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Exploring the cultural construction of children's play in Thailand:
An action research study with the Foundation for Child Development

by

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the children and staff at FCD. To all of the children at the Duangkae Centre, you were at the heart of my experience and are at the core of this study. I will remember every moment I spent with you.

To my colleagues at FCD, thank you for your sharing, teaching, and friendship. Thank you especially to Pii Saow for your instrumental role in this experience, and to Pii Mee and Pii Thim for making the centre feel like home.

Children playing in the sand at the Duangkae Centre (Photo Credit: S. Truong, 2010).

Abstract

Children's play has emerged as a global discourse (Fleer, 2009). Studies from diverse theoretical traditions have examined the role of play in child development; however, the dominant discourse of play has largely privileged Western European-heritage cultural practices, and as a result childhood and play have become decontextualized (Kirova, 2010; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2004). While there is increasing acceptance that play is universal (Frost, Wortham, & Reifel, 2008), it must also be recognized that there is still relatively little that is known about children's play in non-Western and developing contexts (Göncü, Jain, & Tuermer, 2007). Therefore, this action research study contributes to the growing body of literature in the field of play and cultural studies by exploring Thai views of children's play.

The study was conducted with a Thai nongovernmental organization called the Foundation for Child Development (FCD), and was carried out at one of their play centres in an urban low-income congested community. The purpose was to generate new and deeper thinking about play in order to collaboratively (re)construct practices aimed at enhancing children's play opportunities at FCD. Data collection took place from November 2009 – 2010 and included volunteer work and participant observation at the children's play centre. Interviews and focus groups were conducted with FCD staff members and community members. Additionally, a participatory photography research project was conducted with a group of children at the centre.

The study was guided by a cultural-ecological conceptual framework. The findings suggest that play is a culturally structured activity that must be situated contextually. A sociocultural-historical perspective reveals that trends of urbanization and modernization are rapidly changing the landscape of childhood; therefore, it is important to consider the interaction between the global and local elements that are shaping children's play within the contemporary Thai context. The study also calls attention to the importance of having access to play spaces, as they may become meaningful places for children to play and develop. Actions resulting from this study included increasing children's participation in the planning of their play space and a children's photo exhibition to raise awareness of the child's right to play.

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Lastly, thank you to my parents for your support and for the journey you took over 30 years ago. You inspire me every day to continue to learn and to take action.

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Chapter One: Introduction

The Research Question & Impetus for the Study

In this doctoral dissertation I describe an action research (AR) study that was conducted in collaboration with a Thai nongovernmental organization (NGO) called the Foundation for Child Development (FCD), from November 2009 – 2010. The purpose of the study was to generate new and deeper thinking about play in order to collaboratively (re)construct practices aimed at enhancing children's play opportunities at one of FCD's community play centres, called the Duangkae Centre, located in the capital city of Bangkok. The notion of (re)constructing practices firstly recognized FCD's experience and knowledge of play and child development stemming from extensive work in Thailand, and secondly created the opportunity to reflect on which practices were effective and which could be adjusted; it also created the opportunity to construct new practices altogether in order to enhance children's play opportunities at the centre. In order to achieve this, the study was framed by two broad guiding questions:

i. How is play culturally constructed by FCD staff, children, and their caregivers?
ii. How can increasing the inclusion of children's voices help us (re)construct how we plan and provide play opportunities at FCD?

The study addresses current research gaps and contributes to scholarly discourse in the field of play and culture studies in three main areas. First, in the

AR tradition, this study focused on local problems related to everyday experiences at FCD. MacNaughton and Hughes (2009) state that AR in early childhood settings "…can change what you do with children, colleagues, parents and the wider community; it can change how you do it; and it can change how you think about it" (p. 9). Therefore, through engaging in this process FCD and I were able to initiate various actions that had relevance for the local context. By providing the reader with an understanding of this context this study presents a case of how play is being used within a particular community to address the needs of children living in especially difficult circumstances.

Second, Göncü, Jain, and Tuermer (2007) assert that there is limited research on children's play and play spaces in non-Western and developing contexts. Correspondingly, Malone (2006) elucidates how rapid urban growth has had serious consequences for children's lives and that play and recreation provision remain low priorities, particularly in areas with high levels of poverty. Therefore, this study contributes to the larger body of literature that explores how play is constructed in a non-Western context. Furthermore, this study identifies how a number of global and local elements are interacting to shape the way that play is viewed by both children and adults within this community.

Third, although the field of social science has experienced increasing interest in the use of visual methods, such as photography, only a relatively small amount has been written about its use when compared with other methods (Hurworth, 2003; Punch, 2002). Therefore, this study contributes to the growing body of literature that creatively explores young children's play and play spaces

using visual methods (see Burke, 2005; Clark, 2005; Punch, 2002; Rasmussen, 2004). Moreover, the literature also suggests that while children have traditionally been denied a voice in research concerning their lives, there has more recently been an increase in research that situates them as active participants in the process of inquiry (see Alderson, 2008; Christensen & James, 2008; Mayall, 2008; O'Kane, 2008; Punch, 2002). Therefore, this study also contributes to the methodological discussion on the rationale and challenges of using participatory photography *with* children.

Definitions

> **Childhood:** The concept of childhood is socially constructed and therefore, how children are viewed depends on the society and culture of a particular time and place; "…on the other hand, children and therefore childhood do have universal characteristics. Additionally, there is a presumption that it is the responsibility of adults to care for children, in culturally sanctioned ways" (Wells, 2009, p. 3).
>
> **Child Development:** Generally, children's development refers to a process of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth (Hughes, 2010).
>
> **Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances (CEDC):** CEDC is a broad term commonly used by international and intergovernmental organizations in the field of child protection. "Children are in especially difficult circumstances when their basic needs for food, shelter, education,

medical care, or protection and security are not met" (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2011, p. I – 7).

Community: Broadly, community is referred to as "…groups of people who have some common and continuing organization, values, understanding, history, and practices" (Rogoff, 2003, p. 80).

Culture: "I find most useful a definition that includes notions of a group of people who share a set of values, beliefs, and practices; who have access to the same institutions, resources, and technologies; who have a sense of identity of themselves as constituting a group; and who attempt to communicate those values, beliefs, and practices to the following generation" (Tudge, 2008, pp. 3-4).

Developed & Developing Country: *Developed* countries are generally considered to be industrialized, high-income countries. The term developed is sometimes used interchangeably in the literature with the global North, Western countries, or the Minority World. *Developing* countries are generally considered to be countries with lower-income economies; they are sometimes referred to as countries in the global South, in transition, or in the Majority World.

Placing countries in specific categories is problematic for various reasons, including over-looking the diversity that exists within countries or geographic regions, as well as creating unfair dichotomies that privilege a progression towards industrialization. However, this terminology is

unavoidable within a discussion of the contemporary global context. When citing literature throughout this dissertation I use the author(s)' original terminology. In my own discussion, I generally use of the terms global North and global South, aiming to contextualize my meaning whenever possible.

Globalization: Refers to the increasing social, cultural, political, and economic interconnectedness and linkages in different parts of the world. It is made possible by developments in technology, transport, and communications experienced on a large scale (Willis, 2005).

Play: Play is best conceptualized as a form of cultural expression (Göncü, Jain, & Tuermer, 2007). As a cultural construct, a working definition of play includes elements of voluntary, meaningful, symbolic, rule-governed, pleasurable, and episodic behaviours (Fromberg, 2002).

Thailand: The Kingdom of Thailand is a country located in Southeast Asia. It shares borders with Burma and Laos to the north, Cambodia to the east, and Malaysia to the south.

The Theoretical & Conceptual Framework

A participative worldview: The ontological and epistemological assumptions. According to Reason and Bradbudy (2001), a participative worldview simultaneously competes with and integrates positivist and postmodern paradigms, resulting in a subjective-objective notion of reality. This study was situated within such a participative worldview, which:

> …follows positivism in arguing that there is a 'real' reality, a primeval givenness of being (of which we partake) and draws on the constructionist perspective in acknowledging that as soon as we attempt to articulate this we enter a world of human language and cultural expression (p. 7).

Therefore, this study is grounded in a critical realist ontology and an integrated constructivist epistemology. Chinn (1998) explains that integrated constructivists believe that "…nature, cognition, and society interact to influence the course of scientific thought" (p. 77). This epistemological position recognizes that meaning is socially negotiated; however, it rejects relativism by situating knowledge construction as involving cognition and constrained by nature. This view is further positioned in a skeptical or critical realist ontology, which recognizes that there are objects, including social objects, in the world, whether we can know them or not; therefore, this critical realist ontology refers to the belief that any attempt to describe and explain the world is fallible (Scott, 2005). This ontological and epistemological underpinning is consistent with the participative worldview of this AR study.

A guiding postmodern perspective. According to Stringer (2007) the place of theory in AR continues to be discussed and debated. He argues that when conducting research in local contexts academic theories may not fit comfortably into people's everyday lives. Stringer states that "another reason why academic theory may not "make sense" to people is that *any* theory is just one in a wide set of possibilities for explaining or interpreting events in the social world" (p. 188). Therefore, rather than introducing particular theories into the research context that

could limit understanding, Stringer posits that a strength of AR is that it seeks the diverse views of different stakeholders. The research process involves incorporating these views, or theories of how and why events occur as they do, into mutually acceptable ways of understanding. The goal is to arrive at good interpretations that are tested for their reasonableness in the community of inquiry (Bradbury & Reason, 2001).

However, Stringer (2007) also contends that it is not possible for any researcher or stakeholder to enter the research process atheoretically, and offers postmodernism as a genre of theory that challenges knowledge as a set of testable truths that can be objectively known. He states that there is increasing acceptance that the nature of the social world and that of the natural world are fundamentally different. Thus, "…postmodernism questions the nature of social reality and the very processes by which we can come to know about it" (p. 196). According to Stringer, postmodernism interrogates truth claims and moves us to examine the taken for granted assumptions that inform our private, social, and professional activities. One of the ways postmodernists achieve this is by deconstructing the hegemonic metanarratives that we use to make sense of the world by pointing out that there are countless smaller narratives, which constitute multiple truths (Hutcheon, 2006). Therefore, postmodernism focuses on language as the source of truth and reality (Prasad, 2005).

Dachyshyn (2008) points to three axioms of postmodernism that may inform a critical perspective:

> (1) avoid dividing the complex world into binary opposites (e.g. right/wrong, black/white; good/bad); (2) judge a policy (movement, theory, law, position statement) by what happens as a result of its implementation, not by its intent; and (3) be suspicious of grand narratives (theories, discourses) that purport to be based on the Truth with a capital T, understanding that multiple truths always exist and that Truth is always a social-political construction related to power (Hatch et al., 2002, p. 440).

Guided by these axioms, postmodernism served as a lens for reflecting on and raising questions about the diversity and complexity of human meaning-making within a particular Thai context. In this study, postmodernism was engaged with as a guiding perspective to examine views of play in a specific community. For example, postmodernism helped to identify the grand narratives of play and early childhood education discourse as they are interpreted and put into practice by FCD staff members. Furthermore, postmodernism also provided a lens for viewing the diversity of play (e.g. as a culturally structured activity), and childhood (e.g. as a social construction) that may differ across and within cultural groups, such as at the Duangkae Centre. Therefore, postmodernism was commensurable with a cultural-ecological conceptual framework, which was used to contextualize the study of children's play in the Duangkae community.

A cultural-ecological conceptual framework. An interpretive action-oriented methodological approach is well matched with a cultural-ecological conceptual framework which recognizes that individuals and play must be understood within a sociocultural-historical context. Drawing from the work of

Roopnarine and Johnson (1994) and Göncü et al. (2007) this study used a cultural model for describing children's play that consisted of a sociocultural-historical perspective. This approach examined the historical context which focused on increasing understanding of broader societal processes, including the economic, demographic, and global-local milieu of the research setting. It also focused on the sociocultural context of how adults' values influence children's play, how adults' values are communicated, and how adults engage children in play. This approach recognized that adult views shape the cultural context in which children's play takes place, and therefore, their views require exploration in a study of the cultural construction of play. The adult participants' views are discussed in further detail in the third chapter of this dissertation. However, the model used in this study also extended beyond adult views to include how children talk about their play and play space. In doing so, it represented a dialectical approach to a cultural-ecological framework, which recognized that children simultaneously are influenced by, and exert influence on, culture and its forms of expression (Tudge, 2008). The children's views and participation in this study are highlighted in the fourth chapter of this dissertation.

This study was also framed by the concept of participation. Cornwall (1996) discusses various modes of participation, ranging from co-option (i.e. token involvement; research *on* local people) to collective action (i.e. research *by* local people). Methodologically, this study aimed for collaboration with participants. A mode of collaboration can be characterized by outside researchers working *with* local actors to determine priorities; however, the researcher initiates

and guides the process. Correspondingly, along the ladder of children's participation proposed by Hart (1997), this study aimed to work within the fifth and sixth rungs of the ladder. The fifth rung requires that children are consulted and informed throughout the research process. The sixth recognizes that the project is adult-initiated; however, it obliges them to share decisions with children, taking their views seriously. Throughout this dissertation I have endeavoured to communicate the varying levels of participation that were achieved with each research activity with transparency and respect for all those involved in the study.

Limitations & Delimitations

Limitations. One of the main limitations of this study was associated with the challenges of conducting outsider AR. As a non-Thai individual I experienced barriers in communicating in the Thai language. In preparation for this study I completed conversational and intensive Thai language classes, which allowed me to communicate with FCD staff and children during daily activities at the centre. The various research sessions and focus groups were conducted with a language translator and were facilitated in collaboration with FCD staff. Other steps taken to address this limitation included spending an extended amount of time in Thailand since 2005 to increase my cultural understanding and cultivating my relationship with FCD staff members as cultural gatekeepers and guides.

Another limitation was the amount of time that we were able to dedicate to specific research related activities. FCD is a national nongovernmental

organization that is exceptionally busy throughout the year. During the course of this research collaboration they had various campaigns underway, proposal and report deadlines to meet, a number of special events, and of course their regular mandated activities. In light of these time constraints, it was important for me to be flexible and align the research activities within their larger schedule.

Lastly, the third main limitation also corresponds with time and the scheduling of research activities. During the period of this AR study there were major political protests in Thailand. The protests were centred in Bangkok, with the main rallies and incidences taking place from March 12 – May 19, 2010. The situation had both direct and indirect implications for this study, including a number of delays and re-scheduling of our photo exhibition, as well as limiting movement throughout the city and our ability to carry out certain activities with the children.

Delimitations. AR is based on an evolving methodology and a spiral of reflection and action (Stringer, 2007); therefore it was important to set time boundaries for this dissertation research. The study was bound by a timeframe of six to twelve months. Having an upper limit almost seemed counterintuitive to an AR approach; however, for pragmatic reasons (i.e. completing a dissertation and providing FCD with a set time frame of commitment) it was appropriate for this study. Additionally, as the final months approached it allowed me to begin bringing closure to certain actions and the research partnership, and also to transition out of a regular volunteer role with the children.

Secondly, this study was also bound by location; it was an exploration of the cultural construction of play within the context of FCD. The research experience as a whole provided me with the opportunity to talk with diverse individuals, including FCD staff members; however, the research site was specifically the Duangkae Centre and the children involved in the study were those living in the community and who played regularly at the centre. As a result, the scope of the study was narrowed to children's play primarily at the centre, and secondly, in the community.

Lastly, in order to ensure the manageability of the collected visual data, the children were encouraged to select and talk about a specified number of photographs. Depending on the activity, the number ranged between two to five photos. However, there was also flexibility within this process, so children were able to re-take photographs or change their minds about the ones they wanted to talk about.

The Context of the Study

Building rapport with FCD: The beginning of a research collaboration. This dissertation extends from my past volunteer work and research in Thailand. I first traveled to Thailand in 2005 to conduct my Master of Arts thesis research with a University of Alberta international service-learning program called Play Around the World. Through this program, I volunteered with orphanages, schools for children with disabilities, and other social centres to plan and implement sport and play programs for underserved population groups of

children. In addition to volunteering I explored the partnership building process between the Play Around the World program and these various Thai organizations. This research highlighted several knowledge assumptions surrounding the universality of play. In particular, questions surrounding the cultural role of play, benefits of play, and globalization of play were brought to the forefront (Truong, 2007). Ongoing interest in these issues provided me with the motivation to seek out other research opportunities to examine children's play in Thailand, and in particular, for children in especially difficult circumstances.

In the fall of 2007, I returned to Thailand to attend a conference and also had the opportunity to visit the Foundation the Child Development (FCD) at their Duangkae Centre in Bangkok. I can remember walking along a busy road near the main railway station and finally seeing the brightly painted front gate for the first time. The property was enclosed by a concrete wall and inside was a two-storey house surrounded by a play area. On one side of the house there was a large tree in a sand area with a small garden. On the other side there was a larger sand area with some play equipment, a fish pond, and tables and chairs.

Figure 1.1: **Entering the Duangkae Centre (Photo Credit: S. Truong, 2010).**

The Duangkae Centre was closed on the day of my first visit, but I was able to meet with five staff members and learn more about FCD's work. The Foundation for Child Development (FCD) was formally established in 1982 with the amalgamation of various children's working groups (FCD, 2006). Over the years it has received funding from a number of national and international sources to cover operational costs as well as special projects. Today, it has four main project areas: 1. The Project for the Little Hungry; 2. The Mass Communication for Children Promotion Project; 3. The Child Labour Project; and 4. The Family and Community Development Project. FCD reports that it aims to distinguish its mandate from other NGOs working with underprivileged children in Thailand by focusing on the role of play in child development. In particular, their Creative

Spaces campaign and Play for Life project are unique community-based initiatives that focus on providing safe social spaces for children and their families. Falling under the Family and Community Development project area, there is a strong emphasis placed on community cooperation in order to address the lack of appropriate spaces, including physical and media space, for children.

FCD initially opened two play centres: one in Bangkok and one to the southeast of the capital in Samutprakarn province. At the Duangkae Centre in Bangkok, FCD has hosted numerous community play events for families. They often invite local community leaders, including parents, teachers, and public administrators to these events in order to increase awareness of the importance of play and play spaces for children. FCD has also held play workshops for teachers and community volunteers, using their own manual on play for child development, entitled *Play for Life* (Maneeterm, Chuntawithate, & Casey, 2002).

This initial visit in 2007 provided me with the impetus to return to Thailand in April – October 2008 to conduct a qualitative needs assessment focused broadly on the wellbeing of vulnerable children in Thailand. This time also enabled me to connect with FCD and lay the groundwork for a research collaboration that was based on a mutual interest in play and child development.

Increasing awareness of the contemporary context of Thailand. An in-depth analysis of Thailand's history and geopolitical context is beyond the scope of this introduction; therefore, the purpose of this overview is to set the scene in which this study took place. Thailand is a Southeast Asian nation with a rich

cultural history; it has experienced rapid modernization, particularly starting in the second half of the twentieth century. Although Thailand was never formally colonized like its neighbouring countries, such as by Britain in Burma to the north, or by France in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam to the east, Peleggi (2007) explains that Thailand has been equally exposed to Western influences and interferences. In his historical analysis of the Thai nation-state, Peleggi describes these influences that have shaped its modern day context, including becoming integrated into the American post-Cold War oecumene, which involved receiving American military and economic aid starting in the early 1950s. Throughout the ensuing decades Thailand's governments strongly supported the major international financial institutions, including the World Bank, the Asia Development Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. Thus, Thailand's economic development has been largely driven by liberal capitalist principles.

Phongpaichit and Baker (1998) state that American economic aid continued into the 1970s until the United States ended its involvement in the Vietnam War. As a result, Thai economic growth slowed and grew less stable into the early 1980s. Baker and Phongpaichit (2009) explain how government reform and business supporters in the early 1980s led the way for a shift towards export-oriented manufacturing over agricultural export. For example, between 1986 and 1993, Japanese firms invested $47 billion American dollars (USD) in Asia, mainly for manufacturing goods for export. Coupled with a growing tourism industry, in which "annual arrivals grew from a few hundred thousand in the mid-1970s to 12 million at the millennium" (p. 204), Thailand ceased to be a

fundamentally agrarian economy and became the site for export-oriented manufacturing of many East Asian firms. Peleggi (2007) states that from 1987 to 1996 Thailand's economic growth was amongst the highest in the world; however, this ended with the financial crisis in 1997 when the Thai currency fell by over 100 per cent against the American dollar, and Thailand was left with a foreign debt of $89 billion USD. Since the financial crisis, Peleggi explains that Thailand has received a $17.2 billion USD loan from the International Monetary Fund to assist in its economic recovery.

Thailand's economic growth has also been accompanied by a dramatic rise of NGOs over the past few decades. Ungpakorn (2003) explains that while NGOs work in all regions of the country, there is a strong bias towards rural areas based upon a belief that this is where the majority of the poor are located. As in other parts of the world, Thai NGO work spans a diverse range of issues, including "…human rights, the rights of indigenous minorities, promotion of democracy, advocacy for small farmers and fisher-people, advocacy of non-violence and peace, support for children, labour rights, environmental issues, health issues, religious matters, gender rights, alternative technology, cultural issues etc…" (p. 291). Ungpakorn goes on to elucidate that many Thai NGOs receive funding from foreign governments, international NGOs, and multinational organizations, which may directly or indirectly influence their work. Today, Thailand has become a regional hub for many NGOs. For example, the Southeast Asian headquarters for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the International Save the Children Alliance, to name a few, are all located in Bangkok.

In a report on the situation of children in Thailand, UNICEF (2005) states that Thailand's past economic growth and recent recovery from the 1997 financial crisis brought its per capita gross domestic product (GDP) to $2,060 USD in 2004. This growth, which brings Thailand's economic status to a middle income economy, as defined by the World Bank, has facilitated improvements in education, health, nutrition, and sanitation; however, UNICEF has found that it has also coincided with the emergence of other trends, including: environmental degradation; loosening of family ties; grandparents becoming primary caregivers of children in rural northeastern villages; risky behaviour among children; and childhood obesity and related diseases. Furthermore, the report indicates that not all groups of children have benefited equally from Thailand's economic growth and increased child protection measures. Phongpaichit and Baker (1998) explain that Thailand's economic growth has resulted in rapid social changes, including urbanization, a growing middle-upper class, and increasing disparity between the rich and the poor. They argue that the latter became increasingly apparent during the early 1990s, as "Thailand became one of the most unequal societies in the developing world" (p. 281).

Thailand's economic disparity is particularly noticeable in the capital city of Bangkok. Thailand's industrialization has been accompanied by rapid urbanization, and in a country of approximately 60 million people, roughly 11 million live in its capital city (O'Neil, 2008). Baker and Phongpaichit (2009)

describe how Thailand's economic development has created a much larger working and middle class that has been highly influenced by Western consumer tastes and concepts of individualism through capitalism, globalization, and mass media. They assert that the nation's space has become much smaller due to extensive road networks, tourist arrivals reaching up to 12 million a year, and national mass media via television, film, and internet. Baker and Phongpaichit state that over a single generation "the economy became more exposed to global forces, and the society to global tastes and ideas" (p. 232).

Over the last quarter of the 20th century and since the turn of the millennium Thailand's educational system has been significantly reformed. According to the 2008 National Education Report of Thailand, "…all Thai citizens are entitled to receive a complete basic education free of charge" (Thai Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 5). This includes nine years of compulsory primary and lower secondary education, as well as an additional three years of non-compulsory upper secondary education. Thailand's tertiary education is provided by a number of private and public universities, institutes, and colleges. Baker and Phongpaichit (2009) explain that changing gender patterns in Thailand's new middle class were reflected in the tertiary education system. They state that by the 1990s, the majority of university graduates were women, and that the number of male and female graduates in the total labour force were approximately equal. However, they also note that most family businesses remain patriarchal, and all levels of political power still maintain a strong male bias.

Bangkok's congested communities and the Duangkae community. While Thailand's middle class population continues to expand, so too does its urban population. However, interspersed throughout Bangkok's canals, roadways, and rail systems, and in between its megaplexes and multinational corporations are Bangkok's low-income congested communities, which are often referred to colloquially as slums. Ockey (1996, as cited in O'Neil, 2008) estimates that over one million people live in Bangkok's slums. O'Neil (2008) elucidates that many of these larger communities have existed for decades and are permanent structures complete with electrical wiring; however, they may also be small, temporary, and on private or public land. While younger residents of these congested communities were born in Bangkok, the majority of the heads of the households are considered to be economic migrants from rural areas.

FCD has estimated that there are approximately 300 to 400 people renting 100 households in the Duangkae community; however, official statistics are difficult to obtain due to weak infrastructure and the transitional nature of the community. Many of the inhabitants are originally migrants from rural areas who moved to Bangkok to work in factories, as labourers, or as food vendors around the nearby railway station. FCD has estimated that approximately 100 children up to the age of 18 live in the community.

An Overview of the Dissertation

Situating my voice in the text. Throughout this dissertation I have endeavoured to explore and present my own personal narrative in a way that

allows me to connect creatively and authentically with the reader. Finding and situating my voice as a researcher has been an integral part of my writing process. I wanted to be particularly aware of the tendency of writing with what Richardson and Adams St. Pierre (2008) call the homogenized voice of science. Guba and Lincoln (2005) refer to this as the 'voice from nowhere' that produces research texts with abstracted realities. The postmodern crisis of representation has challenged researchers to have a real researcher's voice and to let research participants speak for themselves through the research text. Holman Jones (2008) explains that the personal narrative and performative turn has taught us to construct stories as they intersect with the stories of others so that we may contextualize our texts and subjectivity. One way to achieve this has been through writing autoethnographic texts that implicate us as researchers in the research process as we confront the impossibility of representing lived experience. Therefore, I have endeavoured to reflexively write myself into this text in order to recognize the situated nature of my fieldwork. My hope is that through contextualizing my voice and those of others, I can share with the readers a multifaceted research experience.

Furthermore, in this study, the use of photography provided unique insight into children's experiences of play, primarily at the Duangkae Centre and secondly in the community. These photographs help bring this research to life by providing a visual form of data to complement the written text. However, it is also important to consider the ethical implications of displaying children's images in public documents. After careful consideration, I have decided to protect the

identity of the children who participated in this study; however, in an effort to share their contributions to this research I have included photographs in this dissertation that focus on the spaces and places of their play.

The organization of the dissertation. In Chapter One I have outlined the purpose and impetus for this research, and described the background of the study. Chapter Two contains the review of literature that frames this study. This includes related literature on play, play spaces, and child development. The second chapter also includes a discussion on the AR methodology that guided this study. This is a mixed-format dissertation and Chapters Three and Four have been written as separate manuscripts that will be submitted for publication in academic peer reviewed journals. Chapter Three focuses on the AR collaboration with FCD on a broad level, while Chapter Four concentrates on the participatory photography research project conducted with the children at the Duangkae Centre. Lastly, Chapter Five provides an overall discussion on the themes of this study, including the cultural construction of play, cultural change in a contemporary Thai context, and the notion of play as a global assemblage of global and local elements. This final chapter also highlights the practical, theoretical, and methodological implications of this study, as well as recommendations for future research.

Chapter Two: Framing the Study

Literature Review

This chapter provides a review of the literature that framed this research study. The first section explores the key concepts in play and child development discourse, and then examines how a cultural-ecological conceptual framework can be used to guide research on the cultural construction of play and childhood. The second section grounds the cultural-ecological framework in the new sociology of childhood, which recognizes children as competent social actors who have the right to participate in research concerning their lives. This is followed by a review of literature on child participation and the use of visual methods for research with children. The third section presents examples of recent studies that examine children's own views of their play environments using creative participant-friendly methods. The last part of this chapter outlines the AR methodology that guided this study and the philosophical rationale that situates this research within a participative worldview. This will also include an overview of the quality criteria and ethical considerations of this study.

The challenge of defining play. Play has been described and theorized in the literature in a variety of ways, including as an activity that is child-initiated (Roopnarine & Johnson, 2005), as a personal experience (Hughes, 2001), and as multi-faceted and relative behaviour (Fromberg, 2002). The large scope of play behaviour described in the literature makes it difficult to succinctly define play. Hughes (2001) states that the distinction between what is and is not play can be

made through reference to several defining characteristics. In order to be considered play, Hughes contends that behaviour must satisfy several criteria, including being spontaneous, first-hand experience, goalless, freely chosen, personally directed, intrinsically motivated, where the child is in control, with play cues or meta-signals, a performance of motor patterns, repetitious, neophilic, non-detrimental, and a balanced experience. This diverse list situates play as a complex phenomenon that Hughes further categorizes into fifteen different and essential types: symbolic; rough and tumble; socio-dramatic; social; creative; communication; exploratory; fantasy; imaginative; locomotor; mastery; object; role; deep play; and dramatic. Furthermore, an additional categorization of play is unstructured free play (Frost, Wortham, & Reifel, 2008).

Fromberg (2002), provides a more concise list of characteristics, stating that a working definition includes the recognition of play as: *voluntary* in relation to a specific context; *meaningful* processes that connect with children's own experiences; *symbolic* of children's experiences; *rule-governed* by children; contributing to children's sense of *pleasure*; and as *episodic*, being focused on activity, rather than outcomes. Situating play as relative behaviour, Fromberg elucidates that the context, such as the physical and social environment, historical moment, and cultural conditions, influences the content of children's play. Moreover, the diversity of play contexts results in divergent ways of thinking about play and its related functions.

Play and child development. Fleer (2009) contends that the dominant discourse of play has largely privileged European-heritage cultural practices. In

particular, Fleer explains that in Western-heritage communities play is featured prominently in the field of early childhood education, with much of current practice being informed by foundational research examining the role of play in child development. According to Johnson, Christie, and Yawkey (1999) research suggests that there are three ways to consider the relationship between play and child development. The first is play as a window that simply *reflects* the current status of a child's development. The second is play as a context that *reinforces* development. The third is play as a context that may *result* in development. They assert that these are not mutually exclusive hypotheses, but rather any one is possible depending upon what kind of play is involved and what area of development is being considered. Scholars such as Johnson et al. (1999) and Frost et al. (2008) provide in-depth discussion on the relationship between play and child development. Their syntheses support the hypotheses that play has a role in: cognitive development with respect to operational thought, problem solving, and language development in children; social and emotional development; and physical development, including both gross and fine motor skills.

Fleer, Tonyan, Mantilla, and Patricia Rivalland (2009) explain that the global discourse of play in early childhood education has been influenced by many theoretical traditions. For example, they state that classical theories of play included biologically-driven ideas (i.e. releasing excess energy) and instinct-driven ideas (i.e. providing practice for adult roles) about play. Fleer et al. (2009) explain that these classical theories provided the background for the emergence of contemporary child developmental theories. In particular, they refer to Piaget

(1962), Parten (1932) and Vygotsky (1966), whose work remains highly influential in the global discourse of early childhood education.

Frost et al. (2008) explain that for Piaget, children construct knowledge by incorporating new experiences into their existing understandings through *assimilation* and *accommodation*. "**Assimilation** is the action of the child on surrounding objects, while converse action, **accommodation** is the action of the environment (objects) on the child…Play is essentially assimilation (action on objects) or the primacy of assimilation over accommodation" (p. 39). Piaget also linked various types of play with stages of child development that reflect levels of cognition. For example, functional play consists of actions that are ends in themselves and occurs during the sensorimotor period, while symbolic play reflects the thoughts that children are developing and occurs during the preoperational period. Thirdly, as children enter into the concrete operational period of logical thought, the play form that reflects their level of cognition is games with rules. Frost et al. (2008) assert that while Piaget's work has allowed scholars to argue for the centrality of play in children's cognitive development, his links between types of play and corresponding stages of development have been challenged as questionable, and even inaccurate.

According to Frost et al. (2008), Parten was concerned with how children become social participants in group activities, such as play. Essentially, Parten's theory suggests that children begin to make a transition from non-social to being socially aware once they reach the age of two. The theory posits that the change occurs during preschool years, with children becoming cooperative with peers by

the age of five or six. Frost et al. note that Parten's social theory does not account for individual differences, or disparities amongst children entering group care at earlier ages.

Fleer et al. (2009) contend that in many educational institutions these theories are often presented without critique or debate, and thus, are presented as fact. They argue that Vygotsky provides a third theory, which is theoretically positioned very differently to that of Piaget and Parten. According to Bodrova and Leong (2007) the basic tenets of the Vygotskian framework are: i. children construct knowledge; ii. development cannot be separated from its social context; iii. learning can lead development; and iv. language plays a central role in mental development. With regards to play, Vygotsky took a more integrative view of play than other developmental theorists by asserting that play promotes cognitive, emotional, and social development. However, rather than viewing play as a predominant activity of young children, which some consider Piaget's work to suggest, Vygotsky concludes that play is a *leading activity*, defined as "…the types of interactions between a child and the social environment that will lead to achievement of the developmental accomplishments in one period of life and prepare him for the next period" (Bodrova & Leong, 2007, p. 98). In particular, Vygotsky situates make-believe play as a leading activity for preschool and kindergarten children. Additionally, Vygotsky believes that play establishes a *zone of proximal development* for children, by supporting the skills that are on the edge of emergence. The zone of proximal development is defined as "…a range of tasks between those the child can handle independently and those at the highest

levels she can master through play or with the help of adults or more competent peers" (Frost et al., 2008, p. 40). This represents a point of departure with Piaget, who emphasized children's interactions with physical objects and not people. For Vygotsky, children can achieve higher levels of development through play and scaffolding of learning from adults and competent peers.

Bodrova and Leong (2007) explain that Vygotsky's definition of play is limited to dramatic or make-believe play of preschoolers and primary school-age children; thus excluding activities such as games, object manipulations, and explorations that are commonly referred to in research and practice as play. They state that for Vygotsky, play has three components whereby children: i. create an imaginary situation; ii. take on and act out roles; and iii. follow a set of rules determined by specific roles. Therefore, for Vygotsky, play is not entirely spontaneous because it is dependent on players following a set of rules of an imaginary situation:

> Each imaginary situation contains a set of roles and rules that surface naturally. Roles are the characters that the children play, such as pirate or teacher. Rules are the sets of behaviors allowed either by the role or by the pretend scenario. The roles and rules change as the theme for the imaginary situation changes (p. 130).

