.
8. Cultural symbols within the classroom, and how these related to the surrounding cultures.

Categories were created and I was able to fill in incidences accordingly.

A large amount of data was obtained which needed to be categorised. As it was an ethnographic study, I was open at all times to dialogue and teaching methods that would apply to the study. This included consistent self-reflection as a teacher and researcher, and how my own influences could impact the data. As a socio-cultural study, I was especially looking at the times of mediation which would significantly answer the research question.

My central question was how the storytelling mediated by the teacher was firstly being internalised by the children, and secondly how that revealed itself in the children's play. Thirdly was the inference of how this dialectical feedback process influenced their capacity for self-regulation and reflection.

4.15. Data coding and interpretation

Green, Willis, Hughes, Small, Welch, Gibbs, and Daly (2007:547) listed four steps for data analysis to generate the best qualitative evidence. These were

1. Data immersion;
2. Coding;
3. Creating categories; and
4. Identifying themes.

Immersion in data allowed for all findings to be seen as relevant.

The second step was the process of examining and organising the information, beginning to categorise/classify the information. At this point I needed to be clear about what I was questioning in the data, so that some could be disregarded if irrelevant. The next step was the creation of categories, and as Green et al. (2007:548) discussed, many researchers stop there. Yet, from those categories, themes could emerge, moving beyond a description of categories and into an explanation or even interpretation.

The identification of themes, rather than categories, is therefore the litmus test of a study that produces stronger evidence. We argue that a high-quality paper identifies themes by linking the categories with social theory, until eventually an overriding explanation is arrived at which makes sense of the various patterns that have emerged at the descriptive level (Green et al., 2007:549).

These explanations provided considerable insight into the functioning of language exchange in a Waldorf kindergarten and how that could be mediated through storytelling.

4.16. Ethical considerations

The Waldorf school selected for the study falls under the jurisdiction of ISASA, the Independent schooling Association, and not the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). This meant that no permission was needed from the provincial education department to conduct the study. I obtained permission to conduct the research from the College of Teachers of the specific Waldorf school, which was the authorising body.

I received written permission from each parent in the class for their child to participate in the study. I assured them that no names would be used in the document, and that no photographs or videos would be taken or shared. Any recordings were only for documenting purpose and would be destroyed after transcription. None of the parents had concerns about the proposed research. The children themselves were made aware of the research, and why I would be taking notes throughout the year. All

references to the children were kept anonymous. All information gathered was confidential and only used for the purposes of this study in collaboration with my supervisor.

4.17. Conclusion

The study was conducted as a qualitative, ethnographic study with focus on socio-cultural discourse analysis. The research consisted of a conversational analysis, investigating the role of stories, as mediated by the teacher, on the children's own free imaginative play. Utilising a socio-cultural method implied that children internalise social language, through their own private speech, in order to become their internal psychology. Although this process is silent and unseen, the hypothesis was that if children were active in their own play, revealing the stories told in any form, then this would reveal internalisation.

The methods included observation, focus-group interviews of the parents, and document analysis which included the children's drawings and crafts.

The goal at the end of the study was to have gained an insight into the types of make-believe play which children enacted in the Waldorf kindergarten, and how the play was influenced by mediation of storytelling by the teacher. The coding and analysis of the information was influenced by the socio-cultural categories. I recorded the dialogue between the children, as well as my own as the teacher of the children. Owing to the ethnographic nature of the study, all phenomena were considered relevant until they had been analysed, categorised and/or discarded.

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

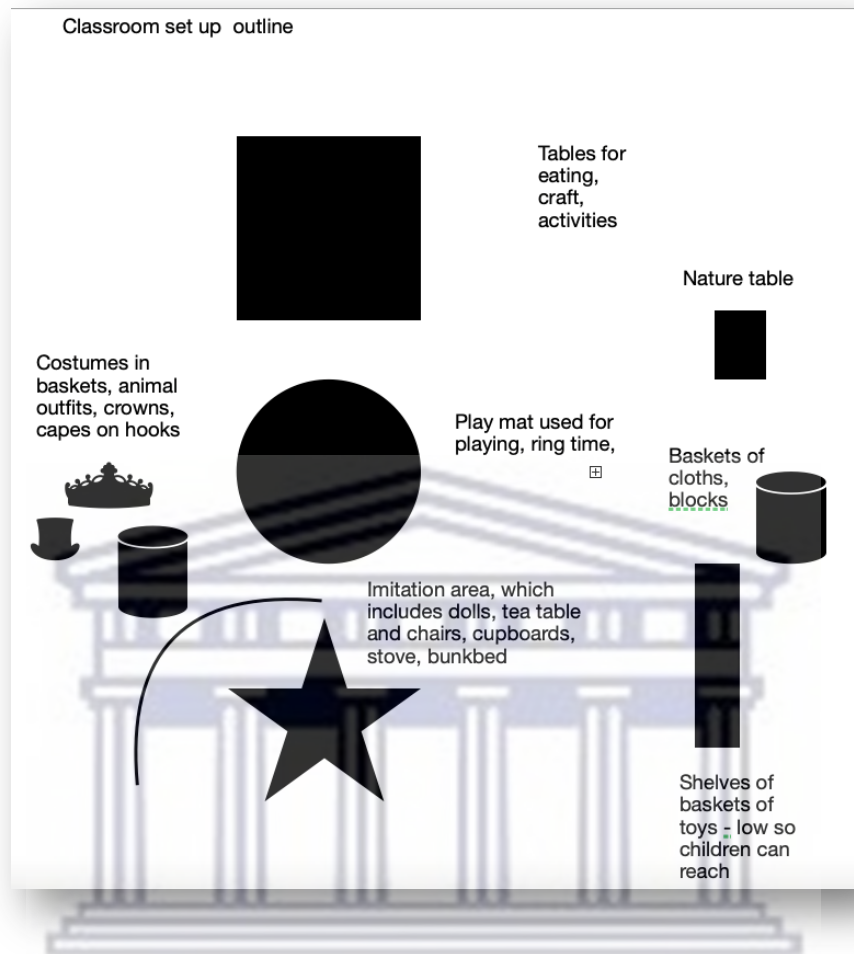
The purpose of the study was to conduct a socio-cultural analysis of the phenomenon presented in a Waldorf kindergarten. This chapter presents the phenomena observed in the data, including the classroom set up, daily rhythms, and storytelling and play. A schedule for all the stories told during the year is given, with a quarterly review. It outlines the results from the interviews and document analysis.

5.2. Location and subjects

The research occurred at a Waldorf school in Cape Town. The school was located on a farm. There were three kindergarten classes, two playgroups, and a primary school with Grades 1–7. I had taught in one of the kindergarten classes for ten years at the time of the research. The school was run as an Independent, private school. There were two containers as offices, and the only electricity on the property was solar. The land was rustic, with camels and goats, as well as birds, scorpions, snakes, various insects, peacocks, and mongooses. There were forests surrounding the property, which was rented.

The class was a mixture of genders, with ten girls and eight boys. The language of teaching was English, with input of isiXhosa and Afrikaans through songs and verses. The children were aged 4.5 to 7 years old. They generally stayed in one class for two years. The younger ones were called ‘moon children’ and the older ‘sun children’. Those who turned 6 years towards the end of the year, October to December, were considered borderline, and potentially stayed an extra year. I had five children in this research year turning 7 years.

The kindergarten day was from 08:00 to 12:30, Monday to Friday, with possible aftercare afterwards. There were four terms per year.

Figure 5.1: Outline of the classroom area

5.3. Classroom structure

The classroom consisted of a wooden hut situated within a large garden of its own. The classroom had a bathroom with two toilets and teacher's kitchen which was separate, with the rest open plan. The classroom was divided into three sections: tables, play or movement mat, and imitation play area. Low shelving and hooks held baskets of toys and dress-up clothing. Other larger baskets of blocks, cloths, and costumes surrounded the play area on the floor. Everything was accessible to the children except the kitchen at the back and the teachers' cupboards. Toys consisted mainly of objects of nature, such as pine cones, pieces of wood, large and small stones, shells, and crystals. There also were animals and humans, made as 'table puppets' out of felt, wood or wool (knitted). These could be used, along with cloths and objects, to create landscapes and stories. Everything had a place.

The garden had a pond, a large pine tree that could be climbed, a sandpit and jungle gyms. There were many garden beds and pathways. There was a balcony with a woodwork table, and in an area of the garden was a clay pit.

5.3.1. Table area

Tables were set up in groups of three, with three tables each. This allowed 18 children to be able to sit and draw or paint. For birthdays and festivals, we would reshape the tables to make one long one which sat the same number of children but closer together. These tables were for crafts, artistic activities such as drawing and painting, and eating. During play, sometimes the tables were also taken out to become bunk beds, houses, boats, and more.

5.3.2. Mat area

This space had multiple uses throughout the day, from playing to ring time and storytelling. This required tidying up after play, which was considered part of the classroom activity. The area had to be clear enough to stand or seat the 18 children. In play time, all the toys, blocks, and equipment would come out and the whole area would be filled.

5.3.3. Imitation area

An important feature of a Waldorf classroom is that the child can engage in imitative play. For this, an area is designed to imitate a home, with dolls in beds or prams, a kitchen table, cupboard with real cups and saucers, toy stove with pots and spoons, ironing board, and dolls clothes. I also had a bunk bed they could play on. Play stands, which were wooden and free standing, had a small shelf that could become part of a house, bed, shop, or place for a puppet show. These could be moved into the play mat area or even outside.

5.4. Nature table

A significant feature of the Waldorf kindergarten classroom is the nature table. This is representative of the season of the year. Coloured cloths set the tone, as well as objects from nature such as the branch of a tree, or flowers and logs, creating landscapes and centre-pieces. There was always a candle. Characters of humans, animals, or elements from nature were placed to show the activity represented by that season. Creating a mood is the intention of the table, as well as its being a place where the children could add their own objects which they brought from outdoors. They would often arrive in the morning with a bunch of flowers or stone or shell to 'put on the nature table'.

The colours aligned with the elements, such as air, water, fire, earth, and each season had a characteristic that could be represented. Table 5.1 shows the colour alignment with the seasons and associated elements.

Table 5.1: Seasons and associated colours and elements for the nature table

Season	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring
Colours	Blues, golden yellow, green, red	Brown, red, yellow, orange	Blue, purple, crystal colours, browns, greens	Pastels such as greens, yellow, pink
Elements	Water, fire	Earth, fire	Earth, water	Air, water

5.5. Seasonal festivals

The Waldorf kindergarten curriculum followed a rhythm of the year reflecting both seasonal changes and the Christian calendar. A festival occurred on the last day of every term, which celebrated both. Festivals involved stories, a ring, a feast and activities which led up to its preparation.

I regularly began the preparation for the festival at least three weeks ahead. This meant that my assistant and I spent hours the night before, setting up the room and putting away toys. The idea was to make the class beautiful and special. On the day, there

were usually an activity, a special ring or story, and a feast. All the crafts of the term were part of the decorations.

The festivals had an interesting complexity in the southern hemisphere. Although they were a celebration of season, the Christian holiday often had a seasonal association, such as spring and Easter. In the southern hemisphere that was switched, so, for instance, the seasonal festival of harvest or autumn coincided with Easter. The festival in September of Saint Michael the Archangel was celebrated in the northern hemisphere as a descent into the dark of winter, taking Michael's golden sword. Here this became the celebration of spring. Our priority was to incorporate the season with the appropriate human activities. Other cultures of the children also contributed to creating a festival around songs, decoration and foods.

The festivals had activities such as:

1. Grinding grain, going to a farm for apples, and making dried slices for autumn.
2. Making lanterns for mid-winter.
3. Sawing, sanding and painting golden swords and sewing a dragon for spring.
4. Making gifts and decorations for summer/Christmas.

Table 4.2 below shows the varying festivals together with the stories, activities, and main themes.

5.6. Rhythmic teaching

Much of the teaching in the Waldorf kindergarten involved rhythm, but also rituals and participation. The medium for experiencing higher-order meaning is participation. It could be said that Waldorf creates ritual from participation. With a small child, the opportunity to treat each activity in a reverent manner meant attention given to its beginning, end and middle.

Table 5.2: List of term dates, festivals and themes

TERM DATES	SEASONAL FESTIVAL	CHRISTIAN FESTIVAL	MAIN THEMES
January–March	Harvest, Autumn	Easter	Rebirth, farm, harvest, gratitude, activities of farming and work, bees.
April–June	Mid-winter	St John the Baptist	Holding light of mid-winter, lanterns, fires, gnomes, rain, wheat.
July–September	Spring	St Michael and the dragon	Taming the dragon, spring, planting, swords, flowers, fairies, new growth.
October–December	Mid-summer	Christmas	Gratitude, gifts, summer, water, stories of Joseph and Mary, shepherds and kings, Jesus.

Each time a candle was lit, there was a moment of consciousness, along with a verse. The repeated rituals every day created a ‘known space’ for the children, which I believe was linked to their learning. An important aspect is that within a ritual there are not collectively prescribed perspectives; these are fluidly created by different groups of people in different contexts. Table 5.2 lists the terms, festivals and main themes.

5.7. The daily rhythm as a binary of breathing

The daily rhythm in a Waldorf kindergarten is considered to model the breathing process.

1. In-breathing activities are those which are focused and teacher mediated, such as craft in the morning, ring time, activities such as painting, drawing and modelling, and story time.

2. Out-breathing activities are those which are child directed such as play which allows them to choose what they wish to do and to use their imaginations. Artistic activities also have an aspect of out-breathing, as they allow for imagination and freedom, while simultaneously being an organised activity.

Table 5.3 overleaf shows the daily rhythm, and whether this activity represented the state of in or out breathing.

Table 5.3: Rhythm of the day, pertaining to in-breath-out-breath in activity

Time	Activity	In-breath/Out-breath
8–9 a.m.	Arrival, craft, quiet play	In-breath
9–9:45 a.m.	Tidy up and free play	Out-breath
9:45–10 a.m.	Fruit time	In-breath
10:15–10:30 a.m.	Ring time	In-breath
10:30–10:45 a.m.	Activity – drawing, painting, modelling	In-breath (and out-breath)
10:45 a.m.	Lunch	In-breath
11 a.m.–12 p.m.	Free play and tidy up, set up for story	Out-breath
12–12:15 p.m.	Storytime	In-breath

5.7.1. Observation: Transitions and repetition of activity and language

Notes from my journal, 15 March.

I observed the children during ring time, when they had to leave their play in the garden or class, and come to the circle together. They would be satisfied to spend that time focusing because they knew they had the time on their own as well. This appeared to be a key to self-regulation in the classroom.

Transitions were an opportunity for rituals, including language and movement. Transitions were conducted, in order to keep the dreamy state of mind of the child, but at the same time awaken them to the change of activity. This meant notifying through an instrument or song, so that they recognised it but were not startled.

Examples of transitions which coincided with activities are shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Transitions and associated activity and language

Transition	Activity associated	Language associated
Craft/inside time to outside play.	Tidy up of inside play	Tidy up song
Outside time to fruit time (eaten outside unless raining)	Washing hands Movements in the verse for fruit	Washing hands song. Fruit verse
Outside time to ring time	Bell rung Children come to classroom and stand in ring.	Song to bring into ring time
Activity	Hand game before the activity.	Verse i.e., Tommy thumb.
Lunch time	Set table, tidy up Wash hands Light candle and blessing	Washing hands song Candle song Blessing before meal
Free play to story time	Chairs laid out for story Bell rung Children enter quietly, sit on a chair	Tidy up song Verses before story

5.7.2. Observation from notes: Self-regulation in terms of cloth folding

One of the valuable aspects of the rhythm is within the transitions. I watch as the children have begun to associate a song or verse with the activity of the transition. They are feeling comfortable in it. The more insecure children like Suki and Siphon predicted the next transition, and are often waiting for me to ring the bell. The transition time helps the children stay in a dreamy state of mind as they are secure in what comes next. They love to wash their hands to the song "Can you tell me, what the children are doing... They are washing their hands, and you can wash too.

All cloths that were used in the play had to be folded. To accompany this activity was a song which went along with the actions.

Two children each holding the corner two sides of the blanket

Sing: Shake shake a pancake (shake the blanket)

And fold the pancake over (fold the corners together)

The children then needed to find their rhythm with each other, and keep folding until it could be put away.

At first Greta and Cindy, who had started kindergarten that year, turning 5 years, were passionate about cloths. When they played, they would take all the cloths out of the basket and make a big pile in the middle of the mat. But soon they realised the connection between playing with all the cloths and tidying them up, since every tidy-up time they would have to fold all these cloths, or ask for help from friends. Soon they were choosing which cloths to use, and avoiding all the extras!

5.8. How rhythm facilitates language

Through the daily rhythm, repetitive language was used in the form of verses and songs.

Table 5.5 gives examples of rituals which also aligned with the rhythm of the morning.

Table 5.5: Activities, rhythms and rituals

Activity	Ritual purpose and tools
Lighting a candle (story, meals)	Fire fairy song Sense of stillness and attention
Hand game before activity	Song and movement to focus attention
Closing-off story time	Song, blowing out candle, shaking hands
Fruit time verse and talking stick	Say a verse with hand movements Child hands out fruit Using talking stick to help allocate speaker and enhance listening

5.9. Ring time, repetition and seasonal rhythm

The ring time was the central, focused time of the morning, where all the children came in from their play, and all participated together. The format was a circle, in the same

area where the play occurred. The children were summoned to the circle with a bell, which one of them rang. They would take off their shoes and coats if needed, and join. There was usually a bit of scuffle as children settled where they wanted to be. Only if a child was ill or hurt could they miss it.

A song was sung as they arrived and joined to make a circle:

Let us make a circle a circle a circle. (x2)

A circle like the sun.

Let us make a circle...A circle like the moon.

The teacher spoke lyrically or sang, alongside movements. The children joined along with the teacher, rather than a 'repeat after me' scenario. There were no explanations or showing, just doing. It also helped that half of the class were there for a second year, so they modelled to the other children. The ring time lasted about 20 minutes.

5.9.1. Types of movements and language which are done in every ring time:

- A **verse** to greet the earth and each other
- Setting the **season**, with language verses and songs
- **Large motor**, general songs including the whole body.
- **Small and fine motor**, such as finger games or those involving specific parts of the body along with lyrics.
- **Ring games** with turn taking. Usually three turns.
- Short **nature story**
- **Bridging** between songs/verses with language to keep the story between the songs and verses.

5.9.2. Examples where polarities were also considered in the development of the ring time:

- Active and quiet songs
- Large and small motor movements

- In and out movements
- Loud and soft
- Polarity in the language and imagery of the songs and verses

The circle was the heart of the morning, filled with purposeful movement and language, through story and song. It always was modelled around the season, using human and animal activities of what happens on earth at that time as the basis. The ring time was an aspect where storytelling could impact the children's play. Usually an activity, such as painting, drawing or modelling, followed the ring time so that the same images could be expressed.

The same ring time was repeated for consecutive days, so the children learned to predict and sing/say the words along with movement. This was a kind of embodied form of learning language. The movements worked on coordination, balance, crossing the midline, body geography, as well as bringing language to life. It was considered an in-breathing activity as the children were not essentially free; they were in a guided activity.

5.9.3. Progression of the ring time in autumn

The story set the scene of the movement ring:

Once upon a time Ayanda and Liesl were riding their little ponies, as granny wanted some apples for an apple pie. They had to go to the stable and fetch the ponies. They gave them a brush and even a carrot. They put on the bridle and rode on the bare backs. Each had to stand on a stool to get up. Table 5.6 overleaf depicts an example of an autumn ring.

The importance of creating a story-telling mood was to calm the children in order for them to imagine the story while listening. The story was told more than once over a few days, repeated three to five times. Told in exactly the same way, this gave them time to build on their internal pictures and listen to the spoken language.

The room was darkened and the focus on the candle allowed them to dream. There were times when children were disruptive, and these children could be helped by holding something heavy, or sitting close to the teacher.

The mode of the story as I told it was as an “old grandmother”. This meant that not much drama but rather a faraway calmness surrounded the storytelling. This was something I had learned in my own teacher training, predominantly for young children. The dramatic tones emerged in the primary school. Even emotive aspects, such as the wolf meeting Little Red Cap (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:139), would be done in a calm voice, rather than attempting to exaggerate the acting and make it frightening.

