

A preschool that brings children into public spaces

Onto-epistemological research methods of vocal strolls, metaphors, mappings and preschool displacements

Christine Eriksson



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Abstract

The interest of this doctoral thesis in early childhood education concerns the discourse on the need to integrate as well as include the youngest children in society. The overall purpose is to produce methodological experimentations on the possibilities of constructing a preschool which facilitates for preschool and preschool children to be present and take place in, and thereby participate in the construction of public spaces, together with other actors and the places themselves. The aim is to experiment with displacing preschool practices from their institutionalised place into public spaces, inspired by various site-specific artistic place-based methods, in order to develop situated onto-epistemological research methods for early childhood education research. These emerging methods aim to enhance interaction between the preschool institution – including the children – and public spaces, as spaces of societal interaction and transaction between different actors.

The preschool institution was founded in a modernist era which set out to construct a society that could offer safe and appropriate places for all citizens. The institutional preschool was organised as such a separate and reserved place for children in society, but the physical preschool walls and doors simultaneously separate children from the non-institutional places of society – the public places. The public space upholds the potential for interaction, exchange and public action for change.

In the empirical fieldwork enacted for this project, I as a researcher, a group of the youngest preschool children (1-3 years), and a number of educators, enacted together so-called *vocal strolls* in the public transport system in Stockholm. The research project functions as a method-producing practice, where children's places – the preschool practices – are brought into adult's places – public spaces – outside the preschool. The study thus produces emerging and situated – *in situ* – research methods in collaboration with a preschool (and its children and practices) and the public spaces we encountered and interacted with. The thesis takes an onto-epistemological theoretical stance, to define the research, not as separated from the world, but as one of many practices collaborating in the production of methods on how to take place in public spaces (cf. Stengers, 2018; Barad, 2007).

The thesis consists of three published research papers which delineate *vocal strolls*, *vocal mappings*, *metaphors* and *displacements* as early childhood education research methods that facilitate a preschool which enables children to *take place in public spaces*. The onto-epistemological research methods which emerged in this study have been inspired by artistic site-specific practices, which have a long tradition of developing methods on how to move art out from art institutions, e.g. museums, galleries and art-studios. These research methods are embodied methods, which produce a direct knowledge and always transform in relation to the situation and the spatial conditions of a place. *Vocal metaphors*, *strolls*, *mappings* and *displacements* are constructed in the process of collaboration between multiple different ways of enacting a place and being enacted by the place. This study has shown the possibility of developing place-based research methods for early childhood education research with the aim of understanding how they might transform our notions and practices of preschool.

Keywords: *early childhood education, onto-epistemological research methods, site-specific art practices, construction of public space, vocal strolls, vocal mappings, displacements, metaphors as methods, democratic participation.*

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*I dedicate this thesis to
myself so that my
daughters Linnea and
Clara will know they have
a mother who follows her
passions*

Acknowledgements

I remember when I sat in the job interview for the position of a doctoral student in Early Childhood Education at Stockholm University. Professor Hillevi Lenz Taguchi, who would become my supervisor, asked me why I wanted to become a researcher. I answered ‘because I love to be in the position of not knowing and have the possibility to produce knowledge about something not yet known’. This thesis has very much circled around the desire to put myself in the position of not knowing. It is perhaps therefore not a coincidence that my second supervisor Monica Sand is interested in methods which will enable you to ‘get lost with punctuality and precision’. In order to cope with this somewhat insecure feeling of not knowing, it has been crucial for me to have supporters around me, as well as to be surrounded by people that inspire me. I here would like to mention some of the most important supporters and influencers.

First, and foremost, I want to thank all the preschool toddlers and educators that invited me, so lovingly, to partake in their preschool practice, and who willingly participated in displacing the preschool practice into public spaces. You are my superstars! I will always cherish your welcoming as one of my most delightful memories in life. I hope that I some other day will pass on the same overwhelming care and enthusiasm to others.

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I also express my gratitude to many of my colleagues at the unit of Early Childhood Education Research within the department of Child and Youth studies. Thank you for your supportive words when popping in to my room asking me how I’m doing. The seemingly mundane question has generated energy to reach the finish line.

