The importance of looking at someone looking through a pirates telescope
- Reflections on the making of knowledge from empirical data

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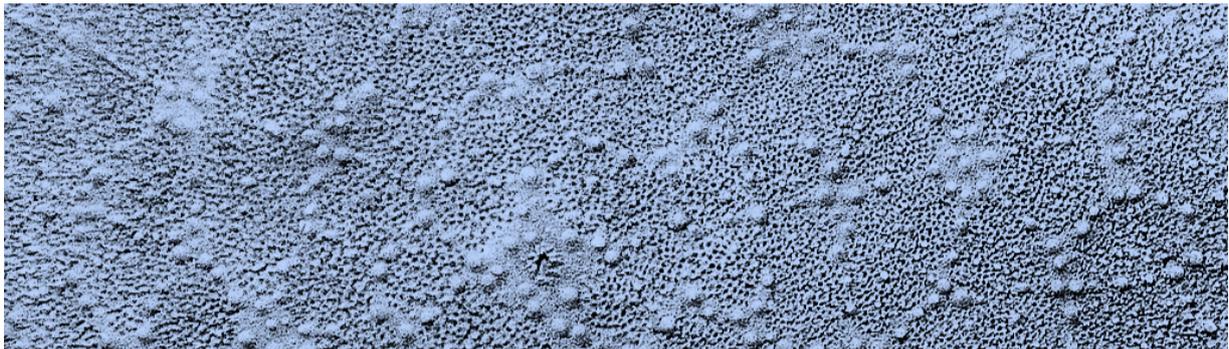
Abstract: This article will address methodological issues concerning the making of knowledge. Drawing on a recent case study from an early childhood educational setting, I will give detailed descriptions of the process of video analysis including the process of transcription and the uses of logs. An aspiration is to create transparency by displaying an analytical process as dynamic, and show how theoretical positions and the researcher her/himself is intertwined in the construction of the empirical base, and thereby in the construction of knowledge. A meta-case is made, and will thereby serve as an example of epistemological reflexivity; how a process of analysis gives certain views and certain truths. To put it in a narrative idiom, this article contains a researcher's learning story about the importance of looking at someone looking through a pirate's telescope, to put it in words indicating a meta perspective on a case study called *Captain Andreas and his Crew* (Ødegaard 2006a, 2007). The article will also, on the basis of a creation of a meta-case, contribute to rethinking truths of children's meaning-making, gender- and identity-work; boys using swords for battles, as the mention of pirates indicates. The article will problematize whether boys using swords for play battles necessarily can be seen as gendering stereotype masculinity.

Keywords: Reflexivity, narrative analysis

Introduction

This article will address methodological issues concerning the making of knowledge; what are the relationships between the researcher's elaborative analytic work and the ethnographic empirical base, and how does that effect new insights into, for example, children's meaning-making and identity work?

Drawing on a recent case study from an early childhood educational setting, I will give detailed descriptions of the process of video analysis including the process of transcription and the uses narratives of logs. By creating a meta-case, the aspiration is to produce transparency by displaying an analytical process as dynamic, and show how theoretical positions and the researcher her/himself is intertwined in the construction of the empirical base, and thereby in the construction of knowledge.

This meta-case will thereby serve as an example of epistemological reflexivity; how a process of analysis yields certain views and truths. There are at least two types of reflexivity; personal and epistemological. Personal reflexivity refers to how a person's values, beliefs, acquaintances and interests influence research, while epistemological reflexivity attempts to identify conditions for knowledge, as Bourdieu formulates it (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). To put it in a narrative idiom as the author of this particular article formulates it, this piece of writing contains a researcher's learning story about the importance of looking at someone looking through a pirate's telescope. Added to the reflexivity is the rethinking of truths of boys using swords for battles, as the mention of pirates indicates.

On the basis of constructing a meta-case, the contribution contains a rethinking of the truth that boys uses swords for battles in order to fight and to act out aggression, as the mention of pirates indicates. On the contrary, boys occupied with what is often reckoned as war play, such as playing with swords, is in fact just a part of the story. Pirate's telescopes became a detail that led to new views on boys' meaning-making and identity work. Pirates do not only act out aggression as in fighting with swords; they also look out across the ocean through telescopes, frightened of other pirates. This contribution is therefore in line with other researchers that trouble reliabilities; new insights on meaning- making and identity work came from working and experimenting with empirical data.