Some questions arose from the children during the telling of the story. If this happened, I did not overact to it, but at times would answer the question, especially if they wanted to know the meaning of a word. After they had asked the question the first time, I found it became a ritual for them, and they would ask the same question on subsequent tellings.

By the end of the year, the older children, turning 7 years, began to repeat every word with me, after hearing the story only once. Their memory was so accessible to them that they spoke along with me, with slight reminders as I spoke. I allowed them to do this, seeing it as a developmental form of listening, but it was the first time it had ever happened.

It is ironic how Disney films have altered events in fairy tale tales. For instance, in the original *The Frog King or Iron Henry* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:17), the ending has completely changed in terms of the transformational moment. In the original story (1975 edition), the Princess becomes so frustrated by the frog that she throws him across the room, shouting, “Will you be quiet, you odious frog?” As she throws the frog against the wall, he changes into a prince. This changed to her kissing the frog in modern versions, which alters the act and meaning. In my own interpretation, that throwing to the wall represents how we have to stand up for ourselves to transform, even if it may happen in ways unknown to us.

Because I had the children for two, sometimes three years in kindergarten, I could watch their change in development. An example was in the questions that were asked about the story. When I was telling *Akimba and the Magic Cow* (Perrow, 2008:114), the older group were finding holes in the logic of the story, and asking about it. In the previous year, they had just listened to the story. This year they asked why Akimba did

not notice his animals were being taken by Bamba? And why he did not save money when his cow produced gold? These were logical and funny questions that arose from the story, of which they had not noticed the relevance in the previous year. This shows a development in their consciousness which corresponds to the developmental stages where their thinking becomes awakened as they reach 5.5 or 6 years.

After the oral telling for three to five days, depending on the length of the story, it would often be followed by puppetry and/or acting.

5.9.4. Puppetry

Using puppets involved standing puppets, both animals and humans, set up on a table. Cloths would decorate landscapes and logs or other pieces of wood created layering. Objects of nature became symbolic mediators, for instance, a pine cone becoming a tree, or stones created a path. Pieces of wood could be made into houses, and colours of the cloth created the mood and season of the story. These are examples of modelling symbolic mediation.

The teacher told the story while manipulating the puppets, and there was quite an art to moving only those puppets featured in that section of the story, while simultaneously speaking. When the puppets were not used they could be put down in a suitable place within the story layout. Puppetry allowed the children to visualise the story being enacted, but also in gestures suited to the language of the telling. This is contrary to much of what they see on screens these days, which is speedy in movement. In the case of the puppet shows in the classroom, they were still told in a dreamy but realistic way, and moved at the same pace as the spoken language. Animal gestures would reflect the nature of that movement, for instance, the difference between a horse or a snail. People also had different gaits, such as a king or an old woman, a child or a baby. The voice changed slightly for characters, but only in tone not overly dramatic.

The first time I would do the puppet show for the children, I would set it up myself. The next time the children always wanted to help in the set up. This involved cloths for landscapes, pieces of wood, logs, stones for hills, houses and other objects. They attempted to repeat the set-up, thus remembering the placement of landscape, objects

and characters. Not only was this a means of modelling play, but also memory of sequence and symbolic object.

After the puppet show was set up, I would cover it with a light cloth. This gave a sense of protection. I would always ask the children to be quiet as the puppets wanted to do their very best for them! Before the story started, a child would play a soft instrument as I lifted the cloth from the puppet show. This only occurred after we lit the candle. There was a reverence in this activity, which showed that I cared for the puppets. The mood enhanced the dream-like atmosphere, which enhanced the children's experience.

When presenting a puppet show, I used the same language as in the oral telling of the tale, so that the children were already familiar with it. Sometimes I would shorten it slightly. During the performance, the gaze of my eyes was directed at the puppets, and not at the children. This was because the children imitated me, and thus would follow my gaze. I would repeat the puppet show 3–4 times. The children were always excited in anticipation of the puppet shows, both to help set them up and to watch.

5.9.5. Cloth puppets

Cloth puppets provided a simple way to perform a puppet show by using a scarf (the best was pure silk), and tying a knot at the top for a head. The finger of one hand went in the head, and the draped cloth furnished the body. I could manipulate the puppet with my hand.

I started with two stories early in the year to model puppetry. The story Sweet Porridge (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:476) was a simple and short fairy tale, with three characters: mother, daughter and old woman. Each cloth colour represented the character, with pink for the daughter, blue for the mother and purple for the old woman. The movement of the various cloths represented the movement of that character: the mother and child, and the old woman in the wood. The mother and child were hungry, and the child went to the wood. There she met an old woman who gave her a magic pot. When the girl used specific words, the pot would cook porridge, while other words would make it stop. The girl went out and the mother knew how to cook the magic porridge, but forgot

the words to make it stop. The porridge thus boiled over the pot, at which point the pot on my lap began to spread cloths from within. One of my favourite lines in the story is:

So, it went on cooking and the porridge rose to the edge, and still it cooked on until the kitchen and the whole house were full, and then the next house, and then the whole street, just as if it wanted to satisfy the hunger of the whole world, and there was the greatest distress, but no-one knew how to stop it (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:476).

The puppet table was my lap and the pot rested on me, and the cloths from the porridge flowed onto me.

5.9.6. Learning sequencing and structure from a puppet show

A puppet show modelled a structure, a visual mapping for the story sequencing.

It showed direction and movement of a journey, depending on where it started and ended.

1. Starting at one location, moving on a journey, and ending at another place. For instance, *The Three Little Men in the Wood* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:78) started at the home of the one girl's father, then went to a combined home with step-mother, through the forest and river, and ended at the palace. *Cinderella* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:121) was in her home and three times went to the palace and back to where she hid. Each time they searched for her and something in the garden was destroyed. At the end, she went back to the palace to be married.
2. In other stories, people go on a journey and then return home, such as in *A Little Boy Went Sailing* (Perrow, 2008:170). *Sweet Porridge* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:475) also started with a girl who went to the forest, found a pot, and came back home. *Little Red Cap* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:139) goes from home to her grandmother's house and back. She also does this a second time.

5.9.7. Action research: changing the structure of puppetry

With the story of Akimba and the Magic Cow (Perrow, 2008:114) I initiated a novel method: the children moved the puppets while I told the story. We had told the story orally, four times, and then acted it four times, so the children knew it very well. Groups of four to five children stood at the puppet table and moved all the animals and characters while I spoke. The first group comprised five boys, and it was wonderful to see the delight they had in performing the puppet show. The language and movement were simple and clear, so between one another they could negotiate their characters.

5.10. Acting out the stories

Acting the story with the class was not intended as a performance, but rather a participatory experience. The teacher set up the chairs and classroom according to the story. Cloths were laid out to represent different areas, and the chairs were placed where the characters were required to sit, but within a circle arrangement. Simple costumes were placed on the chair.

The candle and verse occurred as normal. I chose the roles beforehand, alternating large and small, and kept a record each day. If there were not enough characters I would add extras, such as bushes or trees, or other animals. As the children came in, I would tell them their role and allocate the chairs.

The children were not all active during the entire performance, so they sat in the chairs or on pillows until it was their turn. There was a need for the teacher to maintain discipline in the class, while still motivating the children and having an enjoyable experience.

Acting allowed the children to immerse themselves in the language, movement and gesture of the story. The children were not pressured to play any parts as the teacher narrated. If they knew the parts and wanted to speak them, they could. The older children especially were keen to remember words for their role. Hearing the story numerous times in the oral telling, and sometimes again in puppetry, had made them familiar with the story and its language by the time of the performance.

Like the puppetry, there was movement to the story, so events would take place in different areas. All of it was kept within the larger circle of the acting, so that all children could see at all times. At times acting occurred within a circle, where all the children became the house. This occurred with *The Three Little Pigs* (traditional), and *The Wolf and Seven Kids* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:39).

A few stories were acted for the parents during the festivals. These included *The Seven Ravens* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:137) for the winter festival, while *The Christmas Play* (Bryer & Nicol, 2001) was acted at the end of the year. These were performances for the parents, with more attention given to the settings and costumes. The children would only be allocated their roles the day before, so that they also practised various parts, both large and small. Some stories, such as *Sweet Porridge* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:475), had too few characters or events to be acted.

5.10.1. Types of stories to act

Stories were acted in different ways, according to the type of story, scenes, characters, and materials provided in our training.

Types of stories to act:

1. Stories which when acted, used the same language from the original story told to the children. For example, *The Three Little Men in the Wood* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:78) was a complex story, and the acting occurred exactly as the telling. Different areas on the journey were laid out with cloths.
2. Some stories had specific acting scripts provided, either from my own mentor or other Waldorf teacher resources. *The Wolf and Seven Kids* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:39) had a specific play, with rhyme and song, written by my mentor. The children stood together in a circle and became the house, with two children as the door. All the events of the play occurred inside and around the circle. The play ended in that same circle, with dancing around the wolf. In all the plays with wolves we had a standard song at the end, where the children around the circle sang and danced, "The wolf is dead, the wolf is dead, the wicked wolf is dead".

3. Other stories were a combination of the exact wording, with added songs, rhyming verses or changed parts.

5.11. Presenting the data: Storytelling

The following section covers the four terms in relationship to the overall seasonal themes of the term, as well as the stories which were told, done in puppetry and acted with the children. For each term a few stories are discussed in relationship to their content, how they were presented, and the reactions of the children.

5.11.1. Aspects and themes in the first term

Table 5.6 outlines the factors of the first term, in relation to the season, and associated colours on the nature table, themes of stories and crafts done in class.

Table 5.6: Aspects and themes of the seasonal stories

Season	Summer towards autumn
Colours/nature table	blue, golden yellow, beach colour, green
Themes of stories	Water such as oceans and rivers, boats, fish, mermaids, whales, play, fishing Meadows, picnics, bees Harvest and farms
Crafts done in class	Ocean pictures on hessian Sewing felt fish Pom pom bunnies

5.11.2. Stories presented in term one

Table 5.7 shows the story schedule for the year, including how many days were dedicated to oral telling, puppetry or acting the story. It covers the stories per term and reviews the term in respect of the storytelling. The chart also outlines what type of story it was, whether traditional, fairy tale or written for the Waldorf classroom.

1. The Little Boy and his Boat (Perrow, 2008:170-2)

This story was used as a welcoming story for the children before the first day of school. They came with their parents for a 'tea party' where a story was told of a boy who visits a series of islands, each with an activity that reflected those they would do in the kindergarten.

I told the story in the form of a puppet show. On my nature table was a gift for each child: a boat made from a mussel shell and a felt sail on a toothpick. In this way I was already introducing an imaginative picture for the child's participation in the class. In the story, the boy found an island to climb on rocks, climb trees or jungle gyms (bush castle), eating fruit, playing in a water pool and digging in sand. Each represented a different area of the kindergarten.

There was a lyrical repetition between each activity:

*Playing in the sand (eating bananas, climbing trees...) is lots of fun
But I want more adventures under the sun.*

At the end he sailed home tired, and I sang a lullaby to the boy. The purpose was to make them want to come back to school the following week, which was the start of the year. The same story was then told for the first 3 days of school.

Table 5.7: Term 1 story schedule – summer to autumn festival

Dates / 2016	Story	Method of telling	Times told	Type of story/theme
1/20–22	A little boy and his boat	Told with puppets and landscape of an island	3	Boats and adventures, settling into kindergarten
1/25–27	Sweet porridge	Told with cloth puppets	3	Simple Grimm's fairy tale
1/28–2/2 2/3–5	The Frog prince	Oral Puppetry	5 3	Grimm's fairy tale, water theme
2/8-12 2/15-18	The Queen Bee	Oral Acting	5 4	Grimm's fairy tale, summer theme

Dates / 2016	Story	Method of telling	Times told	Type of story/theme
2/19, 22, 23	The little boy who wanted to be carried	Told with cloth puppet	3	Simple rhyming story, elements of water
2/24–26 2/29–3/3	Three Little Pigs	Told Acting	3 4	Traditional tale, farm theme
3/4, 7–9/4 3/10–11, 14–15	The Wolf and Seven kids	Oral Acting	4 4	Grimm's fairy tale, farm theme
3/16	Easter bunny story	Oral	1	Waldorf autumn festival story
3/17	Easter bunny story	Told with puppets	1	FESTIVAL

2. The three little pigs (traditional)

This is a traditional story, which many children already know. Not only was it a way to introduce the farm theme into stories, but it also brings strong images of building a secure home. I only told it once at story time, and then followed through with acting it 3 times in the ring time of the morning. The circle of children makes up the house when they acted it. This is a means of teaching play to children, as some take particular roles, including main roles, while others become trees, or part of the door to the house, men carrying the supplies.

The characters in the story, when acted, were:

Mother pig and 3 sons, one who builds the house of straw, sticks, bricks.

Me who carry the building material (acted with a wheel barrow)

2 students are door to the house, all the children become the house in a circle

Wolf

Trees in the orchard

The version told in the classroom was older and longer version than I heard as a child. The pig had to visit a turnip patch, orchard, and then the fair, where he bought a butter churn and rolled down the hill, scaring the wolf on the final visit. It was only then that the wolf climbed the chimney, after being outsmarted 3 times, and the fire was waiting. The children danced around the fire place singing, "The Wolf is dead" at the end. This was a song which continued into other plays about the wolf.

3. The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:39)

This is a rich and lively story, which was fun to tell and to act, and continued the theme of farming. The story is about a group of kid goats who stay at home when their mother goes food foraging. The play that I used for this story was written by my mentor, Sheila Miller. It was written in rhyme, and had group actions to the songs. The acting of the story again began in a circle, where the children became the house. But this time the circle breaks and other events occur. Once again it started with all the children as the house, and then differentiating into the mother, wolf, and 7 kids. Two children also became the doors of the house. The wolf constantly pretends to be their mother. For three attempts he tries to trick them, and the first two they recognise the wolf. On the last, he gets in and the kids run and hide. Only the youngest one is found in the clock case. The rest were in the tummy of the wolf; however, the mother later rescues them by cutting open the sleeping wolf's stomach. Rocks are placed by the kids into the stomach and the wolf dies in the well of thirst. The children again dance around the well singing, "The Wolf is dead".

The term ended with the Easter festival. In craft classes, we had sewn bunnies, ground wheat, and each child had a small planting tray in which we sprinkled bird seed. This created a little garden. Then we made gnomes out of a gum nut and a bead. The story of the Easter bunny has a garden and a gnome. During the story, my assistant placed a chocolate egg in each garden, so that when the children came out, they found the eggs and could take them home.

5.11.3. Aspects and themes in the second term

Table 5.8 outlines the characteristics of the second term, including the season, colours of the nature table, themes of the stories and crafts done in the class.

Table 5.8: Aspects and themes of the seasonal stories

Seasons	Autumn moving towards winter
Colours/nature table	browns, golden yellow, red, orange, purple, dark green
Themes of stories	Farm animals, houses, cleaning, mother earth, baby seeds
Crafts done in class	Pom poms making hedgehogs and chickens, circle weaving which leads to a tortoise, sewing rabbits

5.11.4. Review of storytelling in the second term

Three stories were reviewed from this term in relation to their content and reaction of the children. Table 5.9 lists the second term story schedule, including those orally told, with a book, puppetry and through acting.

1. *Rapunzel* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975: 73)

This is the traditional story about a child who loves her neighbours Rampions (turnips) and finally gets caught and trapped in the tower where the witchy neighbour guards her. Finally, it is her hair that helps the journey of getting out of the tower to meet the prince. It contains the famous refrain, “Rapunzel, Rapunzel, Let down your hair.” (Grimm & Grimm, 1975: 75). This continued the theme of the farm and going into the winter time (trapped in a castle). I was surprised in the acting of this play that what my older girls most wanted to do was be the evil Queen, and this began months of their own play with that character.

This story was told orally, and I also had a picture book to accompany. The first time I would tell the story I would not use the book, to give an opportunity to the children to create their own ‘inner pictures’ of the story. Afterwards I would show the pictures along with the telling. There were three stories told with picture books this term, which also modelled a way of telling and reading stories, while following with outside pictures. The pictures in these books had a particular aesthetic quality as determined by the

standards of a Waldorf school. Thus, the pictures in themselves could stimulate imagination.

Table 5.9: Term 2 story schedule – autumn to mid-winter festival

Dates 2016	Story	Method of telling	Times told	Type of story/ theme
4/6–8	The Little House Gnome	Oral	3	Waldorf story home
4/11–13 4/ 14,15,18,19	Rampion	Telling with a picture book Acting	3 4	Grimm's fairy tale, farm theme
4/20–22 4/25, 26, 5/2 5/3–6	Akimba and the Magic Cow	Telling Acting Puppetry	3 3 4	Rewritten from African traditional
5/9–11 5/12–13	The Apple Cake Story	Telling with a picture book Puppetry	3 2	Story picture book
5/16–19 5/23–26 5/27–6/1	Town Musicians of Bremen	Telling with a picture book Puppetry Acting	4 4 4	Grimm's fairy tale Farm life
6/2, 3	Children made stories	Child-directed puppet stories	2	Children asked to tell the story
6/6–9 6/13–16 6/20–23	Seven Ravens	Telling Puppet show Acting	4 4 4	Grimm's fairy tale Dark journey to stars, ravens
6/23	Seven Ravens	Acting for mid-winter FESTIVAL		For parents at night – festival

2. Akimba and the Magic Cow (Perrow, 2008: 114)

This is a traditional African tale, rewritten; a repetitive and fun story about a man, Akimba, who left the village in search of food and work. On his way he met a man chopping wood, who proceeded to offer him magical animals as a way out of his troubles. Each had a special word to summon gold, silver and eggs. Every time, Akimba made the mistake of needing to go away and trusting a neighbour, Bamba with both the animal and sacred word. Each time Bamba sent back a different animal on

his return. Finally, there is a magic stick, which beats him, and Akimba decides to test his neighbour with it. It beats Bamba, who begs for it to stop, and Akimba agrees only if he returns his magic animals. It is a tale of being smart as well as trusting in protecting what you have.

I told the story orally for three days. Then we acted it for 3 days and also did a puppet show for 4 days. The children loved the acting as they had to be the different animals belonging to each person.

Locations of the story: Man chopping wood, Akimba's house, Bamba's house - areas allocated by cloths and chairs

Characters: man chopping wood, Akimba, Bamba, magic/normal cow, magic/normal sheep, magic/ normal chicken, stick.

I had to create an area and have the false animals sitting in Bamba's house, so that when Akimba brought his animal, and came to retrieve it, a different child represented the non-magical animal. The children loved to make the sounds of the animal who did not produce gold, silver or an egg, but just did the sounds of. moo, baaa and cluck cluck.

For an object to represent gold and silver I used cloths and a rock for the eggs.

By the time we did the puppet show the children knew the story very well. I tried something I had not done before, and that was me telling the story while a group of children moved the puppets. Each day of puppetry I asked a different group of 4 children to perform the puppets while I narrated.

3. *The Seven Ravens* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:137)

For our winter festival story, we acted *The Seven Ravens*, which we also presented to the parents on the festival evening. This story was told, done in puppetry and acted, so by the time it was presented the language of the story was well known to the children. The play had songs which we sang already in the puppetry, around the birth

of the girl, her voyage to the celestial sky to search her brothers, the ravens flying and returning as brothers. It is a story filled with symbolic imagery. The boys become ravens due to the anger of the father, as they were fetching water for the young girl's baptism. The girl finds out and goes on a journey, with only a stool, a pitcher and piece of bread, as well as a ring of her mothers. She goes to the sun and moon, who act in a way that are also not what one expects. The moon is cold and horrible and devours children, and the sun is hot but also raging. Only the morning star (Venus) is kind to her and guides her. And gives her a drumstick of a chicken as a way to get into the crystal mountain where her brothers are.

When she arrives and looks for it, the gift is missing and she cuts her own finger off in order to enter. She then places the ring of her mother in the glass of the youngest brother, who when he finds it as a raven, announces that their sister must be there. This breaks their spell and they become human again and return home.

For the festival presentation, we made simple costumes such as black capes for the ravens, and crowns for the stars, sun and moon. Chairs were placed in the positions of the characters, with their costumes waiting on them. There was a prewritten play that I had memorised for the acting, and singing, and the whole class was involved. The classroom was dark, but lit by candles to generate a wintery feeling to the show. I told the story, but the children moved and said parts when they chose. The autumn to winter theme brought the children inside more, doing activities like leaf pressing and crafts such as pom-poms and weaving. From the pom-poms the children made a hedgehog, and from the weaving a tortoise. These animals, once finished, were put on the nature table or played with, until they took them home on the festival.