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Christine Eriksson

At the kitchen table in Täby, 23 November 2019

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Introduction

Early Childhood institutions are socially constructed. They have no inherent features, no essential qualities, no necessary purposes. What they are for, the question of their role and purpose, is not self-evident. They are what we, 'as a community of human agents', make them. (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 2007, p. 62)

What do you think of when you think of early childhood institutions? What is the preschool's most central tasks in society, and how are these operationalised in everyday institutional practice? Perhaps you think of the preschool as a place where parents leave their children while they go to work, which builds on the idea that the welfare state should facilitate organisations of society that affords women and men equal possibilities and rights to work? Or maybe of what comes to mind are the children's rights to play, explore, experiment and learn, which stresses the importance of reserving space for children's interests in our society. Some might think of the preschool buildings and playgrounds located in residential areas. Others might think of activities such as circle-time or naptime or material things such as sandpits, construction rooms, crayons or pegboards?

However, the main task of the preschool has probably been, and continues to be, the integration of children into society. This task can be traced back to the first constructions of what we today term preschool. The first preschools were founded during what we call the modern era with the intent to transform urban citizens to become more civilized with higher moral standards. In this way, a better and more modern society could be achieved (Etzemüller, 2012). The earliest forms of so-called *Infant schools* and *Crèches*, and also later on, the so-called *Large nurseries*, were constructed to literally move children off the streets. The children of the lower classes roamed the streets to find places to play, interact and find food or shelter while their guardians tried to earn a living (Bjurman, 1995; B. Sandin, 1986). School and preschool institutions were established to offer the children a safer space, where they could be fed and morally educated (ibid.). However, in another perspective, the schools and preschools were also intended to create safer streets for the bourgeois citizens by removing what were considered undisciplined and immoral children off the streets (Bjurman, 1995; Hultqvist, 1990). In this way, preschool institutions became part of a modern, organised society, which separated citizens of different ages and social classes (Hultqvist, 1990; Lina Olsson, 2008; B. Sandin,

1986). Such an organisation of society would create physical places that could assemble citizens with homogenous interests and needs (Lina Olsson, 2008, p. 43; Persson, 1997, p. 124). Children's (as well as adult's) education took place in specific buildings; they were thereby separated from the everyday heterogeneous life of the streets. According to Etzemüller (2012), the construction of a modern society, which the preschool is very much a product of, was built on pre-defined ideals and moral values for the modern citizen.

Since the early '90s, child-sociological research has paid particular attention to how children have agency to form and shape their own lives and childhoods (James & Prout, 1997). As a result of the modern organisation of society, it is nonetheless still common to organise and reserve special and suitable places *for* children and childhood as a way to ensure that children are included in society (cf. Halldén, 2007; James & James, 2004; Malone, 2015b; Rasmussen, 2004a). Places *for* children are largely defined as their homes, preschools and recreational institutions, and all these environments have been created by adults to suit the children's needs and desires (Rasmussen, 2004). The preschool organises an institutionalised childhood for the child, within which children are given agency to create for themselves meaningful places of their own (Halldén, 2007). By ways of the children's own constructions of place within the preschool, multiple versions of institutional childhoods become produced (Bollig & Millei, 2018). In this way, children's own participation in society becomes designated to places which, constituted by the physical walls and doors of the preschool, are separated from the non-institutional parts of society (such as streets, parks, public transport systems, etc.).

The idea of the preschool institution as a place *for* children, thus defines the preschool as an autonomous institution within society, and yet basically in a fashion which is based on the separation of groups has thereby created difficulties for such institutions – as preschools – to establish relationships outside the institutional walls. In this way, preschool has become a place which directly and implicitly disconnects children from public spaces. Indirectly, the child is presumed to be a 'blank canvas' on which we can 'paint' a new generation of citizens (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Dahlberg et al., 2007; Taylor, 2013; Wall, 2010).

As a consequence of the above, I argue that preschool pedagogy enacts practices whereby children's constructions of places within childhood institutional settings risk becoming utilised merely as learning opportunities *about* the society outside, rather than having children actively participate *in* that society. In this way, the children become merely spectators of the democratic society taking place *outside* of the preschool. Children are nevertheless supposed to become integrated in society in this institution. In this place they are to learn how to become participants, citizens and constructors of our present and future society *inside* the institutional walls of preschools (and schools), as becomes evident in reading official documents and curricula (Skolverket, 2018).