Fleer (2009) explains that rules for behavior in everyday life may become rules for behavior in play, and it is through this space that a zone of proximal development is generated through play. Vygotsky (1966) provides the example of

two real life sisters who play out being sisters. “Through play, the children consciously focus on the concept of ‘sisters’, thus paving the way for the concept formation” (Fleer, 2009, p. 4). Bodrova and Leong (2007) further elucidate that at first roles are explicit, while rules are implicit and negotiated. Rules are expressed in relation to specific roles and usually become known when a child breaks them. As children approximately between the ages of three to five move towards mature play, they may invent props to fit their roles, play several roles at once, and become immersed in imaginary play that can extend and continue over longer periods of time. Around the age of five, Vygotskians, like Piagetians believe that children are capable of engaging in games; however, Vygotsky’s theory considers games to be a consequence of play, but not play itself. Bodrova and Leong go on to explain that “Games are distinguished from imaginary play by the fact that the imaginary situation is now hidden (and not explicit as it is in pretend play), and the rules become explicit and detailed instead of being hidden or implicit” (p. 154). Therefore, motor games and board games are activities with explicit rules that must be learned, and may provide children with preparation for the transition to learning activity and formal learning.

To characterize the main theoretical frameworks of play and child development, Fromberg (2002) envisions a continuum with Piaget’s psychological-individual perspectives on one end and Vygotsky’s (amongst others’) sociocultural perspectives at the other. Similarly, Bodrova and Leong (2007) explain that for Piaget, a child’s cognitive development occurs primarily in interaction with physical objects, but for Vygotsky it is always socially mediated,

and as such, development is never separated from its social context. Thus, according to Fleer (2009) one of the legacies of Vygotsky's work is a cultural-historical framework in which individuals and play are understood within a social, cultural, and historical context.

One of the pioneering studies addressing the topic of play in a Thai context was an ethnographic research project on child rearing practices in rural Thailand (Amornvivat, Khemmani, Thirachitra, & Kulapichitr, 1990). Adapting Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model as their guiding conceptual and theoretical framework, Amornvivat et al. (1990) conducted the study in four rural villages, each with 10-12 families with children up to the age of six. The purpose of the study was to identify past and present Thai child rearing practices in order to develop a model of early childhood education that was consistent with Thai ways of life. Data collection was carried out by research assistants using the following instruments: one community survey form; three village survey forms; four field record forms; one kindergarten or child development centre observation form; and three forms of research questions.

Amornvivat et al. (1990) state that past Thai child rearing practices were based upon values of obedience and respect for seniority, good manners, knowledge and intelligence, diligence and responsibility, gratitude, strength and bravery for boys and qualities of homemakers and honesty for girls. While they acknowledge that current practices in urbanized areas have been influenced by mass media and Western practices, they believe that child rearing in rural areas still reflects some of the values held in the past. In their study, play is presented as

a part of child rearing that may contribute to physical, intellectual, social and emotional, and cultural and moral development.

Based on their study, Amornvivat et al. (1990) associate play's role in physical development with activities where children may exercise during play. Based on this conceptualization they observed children in numerous play activities, including:

> …play fishing, fencing, shooting arrows, football, tree-climbing, chasing each other, bicycle-riding, swings, see-saws, going through tunnels, jumping ropes, running around, casting and shooting rubber bands, riding on the other's back and racing, guessing fingers, projecting movies, ghosts, boxing, touching fingers, blowing balloons, gecko, selling things, cooking, imitating animals, wheeling, rubber band and stick, jigzaw [*sic*] puzzles, telephoning, games with nuts, rubber loops, chopping with a knife, tapping wood, and tapping bottles" (p. 37).

Furthermore, they found that children's playthings which promoted physical development could come from the environment, discarded items, household items, and the market. Examples of play identified included riding a pretend horse made from a banana leaf stem and rolling bicycle tires with a stick, or imitating adults at work, such as digging in the ground. While the authors do not provide a definition for physical development, they assert that these playthings and activities help children to exercise and be active.

Amornvivat et al. (1990) classify children's play that they consider as contributing to children's intellectual development into eight different categories, including exploration play, testing play, physical play, dramatic and imitation play, construction play, manipulative play, verbal play, and games. The study documents various forms of children's play in each of these categories that reflect the local culture and environment. For example, playing with bamboo sticks or pretending to be a rice and curry vendor indicate the influence of the environment on playthings and roles for imitation play. Other observed play included singing and rhythm play, hide-and-seek, tag, and playing with nature. While these play activities may also be observed in other cultural contexts, the authors note that there are also culturally specific variations, such as rhythm games being played to Buddhist Lent songs or songs about Thai fruit.

Amornvivat et al. (1990) discuss the social and cultural aspects of play throughout the study. They found that children may play alone or in groups, which are often comprised of their relatives and neighbours. They also observed that adults did not often play with children:

> Playing with adults was not often found. The adults usually had played a role in supporting child [*sic*] play by making a toy for the child or facilitating the game rather than playing with the child directly. Playing with the child directly was usually observed with an infant or a young child, more than with older children (p. 73).

They also reported that children often played nearby their homes where adults could watch them; however, they were often allowed to play freely without direct adult interaction. Furthermore, they found that cultural values were often reflected in play. Their analysis suggested that girls and boys played differently. For example, boys often engaged in play that was considered to require strength and sense of adventure, such as sword fighting and riding on one another's back; girls on the other hand were observed to play taking care of younger siblings or cooking and selling food. Despite these variations, girls and boys were also observed playing together in all the rural villages.

A key finding from the study conducted by Amornvivat et al. (1990) was that urbanization, economic development, and mass media are changing both rural and urban life in Thailand. Thus, the study indicated the need to increase understanding of cultural practices, such as play, through a cultural-ecological framework.

Cultural-ecological theory and play. Tudge and Odero-Wanga (2009) explain that cultural-historical or cultural-ecological theory draws heavily on the theories of Vygotsky and Bronfenbrenner. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory recognizes the cultural aspects of human development by asserting that humans, as changing organisms, cannot be isolated from their interactions with their changing environments (Rogoff, 2003). For Bronfenbrenner (1979), the ecological study of human development involves the examination of multi-person systems of interaction within an expansive environment. Bronfenbrenner explains

that any research conducted without this broadened perspective takes development out of its context:

> The ecology of human development involves the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded (p. 21).

Bronfenbrenner contends that in this definition, a child is not a tabula rasa, but rather interacts reciprocally with his or her ecological environment. The ecological environment consists of four concentric structures, which are referred to as microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, and macrosystems.

Rogoff (2003) explains that in Bronfenbrenner's ecological system, microsystems are a child's immediate settings, including the child and others. This may be comprised of the home, school, religious, and neighbourhood setting. Second, mesosystems represent the relationships between and among the microsystems. Mesosystems involve two or more systems in relation to each other, such as whether or not a child enters into a setting alone or with others. Third, exosystems represent the relations between microsystems and settings in which children are not directly involved. For example, children may not experience their parents' workplaces directly; however, the stress and supports of parents' workplaces have an impact on their relations with their children.

Exosystems can also include social networks, quality and access to social services, neighbourhood safety, and public policies. Lastly, macrosystems represent the ideology and beliefs that are present at the level of subculture or culture as a whole. For example, Bronfenbrenner (1979) uses the example of how blueprints, such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, or religious affiliation may create consistencies amongst, and differences between, certain settings. Blueprints embody the dominant beliefs and ideology of an ecological system; however, they can be changed, thus altering the macrosystem. While Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective has made significant contributions to the field of child development, Rogoff (2003) contends that the division of the nested systems limits how the interaction between individual and cultural processes are theorized. She argues instead for a sociocultural-historical theory that situates human development as constituting, and constituted by cultural-historical activities and practices. In such a theory individuals are not only influenced by culture, but also influence cultural processes. Rogoff clarifies this position by stating:

> … from my perspective, people develop as they participate in and contribute to cultural activities that themselves develop with the involvement of people in successive generations…As people develop through their shared use of cultural tools and practices, they simultaneously contribute to the transformation of cultural tools, practices, and institutions (p. 52).

For Tudge and Odero-Wanga (2009), this perspective is reflected in cultural-ecological theory, which posits that development occurs largely through

the everyday activities and interactions of developing individuals and their social partners. Tudge and Odero-Wanga state that by engaging in these habitual activities and interactions children become a part of their cultural world. They maintain that children do not merely reproduce cultural practices, but also recreate them, and assert that "…cultural-ecological theory treats development as a complex interplay among cultural context, individual variability, and change over time, with the key aspect being activities and interactions, where context and individual variability intersect" (p. 147). This corresponds with Rogoff's (2003) position that culture is variable within and across communities, continually changing, and shaped by individual involvement. Therefore, the study of culturally structured activities, such as play and child development, requires contextualization.

Frost et al. (2008) contend that play is present in all cultures, varying based on the surrounding values, beliefs, practices, institutions, and tools. They state that "girls and boys all around the world play, in some ways that we recognize and in other ways that are not so familiar to us" (p. 195). Correspondingly, Gaskins, Haight, and Lancy (2007) conceptualize play as "…a culturally structured activity that varies widely across cultures (as well as within them) as a result of differences in childrearing beliefs, values, and practices" (p. 179). One of the first studies to demonstrate this cross-cultural variation was the seminal *Six Cultures* study conducted under the direction of Beatrice and John Whiting in the 1950s (Edwards, 2005).

In her article, Edwards (2005) revisits the observational notes and data collected for the *Six Cultures* study and subsequent research projects that examined child and family life between the mid-1950s and mid-1970s. Edwards explains that the original study was conducted between 1954 and 1956 in communities in Kenya, Mexico, the Philippines, Japan, India, and the United States. For this study, field teams in each community collected data on children aged three to ten years during timed observations, which were distributed over four or five periods during the day and lasted for five minutes in duration. Subsequent studies incorporated longer periods of observation, ranging from 15 to 60 minutes, depending on the community. Observations were coded by field teams into four preconceived play categories, including creative play, fantasy play, role play, and games with rules. Edwards suggests that there were four strong findings that were consistent across cultures: i. girls spent more of their day doing productive work, while boys spent relatively more time playing; ii. gender segregation mediated play during middle childhood; iii. during middle childhood (ages six to ten) boys reduced interaction with adult females and were observed at greater distances from home than girls; and iv. girls, particularly during middle childhood, had more responsibility for infants than boys. The findings suggested that gender mediates play across cultures; however, the study was based on observational protocols and fixed categories of play and it did not provide details of children's or adults' views of their activities.

An additional outcome of revisiting the *Six Cultures* study was that it allowed Edwards (2005) to reflect on the economic, political, and social changes

that have occurred since the original study. Edwards contends that traditionally, children in developing contexts had less exposure to media and novelty, and as a result were very innovative with their play supplies, often using natural materials. However, the global economic, political, cultural, and mass media integration that has occurred since the original study was conducted has had diverse effects on the way children play. For example, Edwards suggests that mass media facilitates advertisement of the latest commercial playthings, which can create fads in the local, regional, and global cultures of childhood. Edwards concludes that this study supports the supposition that play, while present in all cultures, is mediated by factors, such as cultural norms, and the physical and social environment.

Roopnarine and Johnson (1994) propose that play is an activity that is present in all cultures, and thus is both a cause and effect of culture. In order to achieve more comprehensive and integrated accounts of play they assert that there is a need to broaden the conceptual frameworks on play and to incorporate socio-cultural factors into theory construction. They state that cultural-ecological models of behaviour and development reveal three interacting layers of environmental influence on play. First are the physical and social aspects of children's immediate settings. Second are the historical influences that affect the way that individuals conceptualize play. Third are the cultural and ideological beliefs relative to the meaning of play. This includes environmental influences that mediate the social and economic realities of children's experiences, such as societal norms, class, caste, gender ideologies, geography, familial traditions, peers, media, available toys, and a culture's history.

Correspondingly, Göncü, Jain, and Tuermer (2007) contend that children's play is best conceptualized as a form of cultural expression. In particular, they take up the argument that previous research suggesting that low-income and non-Western children's play is inadequate has perpetuated biased assumptions regarding the occurrence and meaning of play. According to Göncü et al. (2007) there are three main critiques of previous research on children's play. First, prior experimental research removed children from their natural environment to study their play in unfamiliar settings, such as mobile research laboratories. Second, previous research treated 'low-income' and 'non-Western' as separate variables from other contextual factors, such as social conditions and adult values. Third, in the tradition of dominant developmental theorists, such as Leont'ev, Piaget, and Vygotsky, many child development scholars have continued to focus almost entirely on pretend play, which overlooks other forms of play that might not be recognized in Western play theory.

In response, Göncü et al. (2007) present a cultural model for describing children's play in diverse communities. The model provides a broad approach to studying children's play as cultural interpretation and expression by examining three contexts: i. the economical context considers the extent to which material wealth influences children's play; ii. the value context focuses on the extent to which caregivers' values affect how children engage in play; and iii. the communicative context indicates the need to understand how adults communicate their values regarding play to children.

Göncü et al. (2007) contend that their cultural model of play provides an approach to fairly describe children's play in low-income and non-Western communities. In their study, they apply the model to describe the play of children between the ages of four and six, in an African American urban community, a semirural European American community, and a Turkish peasant community. Data collection consisted of observations of 14 to 15 children in each community and interviews with their parents and caregivers. Children were videotaped during free activity time at school and were observed in a community setting in which they frequently played. Interviews with the children's teachers and caregivers focused on learning from their ideas about children's play, children's daily routines, play and games, adults' values about children's play, and adults' conceptions of children's play in comparison to other daily activities. All data from the play videotapes and interviews was transcribed and coded by the researchers.

To examine the expectation that play would be valued and receive support in the low-income communities, teachers and caregivers were asked if play was a good activity for children, if so why, and if they encouraged children to play. Göncü et al. (2007) state that their initial expectation received support; however, there were some variations. For example, while the researchers found that respondents in the African American community reported that play was a good activity that contributed to child development, some caregivers in the Turkish community expressed surprise that children's play would be the topic of scholarly inquiry. The authors note that "…the Turkish caregivers stated that play is

something children do among themselves, and, therefore, it was not worth adults' while to spend time talking about it" (p. 166). These findings speak to the diversity of the value and communicative contexts of play. Göncü et al. go on to discuss their finding that poverty mediates play through issues such as community safety, access to toys, and children's household responsibilities. For example, while they observed that all the children in the American communities had some toys, Turkish children often played with household objects and made toys from accessible resources, such as tree branches, chewing gum wrappers, or mud. Lastly, they also observed and interpreted various forms of play, in addition to pretend play. Based upon previous research and adults' descriptions they identified six types of play that were observed in each community. The six types of play observed and coded included pretend, physical, teasing, sound and rhythm, language, and games. These findings address their expectation that cultural traditions reflect themselves in children's play and reinforce their critique that "…the previous dominant scientific approach to children's play that privileged pretend play and its experimental investigation emerges as Western and middle class" (p. 175). Their observations highlight the broad factors influencing children's play, and how the cultural-ecological context, including poverty, mediates play.

The preceding section of this literature review has examined the ways in which play and child development have been researched and theorized; however, the call to contextualize research concerning childhood requires researchers to consider the ways in which children view their own lives. Therefore, the

following section examines the new sociology of childhood and its implications for play and play space research.

The new sociology of childhood. At the centre of the debate between traditional positivist and non-positivist views of childhood is the new sociology of childhood. Steinberg and Kincheloe (2004) state that within a positivist paradigm children are viewed as naturally compliant and dependent upon adults. Positivists defend this position by drawing upon the physical biological immaturity of children. From a positivist hierarchy, this position situates adults as superior, and children as correspondingly inferior. The underlying assumptions of this view of childhood are rooted in developmental psychology's dominant child development discourse, which describes the developmental trajectory of 'normal' children. This discourse speaks with the scientific authority of neutral and objective knowledge. However, Steinberg and Kincheloe contend that this 'truth' is based almost entirely on American, white, middle-class curriculum. Furthermore, they argue that this decontextualized view of childhood ignores the power relations that oppress children, such as race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability. As such, the positivist regime of truth further subjugates children from lower socioeconomic, non-white, or immigrant backgrounds.

These critiques of childhood and child development studies have been echoed by other scholars, including Fleer et al. (2009) and Penn (2005). Fleer et al. (2009) state that much of the research informing current early childhood practice in Western nations is based upon limited cultural and historical contexts. Penn (2005) argues that not only does this application of universalism occur in

Western nations, but that all too often international development agencies view child development as fixed or unvarying, despite the fact that they tend to be based on observations and experiments with mainly white middle-class children in North America and Europe. These findings are then assumed to be applicable to children in all cultures and circumstances; as a result, child development theories and conceptualizations of childhood have become globalized, where the global North prescribes pedagogy and practice to the global South. In order to break down this Northern privilege, these dominant conceptualizations must be challenged and understood within specific historical and cultural contexts. For example, Dachyshyn (2008) draws upon postmodern critiques in order to reconceptualize the way developmentally appropriate practice is theorized in early childhood education. Dachyshyn cites Cannella (1997) who calls for the deconstruction of six key tenets of early childhood education theory, including: i. the modernist/enlightenment conceptions of children and childhood; ii. the regimes of power in positivist child development theory that create a normal/abnormal or deficient binary; iii. the emphasis on early life experiences rather than on political, historical, and social relations of power; iv. the institutionalization of early childhood education; v. the universality of developmentally appropriate practice; and vi. the prominence of professionalism in the developmentally appropriate practice movement, which "…serves to perpetuate patriarchal values of discipline and regulation (Dachyshyn, 2008, p. 10). Through her sociocultural-historical approach to research, Dachyshyn calls

for adopting cultural practices that reflect the diversity of children and childhoods present in early learning and care programs.

Furthermore, Smagorinsky (1995) asserts that the idea of child development may be problematic as it suggests a sense of telos, or path, towards completion. This sense of telos may represent an ethnocentric view of development when it is grounded in "…unexamined cultural assumptions about the ways in which people have historically developed in particular societies" (p. 194). Smagorinsky reminds us of the principle of heterogeneity, which posits that individuals are not limited to a single developmental focus, but rather can develop in several ways at once.

James, Jenks, and Prout (1998) describe how historical observations about childhood suggest that it is "…less a fact of nature and more an interpretation of it" (p. 62). This perspective highlights how childhood may be construed differently across cultures and throughout history. For example, the seminal work of Philippe Ariès is often cited in childhood studies literature. Corsaro (2005) explains that Ariès researched changes in family organization, children, and age relationships beginning in the Middle Ages to the end of the 18th century. Ariès argues that the notion of childhood, as distinguished from adulthood, did not exist in medieval society. Ariès (1962) states:

> In medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist; this is not to suggest that children were neglected, forsaken or despised. The idea of childhood is not to be confused with affection for children: it corresponds

> to an awareness of the particular nature of childhood, that particular nature which distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult. In medieval society this awareness was lacking. That is why, as soon as the child could live without the constant solicitude of his mother, his nanny or his cradle-rocker, he belonged to adult society (p. 128).

While Ariès' work has been disputed, his historical analysis of childhood has been influential in the constructionist argument for the conceptualization of childhood (Corsaro, 2005). For example, Montgomery (2009) argues that the notion of childhood as a stage of life distinct from adulthood is not universally held, as anthropological studies suggest certain cultures have many life stages of social immaturity. Steinberg and Kincheloe (2004) argue that in place of the dominant positivist view of children there is a need for a perspective that situates children as different from adults based upon age and generation, but not as inferior. This reflects the view enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which, as Montgomery (2009) explains is "…based on the premise that children are equal to adults and should be seen as persons" (p. 61). Therefore, a new paradigm, which reconceptualizes children and contextualizes childhood is required. This is encapsulated in the new sociology of childhood, which situates children as competent social actors (Alderson, 2008; Corsaro, 2005; James et al., 1998; Qvortrup, 2005).

Corsaro (2005) elucidates that there are two central concepts in the new sociology of childhood. First, children are active social agents who create their own cultures and simultaneously contribute to the production of adult societies.

Second, childhood is a structural form that is socially constructed. This concept recognizes that children are a part of society and are affected by its structural arrangements, including social class, gender, and age groups. The new sociology of childhood has emerged through theoretical work on socialization, in which two models have been proposed: the deterministic model and the constructivist model. Corsaro explains that in the former, children play a passive role in society and are controlled through guidance from adults; in the latter, children are agents and learners who actively construct their social worlds. Qvortrup (2005) differentiates these concepts by distinguishing between the view of children as human beings or becomings. He states that in modernity the definition of children is characterized by:

> …our expectations as to their futurity as adults. Colloquial expressions such as 'children are the future of society', 'children are the next generation' and 'children are our most precious resource' tend to deprive them of an existence as human *beings* in favour of an image of them as human *becomings*, thus underlining the suggestion that children are not authentic contemporaries of adults (p. 5).

In the new sociology of childhood, Qvortrup's (2005) view of children as human *beings* is consistent with the cultural-ecological perspective that childhood is a social, historical and cultural construct. This contextualized approach recognizes the plurality of childhoods that exist and the "…danger of bracketing all children together as a group in opposition to adults and overlooking diversity among children" (Punch, 2002, p. 338). There is not one singular authentic

account of children's lives, but rather a diversity of experiences, which must be considered in relation to other variables, including class, gender, culture or ethnicity (Christensen & James, 2008; James et al., 1998). Furthermore, the new sociology of childhood reinforces the position that children do not simply internalize society, but are social actors who contribute to cultural production and change (Corsaro, 2005). This view has several implications for contemporary research practices with children, as it raises epistemological and methodological questions about how adult researchers position children and their knowledge. The theoretical implications of acknowledging children as competent social actors with different competencies, requires researchers to uphold children's right to participate in research concerning their lives, and no longer deny their voices from being heard throughout academic and policy-making arenas (Christensen & James, 2008; James et al., 1998; Prout & James, 1997).

Child participation. The way in which adults view children affects the way they research children and childhood (James et al., 1998). Mayall (2008) argues that adults have divided the social order into two major groups: adults and children. Within this order, children's lives are controlled by adult views of childhood; therefore, it is imperative that adults intending to conduct research with children confront generational issues. Despite the recognition that the association between age and the capacity to take responsibility are socially constructed, traditional research that has been conducted *on* children situates them as incompetent, unreliable, and developmentally incomplete (Mayall, 2008; Thomson, 2008). These biased generational assumptions create various obstacles,

such as infantilizing children, perceiving them as immature, and employing methodologies that do not match their competencies, thereby reinforcing the belief of their incompetence (Alderson, 2008). The result is that adult research and researchers speak on behalf of children and in doing so, children are excluded from the research process (Christensen & James, 2008). Conversely, there has also been increasing interest in listening to children's voices in matters that affect their lives and situating them as experts of their own lives (Einarsdottir, 2005; Hart, 1997). This shift represents two current lenses for viewing children: children's rights discourse and the new sociology of childhood (Alderson, 2008; Clark, 2004). The former, recognizes children as rights holders, while the latter recognizes them as competent social actors.

Alderson (2008) elucidates that participation rights are enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). In particular, Alderson highlights Articles 12, 13, and 31, which call on State parties to assure:

> To the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child (12); (figures in brackets refer to relevant article of the UNCRC)…the right to freedom of expression [including] freedom to seek, review and impart information and ideas of all kind…through any other media of the child's choice (13);…the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and…cultural life and the arts (31) (p. 277).

These rights uphold the dignity of every human being. To claim a right, one must acknowledge that every human being has an equal claim to it; therefore, one's individual rights cannot impinge upon another's. The epistemological and methodological shift towards child participation, distinguishes between research *on* children that situates them as *objects* of research versus research *with* children that situates them as *subjects/active participants* (Alderson, 2008; Christensen & James, 2008; Mayall, 2008; O'Kane, 2008; Punch, 2002). This shift calls upon adult researchers to involve children in defining research agendas and allowing agendas to be modified throughout the research experience, and to adopt methods that suit children's competencies (Punch, 2002; Smith & Barker, 2000).

Child participation calls on researchers, policy-makers, and adults in general, to listen to children's diverse voices. Thomson (2008) states that the notion of voice is formed by the belief in children's capacity to speak and their right to do so. She explains how the notion of voice has been influenced by social scientists (e.g. feminist and postcolonial scholars) and social activists who have drawn attention to the marginalized and oppressed voices that have traditionally been silenced in research. Thomson points out that it is important to acknowledge that there are many voices to be heard, and therefore, research that attends to voice must not censor particular views or represent any one particular group as if they spoke with one voice. Furthermore, voice must also be contextualized. Thomson asserts that:

> …voice is very dependent on the social context in which it is located. Being able to say what you think, in the ways that you want, is highly

> dependant on what you are asked, by whom, about what, and what is expected of you. What is said in one setting to one person may not be the same as what is said on a different day to a different person. Power relations of class, gender, race, ethnicity, dis-ability, sexuality and age all constrain social relations and may profoundly limit what can be said (p. 6).

Therefore, the research paradigm of the new sociology of childhood and child participation does not seek one true meaning where children's knowledge is untainted by adult interference, but rather it is a process of co-construction and interpretation (Clark, 2004).

Child participation requires new methodologies and methods for conducting research that reflect a re-envisioning of children's capacities. There is a need to find ways to involve children by focusing on their competencies, while acknowledging their differences from adults. Within certain contexts, the latter may include their limited and different use of vocabulary and understanding of words, relatively less experience of the world, and possibly a shorter attention span (Boyden & Ennew, 1997 as cited in Punch, 2002). In response, researchers have explored creative approaches for conducting research with children, such as through the use of visual methods.

Using visual methods for research with children. Christensen and James (2008) suggest that research with children should not take an age-based adult/child distinction for granted and remind us that particular methods should be selected based upon those involved, the social and cultural context of the study,

and the research questions posed. In this way, research becomes *participant*-friendly, rather than *child*- friendly. The challenge, as Punch (2002) states, is "…to strike a balance between not patronizing children and recognizing their competencies, while maintaining their enjoyment of being involved with the research and facilitating their ability to communicate their view of the world" (p. 337). In recent years there has been an increase in innovation to adopt and develop research methods for children. Researchers, particularly in the fields of early childhood education and childhood studies, have explored various methods that focus on maximizing children's abilities to express, both verbally and non-verbally, their views, experiences, and knowledge. Examples include the following methods: multi-sensory approaches, such as observation, child conferencing, photography, tours, map making, interviews, and arts-based activities (Clark, 2004, 2005); semi-participant observation, diaries, photography, drawing, worksheets, spider diagrams, and activity tables (Punch, 2004); and group interviews, drawing, photography followed by individual interviews, and a questionnaire administered as a board game (Einarsdottir, 2005, 2008). Additionally, the following methods have been identified as being effective for research with children: recall, focus group discussion, role play, written methods, interviews, surveys, flow diagrams, play, matrices, transect, drama, stories, and songs (Ennew & Plateau, 2004; Hart & Tyrer, 2006; O'Kane, 2008). Lastly, Einarsdottir (2005) notes that the use of various props in interviews, such as toys, paper and crayons, sand, clay, pictures and puppets, has also been recommended.

Punch (2002) states that using methods that are more sensitive to children's competencies can help put them at ease with an adult researcher. Furthermore, selecting activity-based research methods that engage children in a play-like manner contributes towards keeping their attention, and also integrates their right to participate in research with their right to play. For example, Alderson (2008) states, "the UNCRC connects rights to engage in cultural life with the right to play (article 31) resonating with the way play methods can enhance children's research imagination" (p. 284).

Johnson (2008) identifies four main reasons to support the use of visual methods with children: i. visual representations are sources of data; ii. visual methods can be adapted to be inclusive of all ability levels; iii. children construct information and are given greater control in the research process; and iv. children's visual representations provide insight into their experiences (pp. 80-81). This rationale is generally supported in the current body of literature on the use of visual methods with children.

First, visual representations are recognized as a medium of communication other than the traditional form of oral communication (Christensen & James, 2008). As such, visual representations have long been considered sources of data (see Banks, 2007; Collier, 1957, 1967; Harper, 1986; Stanczak, 2007) or important sources of knowing (Moss, 2008). Second, visual methods are intended to place children at ease and build on their strengths by using activities they are familiar with (Einarsdottir, 2005). Also, by using more than one visual method and providing children time to create their images, the process is more inclusive

for children of varying ability levels (Punch, 2002). Third, visual representations offer a means to collectively produce information in a form that remains open for collective cross-checking and analysis (Cornwall, 1996). Rather than data collection being driven by the researcher's questions, it is driven by children's own visual representations, in which they have control over what they choose to communicate. Correspondingly, this is believed to help reduce unequal power relationships between adult researchers and children (Einarsdottir, 2005; Johnson, 2008). Fourth, it has been found that young children are capable of researching their own lives, share what is meaningful to them from their own experiences, and create new ways of understanding (Burke, 2005; Christensen & James, 2008; Johnson, 2008). This rationale has led some researchers to employ visual methods in their research with children. In particular, researchers exploring children's play and play spaces have employed many of these participant-friendly methods, including participatory photography.

Participatory photography. The use of photography is certainly not a new development in academic research (Banks, 1995, 2007; Castleden, Garvin, & Huu-ay-aht First Nation, 2008; Samuels, 2007); however, despite a recent renewal of interest, there remains a relatively small amount of literature dedicated to its use, particularly within the interviewing process (Hurworth, 2003). Collier (1957, 1967) is considered to be the first to describe the use of photographs to elicit responses from research participants, which is a method that came to be referred to as photo-elicitation (Castleden et al., 2008; Hurworth, 2003). Of particular interest to this study is *autodriven photo-elicitation,* which is the process of giving

cameras to research participants themselves, and using their own photographs as a means to bridge communication (Samuels, 2007).

Paulo Freire's work in a barrio in Lima, Peru is an early example of the use of autodriven photo-elicitation in action-oriented research. Boal (1985) explains that while conducting a literacy project, the educators gave members of the study group cameras, proposing to them the following:

> We are going to ask you some questions. For this purpose we will speak in Spanish. And you must answer us. But you can not speak in Spanish: you must speak in "photography." We ask you things in Spanish, which is a language. You answer us in photography, which is also a language (pp. 122-123).

Boal (1985) explains that the questions, such as *'what is exploitation'* were very simple, and the answers, which were the photographs, were later discussed by the study group. Singhal, Harter, Chitnis, & Sharma (2007) contend that for Freire, the purpose of visualization, whether through drawings, sketches, or photographs, was to engage participants in reflection and action. Therefore, visual methods, such as participatory photography, can be used to engage participants in praxis, in order to share knowledge about their situations and create opportunities for action.

Various forms of participatory photography have been discussed in recent literature, including: *talking pictures* and *visual voices* (Singhal et al., 2007); *fotonovela* (Kirova & Emme, 2008); *participant-employed photography* (Castleden et al., 2008); and *photo novella and photovoice* (Wang & Burris, 1997;

Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001; Wang, 2006). In general, the commonalities between these techniques are based on principles of participation and power sharing. Singhal et al. (2007) state that "…by placing cameras in the hands of people, a facilitator or researcher can gain insights into people's lived experiences, which were previously overlooked, rejected, or silenced. The photograph's narrative becomes a participatory site for wider storytelling, community discussion, and action" (p. 217).

This use of photography reflects what Banks (1995), a visual social anthropologist, refers to as collaborative representation. Banks explains that while traditionally, the social sciences have engaged with visual data in two ways (i.e. visual data produced by the *researcher* or the *researched*) in recent years the dichotomy between the observer and observed has begun to collapse. For Banks, the third kind of visual record, the collaborative representation, may be a more humanistic approach for researchers to work with participants, perhaps even towards empowerment through visual media. Correspondingly, Stanczak (2007), a visual sociologist, states:

> Across the types of approaches used, methodologies also vary from explicit empirical uses of documentation – realist position – to storytelling approaches built on sequences of images – a narrative position – to integrative techniques that incorporate interviews or participants' own photographs and points of view – a reflexive position. These positions refer to commonly debated social scientific methodological assumptions

rather than to the epistemological assumptions surrounding photography or images alone (p. 10).

The use of participatory photography as a research method is consistent with a reflexive epistemology of visual research. Stanczak (2007) elucidates that a reflexive epistemology holds that participants' own interpretations provide the most significant meanings of images, rather than any inherent meaning of the image itself. Stanczak states that outside of providing the context for the process, in autodriven photo-elicitation the researcher is removed from the image-making process altogether. The focus of the image-making can be relatively broad, asking participants to photograph anything they want, or quite narrow, by providing a set of specific questions to answer. Regardless of the focus, the reflexive methodological position allows for the greatest flexibility, in which individual research projects may even lead to new or tailor-made methods.

There is a growing body of literature that documents the use of participatory photography in various settings and with diverse groups. The literature suggests that it can be an effective method for sharing power, fostering trust, and creating community-driven change (see Castleden et al., 2008; Singhal et al., 2007; Wang, 2006). Walker, Schratz, and Egg (2008) have also found that photography may be an appropriate research method with children and may increase their sense of ownership towards the research process. Correspondingly, Kirova and Emme (2008) state that "the critical examination of traditional research methods and the search for new methods that can serve as tools for children's participation in research has put photography at the forefront (p. 36).

Photography not only provides children with an alternative mode of expression and meaning-making, but also engages them in a way that keeps their attention and enthusiasm (Burke, 2008; Christensen & James, 2008; Thomson, 2008). Furthermore, children involved in the research process may also perceive the use of cameras as play (Einarsdottir, 2005). However, the researchers have also identified the challenges that can be associated with photography as a research method. For example, similar to the use of any particular technique, photography should be combined with other methods, such as observations and research conversations, in order to facilitate methodological triangulation (Christensen & James, 2008; Einarsdottir, 2005; Samuels, 2007). Additionally, Castleden et al. (2008) state that in order to access that which was not photographed participants must be provided with opportunities to discuss other issues that may be important to them.