Studying studies under a magnifying glass

The need for such methodological reflections has been articulated and developed within ethnography for some time, since, for instance, a comment showed up in a footnote in the essay "Thick description" in the book *Writing culture* (Geertz, 1973a, pp. 19): "Self-consciousness about modes of representation (not to speak of experiments with them) has been very lacking in anthropology". In earlier ethnographic accounts, the context of the accounts and the material itself, the field notes etc., were to a large extent omitted from the research when published. Since the time when this criticism was formulated in a footnote, many contributions to methodological reflections have been made, (e.g. Atkinson, 2001; Atkinson & Delamont, 2008; Bae, 2005; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Czarniawska, 2004; Delamont, 2002; Delamont & Atkinson, 2004; Dyer & Wilkins, 1991; Etherington, 2004; Greig, Taylor, & MacKay, 2007; Gulløv & Højlund, 2003; James, 2001; Krüger, 1999; Spencer, 2001). *Writing culture* seems to represent a turning point, whether linguistic, interpretive or rhetorical, and has had a great impact on ethnographical accounts in recent decades. Spencer (2001) calls this book "an accident waiting to happen" since criticism of ethnographic essentialism accompanied feminist criticism: "The view from nowhere was in fact always a view from somewhere in particular.//" (Spencer, 2001, pp. 444)

Ethnographic design is an established approach within classroom studies/the studies of early years education in Scandinavia, which can be labelled pedagogical anthropology (Gulløv, Anderson, & Valentin, 2010). However, explicit references to the process of research, the empirical work on which practice and knowledge are based, have until now been insubstantial. A mapping of Scandinavian early childhood educational research for the years 2006-2008 shows that pedagogical ethnography is a popular design, but that a huge range of published articles within the early childhood field contained little information about analytic and methodological issues (Nordenbo & Moser, 2009).

Pedagogical research studies using ethnographic design can therefore be claimed to be problematic when it comes to the new insights they bring to the table. Researchers following narrative and descriptive writings will nevertheless argue that the narrative itself is the answer. This is an argument close to what Geertz called the interpretive success (Geertz, 1973). Such a success criterion was certainly present in the early ethnographic accounts by, for instance, Margaret Mead (1975) [1] and William F. Whyte (1993)[2]. Both wrote rich descriptions of everyday activities from the field and cultures they studied. The narratives were written coherently so it was easy for the reader to be convinced that the narrator/researcher had produced an authentic and trustworthy account. In these later editions mentioned above, both the ethnographers took up some critical issues raised by opponents about the lack of transparency and the criticism raised about the ethics of observing living people for later interpretive descriptions in subsequent years.

Within the early year's field, similar changes and post reflexivity can be observed in the authorship of the kindergarten teacher and researcher Vivian Gussin Paley. In her first auto-ethnographic accounts (e. g. (Paley, 1986a, 1986b, 1990), the methodological issues discussed are limited, even if the self-reflection, self-presentation and work in progress is always present. In her book *Kwanzaa and me - a teacher's story* (Paley, 1995), she is describing a process of self-reflection over practice in her own classroom, but this account foregrounds the critique raised towards her earlier narratives and her interpretation of what was going on and how to understand and learn from the children and her play-based curriculum and practice. Paley writes an auto-ethnographic account about the assistant confronting her with earlier writings and practice. So Paley, in line with Mead and Whyte, also responds to critique of earlier ethnographic research work in recent publications. By looking back with the insights from recent methodological discussions, they take up issues of reliability such as the impact of context, the accounts agenda, the author's/researcher's rationale for choices made, contact with people to establish a motive for participating, trustworthiness etc.

Even if such a post transparency gives insights and inspiration for new views, reliability issues concerning empirical analytic work are not elaborated as meta-cases in many pedagogical ethnographies within our field, even if both phenomenological as well as post-structural academic writings have elaborated self-reflexive analysis of the relationships between the researcher and the participants she meets in the field (Atkinson, 2001; Atkinson & Delamont, 2008; Cannella, 1997; Charmaz & Mitchell, 1997; Delamont, 2002; Hatch, 2007; Garvis, Ødegaard & Lemon, 2015). Rethinking the way we work analytically and studying examples can shed light on relationships between text and context, analytic work, transcription based on video analysis and field notes, the process of transcription and coding, and the researcher's understanding of this process; and, finally, on writing the account.

Academic texts that give accounts of research processes might inspire more researchers in the future to share innovative ways of working with empirical data and thereby to rethink and develop issues of methodology. There is therefore a sense of responsibility linked to reflexivity. Such writing shows recognition of complexities in research. Transparency will provide an openness for other

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[1] First published in 1930.
[2] First published in 1943.

researcher to look into (and thereby also to inspect and value) the often hidden processes, hidden because of expectations of writing a coherent narrative account. Narrative research that follows the model of Aristotle will make efforts to the sequential, chronological and completeness in narratives. This narrative model encourages cracks to be hidden from the writing. As the editors of a recent book in the series Studies in Narrative, *Beyond Narrative Coherence* (Hyvarinen, Hyden, & Saarenheimo, 2010) point out, meaning is made in a social context and the researcher is an agent that can strive to create coherence or decline coherence in the writing. Incoherent narratives, however, can present more challenging cases. This is in line with Jerome Bruner's distinction between scripts and narrative (Bruner, 1990) and his claim that it is "only when constituent beliefs in folk psychology are violated that narratives are constructed" (1990, pp. 40).