5.11.5. Aspects and themes in the third term

The following table 5.10 outlines the characteristics of the term, including the season, colours of the nature table, themes of the stories and crafts done in the class.

Table 5.10: Aspects and themes of the seasonal stories

Seasons	Winter towards spring
Colours/nature table	Crystal colours, purple, blue, white, as well as browns and greens
Themes of stories	Rain, homes, spring cleaning, growth and seeds, gnomes and fairies, birds, nest making
Crafts done in class	Weaving becoming tortoises, felt frogs and ponds, felt dragons

5.11.6. Review of storytelling in the third term

The following Table 5.11 gives the story telling schedule for the third term, including oral telling, puppetry and acting.

Table 5.11: Term 3 story schedule – mid-winter to spring festival

Dates	Story	Method of telling	Days	Type of story
7/25–28 8/1–4 8/10–13	The Three Little Men in the Wood	Oral telling Puppetry Acting	4 4 4	Grimm's fairy tale, winter theme
8/15–18 8/19, 22–24 8/26, 29, 30	Little Red Cap	Oral telling Puppetry Acting	4 4 3	Grimm's fairy tale, spring theme
9/1–2	Kimwaki and the Weaver Birds	Oral telling	2	Traditional African spring theme
9/5–8 9/12–13 9/14–17	Little Briar Rose	Oral telling Puppetry Acting	4 2 4	Grimm's fairy tale, spring theme
9/18–20 9/21–22	Snowflake and the Dragon	Oral telling Acting	2 2	Waldorf festival story

Four stories are discussed for this term, including the content and reaction of the children from the story.

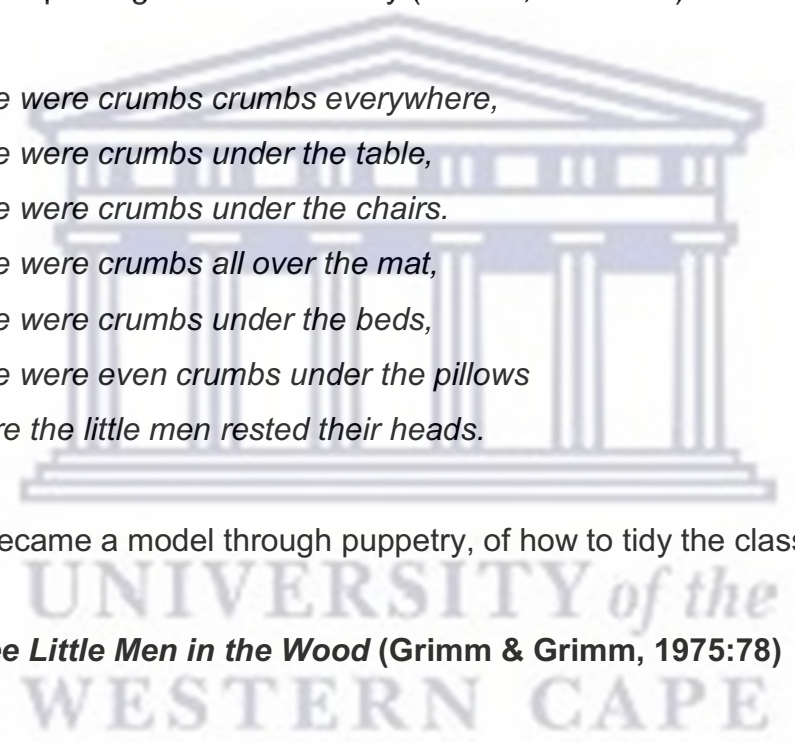
1. *The little straw broom* (Perrow, 2008:220).

The term began with rainy and cold weather, and the stories were about the home and winter. I began with a remedial story, called The Little Straw Broom. It was about two

gnomes who did not know how to clean with the straw broom, and are visited by Gold Hat, who shows them. This is an example of modelling behaviour. The three different characters gave examples of temperaments of doing things: Red hat who rushed the cleaning, Blue hat who was slow and spaced out, and Gold hat who paid attention and did it beautifully. Each hat sang a sweeping song, at the different pace of their characters.

I presented the story in the form of puppetry, using three gum nut gnomes with different coloured felt hats – red, blue and gold. A large tree root became the home.

There was a repeating verse in the story (Perrow, 2008:220):



*There were crumbs crumbs everywhere,
There were crumbs under the table,
There were crumbs under the chairs.
There were crumbs all over the mat,
There were crumbs under the beds,
There were even crumbs under the pillows
Where the little men rested their heads.*

This story became a model through puppetry, of how to tidy the classroom together.

2. *The Three Little Men in the Wood* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:78)

The fairy tale of *The Three Little Men in the Wood* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:78) had always been a favourite of mine. It was orally told, done in puppetry and acted. It was about two girls, each who had a parent die, and they convince the other two parents to marry. At first it was equal, which was told in the story as the following picture:

When the woman proposed to the man's daughter that she wished to marry her father, she stated,

Listen, tell your father that I would like to marry him, and then you shall wash yourself in milk every morning, and drink wine, but my own daughter shall wash herself in water and drink water. (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:76)

Then when the marriage happens,

The next morning, when the two girls got up, there stood before the man's daughter milk for her to wash in and wine for her to drink, but before the woman's daughter stood water to wash herself and water for drinking. On the second morning, stood water for washing and water for drinking before the man's daughter as well as before the woman's daughter. And on the third morning, stood water for washing and water for drinking before the man's daughter, and milk for washing and wine for drinking, before the woman's daughter, and so it continued. (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:79)

This is a symbolic way of expressing the favouring of the one daughter over the other, through a physical means, which was told, then shown in the puppet show, and at last acted through the story.

It had very strong images of kindness and good behaviour, alongside the polarity of a complex series of negative actions by the stepmother. She sent the man's daughter to the forest in a paper dress to collect strawberries in the winter. It was there she met the three little men, and was asked to share her food. Although the stepmother had only given her crusts of bread, she still shared, and this showed the little men her kindness. This was polarised by the other daughter, belonging to the woman, who went to the hut with the men and refused to share her breakfast, which was bread and cake.

The men also asked the first daughter to go in the back of the hut and sweep, although it was the middle of winter. She did this abidingly, and discovered the strawberries her step mother had sent her for. Not only that, upon her return to the parents and step-sister, the men had wished her good things, and now gold came out of her mouth with each word. This made the step sister jealous, who also begged to go to the forest. She was allowed, but only with a warm coat as opposed to the paper frock, and a full breakfast. Yet this sister was rude to the little men, and refused sharing breakfast as well as sweeping outside, and left with a curse that made toads jump out of her mouth each time she spoke. The story was full of different scenes, polarised characters and more complex acting that was appropriate for the middle of the year.

3. *Little Red Cap* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:139)

This is the traditional Little Red Riding Hood, yet longer than I had heard it as a child. It was a lovely winter to spring story as the forest was full of flowers and birds. Because the lead roles are few, I added flowers, birds and butterflies, and we sang some of our spring songs in the acting. This is a story of consequence, of going off the path, and the children loved acting it as well.

4. *Kimwaki and the Weaver Birds* (Savory, 1991)

This is an African story of a man who inherited land but who was not interested in taking care of it, or helping his neighbours. Eventually when it is overrun with weeds, and nobody wants to support the work as he did not return the favors, he watches some weaver birds build their own nests. This inspires him, as the birds are working together, and he goes to help his neighbours. After this, his kindness is returned and they help him to get his farm productive. While fitting the theme of spring and birds, the story holds both the factors of nature to inspire reverence and knowledge of the weaver birds, but also the morals of helping each other.

At the time of storytelling we also sewed birds of felt with beads for wings. I hung the sewn birds from a branch in the classroom. The nature table was also a spring branch with a weaver's nest and needle felted weaver birds.

5.11.7. Aspects and themes in the fourth term

Table 5.12 outlines the characteristics of the term, including the season, colours of the nature table, themes of the stories and crafts done in the class.

Table 5.12: Aspects and themes of the seasonal stories

Seasons	Spring towards summer
Colours/nature table	Pastel colours, pinks, yellows, light green. For Christmas it became dark green, blue, gold.
Themes of stories	Transformation, bees, butterflies, birds, Christmas, giving, sacrifice.
Crafts done in class	Christmas presents for the parents and decorations.

5.11.8. Review of storytelling in the fourth term

Table 5.13 outlines the story schedule for the fourth term, including those with books, oral telling, puppet montage and acting.

Table 5.13: Term 4 story schedule – spring to summer festival

Dates	Story	Method	Days	Type of story/theme
10/12–14	Reading books for children	Books	2	Storybooks from the library
10/17–21 10/24–28, 31	Cinderella	Oral telling Acting	5 6	Fairy tale birds, summer
11/1–3 11/4, 7–9	The Crippled Wood Maiden	Oral telling Acting	3 4	Waldorf story, giving, Christmas
11/10–12/2	Progression of Christmas stories	Telling with a nature table montage	17	Christmas Waldorf-based stories
12/5–7	Christmas play	Acting	3	Waldorf play in rhyme
12/8	Festival	Act the Christmas play	2	Done in evening for parents

In the last term, the children in the class knew one another and the rhythm very well. I thus was able to tell and act more complex stories. The term also brings stories which lead a long preparation of the Christmas summer festival.

1. *Cinderella* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:121)

Because of the advanced ages of some of the children in the class, I decided to tell *Cinderella* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:121). Initially, I had to tell it over two days as it was very long. It was too long for me to memorise. But I did my best to learn it so that I could keep eye contact in the telling and only look down for support. Acting the story was complex but interesting. There were some impactful lead roles with speaking parts. For the extra parts, I had children pretending to be the different trees as well as the birds who came to assist Cinderella. Some of the images were quite macabre, but

the children loved the story. For instance, in the original story, the two sisters try to fit into the shoe by cutting off their toes and heels, which bleed all over when they are riding out, and this is how they are discovered not to be the real owners of the shoe. Then at the wedding the birds take out both sisters' eyes. Rowan (name) really took on the speaking part of the tree each time she ran. I was amazed at how many more scenes there were in the original version than I remembered from my childhood. It was a powerful experience for me to tell and act it with the children, as there were strong images in the story, needing a level of maturity to process. Firstly, there was Cinderella's sadness at the loss of her mother, the extended cruelty of the sisters, and support of the birds. It fell in the spring time when the birds were our theme and I was able to give extra roles when the birds helped with the lentils. Even to this day, the purity of Cinderella asking for a branch of the hazel tree to mourn her mother, rather than her sisters wanting fine dresses, has stayed with me.

2. *Crippled Wood Maiden* (Wyatt, 1994:10)

The Waldorf story of The Crippled Wood Maiden was a pre-Christmas tale of giving and kindness. It was about a wood maiden who injured herself and heard there was healing in the land of the singing sky. When she got there, she found out she could only come on the full moon and needed seven of them to go up. So, she put out notice for anyone else that needed healing, and on the last seven nights, a creature visited. When there were seven guests they went to the place where they could take the ladder up, and realised they were one too many. So, the crippled wood maiden gave up her place, and because of that attained her wings back. It was a fun story to listen to and to act because of each injured character. It also led to the Christmas stories, as they were about moral qualities of helping others and sacrifice.

3. *The Christmas stories*

The process of the Christmas stories to the ending of the year followed a very specific programme in the Waldorf kindergarten. Each of the stories built up towards the birth of Jesus. Each character in the story was represented by the motif on the nature table, which was built as the characters were introduced. This ended with the manger, with Mary, Joseph, Jesus, and the farm animals, the three shepherds, and the three kings.

The whole programme took three weeks to tell the stories. At the same time a play of the story was practised in ring time and performed as a final play for the festival, even for the parents. Once again this had costumes and accessories.

This section of the chapter outlined the storytelling schedule that was conducted in the research year, and how that mediated language to the children. It reviewed some of the stories for their content, language and impact. The research question focused on whether the storytelling of the teacher impacted the children in their play. The following section discusses observations of the children's play.

5.12. Observing play in relation to the storytelling

There were two main times in the kindergarten morning dedicated to free play, equaling about 1.5 hours per 4.5-hour morning. That was one-third of the morning time.

The whole classroom could be used during the play periods, including the inside and the garden. Except for the early mornings, the children were confined to the inside, playing quietly. The equipment, toys, objects of nature, costumes, and cloths were available at the level of the children, so that they could take them as needed. The imitation area provided a home-like environment to stimulate the play.

Outside there was a sandpit, with spades and buckets, and access to water when the teacher was asked. With the help of parents, I had built a 'cooking area' outside that had counters and places to simulate a kitchen; this was close to the sandpit. The garden was full of trees and bushes that could become decoration or ingredients in soups and cakes!

The outdoor equipment included a jungle gym, monkey bars, a tyre swing, a tree to climb, and many pathways in which to run and play games. There were trees and bushes for the children to build houses, play games, and move around. Cloths and play stands could come from inside to add to the house building. Chairs could be moved inside and out.

A pond had fish and plants, and the children could pretend to fish or just observe the pond life. Gardens required watering and weeding, and housed many insects. There was a wild dagga plant which we called 'the ladybird tree', as it contained so many of them.

In general, the teachers did not play with the children. Rather, they engaged in an activity that was either preparation or that could be a model to the children. This included cleaning, washing cloths or dolls clothes, gardening, sweeping, and window washing.

The children enjoyed any activity which the teacher also did, and the older ones could also guide the younger. At the same time, if a child needed help to support their play, such as pegging a cloth or mediating a dispute, the teacher was available. I also had an assistant who helped cut the fruit each day, in which activity the children joined, and who generally kept an eye on the garden while I was working inside.

Much of the children's play included 'making gardens' with all objects of nature, cloths and toys. This involved laying cloths and making landscapes out of logs on different levels. Objects of nature became trees, bushes, animals, boats, and other things. Smaller cloths became details such as rivers. Blocks were built to become houses, beds, and tables. Both people and animal dolls were used, and the children created stories from their own imagination.

5.12.1. Play in the kindergarten

1. Play was often not gender defined. The imitation area was utilised by both boys and girls, including caring for the dolls. I did notice the boys were more inclined to build with blocks, use cars, and make marble runs, while the girls would make more puppet gardens. But both did the other activities as well. Dressing up involved all the children, with animal hats and outfits, crowns, capes and other costumes.

2. A large amount of play focused on homes and families, irrespective of whether human or animal. Much discussion revolved around the cast, whether they were adults, old or young, or babies. Houses were created with chairs as boundaries, or else tables,

stands and blankets. Costumes supported the imagination with animal hats and costumes, as well as dress up clothing such as capes, crowns, aprons, skirts and mermaid tails.

3. The time taken for the game to be set up often surpassed the time of actually playing the game. The anticipation of the game, and opportunity to prepare, included rule setting and role allocation, as well as the structural setting up.

4. At times at the end of the day the children wanted to leave a story garden they had worked on. They could then continue the play the next morning. But this had changed by morning; it never held the same appeal.

5. Objects added to the creativity of the play. For instance, I bought extra-large cloths to make houses, which influenced their play in that the whole class then engaged in house building for many mornings afterwards. At the end of the year, I bought a wooden coffee machine. This inspired play around restaurants and coffee shops, expanding to the creation of menus, setting tables, and roles such as waitresses and customers. The children took the play dough and created muffins which they decorated. The new toys and equipment mediated expanded play.

5.12.2. How the tools of storytelling mediated the structure of play

This section discusses some examples of how the tools within storytelling influenced and mediated play. In my classroom, I observed children playing games involving the two structured means of storytelling, other than oral, and that was puppetry and acting.

The following questions guided my observations of whether their play reflected the storytelling?

- 1) Would they tell the same story (plot, mood, characters) which I told?
- 2) Would they use the same language of the story or change it?
- 3) Would they use the puppets in the same gestures and movements as the story I told?

5.12.2.1. Types of play: puppetry and ‘garden’ making

The toys were all available to the children in baskets. They consisted of the materials of nature, such as large logs or stumps, other pieces of wood, blocks, stones and shells. All of these became landscapes. Then the baskets of puppets, both human and animal, would fill the landscapes and become stories. The children could spend hours just setting up, negotiating the story, before actually telling the story. Some children presented the stories quietly to themselves, others sharing their narrative, while other children stayed silent. At times I would remind the elder children to include the younger ones in the story telling. Sometimes, the children asked if their story gardens could be kept overnight in order to play with it the next morning. At other times they wanted to present the story at ring time, story time, or during play.

On some occasions they set the whole class up as a story, so that the puppet show could be shown. This involved them imitating the rituals of the teacher around storytelling. Table 5.14 provides examples of storytelling processes derived from the classroom story time, expressed through the children's free play.

Table 5.14: Storytelling processes and play

Aspect of storytelling	How children imitated or internalised in their play
Setting up the chairs and candle table.	Setting up chairs and calling the children.
Lighting a candle and reciting a verse before the story.	Children used a mock candle and sang the verses.
Taking a cloth off of the puppet show while playing a musical instrument.	The presenters chose a member of the audience to play the instrument while they carefully removed the cloth.
Audience discipline.	A few children took on the role of ‘disciplining the class’ by asking them not to speak during the show and drawing the signs.

Examples of how children incorporated stories into their play

The children incorporated the themes, language and images of the stories they had heard into their own puppet shows. Table 5.18 shows how stories, initially told and performed with puppets by myself as the teacher, influenced the puppet shows which the children performed for the class. The children made their own versions of stories, using elements of the ones that had been told.

1. The story garden reflecting *The Three Little Men in the Wood* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:78) was laid out on the floor and presented by Storm (6 years) and Marina (6 years) using two standing girl puppets. The story differed slightly from the original but it did reveal that the language, characters, mood and themes of the original story had influenced the girls' presentation.

2. The puppet show reflecting the Easter story was set up on a play stand and presented by Marina (6 years) and Takota (5 years). The same bunny puppet that I had used in the Easter festival show was used for their main character. As in the original storyline, the bunny was tired and weak; however, it was a farmer that brought the bunny back to life, rather than the gnome and Mother Earth. The girls had put out chairs for the whole class to watch, similar to the festival arrangement.

These observations showed that themes, moods, characters, and dialogues from a story are used by the child's imagination to recreate the story anew. The relationship between the story told and what the children played is shown on Table 5.15.

Table 5.15: Example of storytelling influences on the children's puppet plays

STORY – Initiation	INPUT	OUTPUT
<p>1. The Three Little Men in the Wood (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:78)</p> <p>Type of story: Fairy tale</p> <p>Main characters: Two girls Mother and father Three little men in the wood King</p> <p>Themes: death, remarriage, mistreatment, goodness vs rudeness, wishes and justice.</p>	<p>The story was told, performed with puppets and acted over a total of three weeks.</p> <p>Storyline: Two girls have each lost a parent and the surviving parents marry each other.</p> <p>The father's daughter is mistreated and sent to the forest to collect strawberries.</p> <p>The relationship between the stepmother and her own daughter vs father's daughter.</p> <p>The wishes of the little men in the wood which result in gold from the mouth of one daughter, and toads from the other.</p>	<p>In their free play, children conducted a show in front of the whole class.</p> <p>1. The children had lost their parents and were alone in the woods.</p> <p>2. They looked for strawberries in the forest.</p> <p>They incorporated a few lines from the original story: "And they went walking together."</p> <p>"In the forest looking for strawberries."</p>
<p>2. Easter story (a puppet play written by Estelle Briar).</p> <p>Main characters: Rabbit Gnome Mother Earth Chicken Crow Angel</p> <p>Theme: resurrection, farming, sacrifice oneself for another, care</p> <p>Performed once at an Easter/harvest festival using a live garden (bird seed in</p>	<p>A bunny that lives in a very dry garden. A gnome finds him dying and takes him to Mother Earth who puts him in a heavenly garden, full of abundance.</p> <p>He befriends a chicken and offers to guard her eggs. A hawk tries to get to the eggs, and almost pecks the bunny to death.</p> <p>An angel comes and brings him back to life.</p> <p>After the story the children go to their own gardens they had made and an Easter egg is waiting for them.</p>	<p>A rabbit that was so thirsty and hungry that the farmer could not waken him.</p> <p>The farmer brought him water and food so he could be healthy again. The farmer brought the bunny back to life.</p> <p>The children used the same puppet of the rabbit as in my puppet show.</p>

STORY – Initiation	INPUT	OUTPUT
<p>tray), hand puppets and standing puppets. Children had also made their own bunnies and gardens for the festival.</p> <p>Two girls did a puppet show a month after the festival.</p>		

5.12.2.2. Internalisation over time

At the start of the year I did a cloth puppet show of The little boy who wanted to be carried. This involved a cloth on one hand as the little boy, engaging with various elements such as water, a boat, a snail and a horse. These were shown through hand movements. At that time when I presented it to the class, Sipho mostly spoke isiXhosa. But as he gained the English language throughout the year, he was able to play with more communication with the other children. One day in October I saw him sitting with a cloth puppet and imitating the movements of the puppet and his other hand, while speaking words to himself, which seemed to reflect the story told before. This showed a long period between when the story was mediated, and how long the ability to replicate it in play.