Analysis of visual images and photo-elicitation. Cornwall (1996) states that the process of creating visual images is considered to be an analytic act in itself, as participants are able to select images that represent their experiences. However, just like words, visual images are human constructions that are not neutral and can be read in multiple ways. The goal then is to use children's photographs as a tool to seek a diversity of voices and enable children to interpret and explain their experiences (Clark, 2004; Clark-Ibáñez, 2007; O'Kane, 2008; Thomson, 2008). The focus then is not on conducting compositional interpretation of children's photographs, but rather, using the photographs as a supporting method. Rose (2007) explains that photography may be a supporting method in

social science research when photographs are used to answer a particular research question. An example is the process of photo-elicitation, where a photograph is used in a research interview. While there are many different ways of doing photo-elicitation, they are all based on the assumption that participants' photographs can express their experiences, feelings, and preferences. Researchers who use photo-elicitation agree that it is vital to clarify the meaning of a photograph with participants.

The preceding discussion on child participation, visual methods, and participatory photography has presented the rationale for involving children in research concerning their lives. In particular, research that situates children as co-researchers of their play environments has received renewed attention in recent scholarship. Therefore, the next section of this literature review describes several recent studies that have employed participant-friendly methods, including photography, to examine children's play and play spaces.

Play spaces. Researchers in children's geographies have highlighted the importance of understanding the places and spaces of childhood (Holloway & Valentine, 2000). The seminal work of Tuan (1977) suggests that place can provide a sense of security and identity through the meaning attributed to it by humans, while space represents freedom and a feeling of openness. Tuan asserts that a Western child's notion of place becomes more detailed and geographically situated as he or she grows, expanding from the primary environment of the parent/caregiver, to include the room, home, yard, neighbourhood, and city. Through interactions with people and objects, these spaces may become

meaningful places for children. Jack (2008) elucidates this relationship by stating, "place comes into existence when people give meaning to a part of the larger, undifferentiated space in which they live" (p. 3). Therefore, place might not have a singular fixed meaning, but rather is based on the experiences and memories that people associate with particular spaces. For example, Roger Hart "…noted the ways that children appropriate public space for themselves and give names to their favourite places which reflect the way they use them – such as 'sliding hill'" (Holloway & Valentine, 2000, p. 12). Holloway and Valentine (2000) state that Hart's (1979) work has been influential in shaping a research agenda focused on children's unique use, experience, and value of spaces and places.

Ellis (2005) explains that sense of place is a cultural geography term used to describe "…personal connection with a place, built up over years of residence and involvement in the community" (p. 59). This connection that individuals experience, which is also referred to as place attachment consists of the memories, feelings, beliefs, and meanings that they associate with their environments and may become a part of an individual's overall identity (Jack, 2008). Ellis (2005) further elucidates that the concept of place has been greatly affected by globalization and global processes. She explains how global trends, such as increased mobility, migration, and urbanization, have local consequences for children's lives and may also contribute to what Relph (1976) refers to as 'placelessness.' Therefore, it is not surprising that research in cultural geography has emphasized the connections between place and children's wellbeing. For example, Chawla (1992, p. 69, as cited in Ellis, 2005, p. 60) states:

> At every age there is a need for undefined space where young people can formulate their own worlds: for free space where preschoolers can manipulate the environment and play "let's pretend" in preparation for middle childhood demands; for hideouts and play-houses indoors and out where school-age children can practise independence; and for public hangouts and private refuges where adolescents can test new social relationships and ideas.

Chawla (2002) argues that the need for undefined space for children has not changed, particularly with urbanization a major pattern of the 21st century. She reports on the UNESCO *Growing up in Cities* project, which broadly focused on learning about how children use their local environments and evaluate their local resources. The children's interview responses centred on their social and psychological needs and the places that fostered their positive development. Beyond having their basic needs met, the study found that children were happiest with their community when "…it had a positive self-image, friendly adults, available playmates, accessible and engaging public spaces where interesting activities could be found and places that children could claim as their own for socialising and play" (p. 32).

The impetus to consider spaces and places for children has been taken up by the UN and other governmental and nongovernmental agencies in a global movement for *Child Friendly Cities*. Malone (2006) discusses how rapid urban growth has had serious consequences for children's lives, especially within a global context of unbalanced and unsustainable resources. The call for child

friendly cities is therefore a call for good local governance that is committed to the implementation of the UNCRC. While there is no single definition of a child friendly city, the concept reflects the aims of the UNCRC by ensuring children's rights are protected. This also includes their right to play, and to have access to safe environments for recreation, learning, social interaction, development, and cultural expression. However, Malone states that provision for play and recreation remain low priorities, particularly in areas with high levels of poverty. Correspondingly, child participation in research on play and play spaces, particularly, in the non-Western World, remains scarce.

One example of research on children's play in the Majority (i.e. non-Western) World is Punch's (2000) study on children's use of time and space in rural Bolivia. One level of analysis in this study focuses on how children negotiate time for play. Punch contends that in rural contexts, children's work can be crucial for the survival of a household. Tasks such as food preparation, sibling care, and animal-related work, in addition to schoolwork, leave children with little time for play. She found that most children's preferred play spaces were a football pitch and community square, which were both spaces connected with going to school. Punch describes their preferred play spaces as often being away from parental control, thus highlighting their ability to create their own opportunities for play. Strategies for negotiating their play time included arriving late to school with excuses of chores, or returning home late, with excuses of being at school. Children would also arrive early before lessons to increase their playing time with friends and peers, or integrate play into their chores. For example, they would

sing or bring toys with them when bringing animals out to pasture. Punch concludes that while space in rural Bolivia is not overly restricted, children's time for play is limited. As a result, children must be inventive in the ways that they negotiate their social autonomy and manipulate their spaces for work and school.

Rasmussen (2004) elucidates between 'places for children' and 'children's places.' The former, which are dominated by children's homes, schools, and recreational institutions, are environments created by adults for children. The latter, are places that only children can identify and talk about. In order to explore the distinction between these two concepts Rasmussen conducted two research projects in Denmark during 1998/99. In the first project, eighty-eight children, between the ages of five to twelve years, were given a disposable camera for one week to take pictures of places that were *meaningful* to them. In the second study, sixty children conducted walking interviews to show researchers around their neighbourhoods. Through these studies, children were able to share their everyday life experiences through photographs and stories. Rasmussen explains that while the two types of places may at times be identical, any place, including 'places for children,' only becomes a 'children's place' once a child has connected with it physically. For example, chalk drawings, bushes as goalposts, and shortcuts through fences were identified as 'children's places' that resulted from play experiences. This situates children as social actors as it demonstrates how they are engaged in creating meaningful relationships with places that adults do not provide for them. Whether they last for a short period or for years, 'children's places' may emerge in a variety of contexts and in contradiction to the formal

‘places for children’ that are provided for them, particularly in the Danish welfare state, where Rasmussen asserts childhood has become highly institutionalized. She calls for children to be actively involved in planning and designing ‘places for children,’ as this process may also be integrated into their informal play.

Clark (2004) conducted a study with eight kindergarten children, between the ages of three to four years, who attended the same early childhood institution in the United Kingdom. The purpose of the study, which was originally conducted in 1999/2000, was to listen to young children about the details of their everyday lives, including how they use the space provided to them in their childcare setting. Through the use of the mosaic approach, which is a multi-method methodological framework, Clark attempts to identify children’s knowledge and feelings about their nursery. The methods employed in the mosaic approach include observation, child conferencing, photography, tours, map making, and interviews with staff and parents. In particular, Clark provided the children with single-use cameras, asking them to photograph their *favourite things*, in order to gain an in-depth view of life in the nursery. The findings are divided into how children constructed meanings about place use, and place feelings and values. Firstly, children defined the spaces of their nursery in relation to people and past events, specific objects, activities, and routines, and according to their access to certain places. The latter point highlights how children’s experience of place use is often mediated through issues of adult power. Within the context of an early childhood institution, certain places were also designated for specific activities (i.e. the ‘listening room’ and the ‘music room’) and routines with staff (i.e. preparing snacks). Secondly, children’s

feelings towards spaces indicated their preferences for social spaces (i.e. climbing frame, tunnel, and slide), as well as private spaces (i.e. quiet corner of the garden). These spaces were reflected in many of the children's photographs, in response to what was *most important* to them in the nursery.

Clark's (2004) study positions children as experts in their own lives and provides a detailed account of how children construct knowledge of place use and their place preferences. The implications suggest that there is a need for research that focuses on children's own agendas, feelings, and experience of childhood places. The results of such research can inform future decisions about changes to children's environments. For example, through an international literature review regarding listening and consulting young children in early childhood institutions, Clark (2005) identified the following key themes raised by children: friends, food and drink, the creative arts, outdoor play, the role of adults, achievements, and transitions. Clark cautions against making general conclusions based on the small number of studies undertaken to date. However, she asserts that these themes can serve as indicators for future research, as well as to guide policy and practice concerning the creation of childhood environments. Furthermore, she calls for studies that examine children's perspectives on being consulted, as well as retrospective accounts from older children, that position them as experts about their early childhood provision.

Smith and Barker (1999) contend that adults' increasing concerns over children's safety, as well as increased institutionalized environments have changed the landscape of children's play in England and Wales. They argue that

there is a need to increase children's consultation and participation in planning and researching their environments. They conducted case study with children in out-of-school-care, which they define as "…the provision of creative play opportunities for children aged 5-12 years in an adult supervised environment" (p. 36). Through informal focus groups they involved children in creating their own research agenda by asking them what they wanted to focus on. The responses produced five themes, including: i. activities (e.g. what activities children enjoyed and were available to them); ii. playworkers (children's perceptions of playworkers' qualities and whether they were willing to listen); iii. safety and friendships (e.g. children's perceptions of safety and presence of friends); iv. rules (e.g. children's evaluations of rules and contribution to rule formation); and v. participation (children's involvement in planning and development). The authors conclude that children had many ideas on how to improve their environment, but that these suggestions were contextually and temporally based. Therefore, children's consultation and participation in developing their play spaces must be ongoing. This case study led to a larger project involving 367 children attending 25 out of school clubs to share their experiences (Smith & Barker, 2000).

Smith and Barker (2000) state that for children, out of school clubs are not places for childcare, but places for play, to enjoy themselves, and be with friends. While on the one hand adult playworkers remain in control, on the other hand the clubs may also be sites of resistance for some children. For example, children would exclude adults from their play activities or contest adult-defined activities by disregarding instructions. Furthermore, Smith and Barker highlight that three

sociocultural variables affected how different children attempted to contest and control the space of the out-of-school club. The three variables were gender, age, and ethnicity. First, gender had an impact on activity preferences at the out-of-school club. The study indicated that discourses of traditional gendered space were sometimes reinforced by children, and that overall, boys and girls in the study exhibited a gendered division of space as they engaged in activities in different parts of the club. Second, age factored significantly into the meanings that children attached to places. In this study, age was a significant variable, with children under the age of eight more likely to view the club as an enjoyable place than children eight years or older. Many of the older children in the study felt that the out-of-school clubs were places for younger children, which resulted in spatial segregation and/or acts of contestation to reshape the environment to meet their needs. Lastly, Smith and Barker found that for children from ethnic minorities the clubs were a place to meet with friends. They found that while the out-of-school clubs provided opportunities for children to form friendships with others from similar backgrounds, the majority of children and playworkers in the out-of-school clubs were 'white,' suggesting ethnicity as another variable that significantly impacts children's experiences. This research highlights that the meaning attributed to place is fluid, temporary, and negotiable depending on the diversity of children using the space differently. Smith and Barker assert that children's use of time in out-of-school clubs is largely undocumented. This research gap creates the impetus for research that examines how children

experience and attribute meaning in these settings, as well as how sociocultural struggles (i.e. gender, age, and ethnicity) are mapped, reproduced, and contested.

Einarsdottir (2005) explored the use of photography to learn about children's perspectives on their life in Icelandic playschools. In this study, two approaches to using cameras were used with children aged five and six years old. First, 22 children took turns giving the adult researcher a guided tour of their playschool, describing what they found *important*, what they *liked best*, and where they *felt good*. They also took pictures during the guided tour and later discussed them with the researcher. The second group consisted of 12 children who were given disposable cameras and asked to take pictures of *what they wanted* and *what they found important* in the playschool. Einarsdottir found that the most photographed space in the first group was the outdoor playground. Other frequent photographs were of playthings and other children. For the second group, other children were most frequently photographed. Private spaces also featured prominently in the second group. Furthermore, Einarsdottir asserts that in the second unstructured group, many of the children perceived using a disposable camera as play, and in the act of taking pictures they were playing with the camera. Methodologically, she concludes that the use of photography is a child-centred or child-friendly research method when children are provided with the opportunity to explain and discuss their pictures. In a follow-up study with the first group of children, which included focus groups with their parents, Einarsdottir (2008) states that both parents and children placed high importance on play and outdoor play opportunities. Furthermore, within this specific context,

she observed that children valued the freedom to choose what to do. In this study, while play was consistently identified as a preferred activity, there was high variability between each child's particular likes and dislikes for play activities and play spaces; thus highlighting the diversity of children's experiences.

Burke (2005) positioned children as experts of their own play environments by using the tools of drawing, photography, and photo-elicitation. The purpose of the study was to document the play environments of 32 primary school students over the course of one week. The children, who were between the ages of seven and eleven years old, came from one of two schools/neighbourhoods in England. The children were first asked to draw and then were provided with disposable cameras to create a photographic diary of their *preferred* spaces and places for play. During interviews with the researcher, each child was invited to select one photograph to talk about. In turn, the researcher chose one photograph and invited the child to talk about it. The analysis revealed five major categories, as reflected in the number of children's images: i. indoor and outdoor play; ii. open spaces; iii. closed spaces; iv. space-related activities; and v. use of natural materials. Burke elucidates that this type of research is important for planners and policy makers at the local governmental level because it increases awareness of children's needs and experiences within a contemporary urban environment. For example:

> The photographic narratives they produced argue the case that children's greatest needs are for safe open spaces, access to natural materials, freedom to meet, and some ownership of spaces which harness privacy,

> intimacy and creativity. Although the two communities were contrasting in terms of relative poverty, economic activity, levels of property ownership and other social factors, the project revealed that children had more in common across boundaries than otherwise (Burke, 2008, p. 32).

Burke's study is significant for researchers interested in children's play because it illustrates how visual methods, such as drawing and photography can be used to detail the meaning children attach to their play experiences.

The preceding sections of this literature review indicate that there is limited research that examines children's play in non-Western and low-income contexts. Therefore, research that addresses these gaps would contribute to the growing body of literature that interrogates play as a meaningful cultural practice and play spaces as significant sites of children's everyday lives. The new sociology of childhood recognizes children as competent social actors who are influenced by, and actively engaged in, shaping culture. The epistemological and methodological implications of this conceptual framework call on researchers to employ creative and innovative methods that draw on children's strengths, so that they may actively participate in research. One approach to achieving this is through action research methodology and the use of participatory photography as a method. This approach is described in the next section of this chapter.

Methodological Approach

Action research. While action research (AR) is becoming an accepted and even celebrated methodology in academia, Herr and Anderson (2005) argue

that it remains an approach that is difficult to define as a result of its numerous varieties. These include, but are not limited to, participatory action research (PAR), practitioner research, collaborative action research, cooperative inquiry, community-based participatory research, and feminist action research. The authors explain that "…each of these terms connotes different purposes, positionalities, epistemologies, ideological commitments, and, in many cases, different research traditions that grew out of very different social contexts" (pp. 2-3). For this reason, I have chosen to use the term *action research* for pragmatic and philosophical reasons. This broad term emphasizes that local contextualized action is central to this research process, while allowing for levels of collaboration (i.e. with FCD and the Duangkae community), levels of participation (i.e. with both adult and child participants), and my positionality (i.e. how I navigate my role as an *outsider*) to be negotiated throughout the process.

Stringer (2007) explains that one of the main distinctions of AR from traditional experimental research is that instead of seeking generalizable results that apply to all contexts, AR focuses on specific situations and contextual actions. Similarly, Levin and Greenwood (2001) situate AR as a context-bound process that is built on collaborative communicative processes that value the contributions of all participants. As such, an AR approach attempts to democratize the research process, challenge traditional power and knowledge hierarchies, and is a participative process. While acknowledging that all definitions are incomplete, the following is offered as a basis for conceptualizing an AR approach:

> *Action research* takes its cues – its questions, puzzles, and problems – from the perceptions of practitioners within particular, local practice contexts. It bounds episodes of research according to the boundaries of the local context. It builds descriptions and theories within the practice context itself, and tests them there through *intervention experiments* – that is, through experiments that bear the double burden of testing hypotheses and effecting some (putatively) desired change in the situation (Argyris and Schön, 1991, p. 86).

This definition highlights the importance of both reflection and action, which constitute the AR process. This praxis has been represented in a number of ways, including: a circling repetition of planning, executing, reconnaissance or fact-finding, and evaluation (Lewin, 1946); the activity spiral of plan, act, observe, and reflect (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988); and the interacting spiral of look, think, and act (Stringer, 2007).

This study was guided by Stringer's (2007) interacting spiral of look (i.e. gather relevant information; build a picture), think (i.e. explore and analyze; interpret and explain), and act (i.e. plan; implement; evaluate). Stringer points out that people do not move through these complex stages of research through a step-by-step process, but rather may move backwards, repeat activities, or even change directions as the research unfolds. In this way, AR is an evolving methodology, in which a central feature is the process itself. In this study, the interacting spiral was viewed as a recycling set of activities that were explored through a process of

observation, reflection, and action. Furthermore, relationship building was an integral component of this entire process.

Philosophical rationale: Towards a participative worldview. The knowledge interests of AR are situated contextually, based on everyday experiences and local understanding. Reason and Bradbury (2001) state that a primary purpose of AR is to produce practical knowledge that is relevant for people in their everyday lives. As such, AR is concerned with practical outcomes and the corresponding new forms of understanding that result from mutual learning. According to Reason and Bradbury, this approach to research moves us towards a participative worldview, which is emerging at this historical moment. They assert that it is necessary to deconstruct the dominant empirical-positivist worldview and its construction of reality that has been the foundation of Western inquiry since the Enlightenment.

In response, Wicks, Reason, and Bradbury (2008) state that action researchers have drawn on frameworks and traditions that emerged from "…civil rights and feminist movements, liberationist adult and trade union education, post-colonial and critical race theory, and anti-war and ecological protests as well as the student democracy movement" (p. 19), to demonstrate the politics of knowledge generation. Furthermore, they challenge the dominant worldview by calling attention to epistemological pathologies that were responsible for social injustices and inequalities, "…including the notions of an objective, value-free, expert science" (p. 19). As a result, action researchers have called for a more

creative and constructive worldview, built on a metaphor of participation. Reason and Bradbury (2001) state:

> The emergent worldview has been described as systemic, holistic, relational, feminine, experiential, but its defining characteristic is that it is participatory; our world does not consist of separate things but of relationships which we co-author. We participate in our world, so that the 'reality' we experience is a co-creation that involves the primal givenness of the cosmos and human feeling and construing (pp. 6-7).

According to Reason and Bradbury, a participative worldview simultaneously competes with and integrates positivist and postmodern paradigms. Therefore, a participative worldview has a subjective-objective notion of reality based on a participatory understanding of the underlying nature of the cosmos.

Wicks et al. (2008) explain that a participative worldview is an alternative worldview that validates diverse forms of knowledge generation, including experiential and practical ways of knowing by 'ordinary people' as they engage with their world. It calls for an extended epistemology, which rejects the idea of the researcher as an objective observer, and distinguishes a kind of knowing that emerges from within a specific context. This kind of knowledge arises through the lived experience of participation in the world.

Ontological and epistemological assumptions. In this study I incorporate an integrated constructivist epistemology and a participative worldview. According to Guba and Lincoln (2005) constructivist and participative inquiry fit

comfortably together. This commensurability represents a shifting of boundaries between research paradigms that Geertz (1988, 1993, as cited in Guba & Lincoln, 2005) referred to as the blurring of genres. However, while Guba and Lincoln situate constructivism within a relativist ontology, I draw upon the work of Chinn (1998), amongst others, and adopt a form of sceptical or critical realism.

Creswell (2007) states that social constructivist research generally seeks to increase understanding of the world by learning about individuals' varied and multiple meanings of their experiences. Therefore, social constructivist researchers rely as much as possible on participants' own views of the situation and recognize that their subjective meanings are often negotiated socially and historically. One of the challenges of adopting a social constructivist epistemology is that several divergent schools of thought exist, including constructivism, cognitive constructivism, and social constructivism (Hruby, 2001), and social constructivism and integrated constructivism (Chinn, 1998).

Chinn (1998) distinguishes between social constructivism and integrated constructivism by stating that social constructivists explain "…the content of scientific knowledge exclusively by social factors and give little or no role to nature" (p. 77); thus, social constructivists, including social constructionists, are relativistic. On the other hand, "…integrated constructivists believe that nature, cognition, and society interact to influence the course of scientific thought" (p. 77). Integrated constructivists view meanings as socially negotiated; however, they also believe that knowledge construction processes involve cognition and are constrained by nature; thus, Chinn's integrated constructivist position draws on

the social constructivist tradition, while also recognizing that cognition and nature mediate knowledge construction.

Chinn (1998) explains that integrated constructivists differ on the issue of realism; however, they consistently reject relativism. One ontological view discussed by Chinn is sceptical realism, whose adherents provisionally believe that "…scientific models bear a resemblance to reality but acknowledge that these models are fallible and may later be shown to be incorrect (p. 87). According to Scott (2005), the term sceptical, or critical, refers to the belief that any attempt to describe and explain the world is fallible; the term realist refers to the belief that there are objects in the world, including social objects, regardless of whether we can know them or not. Scott further elucidates that the critical realist belief that an independent reality exists "…does not entail the assumption that absolute knowledge of the way that reality works is possible" (p. 635). Therefore, a critical realist ontology (the belief in an independent reality) and integrated constructivist epistemology (the fallibility of our knowledge of it) ground the participative worldview of this AR study.

Interpretation and writing in the postmodern turn. AR is often considered to be more data-driven than theory-driven because the problems themselves usually drive the research (Herr & Anderson, 2005). This approach, which reflects alignment with a theory-after position (Creswell, 1998) allows for an iterative process to unfold, whereby all participants can actively engage in the interpretation and analysis of the data. According to Creswell (2007) inductive data analysis is a process that may involve collaboration with participants in order

to organize data into patterns, categories, or themes. The inductive process is a bottom-up approach, where researchers and participants work back and forth between units of information, eventually building a comprehensive set of themes.

Reason and Bradbury (2001) state that this collective process of inductive data analysis is consistent with an AR approach and participative worldview. It allows for the participants to be co-researchers and to increase understanding of what is important to them. Throughout this study, analysis and verification of understanding took place on a daily basis. Through asking questions and engaging in dialogue we were able to reflect on play and play practice in order to inform our actions, and the development of action initiatives. Spending a significant amount of time with FCD and the Duangkae community created opportunities to share observations and interpretations, and to recognize the diversity of views that deepened our understanding.

It is necessary, as Stringer (2007) states to seek diverse views that help us to construct a multi-layered picture of the research topic. In the postmodern turn, some researchers have sought to achieve this by drawing on ethnographic writing. The ethnographic tradition is most often associated with in-depth fieldwork and participant observation as a primary mode of data collection (Prasad, 2005). Thus, the researcher, who maintains close contact with the participants and situations of interest, strives for an *emic* rather than *etic* orientation. Prasad (2005) explains that ethnographers attempt to describe and understand local interpretations of human action. This is achieved through a concentrated focus on the broader cultural context of events and social interactions. Ethnographers must endeavour

to grasp the wider cultural sense making of local people, and therefore, are expected to be deeply familiar with the culture and to convey this in their writing. For this reason, ethnographers provide thick description to communicate an insightful narrative of their fieldwork. Prasad emphasizes that thick description must go beyond simplistic cultural accounts of shared meanings to include the diversity of voices within a cultural setting. “This description demands that the researcher unravel different clusters of meaning and interest while simultaneously tracing their interconnections with each other” (p. 81). Correspondingly, Tudge (2008) asserts that ethnographic approaches to studying children’s everyday activities, including play, may be consistent with cultural-ecological theory and a contextualist paradigm. However, he also highlights that within this approach, researchers are often constructing the meaning of experiences based on observations of what children and their social partners are doing, rather than children themselves. Therefore, all participants must be given opportunities to speak for themselves. Exploring the multiplicity of cultural voices acknowledges that no single interpretation exists and that the process of interpretation must always be ongoing. This argument reflects the influence of hermeneutic interpretation in ethnography.

In this study, hermeneutics is employed in the ‘weak sense’ as it denotes the interpretive dimensions of qualitative inquiry as distinguished from the specific interpretation of texts (Prasad, 2005). Prasad (2005) elucidates the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer in highlighting the prejudices or the unavoidable preconditions that researchers bring to the act of interpretation. For Gadamer, the

goal is for the interpreter to move as close as possible to the traditions of the 'text,' which results in a 'fusion of horizons.' Ellis (1998) describes our horizons as our prejudices, which continually change as we come in contact with the horizons of others. In the act of interpretation, we must not cling solely to our own horizons or attempt to fully take on those of others. Rather, there is a fusion of horizons through dialogue. Thus, "…hermeneutic understanding is a learning process involving dialogue between researchers and researched – a dialogue which is always ongoing and incomplete" (Scott & Usher, 1999, p. 29). This process is reflected in the concept of the hermeneutic circle. Prasad (2005) describes the hermeneutic circle as an iterative spiral that underscores that 'the part' (i.e. the 'text') can only be understood in relation to 'the whole' (the cultural context), and conversely, the 'whole' can only be understood in relations to its 'parts.'

Packer (1989) further elucidates the forward and backward arc of the hermeneutic circle. The forward arc of projection occurs when the researcher uses his or her forestructure (or horizons) of language, preconceptions, and prejudices to interpret. The backward arc of evaluation occurs when the researcher re-examines the interpretation for confirmation, contradictions, gaps, or inconsistencies. The hermeneutic circle demonstrates the importance of understanding one's own language and horizons and how this impacts upon one's own interpretive framework. The hermeneutic circle draws attention to the fact that interpretations are constantly being formed, and thus, as Guba and Lincoln (2005) point out, ethnographers' narratives must account for this by finding ways

to have a real researcher's voice and letting research participants speak for themselves through the text. Therefore, throughout this dissertation, I have endeavoured to situate my voice within the text; acknowledging and taking responsibility for my interpretations and representations of the research experience.

My positionality. Herr and Anderson (2005) note that while a researcher's relationship with participants, and thus her or his positionality, can shift throughout the course of a study, it remains imperative that researchers consider the degree to which they position themselves as insiders or outsiders. This sense of positionality has direct epistemological, methodological, and ethical implications. Based on their continuum of positionality I situate myself as an *Outsider in Collaboration with Insider(s).* According to Herr and Anderson this positionality is "…probably the most common type of collaborative action research because it is more common for outsiders to initiate research projects than insiders" (p. 39). My positionality was a constant point of reflection, whereby I considered my role, and the impact of my role, values, and beliefs on the research process. Oftentimes, I also discussed these issues with colleagues, in order to consciously identify them and consider how they may impact the research process. Being an outsider in collaboration with insiders also reflected how this research study was a part of a 'living practice,' which McNiff and Whitehead (2002) describe as:

> …placing the 'living I' at the centre of our enquiries and recognising ourselves potentially as living contradictions. We might believe we are

> working in an effective and morally committed manner and then find from our own self-evaluation that we are denying much of what we believe in (p. 22).

The idea of research as a 'living practice' resonates with me, as it illustrates that as a researcher, and more specifically as an action researcher, I am constantly learning. At the core of the process is creating a space for dialogue with others that can lead to meaningful and purposeful reflection and action. Therefore, as I navigated my positionality, as a Canadian, as a Southeast Asian, as a doctoral student, as an adult, and as a male (amongst many other subject positions), I often drew upon the words of Rajesh Tandon, who stated that "participatory research principles are not purist. You can't sit and wait for the ideal situation. Waiting to do it right is paralyzing" (Tandon, 1985, as cited in Maguire, 1987, p. 127). Building off this idea, while *waiting* to do it right is paralyzing, I believe that there must be a *wanting* to do it right. Certainly the notion of right is subjective, but it implies vigilance to engage in an approach that is built on open communication, transparent and shared decision making, participation, and reciprocity.

Quality criteria for AR. While all research must be held up against quality criteria, Greenwood and Levin (2007) suggest that action researchers have a particularly high standard to meet because the research itself is intended to be applied directly to specific human situations. This highlights two key differences between AR and other social science methodologies: first, the AR process involves the implementation of actions; and second, AR is context-bound.

Therefore, rather than seeking knowledge that is *generalizable* to a wide variety of contexts, Stringer (2007) asserts:

> Action research, however, is based on the proposition that generalized solutions may not fit particular contexts or groups of people and that the purpose of inquiry is to find an appropriate solution for the particular dynamics at work in a local situation (p. 5).

Therefore, AR approaches the question of how results are generalizable in an alternative, scientifically valid manner. Greenwood and Levin (2007) propose the concept of *transcontextual credibility*, in which findings are analyzed historically and circumstantially, in order to make judgments on how knowledge may be applied from one situation to another. As the term suggests, action researchers must provide rich description of the research context in which their findings were generated. Greenwood and Levin elucidate that:

> AR does not generalize through abstraction and the loss of history and context. Meanings created in one context are examined for their credibility in another situation through a conscious reflection on similarities and differences between where the understanding was created through a collaborative analysis of the situation where this knowledge might be applied (p. 70).

They contend that it is through attention to cases, context, and history that social science will continue to develop in a way that respects diversity, and build an

understanding of how AR knowledge from one situation, may be transferred to other situations.

Throughout this dissertation I have endeavoured to provide the audience with a rich description of the social, cultural, and historical context of this study. I have also focused on discussing the methods employed and the overlapping borders of global dynamics (i.e. the dominant discourse of play and the globalization of play) with local dynamics (i.e. rural to urban migration, low-income communities, and play centres). I believe this contextualization provides the opportunity to transfer the discussion to other situations where similar dynamics are at play. This may help inform other studies of play in low-income and non-Western settings; however, with the recognition that each situation will be unique.

Beyond the issue of transcontextual credibility, it is possible to use the same criteria for rigor that is based in qualitative research traditions, such as Lincoln and Guba's (1985) credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (see Stringer, 2007). However, reflections on an emerging participative worldview have also led AR scholars to explore the concept of rigor as it relates specifically to AR as a living process (see Bradbury & Reason, 2001; Herr & Anderson, 2005; Reason & Bradbury, 2001). Therefore, in this study I drew upon Herr and Anderson's (2005) validity criteria. The set of criterion proposed by Herr and Anderson contributes to ongoing dialogue and debate on quality in AR and its action-oriented outcomes. While recognizing that *validity* is the preferred term in the positivist tradition of pursuing *truth value* (internal

validity) the authors choose to use the term accompanied by qualifying adjectives rather than coin a new term. The criteria must be balanced with the researcher's position along the insider-outsider continuum; however, on a whole, the criteria recognize that action researchers are interested not only in knowledge generation, but also the process and outcomes of the research itself.

Herr and Anderson (2005) explain that the validity criteria serve as independent measures, while recognizing that they may interact or overlap with one another. The five validity criteria are: i. dialogic validity; ii. outcome validity; iii. catalytic validity; iv. democratic validity; and v. process validity. Each criterion is linked with a particular goal of AR, and therefore, represents part of a holistic approach to ensuring quality research.

Dialogic, catalytic, and process validity. Dialogic validity refers to how the 'goodness' of research is monitored through peer review. This may be achieved through conducting AR collaboratively with insiders, as well as through critical and reflective dialogue with other action researchers or critical friends. This is done with the purpose of ensuring that alternative explanations of research data are considered.

Catalytic validity focuses on the extent to which the research process facilitates increased awareness of the social reality under study and energizes those involved to transform it. This process involves both researchers and participants as 'teachers' and 'learners,' which corresponds with Freire's (2003) dialogical engagement of praxis.

Process validity is also strongly associated with this dialogical process. Process validity refers to the way in which the research moves through cycles of reflection and action. There must be continuous reflection to re-examine the underlying assumptions behind how problems are defined and solved. Therefore, outcome validity is deeply affected by process validity "…in that, if the process is superficial or flawed, the outcome will reflect it" (p. 55). Triangulation, or the use of multiple methods, is one way to strengthen process validity. The quality of relationships with participants and the inclusion of multiple perspectives are needed in order to ensure that the findings are not viewed in a simplistic or self-serving way.

During this study I focused on fostering strong relationships in order to achieve a high level of trust that would allow for a diversity of voices to be heard. Through discussions with FCD staff members, children, parents, and other stakeholders we were able to generate a deeper understanding of how play is culturally constructed and the factors influencing how it is viewed. Additionally, multiple methods were used, including participant-observation, interviews, focus groups, and participatory photography. I paid a great deal of attention to the research process. Steps taken to ensure a sound and appropriate research methodology was followed included establishing a local research advisory group, detailed fieldnotes to document issues as they emerged and the subsequent decisions taken, a site visit and on-going communication with my academic supervisor, and periodic communication with my supervisory committee members to reflect on the research process and key areas of learning. Furthermore,

everyone at FCD involved in this study took on a certain level of co-researcher. Staff members and I engaged in reflection on our play practice; by the end of the study I most certainly had increased my understanding of play and play practice, and my colleagues graciously expressed that they had as well. Children were also involved in the learning process by completing task-based research activities that focused on exploring their play spaces, including ways to improve them.

Outcome and democratic validity. Outcome validity refers to the extent to which quality data leads to quality actions that respond to the initial focus of the research. Democratic validity refers to the level of collaboration that is achieved with stakeholders, so that multiple perspectives are taken into account. High levels of collaboration ensure that the actions taken are relevant to the local context (i.e. relevant to stakeholders).

The initial focus of this study was to generate new and deeper thinking about play in order to collaboratively (re)construct practices to enhance children's play opportunities at FCD. The notion of making an impact or contribution through the research remained a central motivation throughout the research process. I can remember reflecting on this by email with one of my supervisory committee members earlier in the study at a time when I was worried that I/the research wasn't *doing enough* and that the co-learning opportunities still seemed subtle or intangible. During this exchange, I received an important reminder:

> …remember that 'impact' is occurring during the process of doing your research. It isn't something that will appear once you complete your

> study. It began when you became involved with FCD and will continue after you have left. In my interpretation of AR - you leave fingerprints and footprints, but you are not the director, the manager or the consultant. Much of what occurs is a result of interaction initiated by you but then experienced by others. Your own experience is also a critical part of the AR process (and central to what a PhD should be about). (N. Spencer-Cavaliere, personal communication, March 23, 2010).