By first transcribing the narratives, then filling in verbal utterances and movements, in a continuous developing criss-crossed schema, the transcripts, and thereby the empirical base, were elaborated. The transcripts changed during the processes. It became obvious that I, as a researcher constructed the empirical base. Combining video recording with field notes made it possible to produce a richer and thereby also a more complex text. This process led to descriptions that can make us reconsider ways of looking of boys using toy weapons and artefacts connected with playing war and battle. The researcher using certain artefacts, here the developing of a schema for analysing data, thereby shaped conditions for knowledge outcome that challenge common ways of interpreting boys' meaning-making.

A socio-epistemological and narrative approach

The analytical approach is socio-epistemological, being cultural, narrative, dialogical, aesthetic and gendered (Bakhtin, 1986; Connell, 2005; Deleuze & Guattari, 2008; Krüger, 1999; Polkinghorne, 1988; Sawyer, 1997). This is not in accordance with the strong tradition in western culture of seeking the origins of meaning production in the individual person alone. By contrast, Bakthin claims that the word does not belong to an individual person, that the utterance is a meeting place for interplay and confrontation, and that the voices of earlier users lie within the utterance (Bakhtin 1986). Thus, language in use is not to be viewed as isolated actions; from Bakhtin's perspective, it is not possible to talk about a genuinely individual child's voice. Children in play and talk choose their words from those available to them, from those given (Sawyer, 1997). Words, images, modes and dynamics that are made available for children constitute conditions for their meaning-making. Such available forms or signs carry history and meanings from other places and from other times.

Boys and girls, as well as women and men, speak in a variety of voices, based on prior experience and social setting. Through social participation, meaning-making is to be understood as a process of constant negotiation and shifting. Such processes, like beginnings, initiatives, answers, improvisations and transformations, have aesthetic origins as pointed out by Deleuze & Guattari (2008[3]). For example, it is possible to assume that pirate games might be driven by affect, an aesthetic impulse Friedrich Schiller called "play drive" (Schiller, 2008)[4]. This drive to play can be considered to be a force, a movement between affect or senses and cognition. Play is unstable in the sense that themes and means of play easily transform. Also artefacts used, such as toys and items, can shift meaning in a second. Imaginary items become "real" using aesthetic means such as sounds and movements. Being a researcher trying to study such a moving construction must be considered challenging and calls into question the idea of catching or taking hold of a certain kind of reality in

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[3] First published in 1961.
[4] First published in 1794.

trying to develop new knowledge. Video recordings and transcriptions of narrative practice as detailed in this study is such an attempt.

Narrative analysis in the form of writing up and composing case studies as well as analysis of narratives provides an organizational framework for viewing complexities in human experience (Flyvbjerg, 2003; Gudmundsdóttir, 1992; D. Polkinghorne, 1995; Webster & Mertova, 2007). The concept of narrative refers to a form of connected discourse that creates a higher order of meaning (Polkinghorne, 1988). Co-narrative refers to the narrative result when several voices are involved in this discourse. Co-narration, for the purpose of this study, is considered a process of collaboration and negotiation, in which both adults and toddlers are engaged in text production; it can be seen as a speech genre (Bakhtin, 1986). Co-narration is a certain way of producing meaning in collaboration with young people or people with limited ability to talk in coherent narrative constructions.

Analytic perspectives

I had spent 9 months between August 2003 and May 2004, approximately 290 hours to and from in a group of nine children, one-to-three year olds and three adult women; a preschool teacher whom I will call Marit, and her two assistants, here called Frida and Birthe. I was a participant observer in a public kindergarten with 70 children, 1-5 years old. I was taking the role that the participants ascribed to me (Fangen, 2004; Geertz, 2000). The approach employed was ethnographic at its base; later I organized the empirical data as case studies, where selected co-narratives from my video log became crucial.

The aim of these observations was to give new insights into kindergarten as an arena for cultural formation. I had chosen to concentrate on studying narrative talk during mealtimes and play. I thought that such an approach would give empirical data on meaning-making processes and themes and, by this approach; I could give detailed descriptions and narrative knowing. Analysing transcripts from video recordings made it possible to analyse the narrative talk, searching for what was worth talking about, themes and narrative strategies, as well as compose a rich story.

In the following, I will describe the process of analysing a co-narrative that lasted for seven minutes and was video-recorded. Time is crucial in narratives, and in order to develop complex understanding of the issue of knowledge construction, I will draw on the context in which these seven minutes of co-narration occur, also taken down as ethnographic field notes and later organized as a coherent narrative. The description of the analytic process is also written as a narrative, so we are dealing here with layers of narratives that are connected. The following narrative fragments will be analysed as a *polyvocal text*; a text made through multiauthoring of texts, inspired by Czarniawska, (2004) and Sawyer, (1997).

Czarniawska suggests following prosess (p. 652):

- The mimesis (how does it look? A dimension that allows the listener to construct a virtual picture of the events)
- The chronicle (what is happening?)
- The emplotment (how to structure, put together the narrative elements?)