However, several studies have acknowledged the informal learning possibilities that exist outside the preschool institution. Such research has often taken an interest in interventions and experiments where, for example, children are taken out on so-called sculpture strolls (Lindh, 2017) to enable them to take part of the public sculptures placed around the city. The researcher Liselott Olsson has organised what she call mirror-travels with a group of preschool children, with the objective to open up for a literacy learning in public spaces (Liselott Olsson, 2013). There is also research on mobile preschools (Ladru Ekman & Gustafson, 2018), which studies preschools that offer travels to various public spaces that endorse an informal learning.

Another body of research has focused on children's possibilities of mobility in urban public spaces. These researchers, often situated within the field of children's geography, have long pointed to the difficulties children have to move independently in public spaces (Christensen & Cortés-Morales, 2016; Christensen, Mikkelsen, Nielsen, & Harder, 2011; Hickey & Phillips, 2013; Nansen et al., 2015; van der Burgt & Cele, 2014). Public spaces are constructed to suit adult movements, needs and desires, and are hence not automatically safe and secure for children to spend time in without a guardian (Hickey & Phillips, 2013). Public spaces, which are often perceived as shared places for a diversity of people (Franzen, Herrting, & Thörn, 2016), do not seem to be entirely open for children; they simply do not have the same access to public places as adults do (van der Burgt & Cele, 2014). Consequently, children's access to public spaces often becomes conditioned by adults' willingness and ability to accompany them (Nansen et al., 2015). The accompany of an adult can be understood to restrict children's autonomous movement in public spaces. However, the dependency of adults can also be seen as to increase children's access to these places despite their dependence on adults (Christensen & Cortés-Morales, 2016; Mikkelsen & Christensen, 2009). Children's movements in public spaces can, in this way, be seen as interdependent, as they are not able to move entirely freely but still establish their own relations to the places they visit (Mikkelsen & Christensen, 2009).

Yet other studies emphasise that children have very little influence and agency in constructing public spaces (De Laval, 2015; Elsley, 2004). These studies are interested in mapping children's experiences of different places, and gaining a deeper understanding of the interdependent relations that enable the children's mobilities in public spaces (Christensen & Cortés-Morales, 2016; Christensen et al., 2011; Horton, Christensen, Kraftl, & Hadfield-Hill, 2014).

The ideal of a modern society of organising specific and separated places for children is also present in the discussions about children's independent and interdependent mobilities in public spaces. This body of research exposes that such discussions often circulate around whether places are secure, healthy and suitable for children to spend their time in (Christensen & Cortés-Morales, 2016).

Against the above background of earlier research, which cuts across the fields of early childhood education, children's geographies and childhood sociology, the present study is correspondingly interested in the possibilities of a preschool that can integrate children into society in other ways than merely encouraging them to construct places on their own in which to play, within the institutional walls of the preschool.

Therefore, the overall purpose of the thesis is to enact experimentations which displace preschool practices, and thus also the children, by moving them from the institutional space into public spaces, in order to facilitate children to participate in constructing places *outside* those reserved for an institutional childhood, and thus *inside* non-institutional public places, such as streets, buses and pedestrian tunnels. Displacements here refers to the movement out from the institutional preschool buildings and into public spaces.

The streets, then, can be understood as such a place where democracy is, in a specific sense, enacted by a direct presence of a particular body in a public space (Franzén, 2004; Jacobs, 1993). In this way of thinking, public spaces function as places for interconnections and possible transformation. These spaces are often described as meeting places that enable people to gather and to, together, raise their voice to both protest and form opinions about certain issues. This way of understanding the function of public spaces does however underscore the notion of public space as a place gathering people of forming together one collective mind in agreement or consensus (Gabrielsson, 2006). Another way of understanding the function of public space, and which this thesis especially pays attention to, is how public places gather people with heterogeneous and different interests. In such a space, the public space is a place where societal differences and conflicts also become enacted and exposed (ibid.). The latter way of describing public spaces activates questions of who has the right to *take place* (in both a physical and discursive sense) in these public spaces. This thesis focuses on how the preschool, and its central agents, the children, can facilitate possibilities for children to *take place* in public spaces, by ways of their preschool practices. To *take place*, in this thesis, hence refers to the common definition of the expression, as 'events occurring'. However, to *take place* also implies the fact that preschool and children physically 'take up space'. Hence, bringing the children and their preschool practices into, for example, the streets, raises new thoughts about how a preschool can enable children to take place in public spaces, compared to what happens when children play and enact their own versions of reality within the preschool walls (e.g. Björk-Willén, 2012; E. Johansson, 2009; M. Nilsson, Ferholt, & Lecusay, 2018).