This response reminded me of the centrality of the process itself and the importance of relationship building in AR methodology. In this study I was situated as an outsider in collaboration with insiders and sought a mode of participation based on cooperation. According to Cornwall (1996) in the cooperation mode the outsider remains responsible for guiding the process, but aims to conduct research *with* rather than *on* or *for* local stakeholders. Therefore, while I initiated many of the activities in the research, the various participants remained informed, consulted, and a part of the decision making process. This paved the way for several key action-oriented outcomes, including the planning and implementation of various child participation activities, a transforming play spaces project, and a children's photo exhibition that was presented at a national event.

Ethical considerations. Herr and Anderson (2005) posit that given its evolutionary nature, researchers conducting AR must commit to ongoing critical reflexivity. Therefore, the approval of a research ethics board is only a starting point, in addition to an obligation towards professional ethical engagement. Based

on the elements of this study, four broad areas were identified to guide reflection throughout this study: performing qualitative cross-cultural research, conducting research with children, using photography as a research method, and the danger of co-optation.

Ethical issues concerning qualitative cross-cultural research.

Liamputtong (2010) identifies some of the major ethical concerns in cross-cultural research as exploitation, damage to the community, and reporting inaccurate findings. Given the history of abuse in research, and in particular with cross-cultural research concerning historically marginalized groups, researchers need to consider the relevance of their research to the participants themselves. “Research can only be justified if the outcome will benefit the community rather than further damaging it” (p. 32). Therefore, researchers must have a commitment to ensuring that no harm comes to participants as a result of participation in the study, or as a result of sharing sensitive information through the dissemination of the research. Informed consent procedures also require special consideration in cross-cultural research. Liamputtong explains that for ethically grounded cross-cultural research, informed consent must be sought in participants’ local language and with an understanding of their worldview. Furthermore, it should be grounded in shared forms of communicative practice, meaning verbal explanations of the proposed study and a request for verbal consent may be more appropriate for participants. This is a contextualized view that ensures individuals are fully informed of their rights as research participants through a process that emphasizes trust building,

reciprocity, and rapport, more than the mechanistic process of conventional informed consent.

Ethical issues concerning research with children. The second consideration is that research with children must address the issue of power. Children are marginalized in adult-centred societies, resulting in unequal power relations (Alderson, 2008; Punch, 2002). Valentine (1999) identifies specific sources of this power imbalance, including biological age, bodily size, lack of knowledge, experience and social, political and economic status. Thus, children's lives are often controlled by adults. Consequently, children may not be accustomed to being treated as equals and conversely, adults may not be accustomed to treating children as equals. The view that children are equal and competent social actors may not be shared in all cultural groups, and therefore, it is important to be aware of how culture shapes hierarchical relationships. Moreover, there may also be local child-to-child power hierarchies at play, influenced by factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, or (dis)ability (O'Kane, 2008). All of these issues must be a part of a researchers raised consciousness.

A commitment to conducting research with children and developing rapport takes time. Punch (2002) explains that this process requires adults to ethically navigate their role as a semi-participant observer, friend, and researcher. Additionally, child participation is not a methodological panacea and it is important to consider the level of participation that is sought and the expectations that are placed on children (Alderson, 2008).

Ethical issues concerning photography as a research method. The third consideration is the ethical use of photography as a research method. In this study, I implemented measures to address the specific ethical concerns of using photography by following a systematic research procedure and through the use of informed consent. These measures incorporated the minimum best practices for the use of photography in research identified by Wang and Redwood-Jones (2001). In addition, Clark-Ibáñez (2007) notes that the use of photography in the community provides researchers with insight into participants' lives in different ways than when they are actually present in participants' own settings. However, it is not possible to predict the nature of these insights or the content of research conversations. Therefore, she argues that issues of confidentiality and ethics are usually handled on a case-by-case basis. While this places a great deal of responsibility on the researcher, it is an anticipated consequence of this method. This again highlights the importance of ongoing open discussion and documentation of the emergent ethical issues and decisions that were made throughout the research process. For example, during photography sessions in the community, the children were asked to take photographs of spaces and not of people who weren't a part of the study.

Ethical issues concerning co-optation. Lastly, the danger of co-optation is an ethical challenge that must be negotiated in AR. I considered the danger of co-optation in two ways: first, in terms of assimilation, and second, in the form of appropriation. Herr and Anderson (2005) contend that AR has the potential to either reproduce or challenge the norms, rules, skills, and values of prevailing

social arrangements, stating that “practitioners will have to make their peace with how much of a challenger of the status quo they wish to be” (p. 24). By limiting the focus of this study to children’s play experiences there was the danger of assimilating children’s views to merely reinforce the position that children benefit from play. On the one hand, I argue that by exploring children’s play experiences, this study sought a diversity of views in two ways. First, by providing flexibility in the photography process with children so that they could select the photos they wanted to talk about; second, by giving adults the opportunity to share their views of FCD and their suggestions for improving practice. Finally, there was also a danger of co-optation through appropriation if it was not recognized that the results of study are shared with participants (Herr & Anderson, 2005). There was transparency that this study was being conducted as part of my doctoral dissertation and that it would be used for the completion of my degree, as well as for research presentations. However, there was also a commitment to finding ways of using the results directly for the benefit of FCD. For example, it is not uncommon for research reports to be written and produced for organizations involved in AR projects, separately from doctoral dissertations (Herr & Anderson, 2005). This was the case with this study, as we prepared several reports for FCD’s use, as well as the photo exhibition, which directly contributed to their work.

Ethics approval, informed consent and cross-cultural preparation. This study received ethics approval from the Research Ethics Board of the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation (see Appendix A). Information letters (see Appendix B) and consent forms (see Appendix C) were prepared to ensure adult

and child participants had an understanding of the study, as well as their rights and responsibilities as participants. All forms were available in both English and Thai. In total, five forms were used in the consent process. The first form was used to obtain general organizational consent from FCD to participate in the study. The second form was used to obtain consent from adult participants. The third form was used to obtain child assent and their parent/caregiver's consent. The fourth form was used to obtain child assent and their parent/caregiver's consent for their photographs to be taken and used for research purposes. Lastly, the fifth form was used to obtain child assent and their parent/caregiver's consent to use photographs taken by the child for research purposes. Additionally, a confidentiality agreement form was signed by individuals who helped with translation (see Appendix D).

Based on prior research experience in Thailand and discussions with FCD, it was anticipated that verbal assent would be more culturally and contextually appropriate. Approval was received from the Research Ethics Board to obtain verbal consent from all participants, which was documented in my fieldnotes. After in-depth discussions with FCD staff members, it was decided that the information letters and forms would be provided to all participants and would guide the process; however, individual and group sessions were held for all participants prior to seeking verbal consent. The focus of the informed consent procedure was placed on these information sessions and potential participants were given appropriate time following each session to make a decision.

Furthermore, all informed consent procedures were facilitated with FCD staff members who had a high level of rapport and trust working in the community.

In addition to following these procedures, there were a number of other factors which strengthened my preparation to undertake this cross-cultural study, including: a history of volunteer work and research in Thailand; language instruction; strong rapport with Thai cultural gatekeepers; and theoretical understanding in areas of international development studies and global citizenship education. It was from this position that I entered into a research collaboration with FCD to explore Thai views of play, and children's spaces and places at the Duangkae Centre.

Chapter Three:

Exploring Thai Views of Play: An Action Research Study with the Foundation for Child Development[1]

Introduction

Children's play has been studied from a variety of academic disciplines, including history, anthropology, psychology, and education. In particular, studies from diverse theoretical traditions have examined the role of play in child development, with findings suggesting that play may contribute to a child's cognitive, physical, and psycho-social development (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Frost, Wortham, & Reifel, 2008). This body of literature reflects how play has emerged in recent decades as a global discourse, predominantly in the field of early childhood education (Fleer, Tonyan, Montilla, & Patricia Rivalland, 2009). However, while there is increasing acceptance amongst scholars that play and play behaviour is universal (Frost et al., 2008; Roopnarine & Johnson, 1994), it must be recognized that there is still relatively little that is known about children's play and play spaces in non-Western and developing contexts (Göncü, Jain, & Tuermer, 2007). Furthermore, there is limited research that examines play as a culturally structured activity that may vary across and within cultures (Gaskins, Haight, & Lancy, 2007), thereby providing the impetus for research that explores the cultural construction of play and the provision of play in non-Western settings.

[1] A version of this chapter has been submitted for publication.

This action research (AR) study contributes to this body of literature by exploring Thai views of children's play. The study was conducted in collaboration with a Thai nongovernmental organization (NGO) called the Foundation for Child Development (FCD) from November 2009 – 2010. This collaboration examined how play is viewed by FCD and the community it works with, factors that have influenced its conceptualization of play, and how play is viewed in relation to child development. The purpose of the study was to generate new and deeper thinking about play in order to collaboratively (re)construct practices aimed at enhancing children's play opportunities at FCD. By recognizing FCD's rich experience of working with children in Thailand, this study was aimed at learning from their knowledge, as well as reflecting upon it.

This study emerged as a result of past volunteer work and research activities in Thailand. Our[2] previous research examined the partnership building experiences between Thai organizations and a student service-learning course from the University of Alberta called Play Around the World. The research highlighted issues surrounding play, culture, and globalization, and fuelled the interest for this AR study. This led to a meeting with FCD in 2007 to lay the groundwork for future research collaboration. From April – October of 2008 I returned to Bangkok to complete an initial qualitative study on the wellbeing of vulnerable children in Thailand; I then returned in 2009 to complete this study.

[2] The research discussed in this article was carried out as an action research dissertation, in partial fulfillment of my, the first author's, doctoral degree. Therefore, I use the term 'we' and 'our' to refer to research experiences with my supervisor, and first-person narrative to discuss my views and experiences as an AR researcher.

The research context. FCD is a Thai NGO that was formally established in 1982 with the amalgamation of various children's working groups (FCD, 2006). The array of communities that FCD works with reflects the complexity of childhood in a nation that has seen rapid economic and industrial development, particularly in the last fifty years. One of their mandates is to enhance child development for underprivileged children through play. In particular, their Creative Spaces campaign and Play for Life project are unique community-based initiatives that focus on providing safe spaces for children throughout Thailand. Falling under the Family and Community Development project area, there is a strong emphasis placed on community cooperation in order to address the lack of play spaces for children.

FCD suggested their Duangkae Centre in the capital city of Bangkok as the research site. This was their first play centre and the location where their work in the area of play originally developed. The centre consists of a small property with a two-storey house, sandy play areas and a covered concrete pad. The centre is located in an urban low-income congested community, which began as an unofficial community of migrants coming from Thailand's rural north-eastern provinces to seek work in the capital city. Children also came to be with their caregivers[3] and/or to attend the city schools. FCD has found that this rural to urban migration has resulted in many challenges for children and families. Traditional family structures have been disrupted and children are not always

[3] There are a variety of living arrangements in the community; therefore, the general term of caregiver is used to refer to a parent, relative, or adult who cares for and takes responsibility for a child in the community.

surrounded by parents, siblings, and relatives. Additionally, in order to earn a living, caretakers work a variety of jobs and are not always able to be at home with their children. While friends or neighbours may be asked to watch over the children, there are also other challenges associated with living in a very congested low-income community, including limited play spaces for children. Furthermore, the community is a highly congested area, with limited open and safe spaces for children to play. FCD's play centre developed in response to these concerns. Presently, the majority of the children who come to the centre are between the ages of 5 – 12 years, and on a given day there could be 10 – 30 children at the centre. The centre is open every Thursday and Friday after school and all day on Saturday and Sunday, as well as for various holidays and special events.

Figure 3.1: **Playing ball tag at the Duangkae Centre (Photo Credit: Tong, 2010).**

Guiding theoretical and conceptual framework. AR is concerned with practical outcomes and new forms of understanding that result from mutual learning; thus contributing to building theory (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). In this study, postmodernism as a genre of theory acted as a guide to critically examine the metanarratives pertaining to play. Postmodern scholars argue that much of the research informing current early childhood practice in Western nations is based upon limited cultural and historical contexts (Fleer et al., 2009). This application of universalism doesn't only occur in Western nations, but all too often international development agencies view child development as fixed or unvarying, despite the fact that they tend to be based upon observations and experiments with mainly white middle-class children in North America and Europe (Penn, 2005). These findings are then assumed to be applicable to children in all cultures and circumstances. However, the landscape of childhood is rapidly changing across the globe. In order to reflect, and attempt to describe aspects of this diversity, cultural-ecological theory was used as a conceptual framework for this study.

The major theories that have influenced the global discourse of play in early childhood education can be envisioned along a continuum with Jean Piaget's psychological-individual perspectives at one end and Lev Vygotsky's (amongst others') sociocultural perspectives at the other (Fromberg, 2002). For Piaget, a child's cognitive development occurs primarily in interaction with physical objects, but for Vygotsky it is always socially mediated, and as such, development is never separated from its social context (Bodrova & Leong, 2007).

Thus, one of the legacies of Vygotsky's work is a cultural-historical framework in which individuals and play are understood within a social, cultural, and historical context (Fleer, 2009). Drawing upon this work, a cultural-ecological framework was developed to guide an exploration of play within the context of FCD. The model put forth from this study was a sociocultural-historical perspective, which included examining the historical context of FCD and the local community, and the sociocultural context of how adults view, talk about, and engage children in play. However, this model also extended beyond adult observations and interviews to explore the child's context. The child's context focused on providing children with an opportunity to participate and have a voice in sharing their views about play at FCD.

Methodology

The AR spiral. Stringer (2007) explains that AR is context bound, and focuses on specific situations and contextual actions. Therefore, the AR process is constantly evolving through an interacting spiral of look, think, and act, and may change directions throughout the course of the study. The process is a central feature of the research and is mediated through the relationships between the researchers and participants. Upon reflection, I believe the manner in which this study unfolded is most accurately described by explicitly positioning relationship building, not only as an entry-point, but also as continuous throughout the research process. In doing so, the spiral itself is represented by relationship building, throughout which re-cycling sets of reflection (i.e. building a local

picture and increasing understanding of the issues) and action (i.e. exploring and testing possibilities) occur.

My main focus for the first two months was to volunteer at the Duangkae Centre and to strengthen my relationships with the FCD staff, children, and community members. I began volunteering at the centre on a regular basis, playing with the children and helping with a variety of daily tasks. During this time, FCD and I formed an initial advisory committee to provide guidance for the study. This group consisted of Pii[4] Faa, a full-time FCD project coordinator, and Pii Yok and Pii Mai, two mothers in the community and volunteers at the centre. Establishing rapport with the children's caregivers and other community members was a gradual process that was greatly facilitated by the Duangkae Centre staff. Through spending time at the centre I increased my engagement in the community and built trust as a volunteer and researcher.

My positionality: Being an *outsider in collaboration with insiders*. Herr and Anderson (2005) note that since a researcher's relationship with participants can shift throughout the course of a study, it is imperative that researchers consider the degree to which they position themselves as insiders or outsiders. Based upon Herr and Anderson's continuum of positionality, I situated myself as an *outsider in collaboration with insider(s).* As an outsider, it was important to develop rapport and trust with all stakeholders and to continually increase my understanding of the local context. On the other hand, as an outsider, I was also in a position to act as a catalyst to facilitate a research process. Additionally, I was

[4] Pii is the transliteration of a prefix used in the Thai language, meaning older sister/brother.

able to ask questions about everyday values and beliefs, which, as Herr and Anderson (2005) indicate, oftentimes led to discussion and reflection about taken for granted practices that may have remained unchallenged without an outside viewer. Navigating this role required on-going critical reflexivity and open communication; particularly with members of the advisory committee.

Ethical considerations. This study received ethics approval from the Research Ethics Board of the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation at the University of Alberta. To ensure that all ethical guidelines were adhered to in a culturally relevant manner it was important to draw upon FCD's experience in the Duangkae community. The various issues that we discussed included unequal adult-child power relations (see Alderson, 2008; Punch, 2002), local child-to-child power hierarchies (see O'Kane, 2008), and child participation (see Hart, 1997; Punch, 2002).

Informed consent was used as the principal tool to ensure that all research participants had an understanding of the study and their rights. In total, five forms were used in the consent process. The first form was used to obtain general organizational consent from FCD to participate in the study. The second form was used to obtain consent from adult participants. The third form was used to obtain child assent and their parent/caregiver's consent. The fourth form was used to obtain child assent and their parent/caregiver's consent for their photographs to be taken and used for research purposes. Lastly, the fifth form was used to obtain child assent and their parent/caregiver's consent to use photographs taken by the child for research purposes. All potential participants were provided with Thai-

language information letters and consent forms, as well as an individual or group information session. Verbal consent was sought and documented for all participants, as this was considered to be the most contextually appropriate process for obtaining consent.

Reflection & Action

FCD's views of play. Exploration of FCD staff members' views of play was carried out through interviews and a focus group. In addition, a great deal of the learning took place informally through observation and discussion. For example, I was present for the daily activities and meetings at the centre, and was also invited to participate with special events, such as FCD's outreach activities, play days, teacher trainings, and work parties. These research activities revealed that there is a diversity of views regarding play and how the changing context of childhood has affected play and resulted in many challenges for Thai families.

Diversity of views. The general philosophy shared by the staff members I spoke with is based upon the view that play helps to meet children's physical, social, and cognitive needs. Staff members acknowledged that their views about play have been influenced by global perspectives in a number of ways, including through international volunteers, conferences, and literature. However, while recognizing these influences, play was also viewed as a part of Thai culture. In particular, the connection between play and the natural environment emerged as a prominent theme throughout our discussions. Many staff members shared stories from their experiences growing up in rural provinces. Pii Ning described how her

home was nearby a rice paddy field and she would make all sorts of playthings from natural materials, and have make-believe adventures in the fields. She described:

> *...picking dry wood and cutting it for cooking…so our role play is relate to real work, but we have fun with it. There is a small canal near my house and I can construct something to block the water and play in the water and fishing and all kinds of things*[5].

While play behaviour was considered to be common among all children, one participant reflected on how culture may influence how it is viewed. For example, Pii Ann shared:

> *I think every children in the world have the same needs to play. It's the nature of the children. The need to the same thing, but maybe the circumstance or the social environment is different. The culture to look at play is different.*

In their experience working with different communities across Thailand they have had many discussions with parents, caregivers, local administration, and teachers about play. In this group, there was agreement that there is some support to increase children's opportunities to play, but that in general play is not viewed as having specific importance in relation to child development; particularly, when compared with studying. When I asked about their discussions with parents about

[5] Informal discussions, interviews, and focus groups were carried out in English and Thai and recorded as fieldnotes. Formal research discussions were also carried out in both languages, with a translator present. These discussions had simultaneous translation and were also audio-recorded and transcribed.

play Pii Ning responded, "*most parents are not involved and don't see any importance in their involvement in child's play, but this is improving and more and more parents know that they should have a role, but still the minority*". Correspondingly, when Pii Mali reflected on her experience working in rural communities, she shared, "*…the attitude is that one, play is just play… Another thing is that if children have something to do, have some real work, then play is the less important*". These conversations raised the question of why FCD views play as important for children and thus, requires advocacy in Thailand today.

While FCD is involved with promoting education for all children in Thailand, they also believe that children should have time to play and that children can learn through play. A shared view is that through play children can have fun, be creative, problem solve, and learn. The benefits that they have observed through their work include physical and motor skill development, learning how to get along in a social environment, and making learning more enjoyable and interactive. Pii Mali explained that "*play means children's learning process which creates all sorts of happiness. It is not limited only to sports, but is creative, pulling out children's potential. This enables them to cherish their own worth.*" There was a common view that teachers could incorporate more playful methods and activities into their lessons, rather than the traditional lecture, homework, and classroom tutoring approach. Pii Ning observed that attitudes amongst some educators were changing; however, the implementation was still a challenge:

> *"In the rural areas nowadays, things are improving because in most villages there is a child development centre…Once the children enter school the teacher also knows about the importance of play. The only drawback is that even the caregivers at the children's centre and the school teachers know about importance of play, but mainly in theory. They do not know about the function of play workers and play leaders that well, and another thing is that they could not convince children's parents to give more importance to play. The school is isolated from the community and the communication is still not effective.*

Thus, their experiences suggest that there are diverse views of play and its role. For FCD, this provides the impetus to share their concept of play and increase awareness of the benefits of play for children; especially in light of the rapidly changing context of childhood in Thailand today.

Figure 3.2: **Opening a new play space at a rural school (Photo Credit: S. Truong, 2010).**

Contemporary childhoods. The majority of FCD staff members I interviewed grew up in a very different context than the children they work with today. Their experiences of play in rural Thailand reflected their natural surroundings and everyday spaces, which have changed significantly in recent decades as a result of Thailand's industrialization. The subsequent modernization has changed the landscape of rural and urban childhood in a number of ways. For example, according to Pii Ning:

> *Another change is that children are attending larger schools. There is value of being modern and the parents don't like children to play with dirt and earth in the fields. It's dirty. [They] make them spend time in class,*

evening class, special class. There is lack of safe play space; no natural surroundings.

When I asked about the differences they observed in children's play today there was general agreement that while some play has remained the same, there have also been many changes. These changes were attributed to lack of space, new technology, and new values.

The staff members have observed that children living in the city have limited access to natural spaces and are spending increasing hours in structured school settings, or watching television and playing video games. Violence, inappropriate sexual activity, and materialism were identified as some of the threats of mass media. When explaining her observations on the effects of modernization Pii Ning stated:

In the old time money was not so important for our lives, because today everything involves the use of money and involves spending. The type of family has changed. In the old time the Thai family had uncles, grandfathers, many generations living under the same roof so we had many people to look after child's play, but now they turn to the nuclear family, just mother, father, and children, and father and mother have to work hard most times so they put their children into school or evening school.

Their observations suggested how modernity is affecting Thailand's emerging middle class, as well as those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. For

example, in the Duangkae community many caregivers cannot afford to enroll their children in evening classes, and even spending time playing with them is much more of a challenge because of work. Pii Ning said that in her experience:

> *Parents have to work long hours. They have the feeling that keeping their children at game rooms is safe. Whenever they pass by they can take a look and see if their children are still there. It is better than straying around in unpredictable places and also that the modern way of thinking is that [parents]don't know much about computers and they feel that if their children play with computers it looks good and they are a clever child.*

The situation is also rapidly changing in rural areas, where technology and mass media's impact is also a point of concern for FCD. Pii Ann explained:

> *Ten years ago or twenty years ago when you came to the rural area, one tambon, or one community only have one television at the head of the community and every house come watch tv. They maybe walk very long to watch the tv, but now every house has more than one television or computer in the house. So, the influence of the mass media to the children is very strong and serious. So the attitude and behaviour of the children change.*

Pii Ann clarified that she was not stating this as fact, but rather to highlight the far-reaching effects of mass media throughout all parts of Thailand.

Engaging community members in dialogue. FCD views play both as a process and entry-point for child and community development. Staff members follow a child-centred approach, allowing children to direct their own play; however, adults will step in to assist, maintain safety, or settle disputes. There is also an emphasis on adults and older children being positive role models for younger children. In this regard, Duangkae staff members often talked about teaching children not to use bad language or to hit each other, which are behaviours staff believe are modeled from observation. They try to create a safe and consistent environment at the centre, as well as bring together families and ultimately strengthen the community. One particular action of this research process was re-initiating dialogue with community members to examine their views on the current situation in the community and how they could work together with FCD to address the most pressing issues.

Strengthening communication. The Duangkae congested community has grown as a transitional area for rural migrants; however, infrastructure is still in development. The community is represented at the district level by a community chairperson, who also oversees a local committee. Prior to this study, FCD and the committee had not formally met in approximately seven years. As part of the research process we scheduled a meeting to discuss the situation for children in the community. Three FCD staff members, a translator, the chairperson, and seven committee members, all of whom are also caregivers attended the meeting.

The information gathered from this meeting was helpful for assessing the situation of children in the community. More importantly, the meeting created an

opportunity for FCD and the committee to re-establish communication and build relationships. While some of the information was confidential, other issues identified included the number of video game rooms in the community and lack of appropriate supervision, children engaging in risky behaviours, such as drug use, smoking cigarettes or alcohol consumption, inappropriate sexual activity, and low school attendance. In the face of these concerns FCD and the committee felt that they must try to strengthen their role in supporting caregivers while also providing alternative activities for children in the community. The meeting resulted in a preliminary action plan for FCD to conduct a community survey to update their information on the number of families and children in the community, and to continue organizing activities that promote adult-child interaction. In addition, the committee agreed to organize a family activity or community event once a month. When possible, the activities would be centred on a holiday or cultural day, so caregivers might have the day off from work to attend with their children.

Listening to caregivers' concerns. We were also able to schedule a focus group meeting with a group of five caregivers. In order to create a relaxed environment we started by asking them to share their 'play histories' through drawing and storytelling. Similar to FCD staff members, a great deal of the caregivers' play occurred outdoors and involved natural and local materials. There was also general agreement that their rural to urban migration and children's exposure to media, technology, and commercial advertising were factors affecting children's play and behaviour today. A central topic was the

emergence of video game rooms, where children and adolescents are spending an increasing amount of their time outside of school. One caregiver in the group viewed this as positive, since children can gain computer skills and caregivers could know where their children were spending their time; however, the group in general identified similar concerns as the community committee members, including lack of supervision and the negative influences of mass media. Other concerns included children observing inappropriate behaviours in the community and not having positive role models to reinforce what were considered more appropriate behaviours, such as abstaining from drinking, smoking, and improper sexual activity.

Figure 3.3: **A sign for a video game room in Bangkok (Photo Credit: S. Truong, 2010).**

We also asked the group for their views of FCD's activities, whether positive or constructive. In general, the group viewed the centre as a safe place for children to play, and a place for families to seek help or support. However, the challenge of increasing caregivers' involvement in children's play was also discussed. Pii Yok explained:

> *…it depends on the people. If [parents] experience play when they come to the centre… they will see the importance, but if they didn't play and didn't have experience about play, or they were taught not to play, they won't see the importance about play*.

Therefore, the caregivers in this group suggested that FCD continue to try to raise awareness in the community about the importance of play and playing with children. Additionally, one caregiver suggested increasing service time, and another suggested organizing an event for adults to teach traditional games and types of play from the past. There was general agreement that it would be beneficial if caregivers can be supported and encouraged to spend more time with their children when they are not working, and that there is a need for FCD to continue providing activities for families at the Duangkae Centre.

Exploring child participation. One of the goals of this research was to explore ways of enhancing children's play opportunities at FCD. FCD's child-centred approach means that children are often informed and have a say in decisions, such as when planning special events or during their daily play. This research collaboration provided the opportunity to purposefully reflect on child

participation and develop additional strategies to inform our practices for engaging children.

As a part of this larger AR study, we conducted a participatory photography project with the children at the Duangkae Centre. Through this process we learned about children's preferred play and play spaces, and their ideas for improving the space to facilitate play. Through auto-driven photo-elicitation we learned how children attach meaning to spaces and transform them into their own places for play. This project resulted in developing strategies for involving and listening to children, renovations to the centre based on their ideas, and a children's photo exhibition that was displayed at a national campaign event on the child's right to play. The details of this research project are beyond the scope of this paper and are presented in a second paper resulting from this larger AR collaboration.

Giving back. Similar to the experience of McHugh and Kowalski (2011), this research collaboration provided opportunities to 'give back' by supporting the work of the host organization. Entering into this AR study I hoped to achieve a level of reciprocity where I was able to contribute to FCD's work through the research, but also through offering my time and skills to the organization as a whole. In doing so, my relationships with staff members were strengthened and I gained a richer understanding of their work. In addition to volunteering at their play centres I volunteered at events for their Creative Spaces campaign, helped with administrative duties, conducted a workshop on play leadership and planning play day events, assisted in preparing presentations for international conferences,

and worked with FCD on a renovation project at a second play centre in the Bangkok area.

Discussion

While AR is slowly gaining prominence across diverse academic fields, it remains a methodology that is difficult to define, and therefore, judge. Drawing from the work of Herr and Anderson (2005), I believe there are two key questions for reflection: first, *were the results relevant to the local setting*; and second, *did the study generate deeper thinking that contributed to the education of the researchers and participants*? In response to the former, the research process was developed in close collaboration with FCD to respond to mutual areas of interest. The extent to which the results were relevant is demonstrated by the catalytic role of the research to inform and contribute to their work in the Duangkae community, as well as at a broader level. With regards to the latter, this collaboration resulted in several areas of learning. One of the goals of this study was to explore views of play within the context of FCD and the Duangkae community. The study indicates that views of play are being challenged within a rapidly modernizing context, where cultural values and traditions are being shaped by the processes of globalization and urbanization.

A cultural-ecological framework for examining play. This study drew upon a cultural-ecological framework to explore views of play and the conceptualization of play as a cultural practice. According to Tudge and Odero-Wanga (2009), children do not merely reproduce cultural practices, but also recreate them. They assert that "…cultural-ecological theory treats development

as a complex interplay among cultural context, individual variability, and change over time, with the key aspect being activities and interactions, where context and individual variability intersect" (p. 147). Our examination of the sociocultural-historical context of play at the Duangkae Centre reinforces this position, as it highlights how views of play and the role of play in child development are being negotiated by individuals living in a country that has experienced dramatic change within recent decades.

Since the 1970s, Thailand's liberalization of trade and finance has incorporated the country into the global market (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2009). Prior to this, Thailand was largely an agricultural-based society and 'Thai culture' was described as a mixture of the royal and the rural; however, with the rapid economic development of the 1980s, Phongpaichit and Baker (1998) argue that "…the self-image of Thailand as a rural nation was wiped away with extraordinary speed" (p. 154). Thailand's industrialization has resulted in long-term economic growth; however, not all areas of Thailand's development strategy have been as successful. In particular, Thailand's education system requires significant reform if it is to break the pattern of rural poverty (Warr, 2011). A strategy adopted by the Ministry of Education has been to strengthen early childhood care and education programs throughout the country; however, to date, curriculum development and teacher training lack evaluation measures. Therefore, the role of play in early childhood education and care within a Thai context requires further study and attention. A starting point may be the development of a culturally appropriate model for play and child development within a

contemporary Thai context. Future research that is grounded in cultural-ecological theory and examines the development of such models in Thailand or other non-Western contexts would make significant contributions to a growing body of literature that contextualizes and reconceptualizes childhood and play.

Towards postmodern childhood studies: From developmentally appropriate to culturally appropriate practice. Research approaches that contextualize and reconceptualize childhood and play are laying the groundwork for postmodern childhood studies. Cannella (2002) argues that the concept of postmodern childhood studies involves the deconstruction of the dominant discourses of early childhood education, such as developmentally appropriate practice. According to Cannella, these discourses contribute to a universal view of childhood and are based on ethnocentric theories and practices of early childhood education. Instead, Cannella calls for a move towards pluralist perspectives in approaches to early childhood education.

Applying a postmodern lens throughout the process of this study revealed the ways in which FCD staff members and Duangkae community members are engaging with a rapidly changing landscape of childhood in Thailand. Correspondingly, the cultural-ecological conceptual framework highlighted how these individuals are in a process of being influenced by, and simultaneously influencing culture and cultural practices, such as play. For example, FCD's conceptualization of play and child development has been informed and influenced by the dominant perspectives in the field of early childhood education; however, the range of communities they work with also shows the diversity of

childhoods that exist in addition to the dominant image of a 'Western' childhood. Therefore, while there is uptake of what might be considered global perspectives with regards to the role of play in child development, there is also an attempt to contextualize early childhood practices to correspond with the local sociocultural-historical context. In other words, FCD is actively engaged with enhancing child development for children in rural communities, low-income urban communities, areas of unrest and instability, and with migrant children. Therefore, while there were opportunities for critical reflection on how these theories played out within the local context, FCD's priority was meeting the immediate needs of children in a variety of difficult circumstances, rather than directly focusing on contributing to scholarly debate. As a result, I agree with Cannella (1997) that with deconstruction there is also a responsibility for reconstruction. "No decisions would be made, no actions taken, if we simply deconstruct" (p. 2). The findings from this study suggest that one component to the deconstruction and reconstruction of early childhood education practices in a Thai context may be an integrative approach.

Amornvivat, Khemmani, Thirachitra, & Kulapichitr (1990) assert that play has always been a part of traditional child rearing in Thai culture and should be incorporated into Thai models of child development. According to Khemmani (1994), "Thai play is joyful and requires no expensive materials, yet it contributes to the child's physical and mental development" (p. 198). Khemmani argues for an integrative approach where Western principles of early childhood education take the Thai context into account. For Penn (2005), values and cultural

perceptions as a basis for practice have not been adequately addressed in early childhood education literature. She cites the work of Viruru (2001) who argues that play-based pedagogies are based on a level of material resourcing that is not available for many children. Recognizing this limitation, the concept of play advocated by FCD is not dependent on a high level of material resourcing, nor does it call for commercially produced playthings. In their work throughout Thailand FCD promotes the use of local materials, as well as natural resources to create a child-friendly and play-friendly environment. That is not to say that their centres do not have games and toys for the children; however, they also have sand, plants, flowers, recycled tires, bamboo, coconut shells, banana leaves, and a variety of other reclaimed or inexpensive supplies.

This study shows how FCD's work helps to inform an integrative Thai culturally appropriate model for child development in three main ways. First, FCD follows a social model of play that is intergenerational. While the majority of the children at the centre are between the ages of 5-12, the centre is open to children of all ages. Additionally, there are adult staff and volunteers who help create a familial environment, perhaps similar to rural life where different generations interact together. This approach reflects a Vygotskian framework whereby child development cannot be separated from its social context and an intergenerational environment where children may achieve higher levels of development through play by learning from adults and competent peers (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). The growth of this community-based model may present an

alternative to the highly institutionalized approach to early childhood education that is currently prevalent in the Minority World[6].