These observations indicated to me that aspects of the story had been internalised. The language, puppets and landscape features provided mediating tools which facilitated both memory and creativity of the storytelling. And this internalisation is not measure in terms of how long it takes, as that differs between children, ages, and other environmental and personal factors. But my hypothesis remained that if children played the stories in their puppetry or acting games, or used structures of the story telling in their own play, that this showed an element of internalisation.

5.12.2.3. Action research: new aspects of puppetry

When I presented Akimba and the Magic Cow (Perrow, 2008:114), I experimented by allowing groups of children to move the puppets while I told the story to the class. Usually, children are only watching in a puppet show, and I was the puppeteer. The

children had heard the story four times and then acted it, so by the time they assisted with the puppet show they knew it fairly well. They had to move all the animals (two cows, two sheep and two chickens) and the main characters (Akimba, Bamba, and the woodcutter). I observed the children enjoying this activity a great deal and noted that this inspired them to play the story on their own more frequently. Four different groups of children held the show for the story time. One group was all boys, and they seemed to gain so much confidence in moving the puppets so well.

Another experiment I conducted was to leave the puppet show of *The Three Little Men in the Wood* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:78) set up in the classroom until the following morning. I wanted to see whether the children played with it, and how they altered or retained the original story.

Sipho and Suki (5 years) were the first to arrive in the morning. Sipho did not speak much English, but they managed to perform a story of their own together. They did not use the language of the original story, but they made the characters do similar things. It was pleasing to see them working together to develop a story from what they had seen the day before. Marina (6 years) came later and set up the puppet show in as similar a way, as was possible, to my presentation. She told the story according to the original, although she had made up her own characters. The other children were able to follow, but she was guiding the narrative. This shows that potentially some children internalise the language of the story different to others. Many environmental factors could influence this, as well as age. Marina was older than the others.

5.12.2.4. Types of play: dressing up and acting stories

The children had a selection of costumes to dress up with in play time. There were archetypal ones such as capes, crowns and skirts. They made dress up hair by laying a cloth on their head and the crown holding it. There were often royal themes in their games and the costumes would be used all sorts of ways. Animal costumes were also available and that was more inspired by the nature stories.

The structure of acting also influenced the play. By creating play areas with cloths and symbolic objects in order for the scenes to be acted. The children would spend time setting up the game, making places for their events to occur.

An interesting influence was when I was telling Rapunzel (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:67). The children really focused onto the evil witch archetype, and for months after, playing 'evil queens' was a consistent imaginative play game. For me, this represented a developmental cycle that they were undergoing, turning ages 5.5 to 6 years, and some turning 6 to 7 years. From a Waldorf-based understanding, that could represent the awakening of the mind in the pre-school child, and thus a natural antipathy or rebellion, such as the evil queen would hold. Somehow the play offered an archetype which reflected their developmental process, and gave them substance to bring into their own imaginative game. There was no judgement of good or bad, only the pleasure of having a more rebellious character. Interesting that there was no competition between who was the 'most evil' but more a togetherness amongst them. This is what Steiner discussed as antipathy, which arises in the form of feelings (Steiner, 1996a:54).

This section reported the observations of how the different stories entered into the classroom in the form of children's play. This will be further discussed in Chapter 5 and 6 in terms of how it relates to socio-cultural analysis.

5.13. Data from parent interviews

There were two meetings with parents where focus interviews took place.

5.13.1. Meeting 1

At the start of the year, I introduced the research to the class parents, and discussed the ethics of working with children and the purpose of the study. I asked them questions about their children's play at home, and suggested that they observe the relationship throughout the year between the stories told at school and their children's play.

I presented my thesis questions, and how I would be observing the children during play. They filled in consent forms. We discussed any concerns that the parents had

around their children being part of the study, and what confidentiality agreements were involved.

5.13.2. Meeting 2

The second meeting was conducted during the August parent meeting. I asked some open-ended questions about the children's play and development through stories. I showed them a puppet show of *The Three Little Men in the Wood* to give them an idea of what we did in the classroom.

Open-ended questions to the parents in the second focus-group interview were as follows:

What do you think the role of stories are?

Has your child told you about the stories we are doing in the classroom?

Do you see these stories influencing their language or play in any way?

5.13.3. Comments from the parents

The parents discussed how much progress they had seen throughout the year in their children and play.

1: My daughter (5 years) plays much more at home in stories, and is taking cloths to dress up with.

2: When my son (5 years) has his friend over, they can play for hours without interruption.

3: My daughter (6 years) comes home and quotes from the stories. I didn't even know it was from the story until you did the puppet show. She was saying the line from the story, "What should I do? Love is a joy but also a torment." This is amusing; her parents are divorced, so perhaps she is getting some insight from the story. I didn't know why she was saying it, until now.

4: My son (6 years) is noticing the weaver birds at our house more now that you are noticing nature in school every day.

5: My child (5 years) loves making houses in the living room and then gets her little brother to act out the stories, I think, from what she has done at school.

6: I notice how much easier it is to get to school now that she has been at school for half a year. Often, she wants to show me something she is making, or wants to bring something to dress up with.

7: My child (5 years) talks to me about the stories only later in the evening, when we are going to bed.

8: My child (5.5 years) seems to remember a lot of the words from the stories, and tells me about them in the car home.

9: I see the language development in my child (6 years), in how he speaks to me and to others. I think the stories are having an impact on him.

5.14. Document analysis

In order to examine documents of the kindergarten children, I looked at their drawings as these could reveal whether they had internalised stories. They were not learning reading or writing yet, so drawing represented a form of emergent literacy.

5.14.1. Creating a storybook from a story told in class

Appendix 1: Sally had made her own pictures out of the Three Little Pigs story

Sally had mapped out the entire story in pictures and was very excited to tell me about it. She drew the mother pig and babies, and then on other pieces of paper made a storybook of the different houses. She also drew the chimney. This came out of her own volition to draw in the morning.

5.14.2. Expressing images from the ring time stories and songs

Appendix 2: Princess and rainbow

5/8/16: A child has drawn a picture of a princess and a castle in the clouds. It was winter and I was telling the story in the ring time, of King Winter in his winter castle. This is her interpretation, with a rainbow coming down and snow.

Appendix 3: Rainbow and flower

5/9/16: It is springtime and a child has drawn her interpretation of the rain and a rainbow, and flower after we were singing about seeds waking up and becoming flowers in spring time.

Appendix 4: Bird and the tree

21/6/16: It's midwinter and we are telling a story of a bird living a nest and visiting the squirrel in the tree. Richard (6 years) has drawn his depiction of this story in the drawing

activity which came after the ring time story. I never told the children what to draw, but rather let it emerge from their imagination.

Appendix 5: Horse and house

This was done by Richard (5 years) 4/5/16 after a ring time with horses, where the horses were prepared to go and fetch apples from the orchard. His drawing portrays a house with many windows, and a square horse with a golden mane and tail. There is also a water bowl and bale of hay for the horse, and the door is open. The house seems to have a chimney with black smoke looking like a tail of its own.

In my own training, I learned that a house with many windows implies that the child still has their 'spiritual eyes' open. Later they progress to a two-window house, similar to two eyes, and they are ready for Class 1.

Appendix 6: The bird visiting the squirrel

21/6/16 Marina (6 years) It was midwinter and we were telling a story of a bird living a nest and visiting the squirrel in the tree. There is an owl and two porcupines as well, who were characters in the story. This looks very similar to the story told, but showed her own interpretation of the animals, placement to the house, and image of the tree. The house also has many windows.

5.14.3. Drawing as a means to express patterns

Appendix 7: Flower pattern mandala

27/5/16 Sindi explored a flower pattern as a mandala. This corresponds to a development stage.

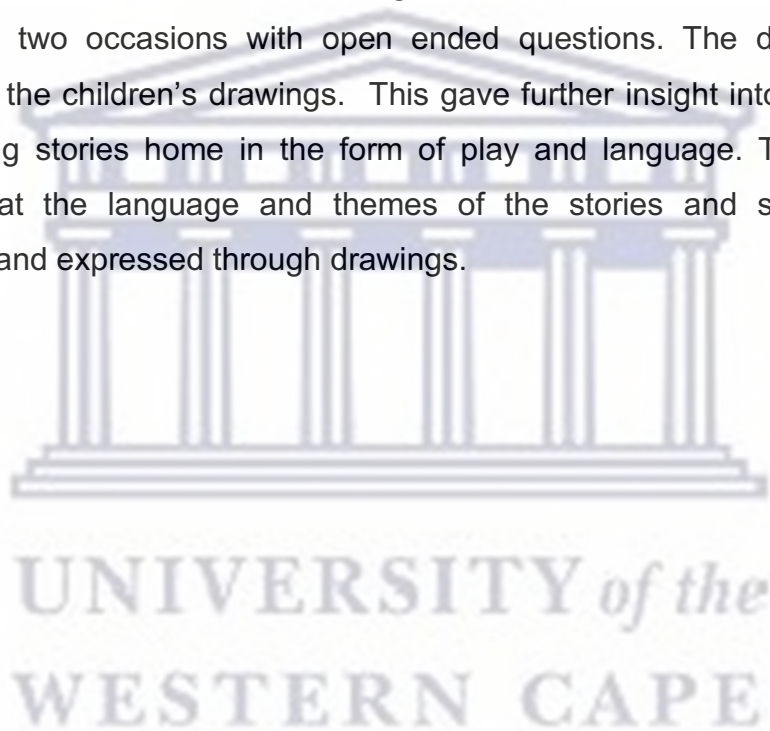
Appendix 8: Star and patterns

Richard on 26/7 did an interesting attempt at patterns, modelling from a star and outwards.

5.15. Conclusion

The findings in this chapter included an outline of the school rhythm, content according to seasons and festivals. There was an outline of the stories told, done in puppetry, and acted with the children throughout the year in story time in the class. Some of these stories were discussed, along with observations of how they were received. These play events were observed, where the children played both making story gardens/ puppetry and acting with costumes and props.

This chapter also documented the findings from the interviews with the parents which occurred on two occasions with open ended questions. The document analysis consisted of the children's drawings. This gave further insight into how the children were bringing stories home in the form of play and language. The drawings also indicated that the language and themes of the stories and songs were being internalised and expressed through drawings.



CHAPTER 6
DISCUSSION

6.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses some of the major tenets of socio-cultural analysis, outlining three major categories which influenced my research. Firstly, all learning can be seen as internalised social relationships, and these processes occur and are observable in the kindergarten classroom. The second category was that language was mediated by tools and symbols in the classroom. I discuss the various uses of tools, symbols and language as mediation of development in the classroom. The third section applied Vygotsky's genetic theory, which postulated that the social becomes the individual, to the observations of the classroom activities and the children's behaviour.

In this study, observations of a Waldorf kindergarten classroom are interpreted through the lens of socio-cultural discourse analysis. By using this analytical framework, the actual dialogue exchanged was given context by the social conditions in which they took place. According to Mercer (2004:140), socio-cultural discourse analysis is designed to comprehend how spoken language is used as a tool for thinking collectively. Language can be regarded as a cultural and psychological tool for getting things done (Mercer, 2004: 141) but also for developing imagination and thinking. In this study, the collective was the class as a whole, and its language and activities constituted its culture.

John-Steiner and Mahn (1996:192) outlined three major analytical themes which they considered the basic tenets of socio-cultural analysis:

1. Individual development, including the development of higher mental functioning, has its sources in social processes.
2. Human action, undertaken independently or socially, is mediated by tools and signs.
3. The above themes must be examined through genetic or developmental analysis, which Rogoff (1990) termed guided participation.

Data from the classroom observations and dialogue in this study were analysed using this approach.

6.2. Individual development originates in social processes

Vygotsky suggested that a child's entry into imaginary situations was developmental and part of the process towards the abstraction of thinking (Nilsson, Ferholt & Lecusay, 2018:236). For Vygotsky, play was the age-appropriate activity for the pre-school child. The dramatic element of play, whereby a dual experience of both the imaginative and the real occurred simultaneously, was considered as supporting the formation of higher mental capacities and self-regulation.

The Waldorf kindergarten curriculum and environment were designed around social interaction. The class could be considered as an old-fashioned household where practical and creative activities, care of the environment, and other activities took place as part of a daily rhythm.

The toys and equipment were laid out at the level of the children for them to select and use, and the whole kindergarten space – inside and outside – was available for play. An area dedicated to imitative play included a small stove and table; doll's clothing and beds; and cupboards with real cups and pots. At times children engaged in independent activities, but these could also be conducted socially. For example, craftwork in the morning was undertaken in collaboration with other children who had chosen the same activity. Children participated as a group in certain activities such as story time and ring time. Free play time encouraged movement in space and was self-directed by the children in terms of who they played with and what they did. Surprisingly, the hum of activity created a noticeably peaceful atmosphere. This also depended on how well I adhered to the rhythm of the day and held a structure within the atmosphere of freedom. Stories and songs helped to define activities and the transitions between them.

6.3. Exploring Vygotsky's definition of play

Vygotsky's approach required that the themes of learning be examined through genetic or developmental analysis, which Rogoff (1990) termed 'guided participation'. According to this theory, every function in cultural development appeared twice – initially as the social and then as the psychological, before leading to higher mental functions through internalised social relationships (Steiner & Mahn, 1996:192). This required an understanding of how internalisation occurred and how children developed.

For Hasan (2002:115), the most important role of the language exchange was to enable the subjects to internalise the world as they experienced it. Thus, internalisation was more about participation. Matusov (1998:331) also contested Vygotsky's perception of internalisation, referencing Bakhtin for his notion of participation. He asserted that all participants, both those mediating and receiving, existed in a dialogical relationship, simultaneously acting socially and individually. He reframed the genetic question as: "How does social-individual become individual-social?" (Matusov, 1998:332).

6.4. Types of mediation in the classroom

Miller and Almon (2009:12) presented the levels of teacher mediation within activities as a continuum. At one pole was the loosely structured classroom with minimal teacher intervention; a didactic and highly structured classroom, where teachers modelled and even directed play, constituted the other. In this observed classroom, there was a loose structure with a strong rhythm. Direct input from the teacher alternated with free play, and the teacher did not intervene in the play unless direction or mediation was required. The principle underlying Waldorf kindergarten teaching is that the teacher engages in practical activities, while the children may choose to join in, imitate the activity, or play independently. A teacher would never simply sit and watch the children either, but rather always be busy doing something. This could even be fixing toys, sewing new ones, or tidying.

I observed that the rhythm, which alternated between focused and free activities, provided enough time for the children to settle in both types of activities. It made them feel safe to know what came next. When I observed them sitting in the movement circle, I noticed how engaged they could be in the activity. They knew that they would also have time to be free in their own imaginary world. The more insecure children tended to predict transitions between activities and asked to be the child who rang the bell for fruit time or ring time. The content was never intellectually based and always imaginative; engaging activities which involved listening were key to their focus and participation.

6.5. Three types of social interaction

1. Teacher mediating activities directly through language, such as leading a movement ring or telling the story.
2. Teacher mediating activities, conversely or dialectically, through independent or small-group activities, including crafts and play.
3. Children mediating one another's activities through language exchange and with or without the input of the teacher. This took place during free play, artistic or craft activities, and group activities led by the teacher. These are outlined in table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Modes of mediation observed in the classroom

Mode	Classroom activity	Type of language exchanges
Teacher mediating directly through language.	Ring time, story time, transitions.	The teacher guides activity, children follow with gestures in ring, learning the songs together. Children listen to a story, imagining through language.
Teacher mediating conversely.	Crafts, play.	The teacher converses with and supports the child completing craft work.
Children mediating one another's activities.	Play.	Children negotiating their imaginary play, use of equipment, characters, and rules of the game. The teacher only intervenes when needed.

Veraksa, Veresov and Sukhikh (2022:542) stated that although the amount of empirical research on the relationship between role play and child development was growing each year, the question of how the child developed through play was often missing from the discussion. When playing, children could do more than in real life, and for Veraksa et al. (2022) the zone of proximal development was based on the imitation mechanism; they imitated the actions which made sense to them and which they wanted to reproduce (Van Oers & Duijkers, 2013, in Veraksa et al., 2022:543). Thus, free play was an entry point into the adult world, creating roles which interested them.

6.6. Mediating storytelling and how this influenced the children's play

For thousands, maybe millions of years, people have been telling stories, around campfires and while travelling from town to town (Schank & Abelson, 2016:2). With regard to interaction in language, all our knowledge was contained in stories and the mechanisms to construct and retrieve them (Schank & Abelson, 2016:2).

A story always has an obstacle, challenge or conflict, and it will often contain a series of challenges or tests. For children of kindergarten age, stories should have a happy ending in order to provide them with a sense of safety in their world. Stories set up an emotional state of dramatic tension and conflict, creating an expectation which will be satisfied at the end (Egan, 1986:25).

Although the stories I told revealed moral lessons, my observations were that the children listening to them did not necessarily judge the characters as better or worse. For example, after listening to the story of Rapunzel (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:73), where the enchantress trapped a girl in a tower, the older girls in the class wanted to play 'evil queens'. I realised that they had not internalised this character as frightening, and that she reflected an aspect of their stage of development.

The importance of repeating stories, as a stand-alone activity or in the movement ring, cannot be underestimated. Between telling and acting of the story of Rapunzel (Grimm & Grimm, 1975: 67) the children participated in it eight times. Would the characters have entered the children's imagination so strongly if the story had been told only

once? Did having the opportunity to act the characters allow the children to focus more deeply on the characteristics which they could then model in play?

6.6.1. Themes in the stories

Each day, during the ring time, I presented my own nature-inspired story. I did not state the actual moral intention of the story or discuss it intellectually with the children. Instead, I relied on their own internalisation of the images. I endeavoured to include real elements of the flora or fauna, rather than the fantastical, to facilitate the formation of a true picture of the animal in the child's imagination. For example, there would never be a purple, flying elephant in a story: that would teach the children nothing about the animal world. The realistic features and characteristics were not presented factually but rather through a story. The purpose was for the child to build an inner picture of the being of nature, and imagine it in movement.

Various themes arose during the animal stories of ring time:

1. Finding a new home.
2. Parents of allowing their children to venture off into the world.
3. Escaping danger by helping each other.
4. Sharing homes or food.
5. Treating each other kindly.

6.6.2. Example of a Nature story

The example of The Sunbird Story illustrates how realistic elements were used during storytelling:

The story involved a sunbird family of mother, father and two chicks (male and female). Both chicks were brown like their mother, while the father was colourful. The chicks were dissatisfied with their colouring and were always asking their mother why they were dull and brown like her, and not colourful like their father. She would answer that one day they would find out. One morning, the father called them to a picnic where some fresh protea flowers were growing and they flew there together. All of a sudden,

they saw a mongoose which was waiting to eat them. The mother quickly took the chicks to the inside of the tree, where they could be camouflaged in the branches. Meanwhile, the father bird distracted the mongoose with his noisy chirps and colourful feathers, until the mongoose had followed him far away from the trees, and he could fly back and collect his family. That night, as the mother was putting the chicks to bed in their nest, they indicated their understanding and acceptance of who they were. "That is why I am brown like you, mother," said the daughter, "...so that when my babies are born, I can hide them inside the trees." The brother chirped, "That is why I will be colourful one day when I am big, so that I can help to distract any danger."

The story demonstrated a process of self-acceptance, achieving this by using accurate information about the birds' characteristics and behaviour. The moral lesson of the story is not stated as a concept but rather revealed through the events of the story.