First the background mimesis is presented, a short reconstruction of how Andreas, a two-year-old boy, became an active participant in the co-construction of the curriculum in his preschool. Later comes the chronicle in a form of reconstruction of extracts from a seven-minute co-narrative. The work with emplotment will be elaborated and commented as sequences of the chronicle are displayed. The purpose is to point out the complex process of writing up a case study; there will be interrelations between the chronicle; what is written down as actually happening in a transcript, and the mimesis;

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what is written down in the transcript and how it is sketched out. Finally, the interrelation with the emplotment; what and how are the researcher sketching, taking narrative action and control in reconstructing a story to be communicated to the academic community. Let us first reconstruct the context and background for writing up the case of "Captain Andreas and his crew".

Result presentation - Mimesis from the process of producing field notes and video-recordings

One of the narratives became crucial for writing the case of "Captain Andreas and his Crew"[5]. This case illustrated how a two-year-old boy participated and influenced the preschool curriculum through continuous initiatives to dance, play and take the lead in narrative talk about pirates. At least this was my reconstruction and my narrative grip as I composed a case. The case was based on one of the narratives. It lasted for seven minutes and 69 turns made up the narrative process. When I was standing camera in hand, filming this meal, I intuitively realized that something important was evolving in front of me. Through the camera lens, I saw Andreas playing and talking about pirates and I recognized scenes from similar scenes of play. There is a dilemma in taking children's initiatives seriously, which means picking up on and supporting their initiatives, and the fact that such initiatives can be in opposition to ideas and beliefs as formulated in framework plans. Picking up children's inspirations from popular culture can for example violate national pedagogical ideas and aims about gender equity. The reason why many teachers do not include popular culture in their everyday curriculum in spite of the fact that children show great interest in them may be due to the fact that they disagree with the ideologies underlying this culture. Popular culture often carries a message of violence, racism or sexism (Dyson, 1997; Jensen, 2010; Marsh & Millard, 2000; Aasebø, 2005). In my field notes, I had written down descriptions and reflections about the boy Andreas and what I at that point believed to be seeing; he was acting out masculinity stereotypically.

Children's perspectives were here being conveyed through Andreas being allowed to introduce the pirate theme for his mates, thereby allowing him to pass on stereotypical masculine gender-making. Talking about pirates and playing pirate themes can be studied with gendering in scope, but was it stereotype gendering? In the process of analysing what he was actually saying and what he was actually doing, a critical event gradually evolved and challenged the gaze that earlier had been so obvious. Before I analyse, comment and reflect any further, let me give a short reconstruction of the narrative case presented as a coherent case study.

Mimesis - a short reconstruction
First illustration reconstructed from notes - August:
I noticed the boy I name Andreas already on my first visit to the preschool. He took hold of my hand and walked me to the photo collage of himself and his family, put up at the entrance hall among similar collages of every child in the group. He proudly pointed out a picture of himself in a Captain Sabre-tooth costume; a black captain's hat, a black coat with golden buttons and a pirate flag in one hand and a sword in the other. Andreas and his older brother had visited the captain's home base in an adventure park with their family during summer when Andreas was one year old. The photo in Andreas' collage, which he had pointed out to me, was taken at this summer event.

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[5] The case is commented upon in various ways in e.g. (Ødegaard, 2005a, 2005 b, 2006a, 2007, 2009, 2011a, 2011b)

Second illustration reconstructed from notes - September:
Andreas brought a Captain Sabre-tooth CD and a book to preschool and he introduced the popular pirate story to his toddler mates…//…His interest in the pirate theme was also expressed in his drawings. One of his drawings of the pirate ship is put on the wall today….//…I was told that Andreas has been to the cinema to see the cartoon movie based on this popular pirate story (Formoe, 2002; Formoe & Tønnesen, 2003).

Third illustration reconstructed from video logs - October:
Some of the children in Andreas' group - particularly the older boys, and occasionally one of the two girls in the group, are playing, listening to and dancing pirate themes day after day. They hold imaginary swords or telescopes in their hands, and are moving rhythmically in a circle with their toys in their hands.

Fourth illustration reconstructed from video logs - January:
In the bathroom, the bench was turned upside down with a little help from an adult and transformed into a pirate ship. With pillows and blankets they pretended that they were spending the night aboard the "ship". A little staircase made a lookout tower, and a paper roll served as a telescope. The play was characterized by the repetition of certain actions: lying down to sleep, climbing the lookout tower, searching the horizon for pirates and screaming with hoarse voices: "The pirates are coming!" Suddenly the sinks where transformed into another ship and were boarded. When the danger of the seamen falling down from the sink led the adults to put a stop to this, the pirates "re-boarded" their "bench ship".