Second, FCD staff members follow a child-centred approach in their play practice. Rather than directing children, they facilitate play by creating the conditions that welcome and inspire it. This requires a safe social environment where adults encourage play and exploration, and a safe physical environment with sufficient space and materials. While it is interesting to note that child-centred practice is a key tenet of developmentally appropriate practice, FCD's approach differs slightly in that it is not based on privileged knowledge and the prominence of professionalism. According to FCD, their approach does not require a level of academic expertise that may be inaccessible to caregivers, teachers, and volunteers from the community. Rather, it is an approach that seeks to explore the benefits of play for children with regards to their learning and development, as well as recognize the unique competencies of children. However, FCD also believes that there is a need for increased public understanding about the importance of play for children and methods for implementing play-based teaching. Such a move would enhance interaction between teachers and students beyond more traditional approaches to pedagogy that reflect a banking method to teaching and rote learning. Therefore, there remains a need for research on the implementation of play-based learning into teaching strategies, and more

[6] Punch's (2004) use of the terms Majority and Minority World, in place of the Developing and Developed World respectively, resonates with me as it highlights how the dominant "Western" image of childhood is only experienced by a minority of the world's children.

specifically, how cultural forms of play and culturally-structured activities may create meaningful learning opportunities for children.

Third, a cultural-ecological framework highlights the complexity of child development and wellbeing. A focus on play as an early childhood intervention cannot be a smokescreen that blinds us from the realities of children's lives (Penn, 2005). As Pii Mali from FCD explains, it is important to "…*use play to point out children's problems, to create social awareness; then highlight the importance of play. We must keep up with the latest situation about child problems.*" Therefore, like many NGOs, FCD faces the challenge of working at the community level to improve the welfare of children and their families, while also trying to influence policy in the area of child protection, rights, and education in Thailand. Their endeavours to protect the child's right to play are informed by, and complement, this work. As a result, this study suggests that a multi-sectoral approach to increasing awareness and strengthening the protection of children's rights, including the right to play, in Thailand would be most effective.

While an integrative approach may be one method for reconstructing early childhood education practices in a Thai context, it must also be acknowledged that this approach may be largely embedded in the dominant discourse of Euro-North American educational ideologies. For example, Cannella (1997) asserts that child-centred pedagogy and play are tenets that have been created in a particular cultural context; however, they have not been recognized as being culturally constructed. Furthermore, she makes the following argument:

> Universally imposing discovery and child-centered pedagogy on all children not only places everyone in a position in which success is dependent on the availability of money and materials, but colonizes classrooms all over the world to be constructed in ways that are consistent with western middle-class values (p. 135).

Therefore, developing an integrative approach to early childhood education requires critical analysis in order to reflexively identify sites of resistance and uptake of dominant ideologies. This involves challenging the universally held truths inherent in child development discourse and allowing for alternative understandings of childhood, child development, and education to inform more culturally appropriate practice. As such, there is a need for future research that critically examines the development of pedagogy and practice in culturally diverse and low materially-resourced settings to inform more just and contextually relevant approaches to early childhood education.

Conclusion

AR in early childhood settings "…can change what you do with children, colleagues, parents and the wider community; it can change how you do it; and it can change how you think about it" (MacNaughton & Hughes, 2009, p. 9). I believe that through this AR study, FCD and I were able to initiate changes and learn together by reflecting upon play and play practice. This AR collaboration contributes to the body of play literature by exploring adult and child views of play at a play centre in a low-income congested community in Bangkok, Thailand. The findings call for a cultural approach to childhood education and

care that is informed by a cultural-ecological framework. These approaches recognize the diverse contexts of childhood that have resulted from global processes, such as globalization and industrialization, which have had a profound impact upon nations such as Thailand. Lastly, this study suggests that play is a vital aspect of child development and can be used as an effective tool to help meet the needs of children in difficult circumstances. As such, there is a continued need for research that examines play as a cultural practice, in order to expand our understanding of its various forms and its potential impact within the diverse contemporary contexts of childhood across the globe.

Chapter Four:

Through the Lens of Participatory Photography: Engaging Thai Children in Research about their Community Play Centre[7]

Prelude

Nok rolled over, trying to block out the sounds coming in through the thin walls of the small one-room home she shared with her mother. The passage outside of their room was always busy in the early morning and Nok's wake-up call was a street concerto of yelling and laughter as the neighbours started their day, water splashing from the communal tap in the alley behind their room, and the occasional growl of a scooter as someone rushed off to work. This was all kept in time by the rhythmic beat of a knife chopping against a wooden cutting board. Nok didn't need to look beside her to know that her mother wasn't there. Every morning at sunrise her mother walked to the market to buy fruit that she would sell at the nearby railway station. Nok pulled herself up and slipped out the door. As she reached to pull her school uniform from the clothesline, she said good morning to her mother who was sitting on a stool beside the door slicing a fresh papaya. Without missing a beat, her mother pointed to a bowl of noodles and told her to eat quickly or else she would be late for school. Then, with a practiced hand, she slid the knife under the papaya and placed it on the ice in the cart. Nok was already sipping the warm broth as her mother pushed the cart down the alleyway. Before she

[7] A version of this chapter has been submitted for publication.

reached the corner, her mother turned and said, "After school, go play at the centre. I'll come see you after work."

Figure 4.1: **A walk into the Duangkae community (Photo Credit: S. Truong, 2010).**

Introduction

This opening vignette introduces you, the reader, to Nok, one of the children whom I came to know from November 2009 – 2010 while conducting an action research (AR) study in Bangkok, Thailand for my doctoral dissertation. The study was carried out in collaboration with a Thai nongovernmental organization (NGO) called the Foundation for Child Development (FCD). FCD operates the children's centre referred to in the story, which is located in an urban low-income congested community, called the Duangkae community. This initial scene describes a morning routine that has commonalities for many of the children growing up in the community: many of the children moved with their

parents or relatives from rural areas, many families live in small one-room homes that are built closely together in the passageways between the larger surrounding buildings, and many adults work very long hours as food vendors around the community or at the railway station.

My[8] research collaboration with FCD emerged out of a shared interest in play and child development in especially difficult circumstances. The overall goal of the study was to generate a deeper understanding of the cultural construction of play and play practice at FCD's Duangkae Centre. AR is a research methodology that focuses on specific situations and contextual actions (Stringer, 2007), and in childhood settings it can be used to improve practice by reflecting on it and finding new ways to think about it (MacNaughton & Hughes, 2009). Therefore, through this AR study we endeavoured to transform our practice in order to enhance children's play opportunities at FCD. One key element of an AR approach is to involve stakeholders as co-researchers, which in this case included FCD staff members, parents/caregivers, and children.

This paper focuses on a participatory photography research project that was carried out within the larger AR study with the children at the Duangkae Centre. The purpose of the research project was to explore how children experience play and sense of place at the centre. In order to examine this we used participatory photography as a child-directed research method. This method facilitated research conversations with the children to learn about their use of

[8] This study was carried out in partial fulfillment of the first author's doctoral degree. Unless otherwise specified, I use the term 'we' and 'our' to refer to the shared research collaboration with FCD staff members, and/or research experiences with my supervisor. First-person narrative is used to discuss my individual experiences carrying out this study.

space and their play preferences at the centre. Through the process of taking photographs and sharing their play stories, the children gave us insight into how the Duangkae Centre can become a meaningful place in their lives.

In the next part of this introduction I explain the impetus for this research and briefly describe the research setting. In the following section I discuss the guiding theoretical perspective and provide an overview of the literature that framed this study. I then present the research project, which consisted of two phases. Phase one was the initiation of the participatory photography project with a small group of children; phase one developed into a larger project with additional children joining the initial group. Thus, phase two is an extension of phase one, and the final findings and discussion sections are reflective of the study as a whole.

The impetus to conduct this study was threefold. First, we had a particular interest in engaging in a research process that would afford children the opportunity to share their stories about their play space, as there is a need for research that focuses on children's own agendas, feelings, and experience of childhood places (Clark, 2004). This study is positioned within an epistemological and methodological belief that children have the capacity and right to participate in research; however, all too often they are excluded from the process (Christensen & James, 2008). Second, through collaboration with FCD we endeavoured to contribute to the body of literature that examines play in non-Western settings. By presenting FCD's work in the Duangkae community this study addresses the limited research focused on children's play and play spaces in

non-Western and developing contexts (Göncü, Jain, & Tuermer, 2007). Lastly, through this paper we share a case of how play is being used to promote wellbeing for children in especially difficult circumstances. Malone (2006) elucidates how rapid urban growth throughout the world has had serious consequences for children's lives, especially in countries with lower income economies. One such effect is that play and recreation provision remain low priorities. As a result, the study of play is also often absent from research agendas, particularly in areas with high levels of poverty. Therefore, we also seek to shine a spotlight on the issue of play and access to safe play spaces for children in especially difficult circumstances.

The Duangkae Centre opened in 1981 in response to the growing number of families migrating to Bangkok from rural provinces (FCD, 2006). Thailand's industrialization in the latter half of the 20th century has been accompanied by rapid urbanization, and in a country of approximately 60 million people, roughly 11 million currently live in its capital city (O'Neil, 2008). Located nearby the central railway station, the Duangkae community became a common transitional area for migrants. As it became more populated, the subsequent challenges the children faced became amplified, including limited play space, a lack of social services, and the relatively insecure environment of a transitional community. Over the past 30 years FCD has continued their work at the Duangkae Centre, with the goal of building an atmosphere for learning and promoting child development through play.

In this paper, I experiment with the use of creative analytic practice[9] by writing scenes that are based upon concrete details of my fieldwork. My aim in creating this narrative is to transport the reader, even for a brief moment, into the research experience with the children; to visualize the community, to imagine playing at the Duangkae Centre, and to share in the learning that took place from this research collaboration.

Guiding Theoretical Perspective

The new sociology of childhood. The way in which adults view children affects the way they research children and childhood (James, Jenks, & Prout 1998). Mayall (2008) argues that adults have divided the social order into two major groups: adults and children. Within this traditional order, children's lives are controlled by adult views of childhood. At the centre of the debate between traditional positivist and non-positivist views of childhood is the new sociology of childhood. Steinberg and Kincheloe (2004) argue that in place of the dominant positivist view of children as naturally compliant and dependent upon adults, there is a need for a perspective that situates children as different from adults based upon age and generation, but not as inferior. This reflects the view enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which situates children as equal to adults. Therefore, a new paradigm, which reconceptualises children and contextualizes childhood is required. This is encapsulated in the new sociology of childhood, which views children as

[9] Richardson (2000) describes creative analytic practice (CAP) as a process of expressing research findings through evocative and creative writing techniques. Drawing on the work of Caulley (2008) and Vickers (2010) I have created scenes that are based upon my fieldnotes. I use pseudonyms to write a narrative that is based upon my research observations, communications, and interactions.

competent social actors (Alderson, 2008; Corsaro, 2005; James et al., 1998, Qvortrup, 2005).

Corsaro (2005) elucidates that there are two central concepts in the new sociology of childhood. First, children are active social agents who create their own cultures and simultaneously contribute to the production of adult societies. Second, childhood is a structural form that is socially constructed. This concept recognizes that children are a part of society and are affected by its structural arrangements, including social class, gender, and age groups. This constructivist model of childhood situates children as agents and learners who actively construct their social worlds; thus acknowledging that children are human *beings*, and not merely human *becomings* (Qvortrup, 2005).

Child participation. A view of children as competent social actors demands that we as researchers acknowledge their right to participation in accordance with the UNCRC. In particular, Articles 12 and 13 address the child's right to freedom of expression, while Article 31 assures the right to rest, leisure, play, and cultural life and the arts (Alderson, 2008). With regards to research, child participation involves implementing methods that ensure children have a voice in matters that affect their lives, and situating them as experts of their own lives (Einarsdottir, 2005; Hart, 1997). The epistemological and methodological shift towards child participation distinguishes between research *on* children that situates them as *objects* of research versus research *with* children that situates them as subjects/*active participants* (Alderson, 2008; Christensen & James, 2008; Mayall, 2008). Furthermore, this shift calls upon adult researchers to adopt

methodologies that suit children's competencies, while acknowledging their differences from adults, such as their limited and different use of vocabulary and understanding of words, relatively less experience of the world, and possibly shorter attention span (Boyden & Ennew, 1997). The use of creative research methods, such as visual methods, and more specifically participatory photography, can be used to navigate these challenges.

Participatory Photography with Children

Christensen and James (2008) suggest that research with children should not take an age-based adult/child distinction for granted, and remind us that particular methods should be selected based upon those involved, the social and cultural context of the study, and the research questions posed. In this way, research becomes *participant*- friendly, rather than *child*- friendly. The challenge, as Punch (2002) states, is "…to strike a balance between not patronizing children and recognizing their competencies, while maintaining their enjoyment of being involved with the research and facilitating their ability to communicate their view of the world" (p. 337). Punch further explains that using methods that are more sensitive to children's competencies can help put them at ease with an adult researcher. Furthermore, selecting activity-based research methods that engage children in a play-like manner may contribute towards keeping their attention, and also integrates their right to participate in research with their right to play.

The use of photography is not a new development in academic research (Banks, 1995, 2007; Samuels, 2007); however, despite a recent renewal of interest, there remains a relatively small amount of literature dedicated to its use,

particularly within the interviewing process (Hurworth, 2003). Various methods of participatory photography have been discussed in recent literature, including: *talking pictures* and *visual voices* (Singhal, Harter, Chitnis, & Sharma, 2007), *fotonovela* (Kirova & Emme, 2008), and *photo novella and photovoice* (Wang & Burris, 1997; Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001; Wang, 2006). In general, the commonalities between these techniques are based upon principles of participation and power sharing. Of particular interest to this study is *autodriven photo-elicitation*, which is the process of giving cameras to research participants themselves, and using their own photographs as a means to bridge communication (Samuels, 2007). Singhal et al. (2007) state that "…by placing cameras in the hands of people, a facilitator or researcher can gain insights into people's lived experiences, which were previously overlooked, rejected, or silenced. The photograph's narrative becomes a participatory site for wider storytelling, community discussion, and action" (p. 217).

Photography has also been used as a technique for research with children. Kirova and Emme (2008) state that "the critical examination of traditional research methods and the search for new methods that can serve as tools for children's participation in research has put photography at the forefront (p. 36). Photography not only provides children with an alternative mode of expression and meaning-making, but also engages them in a way that keeps their attention and enthusiasm (Burke, 2008; Christensen & James, 2008; Thomson, 2008). Furthermore, children involved in the research process may also perceive the use of cameras as play (Einarsdottir, 2005). Thus, the use of participatory

photography is well suited for engaging children in research about their play spaces.

In this study, the use of photography provided unique insight into children's experiences of play, primarily at the Duangkae Centre and secondly in the community. Therefore, a number of the photographs that I took throughout this research experience, as well as those taken by the children have been included in this paper. Strict ethical guidelines were followed to ensure children and their caretakers gave assent and consent, respectively, for their photographs to be shared and their images (i.e. faces) in photographs to be displayed for the purposes of sharing this research. These photographs help bring this research to life by providing a visual form of data to complement the written text. However, it is also important to consider the ethical implications of displaying children's images in public documents. There are a range of views pertaining to this issue and as Clark-Ibáñez (2007) suggests, researchers who use photography as a method must grapple with issues of confidentiality and ethics on a case-by-case basis. After careful consideration, I have decided to protect the identity of the children who participated in this study; however, in an effort to share their contributions to this research I have included photographs that focus on the spaces and places of their play.

Children's Play Spaces

Fon sat cross-legged on the bench outside of her grandmother's home. The alleyways in the community were very narrow, but this corner was especially crowded because their neighbour ran a small shop at the

front of her home. Forgetting about the people around her, Fon tossed a small stone up in the air; her eyes fixed on it as it rose straight up before starting its descent. At the same time her hand skimmed the surface of the bench, gathering up as many pebbles as she could before catching the stone. She opened her palm. Four. She set the pebbles down and was about to toss the stone again when Nok yelled out to her, "Fon, let's go to the centre." Nok had changed out of her school uniform and was waiting down the alley. Fon pocketed her stone and brushed the pebbles onto the ground before taking off after Nok.

They walked towards the bright green door, blinking their eyes from the smoke of the food vendors lining the road. The air always smelled of grilled meat at this time of day. Stepping through the doors they each pressed their palms together at their chins, greeting the two parent volunteers. As usual, they did a quick scan, deciding what to do first. At the back, Kai was swinging from the tree, joking with Tui who was perched above him. Ton and Tong were kicking a ball back and forth on the concrete pad, and on the other side of the house Noi and Maew were making sand cakes and serving them to Som. Nok headed towards the dress-up clothes, but once Ton saw the two girls he let the ball roll right past him and yelled out, "Nok and Fon are here! Let's play tag. Boys against girls!" Nok laughed. Forgetting about the silk dress she was going to put on she grabbed Fon's hand and set out to round up the other girls.

The spaces available to the children in the Duangkae community influence their play and other daily activities, and ultimately play a role in shaping their childhoods. Researchers in children's geographies have highlighted the importance of understanding the spaces and places of childhood (Holloway & Valentine, 2000). The seminal work of Tuan (1977) suggests that place can provide a sense of security and identity through the meaning attributed to it by humans, while space represents freedom and a feeling of openness. Through interactions with people and objects, certain spaces may become meaningful places for children. For example, Roger Hart "…noted the ways that children appropriate public space for themselves and give names to their favourite places which reflect the way they use them – such as 'sliding hill'" (Holloway & Valentine, 2000, p. 12). Correspondingly, Ellis (2005) explains that *sense of place* is a cultural geography term used to describe "…personal connection with a place, built up over years of residence and involvement in the community" (p. 59). This connection that individuals experience, which is also referred to as *place attachment* consists of the memories, feelings, beliefs, and meanings that they associate with their environments and may become a part of an individual's overall identity (Jack, 2008). Therefore, researching children's experiences in their everyday environments can further our understanding of how these processes occur and inform policy and practice in planning children's spaces.

Recent research that has employed the use of participatory photography with children to examine place use and preferences include Clark's (2004) study at an early childhood institution in the United Kingdom, Einarsdottir's (2005)

study at a playschool in Iceland, and Burke's (2005) study at a primary school in England. Each of these studies involved asking children to photograph and talk about their favourite things to play with, and favourite spaces and places for play. These studies demonstrate how photography has been used to learn about children's experiences with their everyday environments and how specific spaces can take on different meanings and purposes for children. For example, Burke (2005) elucidates how a lamppost may become an important place to meet and talk with friends or how children may develop games on the streets of their neighbourhoods. These studies also highlight the diversity of children's play preferences, and thus, the need to listen to all of their individual voices.

The Research Project: Phase I

Getting to know the children. Upon arriving in Bangkok in November 2009, I began volunteering at the Duangkae Centre. This involved playing with the children and assisting the staff wherever possible on a regular basis. The time allowed me to strengthen rapport with the children and staff members, as well as engage in discussion to further develop the study with FCD. After approximately two months, Pii Saow[10], a translator, and I held an informal meeting with the children to ask if they would be interested in participating in a project to share their stories about playing at the centre. We wanted to make sure that all children understood what would be happening and that they could continue playing at the centre whether or not they chose to participate. An initial group of six children,

[10] Pii is the transliteration of a prefix used in the Thai language, meaning older sister/brother. Pii Saow is a FCD staff member who was the main collaborating partner for this research project. All sessions were conducted in Thai, with a translator present for the initial sessions. Communication between myself and FCD staff members was carried out in English and Thai.

three boys and three girls, aged eight to twelve, volunteered to participate; five of the six children completed all five photo sessions[11].

Getting started. After seeking caregivers' consent and the children's assent to participate we met with the children again to decide upon a schedule. At this meeting the children also developed a list of guidelines, which included agreeing to come to all the sessions, taking care of the cameras, and taking turns listening and speaking in the group. Each session included a discussion on the photography topic and then children would be given time to take photographs and then view them as thumbnail prints, as well as on a computer screen. At the end of the sessions the children were asked to select approximately three photographs to print and then discuss at the next session. The children often made notes explaining why they selected each photograph in preparation for the next session. Additionally, they were always able to look at their photos again on the computer and select different ones if they changed their minds.

The first session included a practical lesson on using the digital auto-focus cameras; the first topic was the *different things you do or play at the centre*. The second session involved creating a visual map of the centre through drawings and the children's photographs; the second topic was their *favourite place to play at the centre*. At the third session, the children added the photographs of their favourite places to play to the visual map; the third topic was *what do you like most and what would you change about the play centre*? During the fourth session we discussed the previous photographs and spent extra time asking the children to

[11] One child did not attend the final two sessions because of a trip to her home province.

brainstorm together suggestions for improvements at the centre; the fourth topic was to take photographs of *your community play spaces*. For this activity children were asked to focus on space and not to photograph people in the community. At the final session we viewed and discussed the children's community play spaces. As a way of thanking the children for their participation in this first study they were given free time with the cameras to take photographs and create their own albums.

Listening to the children. It was important to give the children sufficient time to view and select the photographs they wanted to talk about. We asked them to select their favourite photographs to talk about in small group conversations. Most commonly, they identified space for active play (i.e. for playing tag, hide and seek, and ball games), quiet space (i.e. for playing make believe, reading books, and relaxation), natural features (i.e. a fish pond, the sand area, and the trees), and play equipment (i.e. building blocks, games, the slide, and a rope climber) as their favourite spaces to play at the centre.

The conversations revealed how children use the different spaces at the play centre and how these spaces become meaningful to them. Since the centre is fairly small and children often play together, many children had similar photographs; however, there were also very unique photographs and individual stories attached to them. For example, Tee selected his photo of a small wooden playhouse to discuss.

Tee: *I like this picture. The house is open for anyone to play in.*

*Son: *How do you play with the house?*

Tee: *I pretend it is like a small house in the jungle. It is a place to climb, sit and play, and when I feel tired I can take a rest in the house.*

Correspondingly, Fon also took a picture of the wooden house, but rather than imagining she was in the jungle, she envisioned it as her own house in the community.

Fon: *This is a house for playing. I can pretend it is my house and can play inside. It's beautiful and when I would like to play with others it is quiet.*

Figure 4.2: **Fon's playhouse (Photo Credit: Fon, 2010).**

Through these research conversations, as well as on-going participant observation, I learned about how the children played at the centre and the context of their play. The ability for the children to play freely and transform space at the centre emerged as significant when compared with their immediate surroundings. The majority of the homes are small single rooms that are often shared with other people, and are generally considered living or functional space, rather than play space. Open space in the community is also limited, with narrow corridors and crowded passageways winding between the surrounding buildings. The open spaces in the community are typically away from adult supervision or closer to street traffic, which results in several safety concerns for the children. When we asked the children to identify *what makes a good community* and *what is important for a community to have* the two most common responses were safety and space. In the following conversation the children discussed the view of what a safe community looks like.

*Son: *What is a safe space to play?*

Nok: *A safe space has play equipment that is not broken. The slider [in the community] is broken and that can hurt you.*

Ton: *The only space is in the roads so it's not safe to play.*

Nok: *We play tag and rabbit tag at the post office.*

Fon: *At the post office the cars are coming in and out and the rocks on the road can trip you. I wait until 6:30 [pm] to play at the post office because I'm afraid of the cars.*

This discussion provided insight into how the participants viewed their community, as well as how they negotiated the lack of play space available to them. FCD has helped address this challenge by creating the Duangkae Centre as a child-friendly space where children can exert more control over their everyday play environment. Children were involved in the early design of the centre and in keeping with this tradition we wanted to provide the children with an opportunity to give input about their play space at the centre. As a means of enhancing child participation we decided to focus on the suggestions they provided for what they would like to change and initiated a small project to plan and transform the play space with the children. This project is discussed later in this paper in the *Actions* section.

The Research Project: Phase II

Expanding the project: The creation of *Through Children's Eyes*. As the first five photo sessions were coming to an end, FCD was in the process of planning a Global Consultation on the Child's Right to Play, which was an initiative of the International Play Association (IPA). The main purpose of the event was to gather information on the situation of Article 31 of the UNCRC in eight regions of the world (IPA, 2010). As an organizing partner, FCD combined the consultation with a media event to increase awareness of the child's right to play in Thailand. They suggested creating an exhibition of the children's photographs to showcase at the event. As a result, we moved into a second phase of the research project, called *Through Children's Eyes*, and invited all the children to participate.

The project began with a meeting of FCD staff members, where two central questions were developed to guide the theme of the exhibition: *what do you like to play the most at the centre* and *why do you like to come to the centre*? Next, we held an information session for all of the children. Children were assured they could continue to play at the centre if they chose not to participate, and that there would be opportunities for them to take photographs outside of the project if they just wanted to learn how to use a camera. Informed consent, including permission for the use of photographs taken by children, as well as photographs containing the images of children, was sought from all participants' caregivers. The group consisted of 17 children: eight girls and nine boys; ages six to twelve years old.

Engaging the children in participatory photography sessions. Eight small group sessions were carried out during March and April of 2010. Each session lasted between one to three hours and each group consisted of two to six children. All sessions followed a similar format of five steps and were facilitated with a FCD staff member[12]. First, children received an information session on using the digital camera and practiced taking photographs around the centre. Second, the children discussed what they liked to play the most at the centre in order to generate ideas. Prompts to help stimulate discussion included: *where do you like to play the most* and *what do you like to play*? The children were also encouraged to think creatively about how to capture their play with the camera, such as re-creating a game or taking different pictures of a favourite space. Third,

[12] I would like to recognize Saowarat Prada and Panisara Chunthawithet for their co-facilitation of the research sessions. Their rapport with the children and commitment to this research project were truly invaluable.

they were given time to take photographs and to view them on the computer screen. Thumbnail prints were also provided so they could see all of their photographs at once. Each participant was welcome to attend more than one session in order to take new photographs for the exhibition. Fourth, the children were encouraged to take their time to choose two of their favourite photographs to talk about and include in the exhibition. Lastly, children participated in small group research conversations using auto driven photo-elicitation.

The research conversations were carried out informally, allowing the children to take turns showing their photographs and then talking about them to their friends. Notes and direct quotations were documented and later translated into English. While emphasis was placed on the two central questions, the children were also asked to elaborate on their photographs and the stories they told about their play. Prompts included: w*here did you take this picture, what is happening in the picture,* and *why did you decide to take it*?

Figure 4.3: **Taking photographs at the Duangkae Centre (Photo Credit: S. Truong, 2010).**

Glimpses into the Spaces and Places of the Children's Play

Maew slipped her hand through the wrist strap. She walked towards the sand area, the camera pointed to the ground as she watched her feet on the small screen. There were two other children in the sand area taking pictures of the rope climber and the small blue slide. Maew looked through the window and saw Som in the library taking photos of books. She could also hear Tui at the concrete pad telling his friends to run slower so he could get a picture of them playing Rabbit Tag. "They're all blurry," he yelled out laughingly, though it seemed like he was also frustrated. Maew knew what she wanted to take a picture of. One of her favourite things to play was shop seller. She spent a lot of time in the sand area cooking noodles and making other treats using sand, leaves, flowers,

and stones. She kept taking more photos and looking at them on the small screen of the camera, but wasn't satisfied. Finally, she decided to climb the slide. She aimed the camera down and took a picture of her 'shop.'

Later, the small group sat in a circle on the floor looking at their pictures. When it was Maew's turn, she held up the picture of her 'shop.' It was the bench where she played cook. "I like to play making and selling food. I like to play in the sand and I put the toys on the bench. I use the toys as sand moulds to make cakes and then I use the pan to cook food," she explained to the group.

Figure 4.4: **Maew's shop (Photo Credit: Maew, 2010).**

Piecing together a picture. The two phases of this project provided glimpses into the children's play and their use of space, primarily at the Duangkae

Centre, and secondly, within the community. The result was a large number of photographs of play spaces and playthings, and a long list of games and activities that the children liked to play. However, there were also individual preferences and diverse views about play spaces, such as active or calm spaces, and open or private spaces. The research conversations were an important step in allowing children to contextualize their photographs. Their responses were often given in short sentences, with concrete descriptions of what was in the image, what was happening, or how to play a certain game. These explanations became captions, giving a glimpse into the story behind the photographs. Based on this process and on-going analysis with FCD, a picture is pieced together to represent the children's experiences. The picture centres on the overarching theme of having access to space for children. This central theme consists of four interrelated sub-themes: transforming spaces, experiencing diverse playthings, interacting with playmates, and feeling safe.

Space for children. One of the statements I frequently heard from the children was, *in the community there is not space to play*. While play can certainly occur anywhere, the Duangkae community itself is quite congested, and there are limited open spaces where children can play freely. Additionally, the children do not have regular opportunities to visit play spaces outside of the community; thus, the centre has significance as one of the few open play spaces available to the children. Therefore, the centre becomes a meaningful place because it is a child-friendly space amidst an uncertain and unpredictable urban environment. Understanding the meaning attached to this specific space involved

looking at how children use it, and their associations with people and objects within it.

Transforming spaces. The children's photographs illustrated that different areas of the centre are generally connected with specific activities; however, children also expressed freedom in being able to play throughout the centre. For example, both Som and Ning like to play all around the centre, but for Som the merry-go-round is particularly significant, while for Ning the wooden play house is her favourite place to play.

Som: *I like to play on the merry-go-round, play sand, read books, play words games, play hide and seek, rabbit tag, play football, and play with the younger children. My favourite place is sitting to play and talk on the merry-go-round. I can talk, laugh, and have fun.*

Ning: *I like to play dress-up, play cook, read books, play on the merry-go-round, listen to stories, play house, water play, and play on the slide. My favourite is to play dress-up, putting on clothes. I dress-up as a princess and fairy and play in the house.*

In these examples, meaning is attached to spaces based upon how they are used. In the former, the merry-go-round and the sand area are social places for Som to spend time with her friends; in the latter, the playhouse is a place of make-believe or fantasy for Ning.

Experiencing diverse playthings. Many of the photographs also featured various playthings, including stuffed animals, blocks, books, dishes, and balls. Not surprisingly, many children took similar pictures; however, there was a

variety of images after they chose their favourite photos to talk about. The following two quotes are examples of how children often found it easiest to talk about their favourite playthings by describing how they played with them.

Yai: *I come to the centre because there are a lot of toys that I like. I play with the blocks. These blocks are a train. That man will go to build the train.*

Nhu: *I like coming to the centre because there are many toys. I like to fill the elephant with water. I water the flowers and sand and I imagine the sand is flowers.*

A number of the children remarked that they like coming to the centre because there are many different toys for them to play with and there is a larger selection than they have at home. Also, similar to when talking about play spaces, children commented on being able to play with the toys with their friends, and having adults help them with getting supplies or making playthings. Thus, the centre is also a social space with playmates and caring adults.

Interacting with playmates. The social atmosphere of the centre was featured in the children's photographs and was prominent throughout the research conversations. While it's not unlikely to see children playing by themselves, it's more common to see groups of children playing together. The centre is open to children of all ages, which often results in intergenerational play. Older children will also organize or lead games, and will also help the adults in taking care of the younger children. For example, when showing her photograph of dress-up clothes, Noi shared the following:

Noi: *I like to come to the centre because there are a lot of children who come to play. I like to play dress-up and play clothes seller. I like to lead younger children in playing dress-up.*

In addition to friends, children also talked about the adults at the centre, mentioning how they make sure everyone is getting along and that everyone is able to play. In particular, the adults were recognized for taking care of the children and making sure that they were safe.

Fon: *They take care of young children, like younger than three, to not play dangerous things and they listen to what children are saying to others so they don't say bad things.*

Feeling safe. Feelings were associated with constructing place meanings and the children often talked about having fun and feeling happy at the centre. Another prominent feeling expressed by children was that of safety.

Nok: *In the community there is not space to play. Duangkae Centre has a lot of toys and it is safe. Other places are not safe because there are many cars.*

Som: *Playing in other places is not safe. Here it is safe. There are adults to take care of us and I can meet new friends.*

These two examples show how the Duangkae Centre is a distinct environment that is enclosed from the busy traffic in the community. They also reflect how the children have come to trust the adults at the centre and feel safe with them. This was particularly important for the children who were observant of the uncertainties of living in a transitional community.

Figure 4.5: **Nok's safe space (Photo Credit: Nok, 2010).**

Discussion

Children's places. The purpose of this study was to explore how children experience play and sense of place at the Duangkae Centre. Through this process we learned about the many 'children's places' that come to life within the space of the centre. Rasmussen (2004) explains that "the concept 'children's places' is the child researcher's generalized term for places that children relate to, point out and talk about" (p. 165). It is a place that a child connects with. This concept is particularly salient in the contemporary context of Bangkok, where ancient temples stand amongst skyscrapers, condominiums, and shopping centres, creating a cosmopolitan city that O'Neil (2008) refers to as a modern megalopolis. With a major pattern of urbanization in the 21st century there is a

continued need for undefined space where children can build their own worlds (Chawla, 2002). For many children in the Duangkae community, who are rural-urban migrants, the centre has become a meaningful place because it is a stable and secure environment in the midst of change and transition. Through lived out playful experiences, the centre becomes more than a physical, concrete space. It is a place where children know they can play freely and transform their environment. This is reinforced by the child-directed practices adopted by FCD, allowing children to take the lead, encouraging them to think creatively, and helping facilitate play in a safe environment. In this way, child participation occurs on a daily basis.

One of the key differences between 'places for children' and 'children's places' is that only children can identify the latter (Rasmussen, 2004). Therefore, while it is a subjective concept, it is one that may help in identifying the features of spaces that engage children. This has implications for adults when they are planning play spaces for children and when making policy decisions about the use of space in both rural and urban environments.

Child participation in planning play spaces. The notion of voice is formed by the belief in children's capacity to speak and their right to do so (Thomson, 2008); thus, child participation calls upon researchers, policy makers, and adults in general to listen to children's diverse voices. The concept for *Through Children's Eyes* was straightforward; however, it also carried a powerful message that children have a right to play and that adults have a responsibility to protect this right. This was the main idea we tried to convey by showcasing the

children's photographs at an event attended by local administration and governmental child welfare agencies, as well as researchers and practitioners. Burke (2005) elucidates how children's research of place use and preferences is important for planners and policy makers at the local government level because it increases awareness of children's needs and experiences within a contemporary environment. Furthermore, it also highlights that children can and should be involved in the planning process for the spaces of their everyday lives.