Before telling a story of a specific animal or creature, I would study its habits to ensure that I presented realistic descriptions concomitant with the emotion and morality. This story supported the higher mental faculties by opening up opportunities to learn about birds. The children were sewing birds at the same time. They chose beads for their wings and colours, and the story was part of their imagination during the activity.

6.6.3. Remedial story

Another example of a story which contained a moral within it was a remedial story. This was told to the entire class at ring time when a child had been having discipline problems. I did not refer to it as a discipline story, or mention to whom it was directed. Rather, the whole class received it together.

The story of the Whinging (Whining) Whale (Perrow, 2008:100) was designed for a child who was complaining and whining about other children.

The story was about a young whale who often whined and was continually reminded by her mother to use her 'singing voice', not the whining one. The dramatic moment in the story involved a separation from the pod. The whales were exploring new territory and the young whale did not notice the others leaving the area and did not follow. She

tried her usual whining sound, with no response. Then she remembered the words of her mother and began to sing. This was the turning point in the story: the rest of the pod heard her and returned to find her.

The story offered a positive example of communication without employing a command or even a request. After I had told this story in the class, I would remind children who whined of the opportunity to change their communication.

6.7. Interplay between fantasy and reality

For Vygotsky (2004:13), an understanding of the psychological mechanism underlying imagination and creativity required clarity of the relationship between fantasy and reality in human behaviour. Behaviour, which integrated these simultaneously, was seen to develop higher mental functioning. Imagination could be associated with reality in four ways:

1. Products from the imagination are based on elements taken from reality or prior experience.
2. Products of the imagination involve complex associations: a physical response is triggered together with emotions of fear, happiness, sadness, or excitement. At the same time, feeling for something also influences the imagination.
3. Every feeling or emotion locates specific images, impressions and thoughts which resonate with the mood of the moment. This was considered the dual nature of feeling: every emotion has a physical condition and feelings influence perceptions (Vygotsky, 2004:20).
4. Although the product of imagination may never have occurred in the material realm, it is made manifest in the world once the person expresses it or gives it a form, and it can then affect other things.

Stories such as fairy tales often combine realistic and fantastic elements. For example, a child was sent searching for strawberries in the snow only wearing a paper frock in the story of *The Three Little Men in the Wood* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:78). When Cinderella asked her father for a sprig from the hazel tree, it grew into a tree where she could communicate with her mother and conjure up the dresses for the ball (Grimm

& Grimm, 1975:121). Although these images were based in reality, the events are magical. Another example is provided by the story of *The Seven Ravens* (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:137) where brothers are transformed into ravens after being cursed by their father. Searching for her brothers, their sister travelled to the moon, sun and stars. The morning star gave her the drumstick bone from a chicken to open the door to the glass mountain where her brothers were living as ravens. When she arrived at the mountain, she had lost the drumstick bone, and cut off her small finger instead. *Akimba and the Magic Cow* (Perrow, 2008:114) is based on a traditional African tale: Akimba needs income and receives a magic cow, a sheep and a chicken which provide him with gold, silver and eggs.

Through these stories, children integrate aspects of their own imagination that have conflicting elements in a dialogical process towards higher mental functions (Ferryhough, 1996:50). The richer the experience of both language and life which children are exposed to, the more material their imagination has to access. Thus, fantasy utilises contents in new combinations: it does not stand in opposition to memory, but rather, depends on it (Vygotsky, 2004:16). Table 6.2 outlines some of the images from the stories I told in the classroom.



Table 6.2: The real and fantasy aspects of stories told in the classroom

Story	Images
The Three Little Men in the Wood	Going to look for strawberries in winter in the forest.
	Meeting the three little men who make wishes for each girl; the good girl has gold from her mouth with each word; the selfish child has toads.
	The selfish daughter takes the bed of her sister, the Queen, and turns the Queen into a duck.
Akimba and the Magic Cow	The animals have magic powers: when a certain word is uttered, they produce gold (cow), silver (sheep), and eggs (chicken).
The Seven Ravens	The brothers take too long to fetch water for their sister's baptism, so the father turns them into ravens.
	The girl goes looking for her brothers and travels to the moon, sun and stars.
	The morning star gives her a chicken drumstick to open the door to the glass mountain.
	When she loses the drumstick, she cuts off her little finger to open the door.

6.8. Binaries of language and concept

One of the ways in which stories facilitate the dialectic experience is through binaries of language and concept. Foster (2000:38) described how every story had a moment of transformation which shifted a binary from one polarity to another. Vygotsky (1971) called this transformation moment the melodic curve of the story (Ferholt & Nilsson, 2016:296).

Stories always begin with a critical moment involving a collision, conflict, or contraction. The dramatic moment is seen as an analytical tool of development: participants of the story or drama are not passive observers, but are personally and emotionally involved until the crisis is resolved (Walker et al., 2020:120). Every story begins with a need, which is then fulfilled through a journey.

6.9. How tools were used: the example of craftwork

When children entered the classroom in the morning, they could choose whether to draw, play quietly in the classroom, or do craftwork. At the beginning of the year, I started with easy craft projects to help children get used to the needle, thread and beading objects such as buttons. I would cut a piece of hessian, thread a large needle and put out beads and buttons. The blue hessian was suitable for sea pictures, so I cut out fish and mermaids which the children could sew. In the Waldorf system, children spend two years in kindergarten, so the children in their second year were more skilled at craftwork. It was interesting to note the difference in their abilities over the two years. The craft activities using wool were suitable for a range of abilities and developed skills of coordination and skills.

One of the children's grandmothers commented that she had completed the same weaving activity in her schooldays. Waldorf kindergartens have retained these cultural activities although many people view them as old-fashioned with no educational purpose, and most have disappeared from school or pre-school curriculums. The skills involved in these three-dimensional projects are different from those needed to complete two-dimensional worksheets or papers.

The children also sewed animals from felt patterns. I used patterns from a book, or created my own. Some patterns were easier than others, and involved different sections such as the legs, wings, and underbelly. Felt is a very easy material to work with as it does not need to be hemmed. Creatures like dragons, birds, and fish can be embellished with beads. Observations of the children beading and stitching revealed a difference in the abilities within the class: the younger, less-focused children tended to make haphazard and irregular stitches while the older children were much more attentive to the spacing between the stitches and willing to try advanced stitches such as blanket stitch. The beadwork patterns of the older children were more intently designed and they attempted to create symmetry on both wings of the birds or sides of the fish. Because I taught the same child over two years, I could observe this development of skills over time. Table 5.6 lists the progression of the craft projects in the class, which skills were built upon and how stories were used to introduce them.

Table 6.3 outlines the different crafts, what materials they used, skills provided, and associated language or stories that went with the activity.

Table 6.3: The progression of craft projects

Project	Materials	Skills	Story used to introduce the craft
Pom-poms	Two cardboard rings, wool, scissors.	Child chooses coloured wool and threads it through the holes of the cardboard cut-outs. Each thread is laid beside the other in layers until the hole is full. The wool is cut and the cardboard removed to make a hanging pom-pom.	The little squirrel goes around the tree, and lies down beside his brother.
God's eyes	Two sticks, wool, scissors.	Weaving coloured wool around the stick in a diamond shape. Sticks are held like a steering wheel. Use specific hand movements so that the dominant hand is always turning. The result is a beautiful diamond.	'Round, up, change' is repeated by the teacher.
Circle weaving	Round loom of cardboard with strung wool, wool to weave	5-year-olds complete one side and make a tortoise back. 6-year-olds complete both sides and make a bag. On the loom they weave over, under, and round and round. They tie new colours on at the end or make a bag with a twisted handle.	The dolphin swims over the wave, under the wave...
Straight weaving	Wooden weaving loom, string, wool, dull thick needle.	This is only for the 6-year-olds. They weave to one end and then turn the loom around. Wool on a thick needle.	Continuation of the above story.

Children would stay immersed in the sewing and craft for up to an hour in the morning. Since doing craft in the morning was one of the activities children could choose, I never forced it on them. There were a few children who came to the craft table every day; others went to play first, joining in the craft work later. On a few occasions I asked some children to do craft activities when I saw their play was not quiet or pleasant for the other children.

Tom (5.5 years) usually resisted doing craft in the morning. When it came to the September festival, he did not bother to finish his dragon. After the festival, when all the children were taking home the dragons they had sewn, his mother told me that Tom was upset as he did not have one to take home. The next term, he was far more interested in doing craft and realised the fun in making his own toys. His own realisation provided powerful motivation to change his behaviour.

Crafts were laid out in a beautiful way with lit candles, baskets of cut-out patterns, wool, and threads. Children were able to choose which colour wool, felt or thread they would use. If I had time, I would also sew something, so that I could join them in the activity. My assistant would help to make new costumes, for example, a crown for the Pumpkin King game, or birds for the nature table. I did most of the scissor work, threading of needles, and finishing off. Each child had an envelope, made from an A3 drawing, to store their craftwork.

As the teacher, I found that craft activities helped with management of the class. The creativity, focus and skills development enhanced the children's confidence. The products of their craft became toys and supported their play. As examples, Johan (6 years) made a sheath for his toy sword and Christie (5 years) made her own bag to collect fresh lavender. The daily craft sessions had given them confidence to use these skills during their own play.

6.10. Higher mental functions

Higher mental capacities, according to Vygotsky, were involved in the process of learning to objectify one's perspective. Fernyhough (1996:47) defined higher mental functions as a dialogical process derived from interpersonal activities. The child internalised progressively semiotic perspectives of reality, involving the coming into conflict of varying perspectives. Referencing Vygotsky (1978:39), he stated that there were two types of mental development:

1. Higher mental functions including voluntary attention, mediated memory and concept formation: these are under voluntary control and accessible to the

consciousness of the child. They originate in social activity, and hence, shared cultures.

2. Elementary functions, including involuntary, unconscious, and totally directed activities which are determined by stimulation coming from the environment. Imitation fits into this category (Ferryhough, 1996:47).

Ferryhough (1996:48) based his dialectic theory on the work of Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986), asserting that these higher functions were derived from social interaction. Bakhtin realised that all dialogue involved a sharing of perspective, attitude or 'voice'; thus, the child simultaneously accommodates multiple perspectives of reality. This inner dialogue occurred when ideologies or perspectives came into conflict with different, non-hierarchical perspectives and the final orientations remained unresolved (Ferryhough, 1996:48).

6.11. Perezhivanie: the joining of environment and self in experience

Participation involves a state of mind, as well as being a form of activity. Thus, a discussion of the desired states of mind during the kindergarten play becomes relevant.

Here, Vygotsky first used the word in a 1934 lecture, analysing the role of the child's social environment in forming their personality (Blunden, 2016:274). It was originally a Russian dramatic term, *perezhivanie*, defined as a means of determining the nature of the child's experience, and how children personally interpreted events. *Perezhivanie* was considered a 'unit of consciousness', and involved the role which the environment had on the child's experience (Fleer et al., 2017:249). Vygotsky used the image of a prism, which implied that each child could share the same environments and experiences, but would refract them in their own unique way (Michell, 2016: 6). Ferholt and Nilsson (2016:298) point out that Dewey's (1939) concept of 'an experience' was closely related to *perezhivanie*. This was considered valuable in an understanding of how experiences and the environment impacted on the development of children (Fleer et al., 2017: 249).

Vygotsky discussed how children's emotions characterised the interpretation and performance of their experiences, thus creating new meaning. The language of storytelling provided the capacity for the child to create inner images in their mind and simultaneously stimulated emotional responses. These emotional responses, in turn, influenced the imagery. A child immersed in experience is also in a state of participation.

Dramatic *perezhivanie* referred to the contradictory nature of human development; there was no development without conflicts and drama (Veraksa et al., 2022:545). Every complex socio-dramatic role play involved numerous micro-crises and contradictions. The child needed to constantly retrain their impulsive reactions in order to remain connected to the imaginary situation, thus developing self-regulation. This juxtaposition momentarily suspended the child's experience in a state of simultaneously being, and not being, themselves. No development occurred without a qualitative re-organisation, and the social drama allowed this through the prism of differing subjective experiences.

My observations set out in Table 6.4 provide an example of how children could be in dual states of consciousness during play. With the aid of a picture book, the children had the mental acuity to discuss the sequencing of the story, using their experience and memory of hearing and acting it out a year earlier. They were not only sequencing and planning the events, but going back into the play and acting it out. This was an example of a dialectic situation, where the children were in two states at once – the real and the imaginary.

Table 6.4: Example of duality of play

Observations	Dialogue
<p><i>Little Snow White</i> (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:249) had been told the year previously, and the children were reliving the experience in their play. They utilised a picture book that I had used to tell the story.</p> <p>Storm (6.5 years) and Sally (6 years) discussed the logical format of the story with help of Takota (5 years). Although Takota was only five years old, she had also been present at the storytelling in the prior year. The children's parents confirmed that none of them had seen the film of <i>Snow White</i> and this would not have influenced their memory of the story.</p> <p>They played in the classroom, while consulting the book. At each stage of the story, they consulted the pictures, and went back into place to act it out. As they could not read, they used the pictures in the book to map the story. They set out chairs and cloths to delineate the house and forest.</p>	<p>Storm and Sally: Let's look at the book and see if everything is right. First the comb, then the apple.</p> <p>Takota (5 years, playing nearby): The apple is the worst.</p> <p>Storm: Yes, because she died.</p> <p>Takota: But, she didn't.</p> <p>Storm: Yeah, she fainted.</p> <p>Each step was discussed when they then positioned the imaginary apple (felt ball).</p> <p>Sally: The green side...ok the red is poisonous.</p>

6.12. Examples of imitation and new creation

One of the experiences of enhanced combination was in the ring time, when the children simultaneously made the gestures I presented together with the language in the songs, verses or games. The daily repetition meant that they became familiar with both the gestures and the words, and we moved together in unison. The children could become absorbed in the experience of language and movement simultaneously. There were moments when the group felt as coordinated as a circle dance. When I described images that the children could collectively engaged in, I could feel the enhanced participation and joy experienced by the group. An example of this was the apple tree ring, where the children rode their imaginary ponies to pick imaginary apples. The gestures and songs described riding the ponies, arriving at the apple tree, shaking off the apples, feeding the ponies, collecting the apples, galloping home and, finally, making apple pie. The songs and games played at each stage merged together as one larger story. I realised how much more this engaged the children.

6.13. Self-regulation and rules

Vygotsky's work introduced the concept of self-regulation, consisting of two important features: children were so immersed in the play they delayed gratification of other activities, and they created rules which emerged from their games and reflected the boundaries of the adult world. "Thus, engaging in self-regulated behaviours in play becomes possible because an inherent relationship exists between the roles children play and the rules they need to follow when playing these roles" (Bodrova et al., 2013:111).

6.13.1. Class rules made by the teacher

In my Waldorf Kindergarten classroom there were rules set by the teacher which applied to all the children in the class:

- No hitting or hurting was allowed. If an issue arose in the play the children could approach the teacher for assistance or negotiate among themselves.
- The outside water tap could not be turned on without permission.
- Children were not allowed to walk up the slide onto the jungle gym (not up). They were not allowed to climb higher than the flags on the pine tree. These rules were basic to prevent children being injured.
- Children were not allowed to imitate movie characters during play. These pre-made characters were seen as limiting creativity.

6.13.2. Rules made by the children

Children often spent more time discussing rules and negotiating the outlines of the game they devised, then actually playing the game. Table 6.5 provides some examples of this.

These conversations are ongoing, and I could only catch snippets. But the constant negotiation of rules is one of the major features of children's play in the Waldorf kindergarten.

At the start of the school year the children had more need of my assistance with negotiation, but they soon they learned how to resolve their own issues. However, I was always available if needed.

Table 6.5: An example of negotiating rules

<p>Negotiating magical powers The boys were playing games with powers. Tom (5 years) comes to me to mediate with Sam (6 years). Tom: [Sam] says you get extra powers if you catch him. Teacher: And you don't like that? Tom: Yes, it's too hard, Teacher to Sam: Is there any other way to make the rules so [Tom] also likes it? Sam: But I am both good and bad. I am a crow and a crow doesn't need to listen to anybody. Tom interjects: But I want the power to fly". Sam compromises: OK, you can also catch me [but] only on the monkey bars. Tom agrees. Sam was older so he was more dominant in the game than Tom. Still they enjoyed keeping to their own rules, even when they had to be negotiated.</p>	<p>Negotiating who plays the game Here is an example of the children themselves working out who is involved in the game. Peter (6 years, nearly crying): Is there is nobody to play horse with me? He had told the girls that he would play evil queens with them, but then changed his mind. Storm (6 years): Please [Peter], you promised. Peter: I changed my mind. Girls (begging): Please! Boys: Nooooo. They asked me to intervene, and I responded that if he doesn't want to he doesn't have to. Sindi (6 years) states: I know, I told them he changed his mind.</p>
<p>Negotiating characters Peter (6 years): Sindi, can we be what we want to, or do you tell us? Can we be the same and someone else. Sindi: I am a baby polar bear but I can also be a baby dog or a wolf or any baby. Peter: What can I be? Sindi: Anything. Suki (4 years): Sindi won't let me be a wolf. Sindi: We are not playing that game anymore.</p>	

When children had disputes that needed to be mediated by the teacher, I listened to all sides of the story. Sometimes, only an apology was needed, and I was amazed at the powerful impact of these words. The offended child would wait for the apology and the resolution it brought. At other times, when rules were broken, I asked children to make apology cards if I thought that more than a verbal apology was required. Sometimes the disputes were over rules of the games, for example, boys agreeing on

magical powers, and I had to allow them to agree on certain freedoms. Most of the negotiating was achieved by the children, but I created a dialectic for them to be heard.

6.14. Zone of proximal development and age differences

Having children aged 4–7 years in one classroom provided an interesting opportunity to observe the zone of proximal development. In theory, this zone requires mediating skills between those who are more proficient and those who are learning. Mediation occurred between the children and the teacher or assistant, and between the children themselves.

The younger children naturally inclined towards reverence and imitation, focusing their attention on modelling the teacher. The older children also served as examples or models to the younger, and thus played an important role in the classroom culture. In Waldorf education philosophy, children go through a developmental crisis at around 5.5 years. During this time, the thinking processes become awakened, and they tend to become rebellious. Steiner linked the emergence of the new teeth to a stage of their own behaviour of pushing boundaries. Mediation required knowledge of the stages of the children and facilitation of the full group at the same time.

When Mary (5.5 years) went through her developmental crisis, she tried to influence the gestures performed during story time. When we were reciting a verse involving a boat, she used a different movement of the hand to represent the sail, hoping the other children would follow her. She would make her gesture and then look around. My training had taught me not to pay too much attention, but rather to show the other children the right gesture to imitate which was not the same as hers!

Marina (6.5 years) was a very sweet and loving child who loved to listen to me. One day, as I watched the start of circle time, I noticed she had crossed her arms and rolled her eyes, like a dissatisfied teenager. Everything I did in the next few weeks was 'boring' for Marina. This is behaviour that a Waldorf teacher becomes accustomed to: the children act much older than they are and display the rebellious attitudes which mark this stage. This often lasts around three weeks. There are other qualities which accompany this stage, including a self-awareness that made them more nervous of

being alone or separated from their mother, or gave them nightmares. On one morning, during craft activities, Jesse (6 years) stated with great excitement that something had happened to him that morning: "I had a thought inside my head." For a Waldorf kindergarten teacher, this is a sign that the child's thinking capacity is becoming a more conscious process.

A child's attempt to influence the behaviour of classmates was one result of the differing maturity levels of the children. Positive influencing, for example, motivating a new level of play, craft or drawings, was common. Because I had the opportunity to observe the children over a two-year period, I knew when the changes were due to personality or when they reflected developmental growth through age and experience. Children in their first kindergarten year were not used to the cultural rhythms of the classroom; thus, the familiarity of those in their second year had a considerable influence on the younger children.

When Takota (6 years) and Lyla (5 years) presented a puppet show, Lyla took inspiration from the older child, Maddie. I wondered whether this was due to a difference in personality or developmental stage. However, the following year, Lyla took on this role of leader of the younger children, so I could observe the role of age development parallel to personality.

The younger children had so much respect for the older ones that they strived to achieve the cultural norms which the older children could comfortably maintain. This imitation was as important as their modelling of the teacher. Spending two years in kindergarten meant that children took on the roles of the younger follower, and later, became the responsible role model.