Fifth illustration reconstructed from notes and video logs a few days later in January
Today is a "bake the bread yourself" day, and eight toddlers and three adults are sitting around the table enjoying their breakfast. I have positioned myself in the background with my two cameras, as usual. The adults are conversing about the recent staff Christmas party when suddenly Andreas (two years and eight months at the time) climbs up on his chair. Marit, the teacher, grips his hand and smoothly pulls him down into his seat again, asking him if there is something on the table he would like for breakfast. Frida, one of the two assistants, lifts her hand to her forehead as if shielding her eyes, sits up straight and, moving slowly, scans the other side of the table: *I can see…* It is perhaps her tone of voice, her movements mimicking a watching person, or her departure from her expected role - suddenly she has everyone's attention. Andreas copies Frida's movements and says: *I can see a pirate*! Frida follows this up: *A pirate?* Andreas points across the room and says intensely: *Yes, they're coming now!* Birthe, the other assistant, joins in, saying in a humorous voice: *You have to eat as fast as you can!* Andreas is waving his hands and shouting fearfully: *They're coming up!*
They climb! Birthe supports his fiction by saying: *Can you see him?* Frida explains:
They're walking the plank. Andreas waves his arms and pulls on something imaginary.
He looks serious and moans: *I through* (pause) *Sch, sch, sch* (pause) *No!* Then Sander,
who is also almost three, joins in: *The plank.* And Marit suggests: *I wonder if we should*
arrange a Captain Sabre-tooth party sometime. Andreas raises his hand eagerly: *Sabre-tooth*
party! Marit confirms: *Yes, should we? Do you think that would be fun?*

This was an early version of a rewrite from the transcript; the beginning of the co-narrative that ultimately lead to their planning of a pirate party. After the planning that happens in the continuing of this co-narrative, Marit wrote in the monthly documentation to the parents that they would make a change in the plans. She wrote: *Since the children show a great interest in the story of*

the pirate "Captain Sabre-tooth", we will arrange a pirate party and put our other plans on hold. Andreas a two-year old, had in fact influenced the teacher's change of curriculum.

These illustrations lead to a suggestion that repeated introduction of a particular theme in conversations and in play over a period of time can be a child's way of influencing everyday life in preschool. The descriptions of how "Captain" Andreas influenced what was going on in preschool every day, i.e. the pirate play becoming pervasive, comprise an illustration of the complexity and ambivalence for preschool teachers' praxis. This case also made it possible to raise questions about small boys making gender through playing with inspiration from popular culture with spinoff products like swords, pirate hats, black flags with skull motifs and so on aimed at small boys. Yet it was the discovering of how Andreas made use of a particular artefact, the telescope, that made a twist in how this author re-read the transcript and made yet another layer come into focus. I had not yet noticed his use of another artefact belonging to pirate games, the telescope. A small detail such as looking at Andreas looking through the telescope became crucial in the analysis. This artefact did not to same extent as the sword carry an ideologically obvious sign and the way he used it called therefore for new reflections. I had taken it for granted that playing pirates contained antihero play inspired by popular culture targeting young boys. Consequently I considered the ideology conveyed in the cultural formation processes such as doing stereotype masculinities. The relation between Andreas being a boy playing a pirate, the uses of swords and fights seemed so obvious to me.

A meta study – exploring a narrative
I struggled with how to write it up as a narrative case. What was happening? During the whole process, I was convinced that "role play" was central in what I was about to explore. I saw Andreas playing and talking and I had noticed the teachers' humorous tone in other settings. What was the case about? Was it a two year-old getting his voice heard? Or was it rather a story of how stereotypical masculinity was colonizing practice in an early years setting? Or it might be both; could I write up a case of teachers' dilemmas? The thread was followed up and eventually leads to articulating teachers dilemmas. Teachers who work in Norwegian kindergartens are given a complex mandate; to ensure children's influence on curriculum and at the same time bridge gaps and solve increasing societal and cultural challenges including working to strengthen gender equality; a mandate that can be perceived as contradictory or at least as a demanding dilemma (Ødegaard, 2007, 2010, 2012).

I decided to trust the intuition that what I found interesting could be worth a new approach even if these threads were small details in a huge empirical material. At first I ignored it though, because I was not especially interested in pirates and I was opposed to the stereotypical story that was made in the "Hollywood genre" inspired by Disney's productions. This attitude to the themes made me reluctant. In this huge material consisting of 102 co-narratives, video logs and a notebook full of filed notes, there were so many analytical possibilities, so why not do a recognized content analysis or a thematic analysis of all the 102 co-narratives? This struggle and the maintaining a belief that research should bring interesting data to the table led me to read more about case study analysis. This methodological approach made me realize that what I was trying to avoid could be interesting, and worth trying to explore (Abbott, 1992; Dyer & Wilkins, 1991; Eisenhardt, 1989; Ely, 1991; Flyvbjerg, 2003; Palmenfelt, 2000; Platt, 1988). According to Yin, the essence of a case study research strategy is to: *investigate a contemporary phenomenon within real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident* (Yin, 2003, pp 13).