Lessons on carrying out (playful) research *with* children. This article provides an example of how participatory photography may be used effectively in cross-cultural research with children; however, we believe it is most effective when used with an approach that allows for sufficient time in the local community to build rapport and gain a deeper understanding of the cultural context. It was important for me to learn how photography and capturing images could be viewed by those involved in the study, and also to gain trust with the children and local community members. This was facilitated by collaboration with FCD staff members who, as cultural brokers, had "...an understanding and sympathy for the cultural values and social issues" (Liamputtong, 2010, p. 67) in the community.

It was also beneficial to spend time playing with the children. Similar to Punch (2002) I felt that following children's cues was an effective strategy for building rapport. For me, this involved being patient (i.e. not rushing the children to interact with me), consistent (i.e. attending the centre regularly), helpful (i.e. getting supplies, fixing a toy, helping a child on or off equipment, etc.), playful (i.e. inviting children to play and joining when I was invited to play), and curious

(i.e. asking the children what they were doing or what was happening). This gave me insight into the children's play worlds and helped me to understand their explanations of their photographs. Combining this participant observation, along with the research conversations facilitated methodological triangulation.

It was also important to be reflexive about how we conceptualized child participation throughout the research process. Acknowledging that this was an adult-initiated project we strived for a level of participation whereby the children were consulted and informed. With the use of photography in research there is a danger of appropriating images for the researcher's own use. To avoid this we paid particular attention to the process, being clear with the children about the purpose of the research and how the photographs would be used. Additionally, we also continued to consult and share decisions with them when working on a project of renovating the play space at the centre.

Lastly, we believe that our research experience was an example of how play methods can enhance children's research imagination (Alderson, 2008). We found that using photography as a research method engaged the children in a play-like manner and gave them a higher degree of control over the research process. At the end of the study, all of the equipment was left with FCD, so the children can continue to document their play experiences, and FCD can continue with other photography-based projects if they should choose to do so. We also found that conducting informal research conversations was more suited for children than a conventional interview format, and by using autodriven photo-

elicitation the conversations were somewhat less intimating for the children because the focus was placed on the photograph.

A call to action for children's research. Rights-based approaches are premised upon the notion of indivisibility of all rights; thus, it is essential that a movement to protect the child's right to play recognize the whole of children's lives and the totality of what is required to live with dignity. Therefore, there is a need for research that takes a critical approach to investigating the diversity of childhood, particularly in the Majority World[13] where children's lives are often affected by the research, policies, and practices that are developed in, and at times exported by, the Minority World.

Correspondingly, globalization and urbanization are increasingly changing the landscape of childhood. Research that examines the impact of these patterns on children's play and play spaces can help inform educational policies, as well as the policies and practices of child welfare agencies and NGOs. Furthermore, participatory photography may be an effective method for examining how children negotiate this shifting environment and how it impacts upon their play experiences. Research with older youth, such as those who played at FCD as children, could provide a different view of how the Duangkae Centre impacts upon children's lives, and results in meaningful interactions and/or a sense of place. Research using retrospection could help increase understanding of how the

[13] Punch's (2004) use of the terms Majority and Minority World, in place of the Developing and Developed World respectively, resonates with me. "Although this unduly homogenises the 'Majority', the use of the terms Minority and Majority World may at least make the reader pause and reflect on the unequal relations between these two world areas" (p. 111).

meaning attached to the space change over time and the factors that influence those changes.

Putting the *action* into our AR study. AR is a context-bound process that is built upon collaborative communication and local action (Levin & Greenwood, 2001). Therefore, the most significant actions resulting from this study centred on the relationships and mutual learning that developed throughout the process. However, the AR process can also result in more tangible outcomes. For example, this study resulted in changes to the children's play space, and advocacy and awareness raising efforts.

Planning and transforming play space project. As the photography sessions with the children were being carried out, FCD was also planning renovations at the Duangkae Centre. As a part of the research project we were able to initiate a process to inform, consult, and share decision making with children. It was important to inform the children that there were limited resources; however, we wanted to hear all of their ideas and then we could discuss the possibilities. We held a dreaming session, and asked the children to draw pictures of their ideas for the centre. The main ideas focused on clearing spaces at the centre to create more play space; however, there were also ideas for new play features. Based upon their feedback, a plan was developed and volunteers came to the centre to help with the renovations. Various children also helped with the renovations and with designing a new layout for the sand area.

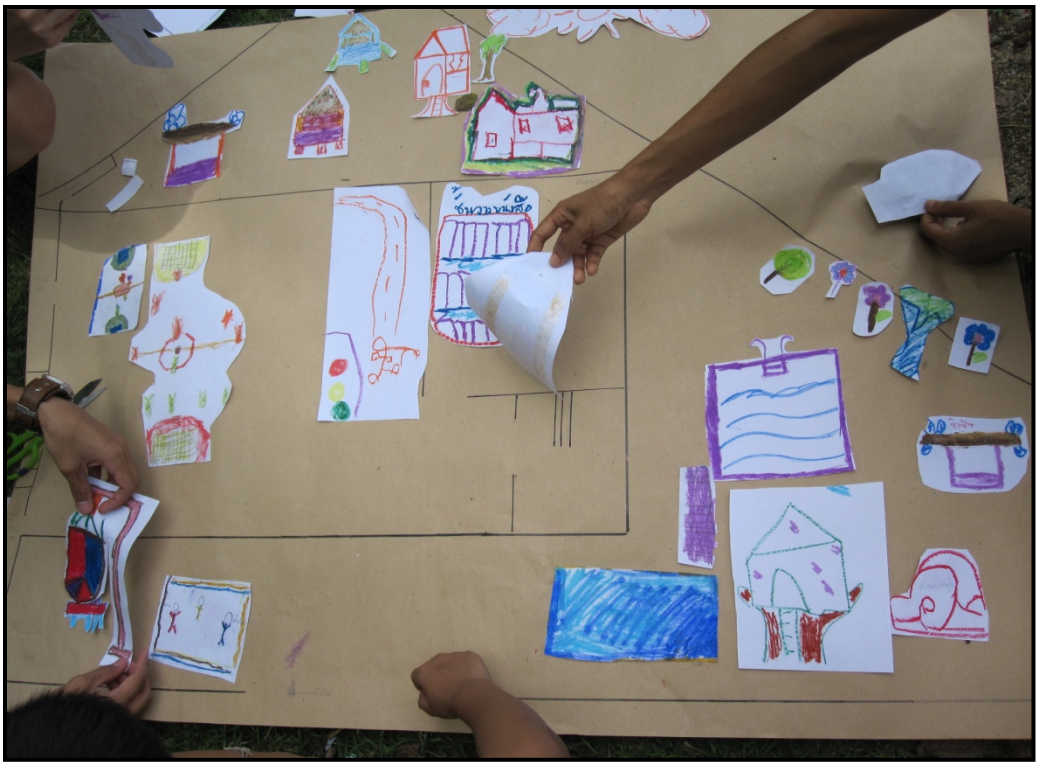

Figure 4.6: **Children's dreaming session (Photo Credit: S. Truong, 2010).**

Figure 4.7: **Painting donated tires for the sand area (Photo Credit: S. Truong, 2010).**

Giving back. Nearing the end of this study, I discussed with the Duangkae Centre staff the possibility of doing one final project with the children. In many ways, the project was a means of bringing closure to my year of fieldwork and thanking the children for sharing their time, stories, and play with me. The most popular idea for a new play feature identified during the dreaming session was a tree house. Using artwork to facilitate discussion, we asked the children to draw or make miniature models. With these ideas, and considering the available space, we drew up a plan for a new play structure. The free-standing structure was built using local wood and materials. The construction engaged various children, youth, and adults in the community. As a result it became a participative process, which was as equally important, if not more, than the outcome itself.

Displaying the children's photography. *Through Children's Eyes: A Photo Exhibition Inspired by the Child's Right to Play* was presented on June 23, 2010 at the IPA Global Consultation on the Child's Right to Play – Bangkok Event. All of the participants were able to attend the event and see their photographs on display; one participant also volunteered to talk about the exhibition and share her views on the importance of play during a panel discussion. The participants also joined other children's groups in various games and activities that were planned as a part of the larger media event. Following the event, the photo exhibition was displayed for a week in a community courtyard located at the Thai Health Promotion Foundation in Bangkok.

Figure 4.8: **Building a new play structure (Photo Credit: S. Prada, 2010).**

Figure 4.9: **Children's photographs on display (Photo Credit: S. Truong, 2010).**

Conclusion

“The everyday life of children takes place in concrete, physical spaces. Children’s everyday life flows along because children live their lives in a stream of time that glides along as they find other places” (Rasmussen, 2004, p. 155).

Nok jumped down from the stage where she had just finished talking about her photographs in front of a large audience. She had been sitting up there for a long time and was feeling restless to join her friends. The other children were already on their way out the door and she knew others were already playing games or doing other activities outside. The woman with the microphone had asked her too many questions and it all seemed a blur to her now. Nok opened the door of the meeting room, feeling the bright sunlight streaming in. Relieved to get away from the adults she stepped out into the courtyard where everyone’s photographs were on display. She thought about going to look at her pictures one more time, but then heard shouting and laughter. Not wanting to miss another minute she ran off toward the sounds of her friends playing.

Chapter 5: Discussion & Conclusion

Introduction

In this chapter I provide a reflection on my research experience as a whole. Using a montage of fieldnotes, journal entries, and various discussions with research participants, I provide an analysis of broad themes within the study. This discussion also serves as an entry-point into a wider dialogue as it identifies key issues and questions that emerged from this research experience which require on-going consideration. The central theme of this discussion is that a sociocultural-historical perspective calls for childhood and play to be contextualized. Extending from this perspective, I propose that play can be interrogated as a global assemblage, whereby global elements emerge and interact with local culture through processes of response and resistance. Lastly, I provide two considerations for future studies of play in a Thai context. The first is that in response to the predominant conceptualization of modern play in child development discourse, it is important that cultural forms of play are not undervalued with regards to their potential to create meaningful opportunities for learning. The second involves looking at child development and early childhood education through the lens of human development rather than economic development, which shifts the focus away from particular (i.e. Eurocentric) images of childhood and provides the space for a diversity of images to be valued.

Mapping the Landscape: Snapshots of Play & Playing

(Duangkae). December is going to be a busy month for FCD. My main focus is going to be volunteering at the centre with the children and helping out wherever I can. There are about 10 different events related to their Creative Spaces campaign that I've been invited to join in with, which is really exciting. It'll give me a chance to see their work in different parts of the country (S. Truong, field notes, November 26, 2009).

(Overnight trip to play day and playground opening in Ban Dung, Udonthani). Observing, joining more activities, meeting with local municipal government, teachers, and volunteers, larger space, a lot of natural materials. Approximately 40 children at the preschool, inside temple grounds, open every week, teachers from 4 centres attended, municipal government and FCD are providing support (S. Truong, field notes, December 17, 2009).

(Sukhumvit 107 & Chatuchak Park for Thai PBS "Heart" campaign). In the morning meeting with Child Care International (CCI), hosting a play day for migrant children from Cambodia and Burma. Research presentation on the health of migrant families. Project through the Child Labour Club, approximately 60 children from Samut Prakarn province. In the afternoon we set up a display at Chatuchak Park to show how families can play together without needing a lot of expensive toys. We brought sand, dress-up clothes, bubbles, coconut shells. Pii Yok asked me

if these children are like the children from Duangkae. She said most of the children were from middle-class families and it seems like they are better behaved. Pii Mali said the same thing to me later. I need to follow-up on this discussion (S. Truong, field notes, December 20, 2009).

(Chachaengsao school work party). Very full day. Volunteers from the community, school teachers and local administration. We painted playground equipment, made some new play structures, shoveled sand. I went with the group to observe making stilts with bamboo. All the boys. The girls went to sand coconut shells and then painted them to make "walkers." Really cool to learn how to make stilts from bamboo and then help the boys walk with them. A group of us also went out into the large paved area and raced while rolling a tire by hitting it with a stick. So much painting. Last thing we did was paint a couple large "hopscotch" grids at the back of the school (S. Truong, field notes, December 24, 2009).

I felt like I had a small breakthrough with some of the children today. There are more children who come on the weekends, rather than the weekdays…Today, some of the boys came over and asked me to join in kicking the ball with them. I'm not sure what it was about this day, but when it happens you just go with it and have fun (S. Truong, field notes, December 26, 2009)

These journal and fieldnote entries from the first several weeks of my research trip reflect the context in which a cultural construction of play is being negotiated and put into practice. Grounded in a contextualist worldview, this study was conducted within a changing, real-life environment where individual lives and FCD's work continued to unfold alongside the research process. As a result, the innumerable variables that contribute to the complex landscape(s) of childhood in Thailand were highlighted. These include socioeconomic status, migration, urbanization, industrialization, changing family structures, technology and media, educational reform, and views of play. All of these dynamics create a challenging environment in which FCD endeavours to meet the developmental needs of children in Thailand. Thus, this study shows how a cultural-ecological framework can paint somewhat of a messy, multi-layered picture, because it:

> …forces researchers to pay simultaneous attention to aspects of the individuals who are the focus of the study, aspects of the context (immediate, cultural, and historical), and (most important) to the actions and interactions going on between these individuals and the social partners, objects, and symbols that play important roles in their development (Tudge, p. 89, 2008).

How then, do I try to make sense of it all? As a starting point, I concentrate on the "local" and reflect on children's play and my discussions with adults about play. I then expand the discussion more broadly to conceptualize play within a sociocultural-historical perspective.

A Sociocultural-Historical Context of Play in Thailand

Cultural views of play. The collection of stories and experiences that adult participants shared with me suggests a view that play is a part of Thai childhood. With the recognition that childhood in rural Thailand was much different during her generation, one caregiver recalled how she could incorporate play into her daily life, which was generally structured around school, homework, and household duties:

> *We had to attend school from Monday to Friday. After school, we had to help herding buffaloes to graze and finished this late in the evening. Then it was almost dark because there was no electricity, so parents called us into our homes. On Saturday and Sunday we herded buffaloes to graze and could play as much as we wanted while watching the buffaloes.*

A connection with the natural environment was prevalent in many of the adults' images of childhood play. One interviewee, a prominent advocate for child rights in Thailand, drew upon this connection and situated play as a cultural practice. When I asked for his assessment of how play is viewed in Thai culture, he replied:

> *…in fact, Thai culture has the richness of play because the Thai children could make the environment to be toys, such as coconut trees. We can produce many things from coconut trees; we can produce many things from banana leaves.*

I was certainly able to observe this while at the Duangkae Centre, where there is one banana tree that provides branches and leaves that were used in a variety of ways.

Figure 5.1: **Riding a banana leaf 'horse' (Photo Credit: S. Truong, 2010).**

Similarly, a common roleplay was making and selling food using natural or imaginary materials. Thursday, December 3, 2009:

> *I went to the centre today. The sand area seems like a really natural place to play with the children – an entry-point – because they can do their own thing, and I can sit and play in the sand and let them take the lead. They play what's called, "len kai kong" a lot, which directly translated means "play selling things or goods." It's often food they are making and selling*

– noodles, rice, papaya salad – sometimes just with sand and sometimes with leaves, rocks, water, and flower petals. Today they were also mashing up leaves in water and filling up empty water bottles so they could play selling their green drink.

Figure 5.2: **Mai's sand cake (Photo Credit: Mai, 2010).**

This example of how children make use of natural materials for play also exemplifies how children represent their worlds in play. The roleplay takes on an element of reality in that the children go through the process of cutting, grinding, chopping, and mixing their ingredients, and other children may join in, helping to cook or sitting down to eat. By playing out this scenario, the children are enacting what Kirova (2010) refers to as a cultural script. Kirova points out that the focus of their play is not on tangible results, but rather on playing the role of an adult.

"Therefore, imagination or an imaginary situation is the requirement for the child to be able to perform real, culturally formed actions and operations" (p. 86). However, cultural change also affects the roles that children play out in their imaginary situations. For example, during another day at the centre I observed a very different roleplay. Sunday, January 3, 2010:

> *Play observed at Duangkae: hide and seek, tag, playing in the sand, len kai kong, dress-up (fantasy), marbles (target/flicking game), play watering the tree, making a horse, sword, whip, and "shooter" with a banana leaf and stalk, playing "James Bond" and other "war games" with play guns, grenades, shooting, spying, hiding, chasing, etc.*

This image of the children playing James Bond stands in contrast with making and serving sand cakes with tea, and is one example of how mass media is changing the context of childhood and children's play in the Duangkae community (and more broadly, across Thailand). For example, while the boys in this situation often dressed-up in the style of traditional clothing and acted out sword fighting and "Muay Thai" (i.e. Thai boxing), it was also common for them to roleplay James Bond (a British literary and film character), Spider-Man (an American comic book and film character), or Ultraman (a Japanese television character). This highlights the global influences of media that are shaping popular culture and as a result, are reflected in children's play.

Kirova (2010) argues that recognizing the diversity of childhoods across and within cultures requires us to call into question a "culture-free" or

decontextualized view of play; therefore, "studying play in its cultural context is absolutely essential to understanding it as a cultural activity in a particular community" (p. 80). In this study, the adults' associations of play with the natural environment were reflective of the context of their childhood, which, in one generation, has changed significantly. For many of the older adult participants, the predominant image of Thailand was that of a rural country, which relied on its agricultural-based economy. However, Thailand's industrialization has changed the role and image of the rural village and the capital city of Bangkok. Speaking about Thailand's rapid economic growth at the end of the 20th century, Phongphaichit and Baker (1998) state:

> The boom stopped Thailand thinking of itself as a rural nation. The city had seized the initiative – not just in the economy and politics but in the realm of culture and national identity. The growing wealth of business and salariat overflowed into an ebullient new urban culture which valued modernity, prosperity, individualism, globalism. Youth pioneered the trend. Television quickly became the main medium on which the culture was formed, expressed, broadcast (p. 185)…Over one generation, the countryside had changed from important to peripheral, from neglected to controlled, from expansive to stagnant, from coddled to threatened (p. 192).

Thus, many of the adults in the Duangkae community are a transitional generation, whose childhoods were reflective of a traditional rural national image, and are now faced with raising children in an urban environment of cultural flux.

Even with a strong trend of urbanization, the majority of Thais still live in the rural provinces. Despite this, the majority of resources have been allocated to the urban economy; thus, privileging the emerging urban culture. Thailand's industrialization has been met with resistance against the increased exploitation and control of the countryside; however, the forces of global economic integration and its impact on Thai culture have already changed the once predominant image of village life. This change is poignantly captured in the second verse of Phongsit Kamphi's 1997 song, *Home*:

> Oh you young kids / So much suffering, not enough to eat / The young brides and bridegrooms have all run away to Bangkok / Only old folks and young kids are left behind / Waiting for them to come home and work on the land of their birth (as cited in Phonphaichit & Baker, 1998, p. 193).

In the case of the Duangkae community, the rural to urban migration is even more wide-ranging, as both young and old have moved to the city, and therefore, there are different generations navigating urban life, and childhood, in a time of rapid cultural change. Cultural-ecological theory provided a framework for examining play within this local context. Through this framework, this study reveals that research into children's play must consider how localities intersect with transnational elements, such as mass media and the dominant discourse of play, to form assemblages of response and resistance.

Play as a global assemblage. Certainly, cultural-ecological theory provides a framework for discussing how changes in children's physical and

social environments impact their play and development. However, my experience also compelled me to explore the overlapping borders between local and global forces because this study took place within a contemporary context of globalization. Therefore, I propose that play, as it is viewed and being put into practice by FCD, can also be interrogated as a global assemblage. This specific assemblage is made up of various global forms, including the dominant discourse of play in early childhood education, modern material playthings (i.e. the toy industry), and media and technology. Therefore, the sites of inquiry are the spaces where global elements emerge and transform local culture, which is in a constant process of change over time.

According to Collier and Ong (2005), global assemblages are sites for the formation and reformation of anthropological questions. "As global forms are articulated in specific situations – or territorialized in *assemblages* – they define new material, collective, and discursive relationships…they are domains in which the forms and values of individual and collective existence are problematized or at stake" (p. 4). This, according to Collier and Ong, requires a discerning, reflective, and critical approach to inquiry because the term "global assemblage" itself suggests inherent tensions between an encompassing *global* and a heterogeneous *assemblage* that is emergent as it interacts with local elements. This is a deeply contextualized approach that complements a sociocultural-historical perspective. By applying it as an analytical tool in this study, it situates play in dynamic interaction with global culture at three particular sites of uptake and resistance:

the role of play in child development, the role of adults, and the influence of play materials.

The role of play in child development. The findings from this study support the position that play is a culturally structured activity that varies as a result of childrearing beliefs, values, and practices (Gaskins, Haight, & Lancy, 2007). In this regard, the central question that emerges is not whether or not play *is* a Thai cultural practice, but rather how play is viewed *in relation to* childrearing and development. Based on their experience working with numerous communities, FCD staff shared a common observation that while play is generally viewed as something children *do*, it is not necessarily viewed as serving a specific *purpose.* Certainly, there is a need to tread carefully here before making overt generalizations; however, the experiences of those participating in this study suggested a different popular view of the role of play in child development than the predominant view put forward by the prevailing global discourse.

For example, a lack of knowledge or understanding of the importance of play was frequently identified as a challenge faced by FCD. More broadly, the outcome report of the International Play Association's *Global Consultation on the Child's Right to Play* in Thailand identified a perceived lack of importance as one of the common obstacles to protecting the child's right to play as experienced by the educators and caregivers who attended the event:

> Most Thai parents or families tend not to see the importance of play of children…In parents' attitude, playing is a waste of time and is not the

> right way to optimize time. They think that the right way to manage time is to study in order to enhance academic knowledge…Government and public officers don't understand child development through playing. They lack skills and knowledge to invent and apply natural materials to make toys in order to respond to children's needs (Sornsomrit, 2010, pp. 1-2).

These views build a layer of the assemblage as they overlap with the beliefs held by FCD and others attending the global consultation that play has a central role in child development. One of Thailand's leading child rights advocates summarized this belief that they are trying to raise understanding or awareness when stating:

> *…playing is the first priority for development. It is the first priority because playing is not only for fun. Playing is how to learn about the world surrounding you: social environment, natural environment; everything. And to play, you develop physically, mentally, or intellectually; everything. Everything inside us. In particular, if playing with the family members, it is part of family development and strengthens attachment and bonding among family members, so it's very important in our life. Not in developed country or developing country, but among human beings.*

This statement demonstrates how localities come into contact with a network of influences, which could be considered global. The view reflects a dominant view of play as integral to learning and important for all humans that is common to the global discourse of play; however, the last sentence also suggests a level of

reflection upon the formation of this view. Throughout our discussion, this child rights advocate recognized the various global forms influencing this view, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC); however, he also believed that this view was not specific to any particular culture. The fact that there is not a long history of play research in Thailand was not reason to suggest that this view of play was not relevant within a Thai context. In this regard, the goal is to protect the child's right to play by increasing awareness of the benefits of playing, from the governmental level to the family unit.

The role of adults in children's play. The way that play is viewed in relation to childrearing and development is intricately connected with the role of adults in children's play. Cultural communities will vary with regards to whether parents will act as playmates in addition to their role as caregivers to young children (Rogoff, 2003). In their ethnographic study of childrearing in rural Thailand, Amornvivat, Khemmani, Thirachitra, and Kulapichitr (1990) found that children often played alone or in groups with other children, and that generally adults did not interact as playmates. Based on their observations, they concluded:

> Playing with adults was not often found. The adults usually had played a role in supporting child [*sic*] play by making a toy for the child or facilitating the game rather than playing with the child directly. Playing with the child directly was usually observed with an infant or a young child, more than with older children (p. 73).

However, by applying a sociocultural-historical perspective to their analysis, I would argue that a particular image of the "adult as playmate" is being projected in these observations, since making a toy or facilitating a game does indicate a degree of play interaction. In general, the findings from the AR study conducted with FCD are consistent with those of this ethnographic study, which suggests the need for reflection on how and why traditional childrearing practices are being challenged. Parallel to the situation of global forces shaping children's play, these same elements are impacting upon what may be considered "good" childrearing practices.

This was exemplified in one participant's response to how adults are generally involved with children's play:

> *Most parents are not involved and don't see any importance in their involvement in child's play, but this is improving and more and more parents know that they should have a role, but still the minority. The better ones are mainly well-to-do families with the wife not having to work for income, and have an education and have time to look after their children. Richer families. But the poorer ones have to work hard to earn more income; it's not possible.*

This statement highlights various influences that are shaping a contemporary view of play, as well as the subsequent challenges, including the rise of a Thai middle-class and the struggle of poorer families. The danger is in privileging a particular view of play that is not accessible to all. Additionally, a tension is created

between the view that parents should play with their children, and the recognition that:

> because of the economic situation many parents from rural areas work in the cities and must leave their children with relatives (usually grandparents) to look after. Because the grandparents are elderly and people in rural areas have a lot of work to do, the children are often neglected and left to their own devices sometimes in risky or vulnerable situations…In slum communities, children spend time with parents helping to work in the markets etc but may also spend a lot of time playing in the computer game shops. Slum communities do not have safe places to play (Sornsomrit, 2010, p. 4).

In light of this, there is a need for an inclusive view of play, which recognizes that play can take different forms in varying contexts. Correspondingly, there is also a need for a broadened view that adults can interact with children and facilitate play in different ways; even if they the lack time and material resourcing of an emergent middle-class.

FCD has responded to these challenges in a number of ways, including trying to mainstream play and child development into the national agenda so that there is a shared state responsibility for child development, by calling for educational reform to integrate play and learning into the classroom, and by campaigning for creative spaces that are accessible to all children and families.

Furthermore, they try to share a view of play that does not rely on a high level of material resourcing, but rather on natural and locally available play materials.

The influence of play materials. Natural materials, such as the commonly mentioned coconut and banana trees have a tradition of being used to create playthings. These materials have cultural relevance because they were also used to mediate cultural learning. However, with rural-urban migration and the contemporary context of childhood in Thailand, children's play materials are changing, and therefore, the use and role of these objects (i.e. natural materials) are also changing. For example, when discussing modern trends in children's play, one participant explained the following connection between natural materials and cultural practices:

> *Around November, we have a very high new moon and we have an ancient New Year celebration on the new moon day and people make banana floats. In the old time the whole family was involved in cutting banana leaves and making that float, but the modern way of life is to spend a little money and you buy; the involvement is not the same.*

In this case, rather than going out with parents to learn about the process of making the floats out of the banana leaves, the tradition is being modernized with commercially produced materials. As a result, the adult-child interaction is also affected. As we continued to discuss the cultural learning that was mediated through these activities, another participant shared a related story from her childhood:

> *When I was young I had to accompany my grandmother to the evening prayer at the local temple and I had to pick the flower and know the appropriate type of flower for that ceremony…but now children don't know what type of flower to pick or use.*

These activities were discussed in relation to play, signifying a broader conceptualization of play to include other forms of cultural activity. The examples also illustrate the role that objects may have in children's learning. Morgenthaler (2006) explains that children's play with objects involves a variety of processes, in which objects may be used functionally or fantastically. From a sociocultural view, play with objects takes on shared meanings based upon the social and cultural context in which it takes place. Therefore, new cultural meanings are created as new objects are introduced into children's play.

Technology is shaping children's play in the Duangkae community quite profoundly. Watching television and playing videogames is now common in the play repertoire of most children attending the centre, and was a shared concern of both FCD staff and community members. In many ways, this has become a site of resistance for FCD; however, they also recognize that mass media and technology are pervasive elements of global culture, which is now a part of modern Thai culture. In this regard, their response is to campaign for child-friendly media and to promote alternative activities to encourage other forms of play. Lastly, it is also interesting to reflect on the implications of introducing technology, such as the use of digital cameras, into the research context. This was not a neutral activity

and is another example of the impact of technology on children's play, through the introduction of novel objects.

Reconceptualizing play: Considering the fluidity of culture. Change has been a prominent theme in this discussion. A sociocultural-historical perspective reveals that play cannot be narrowly defined, because the context of children's play is both diverse and in flux. Thus, there is a need to recognize that there are many different ways of being and living; of playing and childrearing, in this world. In this regard, I agree with Dachyshyn and Kirova (2008) who contend that within the global discourse of play, "it is becoming increasingly apparent that ideas dearly held within developmentally appropriate practice – learning through play, child-centred practice, and following the child's lead – are not a part of all cultures and do not have meaning to all people" (p. 285). Based on the experiences of the participants in this study, these ideas were not commonly shared in rural Thai culture. Therefore, there is a need for a more inclusive conceptualization of play and play practice that recognizes the diversity of culture and ways of being in this world.

At the same time, the concept of global assemblages provides a unique lens for exploring the interaction of global forces with localities. The concept provides a tool for investigating how cultures are changing through response and resistance to global influences. This study suggests that FCD has largely followed an integrative approach to play and child development that reflects a national context of global economic, cultural, and social integration, and offers two main considerations for future studies that focus on children and play in a Thai context.

The first consideration is that modern play, as it is understood within the global discourse of early childhood education, is a relatively recent phenomenon. Bodrova and Leong (2006) contend that from a sociocultural-historical perspective, modern play has emerged as society has evolved. Drawing on the work of Elkonin (see Elkonin 1978; 2005), they argue that in non-industrialized societies play was primarily pragmatic, in that it helped children develop specific skills needed to contribute to everyday life. On the other hand, "modern play is nonpragmatic in that it does not prepare the child for specific skills or activities, but prepares the child's mind for the learning tasks of today" (p. 167). These learning tasks include acquiring a knowledge base necessary for life in a highly industrialized and technical society. If we accept this premise, then we accept a Vygotskian view that "…while formal schooling provides the training for these advanced psychological processes, play produces important prerequisites for them" (p. 167). This view provides rationale for a Thai model of play in early childhood education that helps to prepare children for the formal schooling system. However, it is also important to recognize how modern conceptualizations of play privilege certain forms of play. Play should not be decontextualized from its sociocultural-historical circumstance and cultural forms of play should not be undervalued with regards to their potential to create meaningful opportunities for learning.

The second consideration involves looking at child development and early childhood education through the lens of human development rather than economic development. The modern era of development has seen the advancement of

various conceptualizations of international development. Early discourse was largely dominated by notions of modernization and economic progress; however, the 1970s and 80s saw the emergence of a humanist shift towards a focus on issues of human well-being (Willis, 2005). In particular, Mahbub ul Haq's vision of an alternative view led to the idea of human development, which has received widespread acceptance as a pluralist approach to people's lives (Sen, 2000). The United Nations Development Program (1990) defines human development as:

> a process of enlarging people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and change over time. But at all levels of development, the three essential ones are for people to lead a long and healthy life, to acquire knowledge and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living (p. 10).

The concept of human development proposed by the UNDP indicates that the understanding of development must go beyond the expansion of income and wealth to focus on people themselves and their freedom to exercise choices. Therefore, taking a human development approach to Thailand's educational reform would place the focus on expanding capabilities so that people are enabled to have freedom of choice. This is a liberal position that highlights individual freedom and people's own priorities (Gasper, 2002). Sen (1999) contends that choice is a valuable functioning because it reflects the freedom that members of a certain society enjoy to pursue the lives they value. This pluralist conception shifts the focus away from a particular image of a child – the modern, global, universal child – and provides the space for a diversity of images to be created.

This discussion has broadened from the initial topic of play; however, it does so necessarily because it reflects the sociocultural-historical perspective taken in this study. This perspective reveals that play is one factor out of many that contributes to child development and wellbeing. Therefore, while campaigns to increase awareness of the importance of children's play and right to play are needed, it is equally imperative that they are situated within rights-based approaches to advocacy and development. These approaches recognize the indivisibility of all rights and the root causes of vulnerability and marginalization, such as poverty and inequality (Nelson & Dorsey, 2008). It must be acknowledged that organizations such as FCD are already working with limited resources and attempting to meet the immediate needs of children in difficult circumstances. In this regard, providing and protecting play and play space is an important action to respond to current conditions. However, situating these efforts within rights-based approaches may encourage longer term changes to the conditions of childhood. Nelson and Dorsey (2008) explain that "human rights-based approaches insist on analysis of the *causes* of poverty and of the deprivations, inequality, and violations of rights that accompany it" (p. 116). Therefore, incorporating a social movement for children's play into a rights-based approach also entails envisioning play as an entry-point into the national development process, which should focus on creating the conditions for all children to grow and thrive within the modern landscape.

Implications of this AR Study

In this next section I summarize the key implications of this study. This is intended to complement the discussion provided in the third and fourth chapters of this dissertation by highlighting the main lessons learned throughout the research experience with regards to practice, theory, and methodological approach.

Practical implications. This research process provided an opportunity to reflect on how FCD play space is used and to identify the elements that contribute to a creative space for children. A key learning taken from this context is that place meaning is constantly changing and being negotiated through children's interactions with their playmates and environment. The findings support previous studies that identify features, such as open space, quiet space, natural space, caring adults, and access to playthings, as guiding principles for planning children's spaces; however, this study suggests that in addition to specific play features, it is important for children to have the freedom to transform their play spaces. In this regard, there is less focus on material resourcing or designated spaces, and more attention on the support for children to use their imaginations and locally available materials to transform their physical spaces.

This process can be achieved through implementing child participation practices on a regular basis. It must be recognized that this approach is dependent upon adults filling the role of play space facilitators or animators. This may be particularly challenging in the not-for-profit- sector where the demands placed on staff members and volunteers are already high. However, this approach does not

necessarily require large-scale projects, but rather it calls for practices that facilitate children taking the lead on how they would like to use the space. In this study, we employed participatory activities to enhance child participation, such as mapping, drawing, and model making. Our experience also indicated the importance of recognizing the hierarchies of influence that exist amongst children as well, and that child participation is a consultative process whereby the diverse voices of all children are listened to and taken into account by adults.

Lastly, this study suggests that a multi-sectoral approach to increasing awareness of the child's right to play in Thailand would be most effective. First, this approach involves teachers and childcare workers incorporating play into their practice and co-constructing understanding with parents about the potential role of play in child development. Second, nongovernmental organizations whose work focuses on child welfare can explore the common processes of play for children and how this may contribute to their work with children in especially difficult circumstances. Thirdly, governmental agencies need to not only adopt, but ensure the implementation of policies that enable children to play, and participate in recreation, cultural activities, and the arts. In particular, many participants suggested that the main issue should not be narrowly defined to play, but rather expanded to the situation of children in general.