6.15. Conclusion

This chapter compiled the findings from the classroom situation and established links with the categories on socio-cultural discourse analysis. It looked at how the theoretical lens of mediating objects or language had an effect on the higher thinking capacities. Through language being internalised, which also linked to meaning and the role of imaginative pictures, children could potentially express the stories in their play. The

phenomenon observed in the classroom was compared to the theories surrounding Vygotsky and socio-cultural analysis.



CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

7.1. Introduction

This study was a year-long investigation into the nature of children's play in a Waldorf kindergarten, and the potential influence of a particular storytelling curriculum. This included oral telling, puppetry and acting the plays, always with the teacher as the narrator. The stories were presented in a ritualised and repetitive way, where oral telling entailed 3–5 days, possibly followed by puppetry, acting, or both, also conducted over 3–5 days. A storytelling schedule was given and followed a seasonal theme, using mainly fairy tales as well as folk and traditional stories, with some stories created by other Waldorf teachers. The teacher chose the material and how to present it, but followed a philosophical pedagogy based on the teachings of Rudolf Steiner and his understanding of child development and the spiritualised human being.

The study was on how the language and presentation of these stories revealed themselves in the children's play, and what insights these offered into internalisation, expression, and meaning making. The study specifically focused on the pre-school child, utilising the lens of Vygotsky and socio-cultural theory. This included contexts such as private speech, zone of proximal development, and self-regulation, or what has now expanded to the study of executive processes. It was a deep study on the faculties involved in imaginative thinking, individualisation, and creativity. The goal was to contemplate how a young child attains skills and knowledge, but through the imaginative faculties available to them, or what Vygotsky described as *perezhivanie*, or the joy of the moment of experience.

Vygotsky's goal was to find a methodology for analysing the dialectical process whereby faculties connected to the bodily experience such as instinct, reflexes, imitation and sensing, are pivoted by external tools. This mediation, according to Vygotsky, allowed objectifying and the ability for higher thinking. But more than that, various factors, even opposing, could potentially be unified in this perceived higher experience. While the zone of proximal development was initially directed towards school-age learning, Veresov (2004:45) revealed how it could apply to the young child

as well. Vygotsky's own words supported this understanding of the young child in play as creating the space between what children can and cannot do, alongside others and alone.

As the teacher and researcher in this thesis, I had the opportunity to observe the children in all their daily activities and throughout the whole school day. Since I was aware of all the stories being told in the class, I could observe whether the children used these stories in their play, even much later after the telling. Owing to the length of the research period of the study, being a full school year, there were ample moments to observe whether the material was internalised and expressed in their play. Their output included the dialogue of their imaginative play as well as drawings and other crafts.

7.2. Reviewing the research questions

In order to assess whether the research questions were answered, they are reviewed:

1. How did the mediation of storytelling by the teacher influence the children's self-directed imaginative play in a Waldorf kindergarten?
2. Using a Vygotskian or socio-cultural analysis, how does this give insight into the internalisation of language, imagination, and self-regulation?
3. How did the environment contribute to the findings?

7.3. Hypothesis

My initial hypothesis was that if children enacted the stories told in class, in their own self-directed play, this would reveal an internalisation process.

7.4. Socio-cultural analysis

Utilising a socio-cultural theory, based on the work of Vygotsky, I focused on varying aspects of the children's behaviour to reveal whether internalisation had occurred. The main focus was on how the social language of the classroom, and specifically storytelling, impacted on language and expression in the children's own play.

These aspects of socio-cultural theory included:

1. Children's own private speech within their play and activities.
2. Specific definition of play, including imaginative games with roles, mediators, and rules.
3. Creating zones of proximal development between children and teacher, as well as among children of varying ages and skills.
4. Finding opportunities for developing skills which enhance self-regulation ring time, artistic activities, transitions, storytelling, and play.
5. Further development through dramatic collisions which include varying aspects which come together in a new way.
6. *Perezhivanie*.
7. Binaries in language allowing for the experience of the dialectical process.
8. Symbolic representation in the play.

7.5. Private speech

Since private speech is generally a silent process, or at least directed to oneself and not others, this would be difficult to observe and record. Any attempt would have risked taking the child out of their imaginative experience. Vygotsky proposed that within private speech there was a shortened, abbreviated language, as directed to self and not to a listener. According to Jones (2009:167), some of these assumptions are unfounded, and based on older linguistic theories of his day.

As Veresov (2004:45) pointed out, Vygotsky's actual writings, his focus within the zone of proximal development, were on the mental aspects of internalising language for solving school-age tasks. In his studies he even would interrogate the students in order for them to access internal capacities otherwise not used in their tasks.

7.6. Zone of proximal development

Veresov (2004:45) questioned what then was the role of the zone of proximal development in kindergarten?

He turned to Vygotsky's own words, realising that the word 'proximal' always meant close, and the zone of proximal development was when the child was in the zone of actualising potential through interactions with others (Veresov, 2004:44). This emerged in play because children are always acting older than they are, and more capable, owing to their inclination to imitate. The interesting aspect that Veresov (2004) foregrounded, which he termed "the hidden Vygotsky", was the dramatic collision which occurred when many factors collided during play, creating a state of *Perezhivanie* or united experience.

Vygotsky identified creative processes in children at their very earliest ages, giving the example of transforming a stick into a hobby horse.

Everyone knows what an enormous role imitation plays in children's play. A child's play very often is just an echo of what he saw and heard adults do; nevertheless, these elements of his previous experience are never merely reproduced in play in exactly the way they occurred in reality. A child's play is not simply a reproduction of what he has experienced, but a creative reworking of the impressions he has acquired (Vygotsky, 2004:11).

This act of imitation and creation was the essential zone to contemplate the development of the child under seven. For Vygotsky (see Karpov, 2003) it was very important that play be understood not just as a symptom of growth, but as a formative activity for it. Vygotsky (2004:11) understood the role of imitation in children's play was a reworking of the impressions from surrounding people and environments in order to construct new realities, while at the same time conforming to present desires and needs.

In Rudolf Steiner's lectures, imitation was the most important impulse for the development of the child, owing to the enabling of deeper forms of communication between adult and child. At the same time, imitation nourished the development of the child's own body. Sensing was considered a gateway for the child to the community and the world, but also to his own body (Mathisen & Thorjussen, 2016:19). Sensing was united with movement, which involved both sensitivity and participation within the social community. The connection between thought and word for an adult was

considered equal to body and word for the young child (Mathisen & Thorjussen, 2016:19).

The potential of imitation is that children can actively experience another person's actions and behaviours. All feelings, as well as thoughts, are imitated, as seen through the face, eyes and body language of others (Mathisen & Thorjussen, 2016:19). Imitation nourishes play, where children can come into contact with artefacts and symbolic thinking to stimulate even more situations.

7.6.1. Ways that imitation was fostered

1. Toys should be at child level so that they can take them from the shelves or baskets, and put them back. This is the imitation of living in a home, using and caring for things.
2. Imitation area with dolls in beds with blankets, chair and table with stove, cupboard with proper cups and saucers, pots and utensils. Dolls' clothing and house play inspired imitation of all kinds in terms of the sharing of language, roles, and movement. Brooms and ironing board add to the imitation of work. Children often dressed up for their roles. They used the play stands in various capacities – outside houses with windows, puppet theatres, beds, shops, and more.
3. The ring time participation was not a situation where the adult shows and the children then copy. The adults and children moved together, with gestures and language through songs, verses and games. Imitation is noticeable as the children followed the teacher.
4. Habits in transition stages, such as tidying up, putting on shoes, washing hands, all involved a song or verse, and the activity. The younger children were always watching the older ones in their movements.
5. All activities done by the teacher were understood potentially to be imitated by the child. In this way, the teacher held this consciousness. Even moving chairs, or sweeping, would be done in a slow and beautiful way, as if the children themselves were watching and copying. Activities such as cutting fruit, gardening, sweeping, or washing windows were often joined in by the children, who would then be acting within the zone of proximal development.

7.7. Defining mediation

Fernyhough (1996:48) stated that unconscious mediation came directly from the environment, while conscious participation occurred through utilising tools in a dialogic relationship. Play was not just a reproduction of what was seen, it was also enriched by experience, and facilitated new creation. This state of being in the old and new at the same time created a potential consciousness within the child.

According to Hasan's (2002:115) definitions of roles within mediation, I have answered her questions according to this study:

- 1) Who mediated? It was the teacher who mediated the storytelling and classroom rhythm. During the free play, the children had their own mediators in the games.
- 2) Something is mediated, which Hasan (2002:115) defined as a content, force or energy: This could apply to a story, as well as verses and songs. The daily rhythm was also something mediated, as was the love of the children and a sense of safety and discipline.
- 3) Someone subjected to mediation, to which the mediation makes some difference, were individual children.
- 4) The circumstances for mediation were a kindergarten day, with a Waldorf philosophy in the pedagogy.
- 5) The means of mediating included speaking, puppetry, costumes, stories, songs, games, verses.
- 6) The location was in Cape Town, on a farm, in a wooden classroom and large garden full of trees and bushes, a pond, a clay pit, flower beds, sandpit and pathways.

7.8. Internalisation of stories in children's play

For Vygotsky, internalisation occurred by way of private or egotistical speech. Because of this silent process, I created a rubric for whether this could be validated through observing their self-directed play.

1. Did they use any of the characters from the stories in their play?
2. Did they use similar plots or story lines in their play?
3. Did they extract exact language or phrases from the stories in their play?
4. Did they use the structure in which stories were presented in their play?

The following incidences supported answering these questions:

7.8.1. Imitating the archetypal characters

Children embodied the moods of the stories told, with archetypal images which became characters. For instance, in the telling of Rampion / Rapunzel (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:67), the older children, turning 7 years that year, identified with the archetype of the 'evil queen' for weeks after playing this. They dressed in long scarves and as much black as they could find. In allocating the roles, I would take care to match experiences of playing 'good' and 'bad' characters, but I noticed the older girls loved the evil concept of the character. I recognised this as part of their development, as at this age the cold, thinking aspect arises in their experiences and thus they identified with something of that character. That does not make them evil, but rather able to play with the forces of the world in a safe way, and possibly be guided through the moral journey of the story. The archetype in the story gave them the opportunity to enact it in characters and feelings, aligned to their own awakening of thinking forces.

7.8.2. Imitating the structure of storytelling

The way that the children presented their puppet shows to the rest of the class during play time showed that they had taken the structure of the telling into their movement and performance. At times they also wanted to show their puppet shows during ring or story time. This level of imitation brought them to the role of teacher. The older children naturally were inclined more towards imitating a sense of responsibility and set the discipline for the plays. It was interesting to see the language they used.

In preparation for the puppet show the children drew signs with pictures in order to set the rules. This included a picture for no talking and no cell phones. The first visual rule came from their own experience of talking during presentations. The second was an

imitation from their parent's experiences, as none of them owned a cell phone. Extra factors were added through their theatre, such as someone serving popcorn, taking the tickets they had made. Children were adding a sense of renewal or imagination to events they knew, and bringing them into present time. When the children were seated, had their popcorn, they were mesmerised for a time by the demonstration of puppetry. But as the puppeteers began to lose their thread, so the children watching also responded with restlessness. Here they imitated what they perceived as the way the teacher's role would respond to the restlessness, by playing the instrument to bring quiet to the group and resume focus. The group presenting then got a bit sterner when that method of music playing did not work. But eventually the sternness did not help, and the group disseminated and went on to other foci in their play. This could be considered a play event.

7.8.3. The plot or moods in the puppet shows

Shows they performed on their own followed the path of the story, but with their own interpretation or transformation. One was similar to a story I had told for the Easter festival, which I presented as a puppet play. They used the same character of the tired, thirsty, hungry bunny, but interchanged Mother Earth for a farmer. The mood of my own puppet show which was presented was carried through into theirs, even though it was over a month later.

Another story with a sombre beginning was Three Little Men in the Wood (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:78). This story I had told for five days, followed by a puppet show and then acting, so they had a strong grasp of the language of the story. They created a floor puppet garden and set it up very carefully. I was able to listen to them doing the show during their play, and it was a similar story of lost parents, and walking in the forest, and used the phrase from the story, "And they went out walking together" (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:78). They also used the phrase, "going to the forest to collect strawberries" (Grimm & Grimm, 1975:79). Thus, the actual language, theme, mood and certain details stayed the same, while much was their own creation. They presented it together as if a teacher, but only for themselves.

7.8.4. Imitation through ring games

Ring games were also acted out in the children's own play. A few times I witnessed "Ring around the Rosie", which was a lovely game to include the younger children who wanted to join in. After playing the "Pumpkin King", the children also wanted to do it themselves. This involved a long piece of string which was held by each child around the circle, with a ring placed on it. So that each child was holding the string, and passed around the ring as it came to them. A blindfolded child sat in the middle. The class said together:

The Pumpkin King in his castle sits, all night long a sleeping
The finger gnomes in the castle walls, all night long a peeping
Rickety tay rickety tay, pass the ring and hide it away
(Said as many times as the teacher feels to pass the ring around the circle)

Then when the teacher decides to stop the process of passing the ring, the last verse is:

Rickety tee Rickety tee, wake up Pumpkin King and see
Where oh where can the treasure be?

At this point the child in the middle takes off the blindfold and had to guess under who's hand the ring was.

If they guessed wrong the class would answer: "No not there, try elsewhere".

If they guessed correctly, the class would answer, "You're right you're right, what a delight."

This game was difficult to manage as a teacher, as the children each wanted to end with the ring in their hands. A teacher in training who had attended our class made a crown for the Pumpkin King so this must have inspired the children to play it on their own. Both the words to the game and the self-regulation it required was difficult for them to manage on their own, so it was interesting to me that they decided to play it. I supported them at first to get the words, and then cleaned around them in case they

needed help. This would support the theory of ZPD, as due to my mediation, and that of the crown as a tool, the children were able to demonstrate reaching above their level of both language and developmental regulation.

The game did not last long, as managing the blindfolded person was not easy for them, as well as the inner desire for them each to have the ring, but that they tried and followed the language and structure very well for that period. This would be another example of a play event.

7.8.5. A story of imitation and discovery

A situation occurred with a child who was turning 6 years at the end of the year, and had a very big growth spurt in the first few months of the year. His limbs had grown and he often hit others by accident. He loved to climb the tree, and was able to go to the highest point. I was very capable and I never worried about him. One day he was in the tree and I needed to fetch a chair from class next to mine. I left my assistant outside with the children. In the time that I was away, which was minutes, he had decided to come down from the tree and slide down the rope of the swing. Little did I know, but the night before he had played a video game of travelling up and down ropes. As I entered the garden, I saw him sliding down the rope and knew what was going to happen; my assistant didn't. Immediately he was fine, but then his hands began to bleed. As I sat with him calmly, treating his hands, he stated, "Damn, so the video game was wrong."

7.9. Stories

Stories have the emancipatory potential to create a transformation within one's experience. Vygotsky, in his private notes (Zavershneva, 2012:24), wrote specifically about the role of art, that it had a "special significance of form", or more specifically, "aesthetic significance". He described the transformation that one potentially gains through an aesthetic experience, such as feelings from a work of art, as the "miracle of transforming water into wine" or another way of saying, "overcoming nature in a word" (Zavershneva, 2012:24). Dewey (1934) also reflected on the aesthetic experience, claiming aesthetic experiences as fundamental to the process of learning

(Kokkos, 2010:157). But noting that not all experiences will be transformative. Not all stories will be either. The significance of the study on storytelling was to describe and understand the factors that allowed for imaginative, and potentially transformative, experiences for the listener.

The methods of storytelling included oral forms which support the creation of internal imagery with the words spoken and experience of the language of the story. This does not imply an overdramatic way of telling a story. It should be told in a matter-of-fact way, which then allows the images to come alive (Soesman, 1990:26). What is important is that the storyteller has an intimate relationship with the images.

Dahlin (2013:16) suggested a return to the grand theories of the state of childhood; a period that can never again be reclaimed in the same way. For Dahlin (2013:17), leading ideas in modern educational psychology, along with post-structuralist streams of thinking, have fragmented the notion of a developmental journey in childhood. Age appropriate has become a series of skills and attributes aligned with a stage of development, and entirely missing the individual subject experience. The word has overtaken the experience in the fine tuning of the right/left hemisphere experience.

In days of old, many poems and verses were memorised in school. Until one has experienced memorising a full fairy tale, it is hard to explain the feeling. I continue to roll around the words and images of the first ones I learned by heart, and many times in my life these have come back to guide me.

7.10. The dramatic collision and linking of emotion

The Waldorf environment provided a programme in which to observe the effects of storytelling on play because of the focused specific time for each. For a Waldorf teacher, storytelling is part of their professional craft. Vygotsky used the word *perezhivanie* to describe the totality of experience or measure as a unit of consciousness. Stories, with their emotive power, provided nourishment for the child to experience that good triumphs in the trials of life. They are not only made to be entertaining, but to be digested like a meal, where words meet image.

Fairy tales and traditional stories balance the pain and sorrow of life with joy. Soesman (1990:26) reflected on how stories are often changed from their original to be softened for the modern child. Yet as the child then encounters life, they touch on the other extremes. Stories provide safe boundaries in which to experience polarities, but also transformation.

A fairy tale reaches an apotheosis. All of these fearful, thrilling passages in a fairy tale are quite existential, drastic as the described events may often be. The evil stepmother has to be smashed by the enormous millstone? Isn't that delightful? How else will evil be destroyed? (Soesman, 1990:26).

Children do not take these images literally but enjoy the fairy tale from the level of their constitution, where they experience the balance of negative and positive. In the perfect composition of a tale there is always relief at the end. Just as a child experiences hunger and thirst, for Soesman (1990:26), there is the thirst and hunger for a story.

For Vygotsky (cited in Veresov, 2004:46) the nature of a dialectic was not only pivoting, but in the meeting of 'contradictions,' where a new formulation could occur. Vygotsky wrote (1927:7, cited in Zavershneva, 2012:24) in his private notes, in preparation for a paper:

The "infectiousness" of art is based not on the simple transmission of feelings from one to another – in this sense the speech of an orator, Cry of pain, a loud hurray, is no less infectious. Poetry about sorrow places us above sorrow, defeats it, overcomes, resolves. How it achieves this, by what psychological means—that is the X, the very name of art, the unknown quantity from which all investigation should begin. (Vygotsky, 1927-1928: 7)

In this way, Vygotsky pointed that artistic experience allows a person to experience feelings and at the same time to rise above them.

7.11. Nourishing the foundations for internalising stories

The rhythm of a child's life was considered a contributor to the child's sense of regulation of their habits and activity (De Souza, 2012:51). This rhythm was also a

means of timing the vacillation between preparation, excitement, and transition. Being a teacher of young people is a process of regulating their desires. Thus, when the stories were told in a rhythmic way, meaning the same every day as well as repeated over many days, the children had the time to absorb the images and language. In the study of internalisation and play, I believe this to be essential to the uptake of language. Too often we think that children require variety, yet at home they are always requesting the same stories over and over.

Despite the millennia it took humanity to become literate, we are in a fervent rush to impart literacy to the young child. Yet internalisation becomes a form of digestion, or as Piaget stated, assimilation involves the sensory body as well as the mind.

Self-regulation has become an intricate part of understanding behaviour in education today. Ritual therapy helps the understanding of how important routines are to the young child. Routines and language can meet in these rituals, which become further internalised each time they are done.

7.12. Meaning making

Mahn (2012:101) asked the question, “What is the nature of the concept of meaning used in studies on children’s meaning-making in classrooms?” The search for this answer was the substantial portion of the life work of Vygotsky, in the unification of speaking and thinking processes:

His investigation centres on the analysis of the entity created by this unification – an internal speaking/thinking system with meaning at its centre. Despite the fact that this speaking/thinking system is at the centre of Vygotsky’s work, it remains little explored (Mahn, 2012:100).

Understanding what occurs when a child finds meaning in an activity or words, included a physical as well as an emotional experience for the young child.

7.13. The dialectic and process

Vygotsky had recommended a dialectic approach to analyse the complex systems within their interconnections (Mahn, 2012:103). The key tenets of dialectical logic were:

1. Nothing is constant but change.
2. All phenomena are processes in motion.

Thus, for Vygotsky, to study something historically meant to study it in motion. Yet that motion always takes them back to themselves, or what Steiner described as the 'I'.