What I learnt from these case study theories was that it was me, the researcher that is the composer and that searching for bits of interest could be worthwhile. This cognition made me

ambivalent; on the one hand, I had the reassurance that I had to trust my own intuition and decide what kind of story track to go for. In the first attempt to write, I therefore included the transcriptions in my own subjective narrative; from the perspective of the researcher. It was written as a close-up; this was what I believed to see. I had written a personal narrative with literary qualities. On the other hand, I felt that I had so many threads and so much empirical data and still more available time to experiment. Would the ethnographic description be any different by taking a step back and doing a rewrite with a more distant gaze?

A rewriting of the observation narratives
In the next phase of analysis, I wrote out the transcripts from the video recordings verbatim, eliminating interpretive words from the text, although keeping a description of body language, following procedures from other researchers in the field (e. g. Bae, 2004; Löfdahl, 2002; Løkken, 2000; Pramling, 1988).

Turn	Participant	**Process, experience and outcome** Verbal utterance	**Process, experience and outcome** Gaze, voice sounds and gestures
01	Andreas 2 years, 8 months	I can see a pirate.	He places his hand on his forehead in a pirate-like gesture: looks across the room with his head and body straight. His voice is slightly intense.

During the process, the thought arose of examining the relationship to the context, more specifically. Following a case based approach this specific situation meant something: the conversation was co-created by more participants sitting around the meal table and was connected to what had earlier taken place. The relationship to the play activities on the videos, including my logbook notes was no seen as connected. The reason for this was that during my fieldwork, I had noticed a culture of giving play high value by organizing the day so that there would be time to play as well as a certain kind of playfulness in the teachers' way of approaching the children. The atmosphere was relaxed and humorous as I had experienced it. Being interested in and studying children's meaning-making in preschool, the teachers' way of meeting and approaching children's initiatives would be relevant conditions for children's meaning-making. I then added a new rubric; level of playfulness.

Turn	Part-icipant	**Process, experience and outcome** Verbal utterance	**Process, experience and outcome** Gaze, voice sounds and gestures	**Level of playfulness**
01	Andreas 2 years, 8 months	I can see a pirate.	He places his hand on his forehead in a pirate-like gesture; looks across the room with his head and body straight. His voice is slightly intense.	Person acting in a fiction/drama. He discovers a pirate.
02	Frida, assistant	A pirate?	Looks at Andreas. Her voice is adult-like	Person outside the fiction. Curious adult
03	Andreas	Yes, they' coming now.	He points across the room, still slightly intense.	Person in the fiction. He can see

				pirates coming.
04	Birthe, assistant	You have to eat as fast as you can!	She looks at Sander, who is sitting across from Andreas. Her voice is bright and she the utterance is rapid.	Person in the fiction. She is playful, but also a governing adult.
05	Andreas	They're coming up! They climb!	He waves his hands and shouts out with fear in his voice	Person in the fiction. He is becoming even more frightened of pirates.
06	Birthe	Can you see him?	She turns her head in the direction Sander is pointing.	Person who is supporting the fiction (Why not IN the fiction?)
07	Frida	They walk the plank.	She has been smilingly following Andreas' utterances and movements. She talks quietly while looking at Andreas	Person who interprets and explains. (She might also be in fiction?)
08	Andreas	I through, (pause) sch, sch, sch, (pause) No!	He looks straight ahead at nobody particular. He waves his arms and frowns. He pulls something imaginary and moans.	Person in the fiction. He is a worried person who is struggling.
09	Sander, 2years, 11 months	The plank	Looks at Andreas and continues eating his bread	Person that might be in the fiction; signals that he wants to join the play
10	Marit, preschool teacher	I wonder if we should arrange a Sabre-tooth party sometime	She is occupied with a slice of bread, as she talks.	Person outside the fiction. She suggests a play theme as the teacher in charge.
11	Andreas	Abre-tooth party!	He raises his hand. His voice sounds eager.	Person outside of the fiction. He acknowledges the play theme.

In this phase of analysis attempt I could see and demonstrate that Andreas' and the teacher Marit's relationships to play had some similarities, although still different. This made me curious about children´s participation. I decided to write a case of children's meaning-making as participation. I found support in Jans (2004) that demonstrates that children are meaning-givers and that it is the play that allows them active participation Also Sawyers (1997) supported this thought in his study of conversations in the pre-school classroom. He highlights improvisation within the framework of play conversations. According to Sawyer (1997, pp. 52), children act strategically within each turn of a conversation. *Prior flow of the play drama* happens not within frames, nor scripts or schemas. The

uses of language in play will vary with various contexts. Play will thus be the driver in what turns out to be a collective improvisation; metapragmatic negotiations.