Theoretical implications. This study provides an example of how a cultural-ecological framework, or theory, complements AR methodology as they both recognize that everyday lives are highly contextualized, and they both call for an approach whereby there cannot be a separation between the researcher and

researched. The findings support Tudge's (2008) position that context is not the main explanatory variable in cultural-ecological theory, but rather "…the complex interconnections among individual, interpersonal, and contextual aspects of development" (p. 73). Therefore, cultural-ecological theory presents a framework for researching the everyday activities of individuals within their social and physical environments.

The findings from this study also provide an alternative image of childhood that is not based on the Western European-heritage image that is dominant in early childhood education discourse. This suggests that there is a diversity of childhoods, with varying routines, responsibilities, forms of play, and means and goals of child development. The findings suggest that whether or not childhood is theorized through a deterministic or constructivist model, children live in a world that is structured by adults and therefore, it is the responsibility of adults to ensure that their needs and rights are met. Furthermore, the ways in which children are viewed within a cultural context have an effect on how child participation is conceptualized and put into practice. The resulting implication is that researchers must acknowledge how culture shapes the view of children as competent social actors that is central to the new sociology of childhood.

Lastly, this study proposes that play can be explored as a global assemblage, whereby global elements intersect with localities to transform culture. Play and child development have been examined from diverse fields of academic study and given the complexity of contemporary childhoods there is a need for the application of interdisciplinary approaches. The concept of global

assemblages complements a cultural-ecological framework through a connection to culture and history. For example, Tudge (2008) emphasizes the centrality of culture and history in child development, particularly from a Vygotskian view. Tudge explains that "in the process of historical development, social man [*sic*] changes the methods and devices of his [*sic*] behavior, transforms natural instincts and functions, and develops and creates new forms of behavior – specifically cultural" (Vygotsky, 1931/1997b, p. 18, as cited in Tudge, 2008, p. 64). Therefore, it is important to investigate how global forces have, and currently are, shaping historical development, and in turn, how new forms of cultural behaviour, such as play, emerge.

Methodological implications. Drawing from the work of Roopnarine and Johnson (1994) and Göncü, Jain, and Tuermer (2007) this study explored the use of a cultural-ecological framework for describing and increasing understanding of children's play in a low-income and non-Western community. The study supports the view of Göncü et al. that children's play is best conceptualized as a form of cultural expression and builds upon their cultural model for describing children's play by integrating the child's context into the overall model. Therefore, the model put forth from this study includes a sociocultural-historical perspective, which includes examining how adults view, talk about, and engage children in play. It also extends beyond adult observations and interviews to explore how children talk about their play and play space. It is a dialectical approach to a cultural-ecological framework, which recognizes that children are simultaneously influenced by, and exert influence on, culture and its forms of expression.

Correspondingly, this study shows that photography may be used effectively to involve children in research about their play and play space. However, this experience also revealed that photography is not a cure-all solution for enhancing child participation in research and there are many considerations that should be taken into account. There were many factors affecting what children took photographs of (i.e. influence of friends and availability of space), how they talked about their photographs (i.e. saying what they think we "wanted" to hear), and the meaning attached to the images (i.e. recognizing that a photograph is a snapshot of a specific time and space that is always changing). Therefore, it is important that photography is used in addition to other methods to create a richer context of understanding. Furthermore, the children's photographs and their related captions or stories should be presented independently, with researchers being transparent with their own analyses and interpretations.

Lastly, this study provides an example of how ethnographic strategies, such as spending an extended time in the research setting, creating thick description of the context, on-going participant-observation, and building strong rapport with cultural gatekeepers, are integral to a community-based AR approach. This research study was a lived cross-cultural experience, meaning I needed to be particularly mindful of my actions and how they may have been viewed by the community. It required me to strive for a moral ethic that went beyond the approval of a research ethics board to accept the responsibility of authentic engagement, not only while in Thailand, but also through the re-presentation of the research experience and the dissemination of the results.

Therefore, from a methodological standpoint, this study highlights the importance of: establishing clear motivations and expectations from the start of the research collaboration; the goals of reciprocity and giving back through the research process; and the acknowledgement of the privilege that it is to enter into a research relationship with people who will inspire and teach you about a particular cultural phenomenon in this world that we all share.

AR in a Cross-Cultural Context: Reflections Over One Year Later

Looking back on this research experience I consider myself fortunate to have participated in this collaboration with FCD. From the outset, it was more than a study; it was also a life experience. There were certainly times when the process seemed overwhelming because not only was I attempting to complete research for a dissertation and meet the specified requirements for a doctoral degree, but I was also trying give back and contribute to FCD's work in the Duangkae community. Allowing the research process to slowly unfold in an iterative manner, or through the AR spiral, created uncertainty, which was also unsettling for fear of not having 'sufficient' data. As an outside researcher this at times resulted in feelings of helplessness and even a sense of guilt; however, I held to the belief that a reciprocal relationship could be achieved and that even by sharing FCD's work, greater awareness of the situation of children in Thailand and the importance of the child's right to play could be achieved. This required a commitment to putting the process of a sound AR methodology first, rather than being driven to produce any specific outcomes. Conducting research in a cross-

cultural context resulted in a number of unique challenges including the language barrier, contextual understanding, and the unforeseen situation of political unrest.

First, while I had a working knowledge of the Thai language, communication was sometimes challenging. It took patience to gain the clearest understanding possible because meaning is mediated through the intricacies of language.

> *It is going to be a real challenge to work with young children, and to have the language barrier. What have I gotten myself into? I'm trying to remind myself that AR is not purist. I am here and willing. I will do my best to try to bring the children's stories to light, but I can't help but wonder if I can do this as an outsider?* (S. Truong, field notes, December 5, 2009).

I wrote this short reflection in my fieldnotes in the early stages of the study, and while there were certainly times in the following months when I was frustrated with myself for not being able to communicate or understand something clearly, there were also different ways that I was able to navigate the language barrier, such as through having a translator present for research sessions, clarifying meaning and understanding with FCD staff members in Thai and English, not basing my understanding on any one particular conversation or comment, but allowing a bigger picture to develop over time, and of course asking questions and discussing my interpretations with my colleagues. I am deeply grateful for their patience.

It was also vital that I worked closely with the two translators who assisted me throughout this study. This involved ensuring that they had a solid

understanding of the study, FCD, and the Duangkae community prior to the research sessions. It was also important to provide training for the translators in preparation for the activity-based research methods, such as the photography sessions, because in these situations they also took on an active role as a facilitator and had increased engagement with participants. Lastly, it was important for FCD staff members to be comfortable with the translators; therefore, after an initial meeting and interview, I invited the translators to meet with FCD staff members at the Duangkae Centre. Based upon their approval, I then asked the translators to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to the research sessions.

It was indeed a challenge to conduct research in Thailand without being a native Thai speaker; however, it is important to note that I did enter into the research process with a high level of proficiency through formal and informal language instruction. Otherwise, I believe this study, the level of collaboration achieved, and the strength of my relationships with participants would not be the same as they are today.

Second and corresponding with language, contextual understanding was central to engaging in this cross-cultural research. As an action researcher I believe that cross-cultural research must involve a process of global citizenship education, whereby researchers must be open to expanding their worldview and recognizing that there are many ways of knowing and being in this world. Cross-cultural research, and in particular community-based AR that involves immersion in the field, will have elements of ethnographic methodology in that the

researcher creates a cultural portrait. Therefore, rather than over-generalizing culture or writing from a positivist realist ethnographic viewpoint, I think that cross-cultural action researchers must understand, recognize, and identify both emic and etic views. Creswell (2007) explains that emic is a term that refers to the views of participants, whereas etic refers to the researcher's own personal views. In this study, a cultural-ecological framework was used to build a sociocultural-historical understanding of the local context. Through this contextualized approach and immersion in the field, I believe that I was able to generate a deeper understanding of the emic views shared by participants in this study. Furthermore, throughout this dissertation, I have endeavoured to clearly situate my voice within the text, in order to allow the reader to identify my own personal views and interpretations in relation to the voices of the participants.

I believe that my personal experiences and background contributed to gaining a deeper understanding of participants' emic views. I certainly acknowledge my subject position as a Canadian male doctoral student; however, being born in Southeast Asia, being raised in a first-generation refugee immigrant home, and experiencing a childhood vastly different than that of my parents provided me with an entry point into understanding the local context of the study. While the sociocultural-historical context of my background was different, there were also similarities that resonated with me, such as being a child 'in-between' cultures (see Dachyshyn and Kirova, 2008), and having parents who made difficult decisions to leave the familiar in order to meet the needs of their children and give them opportunities for a different life. These personal experiences shape

my own worldview and consequently influence the questions I am interested in as a researcher, the ways in which I choose to carry out research, and how I build a picture of what is happening.

Lastly, conducting this international cross-cultural research involved accepting and navigating many variables that were beyond my control. For example, while I was living in Bangkok conducting this study there were major political protests across the country. This resulted in a state of emergency being declared by the government in a number of provinces, including the capital city of Bangkok. The major rallies and incidences of unrest or violence took place from March 12 – May 19, 2010. The unstable situation had both direct and indirect effects on the community and the study. There was military and police presence throughout the city, public transportation was unpredictable, certain areas of the city were inaccessible or unsafe for travel, and at times there was a nighttime curfew throughout Bangkok. While I did not personally feel uncomfortable to be in Thailand during this time, I did make adjustments to my daily routines and was required to coordinate a contingency plan with my supervisor and faculty.

The unforeseen situation also required FCD to re-schedule the IPA Global Consultation on the Child's Right to Play, as well as find a new venue since the event was going to be held at a building located at one of the major intersections where protesters were based. This also involved making alternative plans for the children's photo exhibition. Fortunately, in the end we were able to hold the event. While some potential delegates did not come to Bangkok as a result of the unrest, many from various provinces still attended. Additionally, at that point it

was safe for the children to travel to attend and participate in the event as well. The situation opened up many opportunities for discussion and also contributed to my learning about Thailand's social, cultural, and political context. I am thankful that no one from FCD or the Duangkae community was injured during the unrest; my thoughts are with those who lost someone during this time.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings from this study have helped to identify a number of potential areas for future research in the field of play. In this section I outline my key recommendations with regards to future possibilities for research with FCD, for the study of play in Thailand, and lastly, for the broader field of play and culture studies.

Future research with FCD. In many ways, this AR study was exploratory in nature. It was important to bound the study in time and activity so that the collaboration could have a specific end-point; however, the experience also revealed many avenues for future research that could extend from this initial AR study. FCD expressed an interest in specifically examining the impact or benefit of play for the children in the Duangkae community; therefore, future researchers may want to explore this concept with the children. Another approach could also be to engage older children and youth who attended the centre when they were younger. These retrospective accounts could provide insight into how they reflect on their experiences and how they interpret the impact the centre had on their lives. A narrative approach may be appropriate in this context, as it is a form of inquiry that focuses on individual stories. Creswell (2007) explains that as

a method, narrative research examines the lived experience through the expression of stories. “Narrative research is best for capturing the detailed stories or life experiences of a single life or the lives of a small number of individuals” (p. 55); therefore, it could be used to generate a deep and contextualized understanding of children’s experiences in the Duangkae community or at the Duangkae Centre.

Another major theme that was identified in this study was the emergence and growing popularity of videogame rooms, both within the Duangkae community and across Thailand in general. This is an example of the influence of technology on play and its potential implications, including children’s physical activity levels, social environments, relationships with natural spaces, use of free time, and exposure to modern media messaging, to name a few. Using a dialectical approach within a cultural-ecological framework, as Tudge (2008) suggests, may provide insight into how children are influenced by culture, as well as influence cultural change. Within this context, that could involve talking with children about their attitudes and motivations toward playing videogames or spending time in the videogame rooms.

Another topic of research that emerged was the development of a model for play as an entry-point to community development. During the course of our research, FCD re-established connection with the Duangkae Community Committee. The meeting set in motion a plan of action for increased collaboration between FCD and the committee to help address the various challenges facing children and families in the community. An AR study could help to facilitate this

process locally, while also contributing to the body of literature examining how play (or more broadly sport, recreation, and play) can be used to strengthen local community capacity. There is growing interest to examine these processes both at the local level, as well as within the context of achieving international development goals related to child health and wellbeing.

Future research could also explore the play experiences of the different groups of children that FCD works with. FCD currently works with non-Thai children of migrant workers, children in rural villages, children living in low-income congested communities, and most recently, children in the three southernmost provinces in Thailand. In all of these situations play is used to support child development; however, it is also used as a means of strengthening communities. For example, their newly established office in the far south operates in a context of unrest and instability. Therefore, there is a need to consider the implications and effects of focusing on play within this setting.

Lastly, it is important to acknowledge that FCD staff members and I entered into this research collaboration with a shared assumption that play can have a positive impact on children's lives and as such should be promoted and protected as a right. However, there are certainly instances within a play context where children may not benefit from play or may not have positive feelings towards their play experiences. For example, throughout the course of this study I also observed conflicts arise between children, bullying, teasing, and children being excluded from joining in with other children's play. Therefore, it would be

interesting to conduct a critical analysis of play and explore the conditions and situations when children may not view play in a positive manner.

All of these potential research topics represent first and foremost the real challenges that FCD strives to address on a daily basis. As such, it is important to acknowledge that their first priority is to respond by taking action. Therefore, AR is an appropriate approach to take, particularly when collaborating with nongovernmental or community-based organizations. AR is rooted in the local context and centred on finding solutions to local problems (Stringer, 2007). Furthermore, it also draws on local knowledge, experiences, and expertise in order to respond to these issues. Therefore, while AR may be more time consuming than other approaches, it is a methodology that allows the researcher to engage responsibly, grounded in the realities of participants' everyday lives.

Future research for the study of play in Thailand. This research experience provided me with the opportunity to travel to different regions of Thailand and to observe the many ways in which play is being mainstreamed into the work of early childhood learning centres, schools, and nongovernmental organizations. A piece of feedback that was often shared was that there is a need for more information on the implementation of play into teaching strategies and curriculum. This presents a research opportunity to examine the earlier work of Thai scholars, such as Amornvivat et al. (1990) and Khemmani (1994), to develop approaches and curriculum for play and child development within a Thai context. Based on the findings from this study postmodernism may be used as a genre of theory to deconstruct the dominant discourse of early childhood education and

perhaps reconstruct a more culturally appropriate approach. Within this integrative approach it is important to consider how certain tenets, such as child-centered, play-based instruction have been privileged in early childhood education discourse, which may result in a colonizing effect on classrooms all around the world (Cannella, 1997). Therefore, there is also a need for voices of resistance to help inform culturally diverse pedagogy and practice, and to contribute to the body of literature supporting the move towards postmodern and neocolonial childhood studies.

Additionally, as various children's movements continue to emerge, there is an opportunity for research that closely examines the notion of child participation. This research could focus on how child participation is being conceptualized and implemented by different stakeholders in the field of child services. In particular, as research that engages with child participation in Thailand increases, there will be a larger body of literature that may increase understanding of how childhood, as a social construction, is viewed in a Thai context. Correspondingly, this would help to inform how the view of children as competent social actors may be influenced by cultural factors and thus, may be similar or different than those proposed by scholars, such as James, Jenks, and Prout (1998), amongst others.

Future research for the study of play and culture. There is a need to continue developing participatory and participant-friendly methods for carrying out research with children. Detailed accounts of the creation and implementation of innovative and activity-based methods will contribute to a diverse repertoire of

methods that researchers can experiment with, and tailor to their specific settings. The findings from this study suggest that participatory photography and auto-driven photo-elicitation are methods that may be used effectively to learn about children's play preferences and space. However, researchers employing the use of photography may also consider additional ways of deepening children's engagement in the creation of visual data. For example, researchers can ask children to edit or manipulate their photographs using digital editing software to see how this may enhance children's meaning-making process. Moreover, researchers may also explore the role of the lived body in meaningful understanding, such as Kirova and Emme (2009) propose. Their use of *fotonovela* provides a method whereby children can enact their lived experiences by creating poly-media text. This visual text consists of children's photographs of a lived experience that are accompanied by thought balloons, which give insight into what they were thinking or feeling. This process "…creates a space for a new relationship between the visual and the linguistic…" (p. 74), and situates children at the centre of inquiry into their own lived experiences.

Secondly, while applying a gender analysis to children's play was outside the scope of this study, the findings suggest the need to understand how gender norms, roles, and socialization may affect children's play opportunities and choices. For example, Amornvivat et al. (1990) found that girls and boys in rural Thailand played differently, based on certain cultural values and gender-based expectations. A feminist theoretical framework may be used in future research to

increase understanding of how gender affects the cultural construction of children's play. In particular, Frisby, Maguire, and Reid (2009) argue:

> the danger of not drawing on existing feminist theories in action research in deductive ways is that some of the sources and consequences of gender inequalities may be overlooked, misunderstood, or difficult to name because of entrenched power hierarchies within a community (p. 16).

Therefore, feminist theories can be used as tools to illuminate the diverse experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, and how issues of power and inequality, for example, may influence their play.

Lastly, the findings from this research suggest that a cultural-ecological framework presents researchers interested in the study of play and culture with a unique approach to inquiry. This approach responds to the three critiques identified by Göncü et al. (2007), who argued that previous experimental research removed children from their natural environment, treated low-income and non-Western as separate variables from other factors, and focused almost exclusively on particular forms of play. Therefore, future studies using a cultural-ecological framework to describe children's play will contribute to a growing body of literature that contextualizes and perhaps reconceptualizes childhood and play. This will add to current understandings of play as a culturally structured activity.

Conclusion

The seeds of this AR dissertation began to take root in late 2007 with my first visit with FCD at the Duangkae Centre. It is nearly five years later as I sit

down to write these closing words. Reflecting back on my time with FCD I realize that it was a year ago, to the day, that I was in Thailand presenting the photo exhibition with the children from the Duangkae community. The memory brings a smile to my face and I know that I am privileged to have had this research experience. I have remained in contact with my colleagues at FCD, which has allowed me to continue to learn from them. It has also been an important reminder that their work continues. They, like many other grassroots, community-based, or nongovernmental organizations, carry on with the task of creating the everyday conditions for children to grow and thrive. It is both humbling and inspiring.

Throughout this dissertation I have endeavoured to share my experience of exploring the cultural construction of play with FCD. This journey also gave me a glimpse into the lives of the children at the Duangkae Centre, and into the spaces and places of their play. In my writing, I attempted to tell many stories, allowing the diverse voices of those participating in the study to create a multi-layered text. I acknowledge that many interpretations were made through the lenses that inform my worldview; however, my hope is that by situating my voice within the text, I was able to assemble a narrative that shares the rich learning that was generated through this research collaboration.

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Appendices

Appendix A:

Notification of Ethics Approval

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Notification of Ethics Approval

Study ID:	Pro00010203
Study Title:	Action Research Dissertation
Study Investigator:	Son Truong
Funding/Sponsor (free text):	The study is being funded by the supervisor's research funds.
Funding/Sponsor (validated):	There are no items to display
Approval Expiry Date:	November 12, 2010

I have received your application for research ethics review and conclude that your proposed research meet the University of Alberta standards for research involving human participants (GFC Policy Section 66). On behalf of the Physical Education and Recreation, Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences and Native Studies Research Ethics Board (PER-ALES-NS REB), I am providing **research ethics approval** for your proposed research.

The research ethics approval is valid for one year and will expire on November 12, 2010.

A renewal report must be submitted prior to the expiry of this approval if your study still requires ethics approval at that time. If you do not renew before the renewal expiry date, you will have to re-submit an ethics application. If there are changes to the project that need to be reviewed, please file an amendment. If any adverse effects to human participants are encountered in your research, please contact the undersigned immediately.

Sincerely,

Kelvin Jones, Acting Chair
Physical Education and Recreation (PER), Agricultural Life & Environmental Sciences (ALES) and Native Studies (NS)

Note: This correspondence includes an electronic signature (validation and approval via an online system).

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Notification Re-approval

Date:	September 16, 2010
Principal Investigator:	Son Truong
Renewal ID:	Pro00010203_REN1
Study ID:	Pro00010203
Study Title:	"Play for Life": A photojournal action research project of children's play in Bangkok, Thailand
Approval Expiry Date:	November 11, 2011

Thank you for returning the request for re-approval of this study. We have reviewed the file on this project for which all documentation is currently up-to-date, and conclude that the proposed research meets the University of Alberta standards for research involving human participants (GFC Policy Section 66). On behalf of the Physical Education and Recreation, Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences and Native Studies Research Ethics Board (PER-ALES-NS REB), I am providing a re-approval for the study referenced above.

The expiration date for this approval is noted above. A renewal report or closure report must be submitted next year prior to the expiry of this approval. You will receive electronic reminders at 45, 30, 15 and 1 day(s) prior to the expiry date. If you do not renew on or before that date, you will have to submit a new ethics application.

If there are changes to the project that need to be reviewed, please file an amendment. If any adverse effects to human participants are encountered in your research, please contact the undersigned immediately.

Sincerely,

Kelvin Jones, Ph.D.
Chair, Physical Education and Recreation (PER), Agricultural Life & Environmental Sciences (ALES) and Native Studies (NS)

Note: This correspondence includes an electronic signature (validation and approval via an online system).

Appendix B:

Information Letters

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Information Letter "A" (available in English and Thai)
[Letter for Foundation for Child Development]

Research Project Title:
"Play for Life": A photojournal action research project of children's play in Bangkok, Thailand

Investigator:
Son Truong, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
University of Alberta
1.780.492.2679 (in Canada) / 08.7701.9744 (in Thailand)
son.truong@ualberta.ca

Purpose of the Project and Background Information:
I am a PhD student at the University of Alberta in Canada. I would like to work with the Foundation for Child Development to learn more about children's play in Thailand. I think this study is important because there are many studies about children's play in some cultures, but not others. The first goal of this research is to learn more about play in your Thai community. The second goal is to learn about how we can maybe work together to improve play opportunities for children.

I am asking your permission to volunteer for approximately six months at the Foundation for Child Development's play centre in Bangkok. During this time I would also like to invite approximately 8 to 10 children at the play centre to join a photography club. The children can be between the ages of 4 to 18. I will ask children for their verbal permission. For all children under the age of 18 I will also ask their parent or caregiver to give permission. The purpose of the club is to ask children to tell their stories about play using digital photography. Children will be asked to take pictures of their play activities when they are at the Foundation for Child Development. I will also ask children to talk about their pictures. I will organize the photography club to meet 4 or 5 times. The total time for the club will be around 10 hours.

I would also like to invite staff members, the children's parents or caretakers, and other people who work with children to share their ideas about children's play. Children may participate even if their parents or caregivers do not. Parents or caregivers can also participate even if their children do not. Their total time of participation should not be more than 2 ½ hours. The meetings can be individual or in a group setting. I will explain the purpose of this project to each person with a letter or verbally. Each person will be asked to give permission verbally. I will have a translator with me during our meetings.

During this project I may take notes and photographs to keep a record of what I am learning. At the end of the study I will prepare a presentation about the research. I will also ask participants to provide feedback. I will use the information and photographs to write a final paper for my doctoral degree. The findings may be published as a paper and presented at conferences. I will also write a final report of the research for the Foundation for Child Development.

Possible Benefits:

Participation in this study will give you an opportunity to share your ideas about children's play. This may be helpful for other organizations that promote play for child development. Participation may help your organization to think about possible change or new ideas for how play can be used to meet children's needs in your community.

Possible Risks:

There are no known risks to participating in this project. It is possible that participants could feel uncomfortable talking about certain topics during conversations or interviews. Participants do not have to answer any questions that make them feel uncomfortable. You will be notified if I learn about any other risks during the study.

Confidentiality and Data Storage:

If you do not want to use the name of your organization a made-up name will be used. All information from this study will be coded so that participants will not be personally identified in any future publications or presentations. Data will be stored in a locked cabinet to which only the investigators will have access. The data will be stored in the same way when I return to the University of Alberta. When the study is completed, the data will be safely stored for a minimum of 5 years. After 5 years the data will be stored indefinitely and may be used in future research projects related to this topic.

I will also ask all participants if photographs can be taken of them and used for the research. These photographs may be included in research publications and presentations. Real names will not be attached to the images in any photographs. Children can request to be named as photographers.

Freedom to Withdraw:

Your organization's participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may end your participation in the study at any time. You do not need to give a reason and there will not be any consequence. To withdraw, please tell me verbally or in writing that you wish to end your participation. You may also request for your information to be removed from the study.

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Consent Form and Additional Contact Information:

Please feel free to ask me any questions about the study. If you agree to participate, I will ask you to provide verbal consent. This means I will ask if you understand the study and give permission to participate.

If you have any questions about this study, you may contact Dr. Kelvin Jones at the University of Alberta, at 1.780.492.0650. Dr. Jones is the Chair of the Faculty Research Ethics Board and has no direct involvement with this project.

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Information Letter "B" (available in English and Thai)
[Letter for Adults]

Research Project Title:
"Play for Life": A photojournal action research project of children's play in Bangkok, Thailand

Investigator:
Son Truong, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
University of Alberta
1.780.492.2679 (in Canada) / 08.7701.9744 (in Thailand)
son.truong@ualberta.ca

Purpose of the Project and Background Information:
I am a PhD student at the University of Alberta in Canada. I am cooperating with the Foundation for Child Development in Bangkok to learn more about children's play in Thailand. I think this study is important because there are many studies about children's play in some cultures, but not others. The first goal of this research is to learn more about play in your Thai community. The second goal is to think about how this information can help the Foundation for Child Development improve play opportunities for children.

This research project will take place over approximately six months at the Foundation for Child Development's play centre in Bangkok. During this time I will invite approximately 8 to 10 children at the play centre to join a photography club. The children can be between the ages of 4 to 18. I will ask children for their verbal permission. For all children under the age of 18 I will also ask their parent or caregiver to give permission. The purpose of the club is to ask children to tell their stories about play using digital photography. Children will be asked to take pictures of their play activities when they are at the Foundation for Child Development. I will also ask children to talk about their pictures. I will organize the photography club to meet 4 or 5 times. The total time for the club will be around 10 hours.

I would also like to invite staff members, the children's parents or caretakers, and other people who work with children to share their ideas about children's play. The interview can be individual or in a group setting. The interview may last anywhere from 30 minutes to 1½ hours. You may also be asked for a second interview. Your total time of participation should not be more than 2 ½ hours. I can meet with you at a time and location that is convenient for you. I will have a translator with me during our meetings. With your permission, our interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed (written out word for word). I may also take notes during the interview to help me remember what was said. Children may

participate even if their parents or caregivers do not. Parents or caregivers can also participate even if their children do not.

During this project I may take notes and photographs to keep a record of what I am learning.
At the end of the study I will prepare a presentation about the research. I will also ask participants to provide feedback. I will use the information and photographs to write a final paper for my doctoral degree. The findings may be published as a paper and presented at conferences. I will also write a final report of the research for the Foundation for Child Development.

Possible Benefits:
Participation in this study will give you an opportunity to share your ideas about children's play. This may be helpful for other organizations that promote play for child development. Participation may help the Foundation for Child Development to think about possible change or new ideas for how play can be used to meet children's needs in the community.

Possible Risks:
There are no known risks to participating in this project. It is possible that you could feel uncomfortable talking about certain topics during conversations or interviews. You do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. You will be notified if I learn about any other risks during the study.

Confidentiality and Data Storage:
A made-up name will be used for all participants. All information from this study will be coded so that you will not be personally identified in any future publications or presentations. Data will be stored in a locked cabinet to which only the investigators will have access. The data will be stored in the same way when I return to the University of Alberta. When the study is completed, the data will be safely stored for a minimum of 5 years. After 5 years the data will be stored indefinitely and may be used in future research projects related to this topic.

I will also ask all participants if photographs can be taken of them and used for the research. These photographs may be included in research publications and presentations. Real names will not be attached to the images in any photographs. Children can request to be named as photographers.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Freedom to Withdraw:
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may end your participation in the study at any time. You do not need to give a reason and there will not be any consequence. To withdraw, please tell me verbally or in writing that you wish to end your participation. You may also request for your information to be removed from the study.

Consent Form and Additional Contact Information:
Please feel free to ask me any questions about the study. If you agree to participate, I will ask you to provide verbal consent. This means I will ask if you understand the study and give permission to participate.

If you have any questions about this study, you may contact Dr. Kelvin Jones at the University of Alberta, at 1.780.492.0650. Dr. Jones is the Chair of the Faculty Research Ethics Board and has no direct involvement with this project.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ

จดหมายชี้แจงรายละเอียด "ก" (ฉบับภาษาไทย)
[จดหมายถึงมูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็ก]

หัวข้อวิจัย
"เล่นเพื่อชีวิต":โครงการวิจัยด้วยการบันทึกภาพถ่ายการเล่นของเด็กในกรุงเทฯ ประเทศไทย

ผู้วิจัย
ซัน ตรอง นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก
คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ
มหาวิทยาลัยอัลเบอร์ต้า
1.780.492.2679 (ในประเทศแคนาดา) / 08.7701.9744 (ในประเทศไทย)
son.truong@ualberta.ca

<u>จุดมุ่งหมายและที่มาของการวิจัย</u>

ข้าพเจ้าเป็นนักศึกษาปริญญาเอก ของมหาวิทยาลัยอัลเบอร์ต้า ประเทศแคนาดา
และมีความสนใจอยากจะทำงานร่วมกับมูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็กเพื่อที่จะเรียนรู้ให้มากขึ้นเกี่ยวกับการเล่นของเด็กในประเทศไทย
ข้าพเจ้าคิดว่าการวิจัยครั้งนี้มีความสำคัญเพราะมีการศึกษาจำนวนมากเกี่ยวกับการเล่นของเด็กในบางวัฒนธรรม แต่ยังไม่ครอบคลุมทั้งหมด
จุดมุ่งหมายข้อแรกของการวิจัยครั้งนี้ คือ
เพื่อเรียนรู้ให้มากขึ้นเกี่ยวกับการเล่นในสังคมไทยของท่าน ข้อสอง คือ
เพื่อเรียนรู้เกี่ยวกับการทำอย่างไรที่เราจะสามารถทำงานร่วมกันในการปรับปรุงโอกาสในการเล่นของเด็ก

ข้าพเจ้าใคร่ขออนุญาตเป็นอาสาสมัครเป็นระยะเวลาประมาณ 6 เดือน ที่มูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็ก ที่ศูนย์การเล่น ในกรุงเทพฯ โดยในช่วงเวลาดังกล่าว
ข้าพเจ้าใคร่ขอเชิญชวนเด็กที่ศูนย์การเล่นประมาณ 8 ถึง 10 คน
เข้าร่วมกลุ่มถ่ายภาพ โดยจะขอเด็กที่มีอายุระหว่าง 4 ถึง 18 ปี
ทั้งนี้ข้าพเจ้าจะขอให้เด็กตอบรับความยินยอมด้วยวาจา
และสำหรับเด็กที่มีอายุต่ำกว่า 18 ปี
ข้าพเจ้าจะขอความยินยอมจากพ่อแม่หรือผู้ปกครองของเด็กด้วย
จุดมุ่งหมายของการพบเด็ก คือ
การขอให้เด็กเล่าเรื่องราวเกี่ยวการเล่นโดยการใช้ภาพถ่ายแบบดิจิตอล
เด็กจะถูกขอให้มีการถ่ายภาพกิจกรรมการเล่นเมื่ออยู่ที่มูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็ก
และข้าพเจ้าจะขอให้เด็กพูดคุยเกี่ยวกับภาพถ่ายของตนเอง ในการนี้
ข้าพเจ้าจะมีการถ่ายภาพและพูดคุยกับเด็ก 4 ถึง 5 ครั้ง
และใช้เวลาโดยรวมประมาณ 10 ชั่วโมง

นอกจากนี้ ข้าพเจ้าใคร่ขอเชิญชวนผู้ควบคุม
พ่อแม่หรือผู้ปกครองของเด็ก และบุคคลอื่น ๆ ที่ทำงานกับเด็ก
ร่วมเสนอความคิดเกี่ยวกับการเล่นของเด็ก ทั้งนี้เด็กอาจเข้าร่วม
แม้ว่าพ่อแม่หรือผู้ปกครองไม่ได้เข้าร่วม เช่นเดียวกัน
พ่อแม่หรือผู้ปกครองสามารถเข้าร่วม แม้ว่าเด็กไม่ได้เข้าร่วม
และเวลาโดยรวมของการเข้าร่วมจะไม่มากกว่า 2 ½ ชั่วโมง

โดยการพบสามารถพบเป็นรายบุคคลหรือเป็นกลุ่มก็ได้
และข้าพเจ้าจะอธิบายจุดมุ่งหมายของการวิจัยครั้งนี้แก่ผู้เข้าร่วมทุกคนด้วยตัวหนังสือหรือคำพูด และแต่ละคนจะได้รับการร้องขอความยินยอมด้วยคำพูด
โดยข้าพเจ้าจะมีล่ามแปลภาษาอยู่ด้วยขณะที่มีการพบกัน

ขณะดำเนินการวิจัยครั้งนี้
ข้าพเจ้าอาจมีการจดบันทึกและถ่ายภาพเพื่อเก็บข้อมูลสิ่งที่ข้าพเจ้ากำลังเรียนรู้
เมื่อสิ้นสุดการวิจัย ข้าพเจ้าจะมีการเตรียมการนำเสนอการวิจัย
และจะขอให้ผู้เข้าร่วมได้มีการให้ข้อมูลย้อนกลับ
โดยข้าพเจ้าจะใช้ข้อมูลและภาพถ่ายในการเขียนรายงานวิจัยฉบับสมบูรณ์เพื่อการได้รับปริญญาเอก
และผลการวิจัยอาจจะมีการตีพิมพ์และนำเสนอในงานการประชุมสัมมนา
นอกจากนั้น
ข้าพเจ้าจะเขียนรายงานวิจัยฉบับสมบูรณ์ให้กับมูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็กด้วย