These stories over time are ancient reminders of central moral landmarks for living life. Language does not stand on its own, but is a vessel or container for imagery, feeling, and wisdom. The binaries helped in a story to highlight tensions, and the dialectic was used to stimulate plot, conversation, progression, and creative change. Stories are the perfect example of constant change within process rather than outcome. The outcome on its own of a story is of little value without the journey.

Vygotsky proposed that the mental image comprised only half of the experience, and the other half was "attention and action-based in nature." (West, 2021:239). When it came to the dramatic collision, half the experience was based in the somatic, action based, or physical experience, and the mental image was linked to imagination. Van der Veer (2007:45) linked this experience to a pre-established plan, where the finished product potentially first exists in the form of a mental image or intention. This pre-established plan could also be related to an expectation. As Soesman (1990:26) explained, just as the child has to feel hunger and thirst, so the child craves a story.

7.14. Conclusion

This study examined a Waldorf kindergarten class over the time period of one year in order to assess the relationship between the storytelling of the teacher and the free imaginative play of the children. It used the analysis tool of a socio-cultural socio-cultural theory to look at the dialectical relationships that occurred between the mediating tools of language, toys, objects and symbols, and how these contributed to

the imagination and expression. Because the Waldorf kindergarten uses three structures of storytelling: oral telling, puppetry and acting, these could be observed in terms of their mediation to children's play, alongside the language of the storytelling. Both the structures of storytelling and the language contributed to themes, characters, phrases and methods within the children's own play.

The study was also a theoretical exploration around the internalisation of language, and how that can be assessed. In the beginning a hypothesis was stated that if the children utilised the language, themes, characters, moods of the stories in their play, then this would show that a form of internalisation had occurred. With the theoretical approach of the Waldorf schooling emphasising imitation in the early childhood, and the addition of neurological understanding such as attachment, self-regulation, brain hemispheres and mirror neurons, a concept of early childhood learning could be made. That is, if the language and thus imagery of the story contributes to an emotional experience for the child, they are learning more than just the story. A process of making meaning, which also leads to greater self-regulation, can be assumed.

Although a barometer of self-regulation was not constructed for this study, it was a means of assessing what kinds of methods could emerge from this kind of storytelling program, offering models of play alongside the language. *Perezhivanie*, similar to Dewey's aesthetic experience, was the word which Vygotsky derived from Russian drama, and embodied the experience of language and drama in a unit of time; a moment of being. Stories engage children in a way they can meet themselves, including their moral or emotional aspects, and allow them to explore, through binaries, their identity or centre.

This study seemed to bring a socio-cultural analysis to a Waldorf kindergarten class. This meant investigating the places where relationships occurred, both with tools such as objects and toys, and each other. Vygotsky's significant contribution to play was the understanding that it was not just an activity, but the developmental one for the pre-school age. My project birthed when I taught in a rural Eastern Cape classroom, and read Vygotsky's theories on imagination. I could see that the process towards self-regulation he outlined were potentially embedded in the curriculum I was teaching, and

this sparked my curiosity to understand the Waldorf method through the socio-cultural lens.



REFERENCES

Almon, J. & Miller, E. 2011. The crisis in early education. *Alliance for Childhood*, 1–4.

Almon, J. 1992. Educating for creative thinking: The Waldorf approach. *Revision*, 15(2):71–78.

Almon, J. 2004. The vital role of play in early childhood education. In Howard, S. (ed.). *The developing child: The first seven years*. Spring Valley, NY: Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America, 85–94.

Almon, J. 2013. Adventure: the value of risk in children's play. *Alliance for Childhood*, 1-37.

Armon, J. 1997. The Waldorf curriculum as a framework for moral education: One dimension of a fourfold system. Paper presented at the American Association Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL, 24–28 March. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED420605.pdf> [8 August 2023].

Atkinson, D., Okada, H. & Talmy, S. 2011. Ethnography and discourse analysis. In Hyland, K. & Paltridge, B. (eds.). *Continuum companion to discourse analysis*. London: Continuum, 85–100.

Atkinson, P. & Hammersley, M. 1994. Ethnography and participant observation. In Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 248–261.

Avison, K. 2008. Why a Steiner Academy? *Forum for Promoting 3–19 Comprehensive Education*, 50(1):85–96.

Barblett, L., Knaus, M. & Barratt-Pugh, C. 2016. The pushes and pulls of pedagogy in the early years: Competing knowledges and the erosion of play-based learning. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 41(4):36–43.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/183693911604100405>

Batra, S. 2013. The psychosocial development of children: Implications for education and society—Erik Erikson in context. *Contemporary Education Dialogue*, 10(2):249–278. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0973184913485014>

Bergen, D. 2002. The role of pretend play in children's cognitive development. *Early Childhood Research & Practice*, 4(1):2–12.

Berk, L.E., Mann, T.D. & Ogan, A.T. 2006. Make-believe play: Wellspring for development of self-regulation. In Singer, D.G., Golinkoff, R.M. & Hirsh-Pasak, K. (eds.). *Play = learning: How play motivates and enhances children's cognitive and social-emotional growth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 74–100.

Bernier, A., Carlson, S.M. & Whipple, N. 2010. From external regulation to self-regulation: Early parenting precursors of young children's executive functioning. *Child Development*, 81(1):326–339.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2009.01397.x>

Bettelheim, B. 1977. *The uses of enchantment: The meaning and importance of fairy tales*. New York, NY: Vintage.

Birmingham, R.S., Bub, K.L. & Vaughn, B.E. 2017. Parenting in infancy and self-regulation in preschool: An investigation of the role of attachment history. *Attachment & Human Development*, 19(2):107–129.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14616734.2016.1259335>

Blunden, A. 2015. Lecture 9. The object of activity in Leontyev, Engeström and Vygotsky. *Concepts of cultural historical activity theory series* [Video].

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oek0RDjKt_c [14 March 2023].

Blunden, A. 2016. Translating *perezhivanie* into English. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 23(4):274–283. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2016.1186193>

Bodrova, E. & Leong, D.J. 2007. *Tools of the mind: The Vygotskian approach to early childhood education*. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall.

Bodrova, E. & Leong, D.J. 2015. Vygotskian and post-Vygotskian views on children's play. *American Journal of Play*, 7(3):371–388.

Bodrova, E. 2008. Make-believe play versus academic skills: A Vygotskian approach to today's dilemma of early childhood education. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 16(3):357–369.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13502930802291777>

Bodrova, E., Germeroth, C. & Leong, D.J. 2013. Play and self-regulation: Lessons from Vygotsky. *American Journal of Play*, 6(1):111–123.

Bretherton, I. 1992. The origins of attachment theory: John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth. *Developmental Psychology*, 28(5):759–775. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.28.5.759>

Bruner, J. 1997. Celebrating divergence: Piaget and Vygotsky. *Human Development*, 40(2):63–73. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000278705>

Bryndová, L. 2018. Traditional storytelling in teaching foreign languages at the primary level. Unpublished Master's thesis, Palacký University, Olomouc, Czech Republic.

Cain J.L. 2016. The aesthetics of Rudolf Steiner and Spiritual Modernism. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.
https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/135829/jlcain_1.pdf [4 June 2023].

Campbell, J. 1993. *The hero with a thousand faces*. London: Harper Collins.

Chen, F. 2017. Everyday family routine formation: A source of the development of emotion regulation in young children. In Fleer, M., González Rey, F. & Veresov, N. (eds.). *Perezhivanie, emotions and subjectivity: Advancing Vygotsky's legacy*. Singapore: Springer, 129–143.

Curwood, J.S. 2007. What happened to kindergarten? *Instructor*, 117(1):28–32.

Daemmrich, H.S. 1972. Review: *The psychology of art by Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky*. *Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism*, 30(4):564–566.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/429477>

Dahlin, B. 2013. Poetizing our unknown childhood: Meeting the challenge of social constructivism. The Romantic philosophy of childhood and Steiner's spiritual anthropology. *RoSE—Research on Steiner Education*, 4(1):16-47.

Dahlin, B. 2017. *Rudolf Steiner: The relevance of Waldorf education*. Cham: Springer.

De Souza, D.L. 2012. Learning and human development in Waldorf pedagogy and curriculum. *Encounter: Education for Meaning and Social Justice*, 25(4):50–62.

Denzin, N.K. 1999. Interpretive ethnography for the next century. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 28(5):510-519.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/089124199129023631>

Drake, K., Belsky, J. & Fearon, R.M.P. 2014. From early attachment to engagement with learning in school: the role of self-regulation and persistence. *Developmental Psychology*, 50(5):1350–1361. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032779>

Egan, K. & Gajdamaschko, N. 2003. Some cognitive tools of literacy. In Kozulin, A., Gindis, B., Ageyev, V.S. & Miller, S.M. (eds.). *Vygotsky's educational theory in cultural context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 83–98.

Egan, K. 1986. *Teaching as storytelling: An alternative approach to teaching and curriculum in the elementary school*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Egan, K. 1989. Memory, imagination, and learning: Connected by the story. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 70(6):455–459.

Egan, K. 2005. *An imaginative approach to teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Elhammoumi, M. 2010. Is 'back to Vygotsky' enough? The legacy of socio-historicocultural psychology. *Psicologia em Estudo, Maringá*, 15(4):661–673.

Erikson, E.H., Hoffmann, J.D. & Miller, R.S. 2019. The meaning of play. In Glaveanu, V.P. (ed.). *The creativity reader*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 253–268.

Fairclough, N. 2001. The dialectics of discourse. *Textus*, 14(2):231–242.

Faulkner, J., Kirkby, J., Manley, D., & Perrin, J. 2014. "Once there was...": Expanding the literacies of storytelling in the early years. *He Kupu: The Word*, 3(5):68–79.

Fearon, R.P., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M.J., Van IJzendoorn, M.H., Lapsley, A.M. & Roisman, G.I. 2010. The significance of insecure attachment and disorganization in the development of children's externalizing behavior: a meta-analytic study. *Child development*, 81(2):435–456. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2009.01405.x>

Ferholt, B. & Nilsson, M. 2016. *Perezhivaniya* as a means of creating the aesthetic form of consciousness. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 23(4):294–304. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2016.1186195>

Fernyhough, C. 1996. The dialogic mind: A dialogic approach to the higher mental functions. *New Ideas in Psychology*, 14(1):47–62. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0732-118X\(95\)00024-B](https://doi.org/10.1016/0732-118X(95)00024-B)

Ferrari, M. 2011. What can neuroscience bring to education? *Educational Philosophy and theory*, 43(1):31–36. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2010.00704.x>

Fisher, K.R., Hirsh-Pasek, K., Golinkoff, R.M. & Gryfe, S.G. 2008. Conceptual split? Parents' and experts' perceptions of play in the 21st century. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 29(4):305–316. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2008.04.006>

Fleer, M. & Hammer, M. 2013. Emotions in imaginative situations: The valued place of fairytales for supporting emotion regulation: Part 2. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 20(3):240–259. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2013.781652>

Fleer, M. 2009. Understanding the dialectical relations between everyday concepts and scientific concepts within play-based programs. *Research in Science Education*, 39:281–306. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11165-008-9085-x>

Fleer, M. 2013. Collective imagining in play. In Schousboe, I. & Winther-Lindqvist, D. (eds.). *Children's play and development: Cultural-historical perspectives*. Dordrecht: Springer, 73–87.

Fleer, M. 2020. A tapestry of playworlds: a study into the reach of Lindqvist's legacy in testing times. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 27(1):36-49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2019.1663215>

Fleer, M., González Rey, F. & Veresov, N. 2017. Continuing the dialogue: Advancing conceptions of emotions, perezhivanie and subjectivity for the study of human development. In Fleer, M., González Rey, F. & Veresov, N. (eds.). *Perezhivanie, emotions and subjectivity: Advancing Vygotsky's legacy*. Singapore: Springer, 247–261.

Fleer, M., Veresov, N. & Walker, S. 2020. Playworlds and executive functions in children: Theorising with the cultural-historical analytical lenses. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*, 54:124–141. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12124-019-09495-2>

Foster, A. 2000. Nature storytelling: The importance of binary opposites. Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Toronto, Canada.

Frake, C.O. 1964. Notes on queries in ethnography 1. *American Anthropologist*, 66(3):132–145. <https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1964.66.3.02a00860>

Fröbel, F. 1885. *The education of man*. Vol. 5. New York, NY: Lovell.

Frödén, S. & Rosell, A.L. 2019. Opening an imaginative space? A study of toys and toy-play in a Swedish Waldorf kindergarten. *Nordisk tidsskrift for pedagogikk og kritikk*, 5:186—201. <http://dx.doi.org/10.23865/ntpk.v5.1383>

Frost, J.L. 1998. Neuroscience, Play, and Child Development. Paper presented at the IPA/USA Triennial National Conference, Longmont, CO, 18–21 June. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED427845.pdf> [12 June 2023].

Fu, D. 1997. Vygotsky and Marxism. *Education and Culture*, 14(1):10–17.

Gajdamaschko, N. 2006. Theoretical concerns: Vygotsky on imagination development. *Educational Perspectives*, 39(2):34–40.

Gaskins, S. & Goncii, A. 1978. Children's play as representation and imagination: The case of Piaget and Vygotsky. *The Quarterly Newsletter of the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition*, 10(4):104–107.

Gerhardt, S. 2004. *Why love matters: How affection changes a baby's brain*. New York, NY: Brunner-Routledge.

Giudice, M.D., Manera, V. and Keyzers, C. 2009. Programmed to learn? The ontogeny of mirror neurons. *Developmental science*, 12(2):350–363. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7687.2008.00783.x>

Glöckler, M. 2004. Forces of growth and forces of fantasy: Understanding the dream consciousness of the young child. In Howard, S. (ed.). *The developing child: The first seven years*. Spring Valley, NY: Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America, 73–84.

Goldberg, E. 2005. *The Wisdom Paradox: How Your Mind Can Grow Stronger As Your Brain Grows Older*. New York: Gotham books.

Goldberg, E., Akhutina, T.V., Melikyan, Z.A., Mikadze, Y.V., Mervis, J.E. & Bisoglio, J. 2016. History of neuropsychology in Russia. *Oxford handbook on the history of clinical neuropsychology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Goldshmidt, G. 2022. The role of stories in Waldorf education: Meaning, principles, and method. *European Journal of Alternative Education Studies*, 7(2):25–33.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.46827/ejae.v7i2.4489>

Göncü, A., Patt, M.B. & Kouba, E. 2002. Understanding young children's pretend play in context. In Smith, P.K. & Hart, C.H. (eds.). *Blackwell handbook of childhood social development*. Oxford: Blackwell, 418–437.

Gough, D.H. & Bock, Z. 2001. Alternative perspectives on orality, literacy and education: A view from South Africa. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 22(2):95–111.

Gray, P. 2011. The decline of play and the rise of psychopathology in children and adolescents. *American Journal of Play*, 3(4):443–463.

Green, J., Willis, K., Hughes, E., Small, R., Welch, N., Gibbs, L. & Daly, J. 2007. Generating best evidence from qualitative research: The role of data analysis. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 31(6):545–550.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1753-6405.2007.00141.x>

Grimm, J. & Grimm, W. 1975. *The complete Grimm's fairy tales*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Hammer, M. 2017. Perezhivanie and child development: Theorising research in early childhood. In Fler, M., González Rey, F. & Veresov, N. (eds.). *Perezhivanie, emotions and subjectivity: Advancing Vygotsky's legacy*. Singapore: Springer, 71–81.

Hammond, J. 2011. Classroom discourse. In Hyland, K. & Paltridge, B. (eds.). *Continuum companion to discourse analysis*. London: Continuum, 291–305.

Harwood, A.C. 1967. *The way of a child*. London: Rudolf Steiner Press.

Hasan, R. 2002. Semiotic mediation and mental development in pluralistic societies: Some implications for tomorrow's schooling. In Wells, G. & Claxton, G. (eds.). *Learning for life in the 21st century: Sociocultural perspectives on the future of education*. Oxford: Blackwell, 112-126.

Hedegaard, M. 2009. Children's development from a cultural–historical approach: Children's activity in everyday local settings as foundation for their development. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 16(1):64–82.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10749030802477374>

Henning, E., Van Rensburg, W. & Smit, B. 2004. *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Hohr, H. 2000. Dynamic aspects of fairy tales: Social and emotional competence through fairy tales. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 44(1):89–103.
<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1080/713696665>

Howard, S. 2006. The essentials of Waldorf early childhood education. *Gateways*, 51:6–12.

Hyman, L. 2012. Vygotsky's Crisis: Argument, context, relevance. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 43(2):473–482.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.shpsc.2011.11.007>

Ingram, J. & Elliott, V.F. 2020. *Research methods for classroom discourse*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Jenkinson, S. 2004. The genius of play. In Howard, S. (ed.). *The developing child: The first seven years*. Spring Valley, NY: Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America, 95–99.

Johnson, G.E. 1907. *Education by plays and games*. Boston, MA: Ginn.

John-Steiner, V. & Mahn, H. 1996. Sociocultural approaches to learning and development: A Vygotskian framework. *Educational Psychologist*, 31(3–4):191–206. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.1996.9653266>

Jones, P.E. 2009. From 'external speech to 'inner speech' in Vygotsky: A critical appraisal and fresh perspectives. *Language & Communication*, 29(2):166–181. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2008.12.003>

Jones, R. 2011. Data collection and transcription in discourse analysis. In Hyland, K. & Paltridge, B. (eds.). *Continuum companion to discourse analysis*. London: Continuum, 9–21.

Karpov, Y.V. & Haywood, H.C. 1998. Two ways to elaborate Vygotsky's concept of mediation: Implications for instruction. *American Psychologist*, 53(1):27–36. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.53.1.27>

Karpov, Y.V. 2003. Development through the Lifespan: A Neo-Vygotskian approach. In Kozulin, A., Gindis, B., Ageyev, V.S. & Miller, S.M. (eds.). *Vygotsky's educational theory in cultural context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 138–155.

Kokkos, A. 2010. Transformative learning through aesthetic experience: Towards a comprehensive method. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 8(3):155–177. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1541344610397663>

Kotik-Friedgut, B. & Ardila, A. 2014. Cultural-historical theory and cultural neuropsychology today. In Yasnitsky, A., Van der Veer, R. & Ferrari, M. (eds.). *The Cambridge handbook of cultural-historical psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 378–400.

Kotik-Friedgut, B. & Friedgut, T.H. 2008. A man of his country and his time: Jewish influences on Lev Semionovich Vygotsky's world view. *History of Psychology*, 11(1):15–39. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1093-4510.11.1.15>

Kozulin, A. 2003. Psychological tools and mediated learning. In Kozulin, A., Gindis, B., Ageyev, V.S. & Miller, S.M. (eds.). *Vygotsky's educational theory in cultural context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 15–38.

LeCompte, M.D. & Goetz, J.P. 1982. Problems of reliability and validity in ethnographic research. *Review of Educational Research*, 52(1):31–60.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543052001031>

Lima, E.S. 1995. Vygotsky in the international scene: A brief overview. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 26(4):490–503.
<https://doi.org/10.1525/aeq.1995.26.4.05x1066z>

Lin, L.F. 2011. On the developmental journey: An ethnographic study of teacher identity development of NESTs and NNESTs in a US MATESOL program. Unpublished PhD dissertation, Davis, CA: University of California.

Lindqvist, G. 1995. *The aesthetics of play: A didactic study of play and culture in pre-schools*. London: Coronet Books.

Mahn, H. 2012. Vygotsky's analysis of children's meaning making processes. *International Journal of Educational Psychology*, 1(2):100–126.
<https://doi.org/10.4471/ijep.2012.07>

March, S. & Fleer, M. 2016. *Soperezhivanie*: Dramatic events in fairy tales and play. *International Research in Early Childhood Education*, 7(1):68–84.

Mathisen, A. & Thorjussen, F. 2016. Imitation, interaction and recognition communication between children and adults in the Waldorf kindergarten. *RoSE – Research on Steiner Education*, 7(2):18–22.