Children's talk in play could be understood as dialogical, in the Bakhtinian sense of the word. For instance when there is a combination of the use of the character's voice and the director's voice in the play; "and then he saw the sharks come; help help!". Bakhtin's work shows that all use of language and text carries signs that are unspoken, but they carry the history of other users (Bakhtin, 1986). This could further be illustrated by watching a scene where Frida, one of the teaching assistants, raised her hand to her forehead and, surveying the table, gestalted the movements of the steady, silent captain of a ship surveying the sea. Shortly afterwards, Andreas gestalted a person in the same position as Frida, until he suddenly shouted out; he had seen a pirate. The hand and the movements give signs that the utterances, the conversation, must be understood accordingly. Looking at the scheme together with the project's external tutor, Berit Bae, however, made me realize that what I had tagged and categorized within the last rubric, the level of the playfulness, was not necessarily characteristic of play. I needed more analysis, and instead of putting characteristics of playfulness into the rubrics, I decided to go for negotiations and positioning in this new attempt.

Theses insights made me decide to be more explorative in the analytical process before I wrote new descriptions. I realized that the verbal utterances and the body movements gave information that conditioned certain ways of seeing, constructing and describing. Following this thread, I wondered what it would be possible for me to see if I expanded the analytic scheme. I decided to try out more specific rubrics. Looking for the metapragmatics in the data; the *explicit* metapragmatics as well as the *implicit* metapragmatics (Sawyer 1997), would make it possible to comprehend how the language was used. Furthermore I was continually curious about the playfulness; would it be of interest for the study and would it be possible to comprehend and describe the characteristic of the playfulness? In my next phase of analysis I therefore wanted to follow Sawyer's way of using the concepts of explicit and implicit metapragmatics.

Turn	Participants	Voice content		Voice interpretation	
		(Explicit metapragmatics)	(Implicit metapragmatics)	Characteristics of play	Characteristics of negotiations
01	Andreas	I can see a pirate.	He places his hand on his forehead in a pirate-like gesture; looks across the room with his head and body straight. His voice is slightly intense.	He sees a pirate. He is in fiction.	He takes initiative to talk.
02	Frida, assistent	A pirate?	Looks at Andreas. Her voice is adult-like	She is curious. She is not in fiction.	She take up his initiative.
03	Andreas	Yes, they' coming now.	He points across the room, still slightly intense.	He can see the pirate is coming; still in fiction.	He expands the pirate theme.
04	Birthe, assistent	You have to eat as	She looks at Sander, who is sitting across from	She is in fiction.	She positions herself as the

		fast as you can!	Andreas. Her voice is bright and she the utterance is rapid.		teacher, using disciplinary methods indirectly, a person responsible for him eating during the meal.
05	Andreas	They're coming up! They climb!	He waves his hands and shouts out with fear in his voice	He can see the pirates are coming. He is frightened; still in fiction	He expands the pirate theme.
06	Birthe	Can you see him?	She turns her head in the direction Sanders??? is pointing.	She could be in fiction? Or not?	She supports his play; being in fiction.
07	Frida	They walk the plank.	She has been smilingly following Andreas' utterances and movements. She talks quietly while looking at Andreas	She intepret and explains. She might be in fiction?	She supports his play; being in fiction.
08	Andreas	I through, (pause) sch, sch, sch, (pause) No!	He looks straight ahead at nobody particular. He waves his arms and frowns. He pulls something imaginary and moans.	He struggles; in fiction.	He expands the pirate theme.
09	Sander, 2 år og 11 måneder.	The plank	Looks at Andreas and continues eating his bread	He states that the plank is important. He might be in fiction? Or not?	He gives a sign; he wants to participate in the conversation/play.
10	Marit, Førskole læreren	I wonder if we should arrange a Sabre-tooth party sometime	She is occupied with a slice of bread, as she talks.	She states that a party is important	She positions herself as the teacher, understood as the leader
11	Andreas	Aber-tooth party!	He raises his hand. His voice sounds eager.	He is not in fiction.	He agrees.

Later on I would query the data of the characteristics of play in another way than in my latest phase. The visualization of these rubrics made me see a more explicit picture of playfulness. Still more questions came up. In my observations I had noticed that the use of artefacts, the battle artefacts, was crucial for understanding the children's meaning-making processes.

Discussion

What kind of insights came from these constructs; the scheme?

A more explicit and nuanced picture of (what might be considered) children's voices as play and playfulness was appearing from these analytical attempts. The video-recordings of the multiparty conversation were rich in information, so even if the extended scheme made complexity visual, still more information could have been drawn from the data. The picture I had constructed was now formed from what I found new interest in and worth watching more closely.

I could now see that the children and the adults, the teachers as well as the teaching assistants, talked their way through the co-narrative in a playful manner. Still I saw a difference. The children went more deeply into the fiction using both voice, mimicry and body movements to gestalt characters in the play, the adults just occasionally used their bodies. They limited their playfulness to the text communicated and also in the way they communicated, with a smile and sometimes with a voice in fiction. I will describe the patterns characterizing the adults' playfulness as *cheerful*, while the children's playfulness as *serious*.