<u>ประโยชน์ที่คาดว่าจะได้รับ</u>

ผู้เข้าร่วมในการวิจัยครั้งนี้จะมีโอกาสได้นำเสนอความคิดเกี่ยวกับการเล่นของเด็ก ซึ่งอาจจะเป็นประโยชน์สำหรับองค์กรอื่น ๆ
ที่ส่งเสริมการเล่นเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็ก
การเข้าร่วมอาจจะช่วยให้องค์กรของท่านเกิดความคิดเกี่ยวกับการเปลี่ยนแปลงหรือแนวคิดใหม่ ๆ
สำหรับการใช้การเล่นให้ตรงกับความต้องการของเด็กในสังคมของท่าน

<u>ความเสี่ยง</u>

เท่าที่ข้าพเจ้าทราบ ไม่มีความเสี่ยงใด ๆ ในการเข้าร่วมการวิจัยครั้งนี้
อย่างไรก็ตาม
อาจเป็นไปได้ที่ผู้เข้าร่วมอาจรู้สึกอึดอัดใจในการพูดคุยในหัวข้อขณะที่สนทนาหรือสัมภาษณ์
แต่ผู้เข้าร่วมไม่มีความจำเป็นที่จะต้องตอบคำถามที่ทำให้เกิดความรู้สึกไม่สบายใจ และถ้าข้าพเจ้าทราบเกี่ยวกับความเสี่ยงอื่น ๆ ขณะที่ทำวิจัย
ท่านจะได้รับการแจ้งให้ทราบ

<u>ความลับและการเก็บรักษาข้อมูล</u>

ข้าพเจ้าจะใช้ชื่อสมมติถ้าท่านไม่ต้องการให้ใช้ชื่อองค์กรของท่าน
และข้อมูลทั้งหมดจากการศึกษาครั้งนี้จะถูกแทนที่ด้วยรหัส
เพื่อที่ผู้เข้าร่วมจะได้ไม่ถูกระบุชื่อตัวตนในการตีพิมพ์หรือการนำเสนอในอนาคต
และข้อมูลจะถูกเก็บรักษาในตู้ใส่กุญแจที่มีเพียงผู้วิจัยเท่านั้นที่สามารถเปิดดูได้
ข้อมูลจะถูกเก็บรักษาด้วยวิธีการเดียวกันเมื่อข้าพเจ้ากลับไปที่มหาวิทยาลัยอัลเบอร์ต้า และเมื่อการศึกษาเสร็จสมบูรณ์
ข้อมูลจะถูกเก็บรักษาไว้ในที่ปลอดภัยอย่างน้อย 5 ปี และหลังจาก 5 ปี
ข้อมูลจะถูกเก็บรักษาต่อไปและอาจถูกใช้ในการวิจัยในอนาคตที่สัมพันธ์กับการวิจัยในครั้งนี้

นอกจากนี้ ข้าพเจ้าจะสอบถามผู้เข้าร่วมทุกคน
ว่ายินยอมให้มีการถ่ายภาพและให้ใช้สำหรับการวิจัยหรือไม่
และภาพถ่ายเหล่านั้นอาจถูกประกอบอยู่ในการตีพิมพ์และการนำเสนองานวิจัย
แต่ชื่อที่แท้จริงจะไม่มีการปรากฏอยู่ในภาพถ่าย
และเด็กสามารถร้องขอให้ใส่ชื่อในฐานะผู้ถ่ายภาพ

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ

<u>อิสระในการถอนตัว</u>

การเข้าร่วมการวิจัยขององค์กรของท่านในครั้งนี้เป็นการอาสาสมัครอย่างแท้จริง ท่านอาจจะเลิกการเข้าร่วมในการวิจัยเมื่อใดก็ได้ และไม่จำเป็นที่จะต้องให้เหตุผลและจะไม่มีขั้นตอนใด ๆ ทั้งสิ้น ในการถอนตัว กรุณาบอกข้าพเจ้าด้วยวาจาหรือข้อความว่าท่านต้องการที่จะหยุดการเข้าร่วม และท่านอาจร้องขอให้ลบข้อมูลของท่านออกจากการวิจัยได้

<u>การตอบรับและข้อมูลการติดต่อเพิ่มเติม</u>

กรุณาสบายใจที่จะสอบถามข้าพเจ้าเกี่ยวกับการวิจัย ถ้าท่านตกลงที่จะเข้าร่วม ข้าพเจ้าจะขอให้ท่านตอบรับด้วยวาจา ซึ่งหมายถึง ข้าพเจ้าจะถามว่าท่านเข้าใจการวิจัยและให้ความยินยอมที่จะเข้าร่วม

ถ้าท่านมีคำถามเกี่ยวกับการวิจัยครั้งนี้ ท่านอาจติดต่อ ดร.เคลวิน โจนส์ ที่มหาวิทยาลัยอัลเบอร์ต้า ที่เบอร์โทรศัพท์ 1.780.492.0650 ดร.โจนส์ เป็นประธานคณะกรรมการจริยธรรมในการวิจัยของคณะ และไม่มีส่วนเกี่ยวข้องโดยตรงกับการวิจัยครั้งนี้

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ

จดหมายชี้แจงรายละเอียด “ข” (ฉบับภาษาไทย)
[จดหมายถึงผู้ใหญ่]

หัวข้อวิจัย
“เล่นเพื่อชีวิต”:โครงการวิจัยด้วยการบันทึกภาพถ่ายการเล่นของเด็กในกรุงเทพฯ ประเทศไทย

ผู้วิจัย
ซัน ตรอง นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก
คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ
มหาวิทยาลัยอัลเบอร์ต้า
1.780.492.2679 (ใน แคนาดา) / 08.7701.9744 (ในประเทศไทย)
son.truong@ualberta.ca

<u>จุดมุ่งหมายและที่มาของการวิจัย</u>

ข้าพเจ้าเป็นนักศึกษาปริญญาเอก ของมหาวิทยาลัยอัลเบอร์ต้า ประเทศแคนาดา
ข้าพเจ้ากำลังทำงานร่วมกับมูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็กในกรุงเทพฯ
เพื่อที่จะเรียนรู้ให้มากขึ้นเกี่ยวกับการเล่นของเด็กในประเทศไทย
ข้าพเจ้าคิดว่าการศึกษาครั้งนี้มีความสำคัญเพราะมีการศึกษาจำนวนมากเกี่ยวกับการเล่นของเด็กในบางวัฒนธรรม แต่ยังไม่ครอบคลุมทั้งหมด
จุดมุ่งหมายข้อแรกของการวิจัยครั้งนี้ คือ
เพื่อเรียนรู้ให้มากขึ้นเกี่ยวกับการเล่นในสังคมไทยของท่าน ข้อสอง คือ
เพื่อเกิดแนวคิดเกี่ยวกับการทำอย่างไรที่ข้อมูลจากการวิจัยครั้งนี้จะสามารถช่วยมูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็กปรับปรุงโอกาสในการเล่นของเด็ก

โครงการวิจัยครั้งนี้จะใช้เวลาประมาณ 6 เดือน
ที่มูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็ก ที่ศูนย์การเล่น ในกรุงเทพฯ ในช่วงเวลาดังกล่าว
ข้าพเจ้าจะเชิญชวนเด็กที่ศูนย์การเล่นประมาณ 8 ถึง 10 คน
เข้าร่วมกลุ่มถ่ายภาพ โดยจะขอเด็กที่มีอายุระหว่าง 4 ถึง 18 ปี
ทั้งนี้ข้าพเจ้าจะขอให้เด็กตอบรับความยินยอมด้วยวาจา
และสำหรับเด็กที่มีอายุต่ำกว่า 18 ปี
ข้าพเจ้าจะขอความยินยอมจากพ่อแม่หรือผู้ปกครองของเด็กด้วย
จุดมุ่งหมายของการพบเด็ก คือ
การขอให้เด็กเล่าเรื่องราวเกี่ยวการเล่นด้วยการใช้ภาพถ่ายแบบดิจิตอล
เด็กจะถูกขอให้มีการถ่ายภาพกิจกรรมการเล่นเมื่ออยู่ที่มูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็ก
และข้าพเจ้าจะขอให้เด็กพูดคุยเกี่ยวกับภาพถ่ายของพวกเขา ในการนี้
ข้าพเจ้าจะมีการถ่ายภาพและพูดคุยกับเด็ก 4 ถึง 5 ครั้ง
และใช้เวลาโดยรวมประมาณ 10 ชั่วโมง

นอกจากนั้น ข้าพเจ้าใคร่ขอเชิญชวนผู้ควบคุม
พ่อแม่หรือผู้ปกครองของเด็ก และบุคคล อื่น ๆ ที่ทำงานกับเด็ก
ร่วมเสนอความคิดเกี่ยวกับการเล่นของเด็ก
การสัมภาษณ์สามารถเป็นรายบุคคลหรือเป็นกลุ่มก็ได้
และการสัมภาษณ์อาจใช้เวลาระหว่าง 30 นาที ถึง 1 ½ ชั่วโมง
ท่านอาจถูกร้องขอสำหรับการสัมภาษณ์ครั้งที่สอง
และเวลาโดยรวมของการเข้าร่วมจะไม่มากกว่า 2 ½ ชั่วโมง

ข้าพเจ้าสามารถไปพบท่านในสถานทีและเวลาที่ท่านมีความสะดวกสบาย
โดยข้าพเจ้าจะมีล่ามแปลภาษาอยู่ด้วยขณะที่มีการพบกัน ถ้าท่านยินยอม
การสัมภาษณ์ของเราจะถูกบันทึกเสียงและแปล (ด้วยการเขียนคำต่อคำ)
และข้าพเจ้าอาจจะมีการจดบันทึกขณะที่มีการสัมภาษณ์เพื่อช่วยให้ข้าพเจ้าจด
จำสิ่งที่เราพูดคุยกันได้ ทั้งนี้เด็กอาจเข้าร่วม
แม้ว่าพ่อแม่หรือผู้ปกครองไม่ได้เข้าร่วม เช่นเดียวกัน
พ่อแม่หรือผู้ปกครองสามารถเข้าร่วม แม้ว่าเด็กไม่ได้เข้าร่วม

ขณะดำเนินการวิจัยครั้งนี้
ข้าพเจ้าอาจมีการจดบันทึกและถ่ายภาพเพื่อเก็บข้อมูลสิ่งที่ข้าพเจ้ากำลังเรียนรู้
เมื่อสิ้นสุดการวิจัย ข้าพเจ้าจะมีการเตรียมการนำเสนอการวิจัย
และจะขอให้ผู้เข้าร่วมได้มีการให้ข้อมูลย้อนกลับ
โดยข้าพเจ้าจะใช้ข้อมูลและภาพถ่ายในการเขียนรายงานวิจัยฉบับสมบูรณ์เพื่อกา
รได้รับปริญญาเอก
และผลการวิจัยอาจจะมีการตีพิมพ์และนำเสนอในงานการประชุมสัมมนา
นอกจากนั้น
ข้าพเจ้าจะเขียนรายงานวิจัยฉบับสมบูรณ์ให้กับมูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็กด้วย

<u>ประโยชน์ที่คาดว่าจะได้รับ</u>

ผู้เข้าร่วมในการวิจัยครั้งนี้จะมีโอกาสได้นำเสนอความคิดเกี่ยวกับการเล่น
ของเด็ก ซึ่งอาจจะเป็นประโยชน์สำหรับองค์กรอื่น ๆ
ที่ส่งเสริมการเล่นเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็ก
การเข้าร่วมอาจจะช่วยให้มูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็กเกิดความคิดเกี่ยวกับการเปลี่ย
นแปลงหรือแนวคิดใหม่ ๆ
สำหรับการใช้การเล่นให้ตรงกับความต้องการของเด็กในสังคมของท่าน

<u>ความเสี่ยง</u>

เท่าที่ข้าพเจ้าทราบ ไม่มีความเสี่ยงใด ๆ ในการเข้าร่วมการวิจัยครั้งนี้
อย่างไรก็ตาม
อาจเป็นไปได้ที่ท่านอาจรู้สึกอึดอัดใจในการพูดคุยในหัวข้อขณะที่สนทนาหรือสั
มภาษณ์
แต่ท่านไม่มีความจำเป็นที่จะต้องตอบคำถามที่ทำให้เกิดความรู้สึกไม่สบายใจ
และถ้าข้าพเจ้าทราบเกี่ยวกับความเสียงอื่น ๆ ขณะที่ทำวิจัย
ท่านจะได้รับการแจ้งให้ทราบ

<u>ความลับและการเก็บรักษาข้อมูล</u>

ข้าพเจ้าจะใช้ชื่อสมมติแทนชื่อผู้เข้าร่วมทุกคน
และข้อมูลทั้งหมดจากการศึกษาครั้งนี้จะถูกแทนที่ด้วยรหัส
เพื่อที่ท่านจะได้ไม่ถูกระบุชื่อตัวตนในการตีพิมพ์หรือการนำเสนอในอนาคต
และข้อมูลจะถูกเก็บรักษาในตู้ใส่กุญแจที่มีเพียงผู้วิจัยเท่านั้นที่สามารถเปิดดูได้
ข้อมูลจะถูกเก็บรักษาด้วยวิธีการเดียวกันเมื่อข้าพเจ้ากลับไปที่มหาวิทยาลัยอัลเ
บอร์ต้า และเมื่อการศึกษาเสร็จสมบูรณ์
ข้อมูลจะถูกเก็บรักษาไว้ในที่ปลอดภัยอย่างน้อย 5 ปี และหลังจาก 5 ปี
ข้อมูลจะถูกเก็บรักษาต่อไปและอาจถูกใช้ในการวิจัยในอนาคตที่สัมพันธ์กับการวิ
จัยในครั้งนี้

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ

นอกจากนี้ ข้าพเจ้าจะสอบถามผู้เข้าร่วมทุกคน
ว่ายินยอมให้มีการถ่ายภาพและให้ใช้สำหรับการวิจัยหรือไม่
และภาพถ่ายเหล่านั้นอาจถูกประกอบอยู่ในการตีพิมพ์และการนำเสนองานวิจัย
แต่ชื่อที่แท้จริงจะไม่มีการปรากฏอยู่ในภาพถ่าย
และเด็กสามารถร้องขอให้ใส่ชื่อในฐานะผู้ถ่ายภาพ

อิสระในการถอนตัว

การเข้าร่วมการวิจัยของท่านในครั้งนี้เป็นการอาสาสมัครอย่างแท้จริง
ท่านอาจจะเลิกการเข้าร่วมในการวิจัยเมื่อใดก็ได้
และไม่จำเป็นที่จะต้องให้เหตุผลและจะไม่มีขั้นตอนใด ๆ ทั้งสิ้น ในการถอนตัว
กรุณาบอกข้าพเจ้าด้วยวาจาหรือข้อความว่าท่านต้องการที่จะหยุดการเข้าร่วม
และท่านอาจร้องขอให้ลบข้อมูลของท่านออกจากการวิจัยได้

การตอบรับและข้อมูลการติดต่อเพิ่มเติม

กรุณาสบายใจที่จะสอบถามข้าพเจ้าเกี่ยวกับการวิจัย
ถ้าท่านตกลงที่จะเข้าร่วม ข้าพเจ้าจะขอให้ท่านตอบรับด้วยวาจา ซึ่งหมายถึง
ข้าพเจ้าจะถามว่าท่านเข้าใจการวิจัยและให้ความยินยอมที่จะเข้าร่วม

ถ้าท่านมีคำถามเกี่ยวกับการวิจัยครั้งนี้ ท่านอาจติดต่อ ดร.เคลวิน โจนส์
ที่มหาวิทยาลัยอัลเบอร์ต้า ที่เบอร์โทรศัพท์ 1.780.492.0650 ดร.โจนส์
เป็นประธานคณะกรรมการจริยธรรมในการวิจัยของคณะ
และไม่มีส่วนเกี่ยวข้องโดยตรงกับการวิจัยครั้งนี้

Appendix C:

Consent Forms

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

CONSENT FORM "A" (available in English and Thai)
[Form for Foundation for Child Development]

Title of Project:
"Play for Life": A photojournal action research project of children's play in Bangkok, Thailand

Investigator:
Son Truong, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
University of Alberta
1.780.492.2679 (in Canada) / 08.7701.9744 (in Thailand)
son.truong@ualberta.ca

To be answered by a representative of the Foundation for Child Development.

1. Do you understand that your organization has been asked to be in a research study?
Yes No

2. Have you read and received a copy of the attached information letter?
Yes No

3. Do you understand the entire content of the information letter?
Yes No

4. Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?
Yes No

5. Do you agree for the organization to be identified by name in this study?
Yes No

6. Do you give permission for the investigator to be a participant observer and for observations to be included in this study?
Yes No

7. Do you give permission for the investigator to take photographs that may be used for the research project if permission is sought from individuals whose images appear in the pictures?
Yes No

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Do you agree for the Foundation for Child Development to take part in this study?

_____	_____
Name	*Date*

I believe that the person giving verbal consent understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

_____	_____
Signature of Investigator	*Date*

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

CONSENT FORM "B" (available in English and Thai)
[Form for Adults]

Title of Project:
"Play for Life": A photojournal action research project of children's play in Bangkok, Thailand

Investigator:
Son Truong, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
University of Alberta
1.780.492.2679 (in Canada) / 08.7701.9744 (in Thailand)
son.truong@ualberta.ca

To be answered verbally by adult participants.

2. Do you understand that you have been asked to be in a research study?
   Yes No

2. Have you read and received a copy of the attached information letter?
   Yes No

3. Do you understand the entire content of the information letter?
   Yes No

4. Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?
   Yes No

Do you agree to take part in this study?

_____ _____
Name *Date*

I believe that the person giving verbal consent understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

_____ _____
Signature of Investigator *Date*

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

CONSENT FORM "C" (available in English and Thai)
[Form for Parents/Caregivers and their Children]

Title of Project:
"Play for Life": A photojournal action research project of children's play in Bangkok, Thailand

Investigator:
Son Truong, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
University of Alberta
1.780.492.2679 (in Canada) / 08.7701.9744 (in Thailand)
son.truong@ualberta.ca

To be answered verbally by parents/caregivers of child participants.

3. Do you understand that your child has been asked to be in a research study?
Yes No

2. Have you and your child read and received a copy of the attached information letter?
Yes No

3. Do you and your child understand the entire content of the information letter?
Yes No

4. Have you and your child had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?
Yes No

5. Do you give permission for the investigator to make observations of your child while he or she is at the Foundation for Child Development to use for this study?
Yes No

[Parent/Caregiver Verbal Consent]

Do you, _____ give permission for your child, _____ to take part in this study?

and

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

[Child Verbal Assent]
Do you, _____agree to take part in this study?

I believe that the person giving verbal consent understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily gives permission for his or her child to participate.

_____ _____
Signature of Investigator *Date*

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

CONSENT FORM "D" (available in English and Thai)
[Permission to take photographs]

Title of Project:
"Play for Life": A photojournal action research project of children's play in Bangkok, Thailand

Investigator:
Son Truong, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
University of Alberta
1.780.492.2679 (in Canada) / 08.7701.9744 (in Thailand)
son.truong@ualberta.ca

To be answered verbally by adult participants and/or parents/caregivers and child participants.

1. Do you understand that the investigator is asking to take photographs of you and discuss them for the purpose of this research?
   Yes No

2. Do you understand that the investigator is asking to take photographs of your child and discuss them for the purpose of this research?
   Yes No

3. Do you give permission for the investigator to use these photographs for a doctoral dissertation, publications and presentations if made-up names are used?
   Yes No

4. [Child Verbal Assent]

Do you, _____ agree to be photographed for this project?

Yes No

Person(s) to be photographed:_____ _____
Printed Name *Printed Name*

Name of person giving verbal consent: _____
Printed Name

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

I believe that the person providing verbal consent understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participation.

_____	_____
Signature of Investigator	*Date*

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

CONSENT FORM "E" (available in English and Thai)
[Parent/Caregiver permission to use child's photography]

Title of Project:
"Play for Life": A photojournal action research project of children's play in Bangkok, Thailand

Investigator:
Son Truong, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
University of Alberta
780.492.2679 (in Canada) / 08.7701.9744 (in Thailand)
son.truong@ualberta.ca

To be answered verbally by parents/caregivers of child participants.

1. Do you understand that the investigator is asking to use your child's photography for the purpose of research?
Yes No

2. Do you give permission for the investigator to use these photographs for a doctoral dissertation, publications and presentations if made-up names are used?
Yes No

3. Upon your child's request, do you give permission for his or her name to be included as the photographer of an image?
Yes No

4. [Child Verbal Consent]
Do you, _____ give permission to use your photographs for this project?
Yes No

Name of person giving verbal consent: _____
Printed Name

Name of child participant: _____
Printed Name

I believe that the person giving verbal consent understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participation.

_____ _____
Signature of Investigator *Date*

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ

แบบฟอร์มให้คำอนุญาต "ก" (ฉบับภาษาไทย)
[แบบฟอร์มสำหรับมูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็ก]

หัวข้อวิจัย
"เล่นเพื่อชีวิต": โครงการวิจัยด้วยการบันทึกภาพถ่ายการเล่นของเด็กในกรุงเทพฯ ประเทศไทย

ผู้วิจัย
ซัน ตรอง นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก
คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ
มหาวิทยาลัยอัลเบอร์ต้า
1.780.492.2679 (ในประเทศแคนาดา) / 08.7701.9744 (ในประเทศไทย)
son.truong@ualberta.ca

ให้คำตอบโดยตัวแทนของมูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็ก

1. ท่านเข้าใจว่าองค์กรของท่านได้ถูกร้องขอให้เข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัย

ใช่ ไม่

2. ท่านได้อ่านและได้รับจดหมายชี้แจงรายละเอียด

ใช่ ไม่

3. ท่านเข้าใจเนื้อหาทั้งหมดที่อธิบายไว้ในจดหมายชี้แจงรายละเอียด

ใช่ ไม่

4. ท่านได้มีโอกาสถามคำถามและสนทนาเกี่ยวกับการศึกษาครั้งนี้

ใช่ ไม่

5. ท่านยินยอมที่จะให้องค์กรของท่านถูกระบุชื่อในการศึกษาครั้งนี้

ใช่ ไม่

6. ท่านยินยอมให้ผู้วิจัยเข้าร่วมเป็นผู้สังเกตการณ์ และยินยอมให้นำผลการสังเกตการณ์ไปใช้ในการศึกษาครั้งนี้

ใช่ ไม่

7. ท่านยินยอมให้ผู้วิจัยมีการถ่ายภาพซึ่งอาจนำไปใช้ในการวิจัย ถ้าผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัยแต่ละบุคคลที่มีภาพปรากฏอยู่ในภาพถ่ายให้การยินยอม

ใช่ ไม่

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ

ท่านตกลงที่จะให้มูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็กเข้ามีส่วนร่วมในการศึกษาครั้งนี้

_____ _____

ชื่อ วันที่

ข้าพเจ้าเชื่อว่าบุคคลที่ให้คำอนุญาตด้วยวาจาเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับการเข้าร่วมการวิจัยและตกลงที่จะเป็นอาสาสมัครเข้าร่วม

_____ _____

ลายเซ็นของผู้วิจัย วันที่

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ

แบบฟอร์มให้คำอนุญาต "ข" (ฉบับภาษาไทย)
[แบบฟอร์มสำหรับผู้ใหญ่**]**

หัวข้อวิจัย
"เล่นเพื่อชีวิต": โครงการวิจัยด้วยการบันทึกภาพถ่ายการเล่นของเด็กในกรุงเทพฯ ประเทศไทย

ผู้วิจัย
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son.truong@ualberta.ca

ให้คำตอบด้วยวาจาโดยผู้ใหญ่

1. ท่านเข้าใจว่าท่านได้ถูกร้องขอให้เข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัย **ใช่** **ไม่**
2. ท่านได้รับและได้อ่านจดหมายชี้แจงรายละเอียด **ใช่** **ไม่**
3. ท่านเข้าใจเนื้อหาทั้งหมดที่อธิบายไว้ในจดหมายชี้แจงรายละเอียด **ใช่** **ไม่**
4. ท่านได้มีโอกาสถามคำถามและสนทนาเกี่ยวกับการศึกษาครั้งนี้ **ใช่** **ไม่**

ท่านตกลงที่จะเข้าร่วมในการศึกษาครั้งนี้

_____ _____
ชื่อ **วันที่**

ข้าพเจ้าเชื่อว่าบุคคลที่ให้คำอนุญาตด้วยวาจาเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับการเข้าร่วมการวิจัยและตกลงที่จะเป็นอาสาสมัครเข้าร่วม

_____ _____
ลายเซ็นของผู้วิจัย **วันที่**

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ

แบบฟอร์มให้คำอนุญาต "ค" (ฉบับภาษาไทย)
[แบบฟอร์มสำหรับพ่อแม่ ผู้ปกครอง และบุตร**]**

หัวข้อวิจัย
"เล่นเพื่อชีวิต": โครงการวิจัยด้วยการบันทึกภาพถ่ายการเล่นของเด็กในกรุงเทพฯ ประเทศไทย

ผู้วิจัย
ซัน ตรอง นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก
คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ
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son.truong@ualberta.ca

ให้คำตอบด้วยวาจาโดยพ่อแม่ ผู้ปกครอง ของบุตรที่เข้าร่วม

4. ท่านเข้าใจว่าบุตรของท่านได้ถูกร้องขอให้เข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัย

2. ท่านและบุตรของท่านได้รับและได้อ่านจดหมายชี้แจงรายละเอียด

3. ท่านและบุตรของท่านเข้าใจเนื้อหาทั้งหมดที่อธิบายไว้ใน จดหมายชี้แจงรายละเอียด

4. ท่านและบุตรของท่านได้มีโอกาสถามคำถามและสนทนาเกี่ยวกับการศึกษาครั้งนี้

5. ท่านยินยอมให้ผู้วิจัยทำการสังเกตการณ์บุตรของท่านขณะที่บุตรของท่านอยู่ที่มูลนิธิเพื่อการพัฒนาเด็ก

[คำอนุญาตด้วยวาจาของพ่อแม่ ผู้ปกครอง]
ข้าพเจ้า _____ ยินยอมให้บุตรของข้าพเจ้าชื่อ _____
เข้ามีส่วนร่วมในการศึกษาครั้งนี้

และ

[คำตกลงด้วยวาจาของเด็ก]
ข้าพเจ้า _____
ตกลงที่จะเข้ามีส่วนร่วมในการศึกษาครั้งนี้

ข้าพเจ้าเชื่อว่าบุคคลที่ให้คำอนุญาตด้วยวาจาเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับการเข้าร่วมการวิจัยและยินยอมให้บุตรเป็นอาสาสมัครเข้าร่วม

_____ _____
ลายเซ็นของผู้วิจัย วันที่

คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ

แบบฟอร์มให้คำอนุญาต "ง" (ฉบับภาษาไทย)
[ยินยอมให้ถ่ายภาพ]

หัวข้อวิจัย
"เล่นเพื่อชีวิต": โครงการวิจัยด้วยการบันทึกภาพถ่ายการเล่นของเด็กในกรุงเทพฯ ประเทศไทย

ผู้วิจัย
ซัน ตรอง นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก
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มหาวิทยาลัยอัลเบอร์ต้า
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son.truong@ualberta.ca

ให้คำตอบด้วยวาจาโดยผู้ใหญ่ และหรือพ่อแม่ ผู้ปกครอง และเด็กที่เข้าร่วม

4. ท่านเข้าใจว่าผู้วิจัยกำลังจะขอถ่ายภาพของท่านและใช้ภาพถ่ายดังกล่าวในการสนทนาเพื่อจุดมุ่งหมายของการวิจัยในครั้งนี้

5. ท่านเข้าใจว่าผู้วิจัยกำลังจะขอถ่ายภาพบุตรของท่านและใช้ภาพถ่ายดังกล่าวในการสนทนาเพื่อจุดมุ่งหมายของการวิจัยในครั้งนี้

6. ท่านให้ความยินยอมแก่ผู้วิจัยในการใช้ภาพถ่ายเหล่านั้นสำหรับปริญญานิพนธ์ปริญญาเอก การตีพิมพ์ และการนำเสนอ ถ้ามีการใช้ชื่อสมมติ

4. [คำตกลงด้วยวาจาของเด็ก]
ข้าพเจ้า _____ ตกลงที่จะให้มีการถ่ายภาพในโครงการวิจัยครั้งนี้

บุคคลที่ยินยอมให้มีการถ่ายภาพ_____ _____
ตัวพิมพ์ *ตัวพิมพ์*

ชื่อของบุคคลที่ให้คำตกลงด้วยวาจา _____
ตัวพิมพ์

ข้าพเจ้าเชื่อว่าบุคคลที่ให้คำอนุญาตด้วยวาจาเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับการเข้าร่วมการวิจัยและตกลงที่จะเป็นอาสาสมัครเข้าร่วม

_____ _____
ลายเซ็นของผู้วิจัย วันที่

คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ

แบบฟอร์มให้คำอนุญาต "จ" (ฉบับภาษาไทย)
[พ่อแม่ ผู้ปกครองยินยอมให้ใช้ภาพถ่ายของบุตร]

หัวข้อวิจัย
"เล่นเพื่อชีวิต": โครงการวิจัยด้วยการบันทึกภาพถ่ายการเล่นของเด็กในกรุงเทพฯ ประเทศไทย

ผู้วิจัย
ซัน ตรอง นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก
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ให้คำตอบด้วยวาจาโดยพ่อแม่ ผู้ปกครองของบุตรที่เข้าร่วม

1. ท่านเข้าใจว่าผู้วิจัยกำลังจะขอใช้ภาพถ่ายบุตรของท่าน เพื่อจุดมุ่งหมายของการวิจัย

2. ท่านให้ความยินยอมแก่ผู้วิจัยในการใช้ภาพถ่ายเหล่านั้นสำหรับปริญญานิพนธ์ปริญญาเอก การตีพิมพ์ และการนำเสนอ ถ้ามีการใช้ชื่อสมมติ

3. ถ้าบุตรของท่านเรียกร้อง ท่านจะยินยอมให้ชื่อของบุตรท่านปรากฏอยู่บนภาพถ่ายในฐานะผู้ถ่ายภาพ

4. [คำตกลงด้วยวาจาของเด็ก]
ข้าพเจ้า _____ ยินยอมให้ใช้ภาพถ่ายของข้าพเจ้าสำหรับโครงการวิจัยนี้

ชื่อของบุคคลที่ให้คำตกลงด้วยวาจา _____
ตัวพิมพ์

ชื่อของเด็กที่เข้าร่วม _____
ตัวพิมพ์

ข้าพเจ้าเชื่อว่าบุคคลที่ให้คำอนุญาตด้วยวาจาเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับการเข้าร่วมการวิจัยและตกลงที่จะเป็นอาสาสมัครเข้าร่วม

_____ _____
ลายเซ็นของผู้วิจัย วันที่

Appendix D:

Confidentiality Agreement

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT (available in English and Thai)

Title of Project:
"Play for Life": A photojournal action research project of children's play in Bangkok, Thailand

Investigator:
Son Truong, PhD Candidate
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
University of Alberta
1.780.492.2679 (in Canada) / 08.7701.9744 (in Thailand)
son.truong@ualberta.ca

I, _____, the _____ agree to:
Print Name *Specify Role*

1. keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the *Investigator(s)*.

2. keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while it is in my possession.

3. return all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the *Investigator(s)* when I have completed the research tasks.

4. after consulting with the *Investigator(s)*, erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the *Investigator(s)*, (e.g., information stored on computer hard drive).

_____ _____
Signature *Date*

I believe that the person signing this form understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

_____ _____
Signature of Investigator *Date*

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ

ข้อตกลงที่จะปกปิดเป็นความลับ (ฉบับภาษาไทย)

หัวข้อวิจัย
"เล่นเพื่อชีวิต": โครงการวิจัยด้วยการบันทึกภาพถ่ายการเล่นของเด็กในกรุงเทพฯ ประเทศไทย

ผู้วิจัย
ซัน ตรอง นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก
คณะพลศึกษาและนันทนาการ
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son.truong@ualberta.ca

ข้าพเจ้า _____ตำแหน่ง _____ ตกลงที่จะ
ตัวพิมพ์ บทบาทหน้าที่

5. เก็บรักษาข้อมูลการวิจัยทั้งหมดที่ข้าพเจ้าทราบเป็นความลับ โดยไม่สนทนาหรือให้ข้อมูลวิจัยในแบบฟอร์มหรือรูปแบบใด ๆ (เช่น แผ่นดิสค์ เทป หรือเอกสาร) แก่บุคคลอื่น ๆ นอกเหนือจากผู้วิจัย (คณะ)

6. เก็บรักษาข้อมูลการวิจัยทั้งหมดในแบบฟอร์มหรือรูปแบบใด ๆ (เช่น แผ่นดิสค์ เทป หรือเอกสาร) ให้ปลอดภัย ขณะที่อยู่ในการครอบครองของข้าพเจ้า

7. ส่งคืนข้อมูลการวิจัยทั้งหมดในแบบฟอร์มหรือรูปแบบใด ๆ (เช่น แผ่นดิสค์ เทป หรือเอกสาร) แก่ผู้วิจัย (คณะ) เมื่อข้าพเจ้าได้หมดส่วนเกี่ยวข้องกับการวิจัย

8. หลังจากได้ปรึกษากับผู้วิจัย (คณะ) ข้าพเจ้าจะลบหรือทำลายข้อมูลการวิจัยทั้งหมดในแบบฟอร์มหรือรูปแบบใด ๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้องกับโครงการวิจัยครั้งนี้ ที่ไม่สามารถส่งคืนให้กับผู้วิจัย (คณะ) ได้ (เช่น ข้อมูลที่เก็บรักษาไว้ในโปรแกรมคอมพิวเตอร์)

_____ _____
ลายเซ็น วันที่

ข้าพเจ้าเชื่อว่าบุคคลที่ลงนามในเอกสารนี้เข้าใจเกี่ยวกับการเข้าร่วมการวิจัยและตกลงที่จะเป็นอาสาสมัครเข้าร่วม

_____ _____
ลายเซ็นของผู้วิจัย วันที่