A preschool that brings the children into to the public space of streets, metros and pedestrian tunnels, thus hold possibilities of opening up for other ways and places in which to enact an institutional childhood. The philosopher Rosi Braidotti terms these acts of displacing something from one state or place into another *transactions* (Braidotti, 2006, p. 43). Transactions expose and produce

differences and can lead to transformation and change. If we look at the etymology of transaction, the prefix *trans* asserts ‘across’ and *agere* means ‘to set in motion’. Transactions impose actions across different boundaries.¹ Public space becomes constructed by heterogeneous and multi-directional connections between different geographical, temporal, cultural, social, disciplinary, physical and material boundaries (Braidotti, 2006). Transactions assert how what we consider something to be, is always in a process of change, depending on the different connections made (ibid.). Perhaps the researcher’s intention of moving the preschool practices, and thus the moving of children, into the public space of, for example, streets, can facilitate children to take part in such transactions?

The focus on ongoing transactions is key to the onto-epistemological theoretical stance that this thesis strives to enact. It means that the researcher directly participates in *enabling transactions*, rather than to participate and produce data, in order to *study* the everyday transactions going on. An onto-epistemological research practice can thus never be conceived nor enacted as separated from the practices going on in everyday life (Barad, 2007). The onto-epistemological stance taken in this thesis enables the researcher and the preschool (and thus the children as central agents of the preschool) to collaboratively develop research methods that construct a preschool, which facilitates for preschool and preschool children to take place in public spaces.

In relation to the above described problem of this thesis, articulated in terms of small (yes, small not only young) children’s difficulties of taking presence, and thus taking place, in public spaces, I have turned to site-specific practices of art for inspiration. In order to experiment together with preschool practices and children (toddlers) *in* and *with* public spaces around this problem, I have found that so called site-specific art practices have a long experience of experimenting with transactions of the sort I am interested in. These art practices have sought to develop situated, or if you will, *in-situ* methods, that move art out of institutions, e.g. museums and into public spaces. Thus, what these art practices and their experimentations with emerging methods do, correspond, in important ways, to my desire to move preschool practices that otherwise take place inside the institution, outside and into public spaces.

Moreover, taking my inspiration from these kinds of art practices, seemed like the most rational scientific choice in relation to the onto-epistemological approach of this study. The onto-epistemological stance asserts that the knowledge production focuses on what emerges as effects of encounters between bodies and matter, rather than producing knowledge about these bodies and matter themselves. In this case, I am interested in producing knowledge about what emerges as *early childhood research methods* in the transactions of preschool practices; that is, when *moving* these preschool practices from one space into another. In other words, I am not – in this particular study –

¹ <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=transaction>

interested in producing knowledge *about* the children's experiences, their learning or subjectivity constructions. Rather, I am interested in what emerges as an effect of experimenting transactions *involving* children and preschool practices and myself as researcher, in relation to an overarching problem that concerns children's possibilities of being present and taking place in public space, as spaces for possible transformative change.

The site-specific artistic practices that this thesis takes its inspiration from have formulated an institutional critique of the modern ideal of separating art from everyday practices, which has isolated art inside museums and galleries (Doherty, 2015; Kwon, 2004). The movement of art out of institutions into public spaces exposes, as well as transforms, the conditions for art (Kwon, 2004). It draws attention to how the surrounding context participates in creating meaning. Site-specific art tries to re-connect art with the everyday life outside the institutions of art. It accomplishes this by exposing and transforming the spatial, cultural, economic, political and social boundaries that affect how we understand the meaning of an art object (Kwon, 2004; Sand, 2008; G. Sandin, 2003). Site-specific methodologies thus offer inspiring practices which has developed methods that take into account how art-institutions, artists, everyday places and non-artists *collaborate* on curating context (Gabrielsson, 2006). Rather than context being a background against which an art object is to be placed, site-specific art practices seeks to *experiment* with context by activating place in multiple ways and by various methods.