Andreas had certainly a serious playfulness throughout the long 7-minute co-narrative. Andreas had a voice that was heard; I will suggest that it was his seriousness and the repetitiveness of theme that made his voice be taken up by the adults and made him influence the plans and curriculum.

Working with and exploring with an analytic scheme gave me a more qualified insight of children's ways and conditions for getting their voices heard. The analytic scheme was the artefact that took me from the intuition of "It is something interesting in the playfulness that I observe in children's and teachers' interactions" to writing up a case with rich descriptions that can make us understand young children's conditions for participating. The analytic scheme made me see the serious playfulness in Andreas' participation and the more cheerful distant playfulness in the adults' participation. Metaphors had been found and descriptions of a child's way to influence could be described in more details: This is what paradigmatic cases can do, according to Flyvberg (2003).

All the details that were laid out for analysis during the extension of the analytic scheme made me aware of one extra little detail that I wanted to put under the magnifying glass. During my fieldwork, I had noticed that Andreas played pirates; more specifically Captain Sabre-tooth and anticipated straight away that he took the role of the captain. I reckoned that playing the captain was identity work for a boy that had been exposed for popular culture targeting young boys; the antihero pirate. During the process of working with the different analytic schemes, I gradually realized that what I first thought of and described as "pirate play, Captain Sabre-tooth play" could be nuanced. Andreas was *not* in fiction as Captain Sabre-tooth during all the co-narrative. On the contrary, he was in fiction as a person who watched the pirate arrive through a telescope, as he refers to imaginary happenings when I for example suddenly points across the room and utter that thy (the pirates) are coming (imaginary utterances seen in turn 01, 03, 05). These interesting details made me change my understanding and consequently my descriptions of boys playing pirates or other fighting and warlike play themes. Watching Andreas at a distance, by constructing and studying him in an analytic scheme made me see another boy than I saw and described in my first close up. While I first saw a boy playing pirates understood as stereotype masculinity, I could now see Andreas as a boy that uses the pirate theme in various ways (Connell, 2005); as a person who is using the Captain Sabre-tooth character as

identity work, but at the same time playing out a character who can watch the captain at a distance; a person who is being scared of the Captain as he watches him getting closer.

Children's meaning-making can be characterized by repetition as well as by variation (Lindahl & Pramling Samuelsson, 2002). I saw Andreas at first as the boy who took the role of the aggressive, dangerous pirate character. The analytic scheme made me see new patterns. Andreas was not in fiction as the dangerous aggressive person all the time, when he watched the pirate at a distance as in the selected transcripts above; as I had noticed in play conversations, Andreas and the other children as well used the telescope to create a distance. They would take up a telescope, a material artefact, a paper rolled up, or an imaginary one. Through the telescope he could meet; he could place the dangerous person at a distance. In a serious playfulness, he changes between these two positions in the co-narration. The material artefact was not in use during the meal at the table; but I had observed during everyday play the artefacts in use as imaginary artefact and the personnel supports the fiction during the co-narration.

The aesthetic of fear can be described as pleasurable (Stattin, 2000). In present society, parents and pedagogues will not scare children. Yet we can see children such as Andreas seeking dangerous scenes and figures; looking out for them. The pirate story about Captain Sabre-tooth targets older boys; nonetheless younger boys, such as Andreas, may have older siblings and are thereby easily exposed to culture that is not actually meant for them. Andreas enjoys the frightening aesthetics in the pirate story. He is offered a meeting with scariness that he might desire to meet. I therefore do not think of Andreas as a boy that identifies with a pirate using his sword all the time. I eventually see Andreas as a boy that enjoys excitement and uses the character and the story to create excitement in his life. This corresponds with a study of 39 child-initiated co-narratives in a group of one-to-three year-olds, where the themes of *scare* and *being frightened* were the most dominating themes (Ødegaard, 2006b).

Summing up

This example of me, as a researcher looking at Andreas looking through a telescope, illustrates a dynamic process of ethnographic research as a practice where the researcher her/himself is intertwined in the construction of the empirical base and thereby in the construction of knowledge. The developing of a criss-cross schema implied that the empirical base was laid out in innovative ways, which in turn opened up for new ways of looking at the data. Combining field notes with transcripts from video recordings made the transcriptions a process rather than the video-recordings as a fixed text, and the continuing analytic processes as a *re*reading and *re*writing, made it possible to look at Andreas looking through the telescope, both the material artefact as well as the imaginary one. While the sword was used with outgoing movements, a possibility to attack as a scary pirate, the telescope conversely gave Andreas the possibility to withdraw from the battle and be a person scared of pirates.

This process of exploring and expanding a scheme made it possible to create a distance to the data and led to a rethinking of truths about boys playing with artefacts used in battles like swords, flag and telescopes. Moreover this exploration led to new insights into the complexity concerning children's meaning-making, gender practices and the relation between the ethnographic researcher and the children studied.

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