Matusov, E. 1998. When solo activity is not privileged: Participation and internalization models of development. *Human Development*, 41(5-6):326–349.
<https://doi.org/10.1159/000022595>

Mercer, N. 2004. Sociocultural discourse analysis: Analysing classroom talk as a social mode of thinking. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Professional Practice*, 1(2):137–168. <https://doi.org/10.1558/japl.v1.i2.137>

Mercer, N. 2010. The analysis of classroom talk: Methods and methodologies. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 80(1):1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1348/000709909X479853>

Meshcheryakov, B.G. 2016. The Zeus of Kharkov psychology. *Journal of Russian & East European Psychology*, 53(6):32–50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10610405.2017.1289729>

Meyer, R. 1988. *The wisdom of fairy tales*. Edinburgh: Floris Books.

Michell, M. 2016. Finding the "prism": Understanding Vygotsky's *perezhivanie* as an ontogenetic unit of child consciousness. *International Research in Early Childhood Education*, 7(1):5–33.

Miller, E. & Almon, J. 2009. *Crisis in the kindergarten: Why children need to play in school*. College Park, MD: Alliance for Childhood.

Muscat, L. 2022. On the move: Embodied literacy and symbolic thought in early childhood. *Early Childhood Education*, 48(1):20–25.

Muschalle, M. 2019. Goethe, Kant and intuitive thinking in Rudolf Steiner's *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*. <http://www.studienzuranthroposophie.de/GoeKaE.pdf> [8 August 2023].

Nicolopoulou, A. 2010. The alarming disappearance of play from early childhood education. *Human Development*, 53(1):1–4. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000268135>

Nicolopoulou, A., Barbosa de Sa, A., Ilgaz, H. and Brockmeyer, C., 2009. Using the transformative power of play to educate hearts and minds: From Vygotsky to Vivian Paley and beyond. *Mind, culture, and activity*, 17(1):42–58.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10749030903312512>

Nilsson, M. & Ferholt, B. 2014. Vygotsky's theories of play, imagination and creativity in current practice: Gunilla Lindqvist's "creative pedagogy of play" in US kindergartens and Swedish Reggio-Emilia inspired preschools. *Perspectiva*, 32(3):919–950.

Nilsson, M., Ferholt, B. & Lecusay, R. 2018. 'The playing-exploring child': Reconceptualizing the relationship between play and learning in early childhood education. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 19(3):231–245.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1463949117710800>

Nobel, A. 1996. *Educating through art: The Steiner school approach*. Edinburgh: Floris Books.

Page, T. 2017. Attachment theory and social work treatment. In Turner F.J. (ed.). *Social work treatment: Interlocking theoretical approaches*. 6th ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1–22.

Palincsar, A.S. 1998. Social constructivist perspectives on teaching and learning. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 49:345–375.

<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.49.1.345>

Perrow, S. 2008. *Healing stories for challenging behaviour*. Stroud: Hawthorn Press.

Peterson, J.B. 2002. *Maps of meaning: The architecture of belief*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Presseisen, B.Z. & Kozulin, A. 1992. Mediated learning – The contributions of Vygotsky and Feuerstein in theory and practice. Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement; Philadelphia, PA: Research for Better Schools, Inc.

Raggatt, P. 2010. The dialogical self and thirdness: a semiotic approach to positioning using dialogical triads. *Theory & Psychology*, 20(3):400–419. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1177/0959354310364878>

Rahiem, M.D.H., Abdullah, N.S.M., Krauss, S.E. & Rahim, H. 2020. Moral education through dramatized storytelling: Insights and observations from Indonesia kindergarten teachers. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 19(3):475–490. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.19.3.26>

Rahman, G. 2014. The archetypes of hero and hero's journey in five Grimm's fairy tales. Unpublished Bachelor of Literature thesis, Yogyakarta State University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Ramachandran, V.S. 2000. Mirror neurons and imitation learning as the driving force behind the great leap forward in human evolution. <https://www.edge.org/documents/Rama-2000.pdf> [8 August 2023].

Ratner, C. & Silva, D.N.H. 2017. Introduction: Recovering and advancing Vygotsky's Marxist psychology. In Ratner, C. & Silva, D.N.H. (eds.). *Vygotsky and Marx: Toward a Marxist psychology*. London: Routledge, 1–26.

Rawson, M. 2022. L2 Teaching and learning in Waldorf schools – why performative?. *Scenario: A Journal for Performative Teaching, Learning, Research*. 16(1):1-21. <https://doi.org/10.33178/scenario.16.1.1>

Rawson, M., & Rose, M. 2002. *Ready to learn: from birth to school readiness*. Stroud: Hawthorn Press.

Rogoff, B. 2008. Observing sociocultural activity on three planes: Participatory appropriation, guided participation, and apprenticeship. In Murphy, P.F., Hall, K. & Soler, J.M. (eds.). *Pedagogy and practice: Culture and identities*. London: Sage, 58–74.

Rohrkemper, M.M. 1989. Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: A Vygotskian view. In Zimmerman, B.J. & Schunk, D.H. (eds.). *Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: Theory, research, and practice*. New York, NY: Springer, 143–167.

Rojas-Drummond, S. & Mercer, N. 2003. Scaffolding the development of effective collaboration and learning. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 39(1–2):99–111. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-0355\(03\)00075-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0883-0355(03)00075-2)

Sanders, B. 1995. *A is for ox: The collapse of literacy and rise of violence in an electronic age*. New York, NY: Vintage.

Sangasubana, N. 2011. How to conduct ethnographic research. *The Qualitative Report*, 16(2):567–573. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2011.1071>

Savory, P. 1991. *The best of African folklore*. Cape Town: Struik Timmins.

Schank, R. & Abelson, R. 1995. Knowledge and memory: The real story. In Wyer, R.S. (ed.). *Knowledge and memory: The real story*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence, 1–85.

Schore, A.N. 2001. Effects of a secure attachment relationship on right brain development, affect regulation, and infant mental health. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 22(1–2): 7–66. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/1097-0355\(200101/04\)22:1<7::AID-IMHJ2>3.0.CO;2-N](http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/1097-0355(200101/04)22:1<7::AID-IMHJ2>3.0.CO;2-N)

Schousboe, I. 2013. The structure of fantasy play and its implications for good and evil games. In Schousboe, I. & Winther-Lindqvist, D. (eds.). *Children's play and development: Cultural-historical perspectives*. Dordrecht: Springer, 13–27.

Schwartz, J.M. & Begley, S. 2009. *The mind & the brain: Neuroplasticity and the power of mental force*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Shank, M. 2016. Imagination, Waldorf, and critical literacies: Possibilities for transformative education in mainstream schools. *Reading & Writing – Journal of the Reading Association of South Africa*, 7(2):1–9. <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v7i2.99>

Singer, D.G., Golinkoff, R.M. & Hirsh-Pasek, K. (eds.). 2006. *Play = learning: How play motivates and enhances children's cognitive and social-emotional growth*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Smilansky, S. 1968. *The effects of socio-dramatic play on disadvantaged preschool children*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Soesman, A. 1990. *The twelve senses*. New York, NY: Anthroposophic Press.

Spinrad, T.L., Stifter, C.A., Donelan-McCall, N. & Turner, L. 2004. Mothers' regulation strategies in response to toddlers' affect: Links to later emotion self-regulation. *Social Development*, 13(1):40–55. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9507.2004.00256.x>

Steiner, R. 1979. *The philosophy of freedom: A basis for a modern world conception*. London: Rudolf Steiner Press.

Steiner, R. 1994. *Theosophy: An introduction to the spiritual processes in human life and in the cosmos*. New York, NY: Anthroposophic Press.

Steiner, R. 1996a. *The child's changing consciousness as the basis of pedagogical practice*. New York, NY: Anthroposophic Press.

Steiner, R. 1996b. *The foundations of human experience*. New York, NY: Anthroposophic Press.

Stetsenko, A. & Ho, P.C.G. 2015. The serious joy and the joyful work of play: Children becoming agentive actors in co-authoring themselves and their world through play. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, 47:221–234.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s13158-015-0141-1>

Stetsenko, A. 2019. Cultural-historical activity theory meets developmental systems perspective: Transformative activist stance and nature culture. In Edwards, A., Fleer, M. & Bøttcher, L. (eds.). *Cultural-historical approaches to studying learning and development: Societal, institutional and personal perspectives*. Singapore: Springer, 249–262.

Suggate, S. & Suggate, T. 2019. *Reclaim early childhood: The philosophy, psychology and practice of Steiner-Waldorf early years education*. Stroud: Hawthorn Press.

Sutton-Smith, B. 1966. Theoretical notes. Piaget on play: A critique. *Psychological Review*, 73(1):104–110. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0022601>

Sutton-Smith, B. 2008. Play theory: A personal journey and new thoughts. *American Journal of Play*, 1(1):80–123.

Toomela, A. 2014. There can be no cultural-historical psychology without neuropsychology. And vice versa. In Yasnitsky, A., Ven der Veer, R. & Ferrari, M. (eds.). *The Cambridge handbook of cultural-historical psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 315–349.

Van der Veer, R. & Van Ijzendoorn, M.H. 1985. Vygotsky's theory of the higher psychological processes: Some criticisms. *Human Development*, 28(1):1–9.

Van der Veer, R. 2007. Vygotsky in context: 1900–1935. In Daniels, H., Cole, M. & Wertsch, J.V. (eds.). *The Cambridge companion to Vygotsky*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 21–49.

Vandervert, L. 2017. Vygotsky meets neuroscience: The cerebellum and the rise of culture through play. *American Journal of Play*, 9(2):202–227.

Vasileva, O. & Balyasnikova, N. 2019. (Re)Introducing Vygotsky's thought: From historical overview to contemporary psychology. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10:1515. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01515>

Veraksa, N.E., Veresov, N.N. & Sukhikh, V.L. 2022. The play matrix: A tool for assessing role-play in early childhood. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 30(3):542–559. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669760.2022.2025582>

Veresov, N. 2004. Zone of proximal development (ZPD): The hidden dimension. In Ostern, A. & Heila-Ylikallio, R. (eds.). *Language and culture: Tensions in time and space*. Vol. 1. Finland: Vasa, 42–48.

Veresov, N. 2010a. Forgotten methodology: Vygotsky's case. In Toomela, A. & Valsiner, J. (eds.). *Methodological thinking in psychology: 60 years gone astray?* Charlotte, NC: Information Age, 267–295.

Veresov N. 2010b. Marxist and non-Marxist aspects of the cultural-historical psychology of L.S. Vygotsky. *Psychology Review*, 2(2010-1).

Veresov, N. & Kulikovskaya, I.E. 2015. Human world-outlook evolution: From L.S. Vygotsky to modern times. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(3 S1):570–574. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n3s1p570>

Vygotsky, L.S. 1978. *Mind in society: Development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L.S. 2004. Imagination and creativity in childhood. *Journal of Russian & East European Psychology*, 42(1):7–97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10610405.2004.11059210>

Vygotsky, L.S. 2016. Play and its role in the mental development of the child. *International Research in Early Childhood Education*, 7(2): 3–25

Walker, S., Fler, M., Veresov, N. & Duhn, I. 2020. Enhancing executive function through imaginary play: A promising new practice principle. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 45(2):114–126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1836939120918502>

West, D.E. 2011. Deictic use as a threshold for imaginative thinking: A Peircean perspective. *Social Semiotics*, 21(5):665–682. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2011.607968>

West, D.E. 2021. The dialogic nature of double consciousness and double stimulation: Implications from Peirce and Vygotsky. *Σημειωτική – Sign Systems Studies*, 49(1-2):235–261. <https://doi.org/10.12697/SSS.2021.49.1-2.10>

Wiersma, W. & Jurs, S.C. 2005. *Research methods in education*. 8th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Winther-Lindqvist, D. 2013. Playing with social identities: Play in the everyday life of a peer group in day care. In Schousboe, I. & Winther-Lindqvist, D. (eds.). *Children's play and development: Cultural-historical perspectives*. Dordrecht: Springer, 29–54.

Wisneski, D.B. & Reifel, S. 2011. The place of play in early childhood curriculum. In File, N., Mueller, J.J. & Wisneski, D.B. (eds.). *Curriculum in early childhood education*. New York, NY: Routledge, 175–187.

Wolcott, H.F. 1987. On ethnographic intent. In Spindler, G. & Spindler, L. (eds.). *Interpretive ethnography of education at home and abroad*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 37–60.

Wyatt, I. 1994. *The seven-year-old wonder book*. Edinburgh: Floris Books.

Yasnitsky, A. & Ferrari, M. 2008. From Vygotsky to Vygotskian psychology: Introduction to the history of the Kharkov school. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 44(2):119–145. <https://doi.org/10.2753/RPO1061-0405480100>

Yasnitsky, A. 2010. Guest Editor's Introduction: "Archival revolution" in Vygotskian Studies? Uncovering Vygotsky's archives. *Journal of Russian & East European Psychology*, 48(1):3–13. <https://doi.org/10.2753/RPO1061-0405480100>

Zavershneva, E.I. 2010. "The Way to Freedom" (On the publication of documents from the family archive of Lev Vygotsky). *Journal of Russian & East European Psychology*, 48(1):61–90. <https://doi.org/10.2753/RPO1061-0405480103>

Zavershneva, E.I. 2012. "The key to human psychology". Commentary on LS Vygotsky's notebook from the Zakharino Hospital (1926). *Journal of Russian & East European Psychology*, 50(4):16–41. <https://doi.org/10.2753/RPO1061-0405500401>

Zipes, J. 1979. Who's afraid of the brothers Grimm? Socialization and politicization through fairy tales. *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 3(2):4–41.



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

APPENDICES



Appendix 1: Sally had made her own pictures out of the Three Little Pigs story



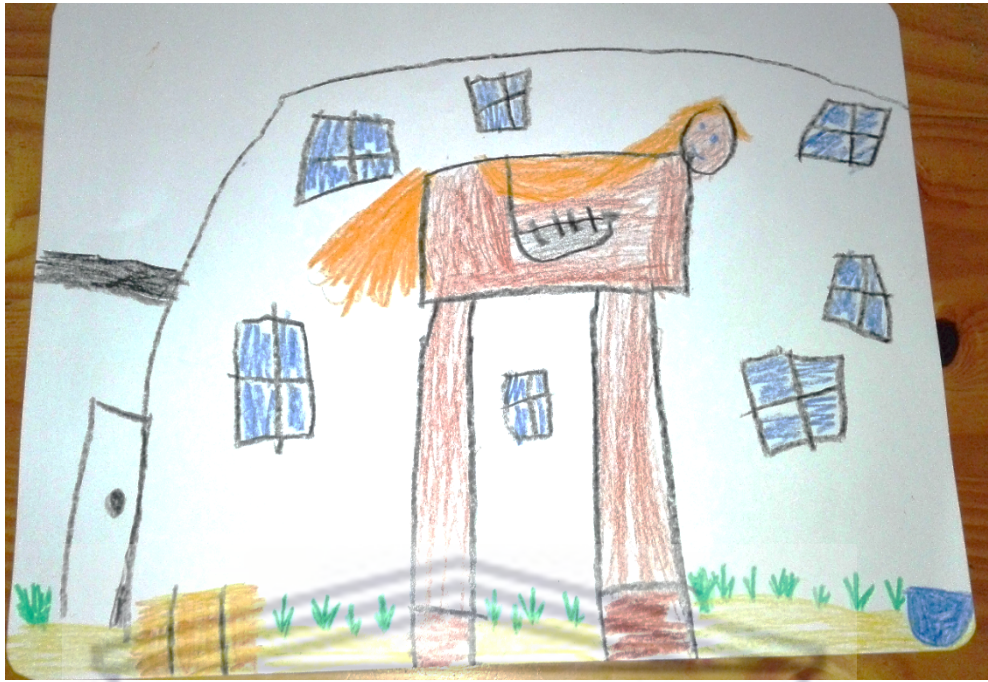
Appendix 2: Princess and the rainbow



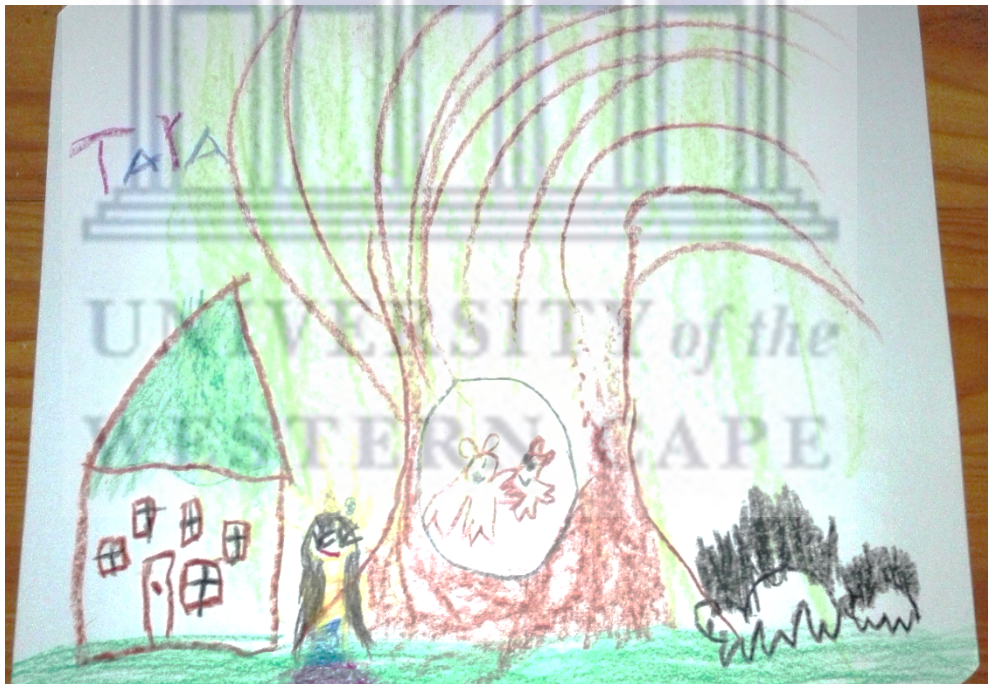
Appendix 3: Rainbow and flower



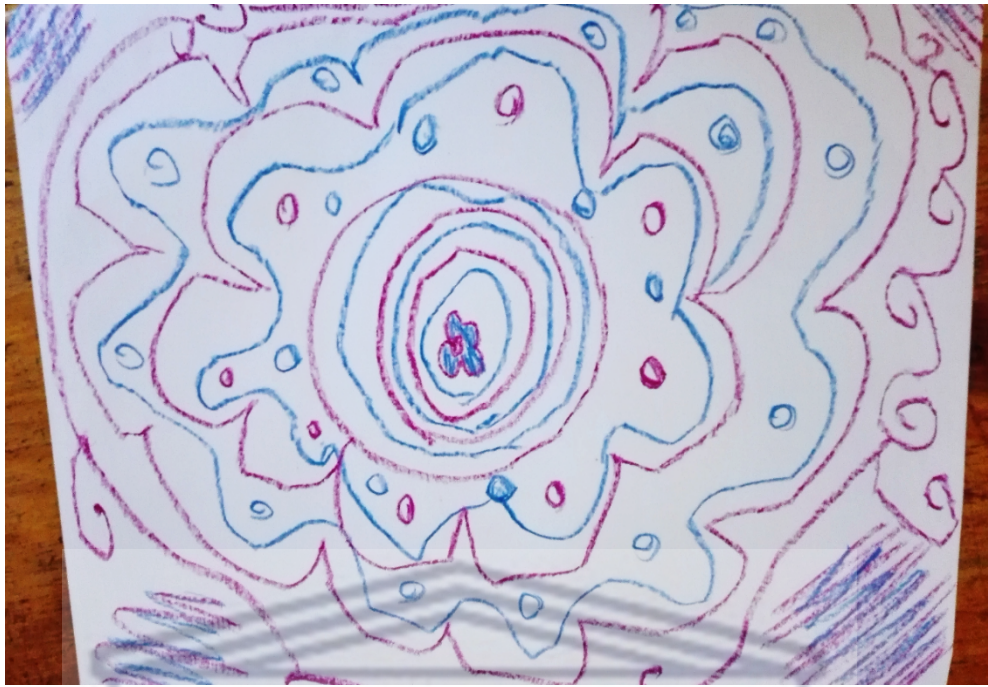
Appendix 4: Bird and the tree



Appendix 5: Horse and house



Appendix 6: The bird visiting the squirrel



Appendix7: Flower mandala



Appendix 8: Star and patterns