The director of Public Art Agency Sweden, Magdalena Malm (2017), terms the process of moving art out from institutions as a way of *curating context*. The word *context* derives from Latin, meaning 'composition' or a joining together. The prefix of *con*, 'with', and the word *textere*, meaning 'to weave, to make'.² To curate context is therefore to negotiate, facilitate and produce possibilities for transactions which creates the situations in which multiple meanings can emerge and exist simultaneously (Malm, 2017; Mur Dean, 2017). Thus, to curate context concerns how various practices and people both become activated by the place itself, and activate the place in multiple ways simultaneously (Malm, 2017).

Given the problem of the thesis introduced above, the aim is to enact – or what I, with inspiration from site-specific artistic methods, conceptualise as *curate* – the moving of preschool practices out from the institutional buildings and into the public streets. This displacing moving is facilitated by me as a researcher. The children, the practices, educators and I, as researcher, then participate in constructing public spaces together with all other agents present. In this way, this study expands the notion of curating context by suggesting a *collective curating*, where children, educators and by-passers all curate context together; by the ways they are enabled to respond to the situation and how

² <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=context>

their response activates the place anew. The researcher as *curator* thus constitutes another form of researcher role than that which is taken in most other childhood or early childhood education research, underpinned by an onto-epistemological approach to research. The role of the researcher will be further discussed in the methodology chapter.

What emerges in this curated collaboration of public space, as explained above, is a production of early childhood research *methods* that transform both the public space and the preschool practices, which are displaced and curated in a new context. This would, however, not be possible to do without the children. Since what a preschool is and becomes will always be constituted by the daily preschool activities, rhythms and routines *enacted by the children*. Hence, the children are of course central agents in the experimentations of these curated research methods. However, it is the curated but situated and emerging methods themselves that are the protagonists of the methodological experimentations of this research. The experimentation and construction of these are, however, driven by the overall purpose of having these methods make it possible for children to take place in the public spaces of our society.

Aim and research questions

The above introduction has described how a number of previous research studies have shown in what ways children have, or produce, agency in various ways within the early childhood institutional buildings – preschools – and thereby participate in the construction of their own places. Another body of research outlines the difficulties for children to take place, be present and move in public urban spaces. This prior knowledge brings to the fore the purpose and aim of this thesis.

The overall purpose is to produce methodological experimentations on the possibilities of constructing a preschool which facilitates for preschool and preschool children to be present and take place in, and thereby participate in the construction of public spaces, together with other actors and the places themselves.

The aim is to experiment with displacing preschool practices from their institutionalised place into public spaces, inspired by various site-specific artistic place-based methods, in order to develop situated onto-epistemological research methods for early childhood education research. These emerging methods aim to enhance interaction between the preschool institution – including the children – and public spaces, as spaces of societal interaction and transaction between different actors.

The research questions ask:

- What kinds of early childhood research methods will emerge in these displacements when preschool practices are put into transactional interactions with public spaces of streets, buses, metro-trains and pedestrian tunnels and the agents within them?
- What can be learnt about the role of the preschool institution in society from these methodological experimentations?

Thesis overview

This kappa text has seven chapters. In the first and present chapter, the reader is introduced to the overall thesis problem of bringing the preschool and its practices out, and into public spaces. Chapter two presents the historical background of contemporary preschool and its relations to public spaces. Chapter three presents earlier research concerned with institutional childhoods as constructed in preschools and children's movements in urban public spaces. Chapter four describes and discusses how the thesis methodology and methods draw heavily on site-specific art practices and research. Chapter five reports on the practical conditions and ethical considerations of the set-up of the experimentations. Chapter six provides a summary of the three published articles connected to this kappa text. In the seventh and final chapter, I discuss the thesis aim and research questions. Here, I also provide a discussion on what kind of knowledge this thesis kappa text has produced in relation to early childhood education research (ECER).

Background

Small children do not belong in the city. At least not as cities are now organised. Cities are societies adapted to the lives of adults. Although the slightly older children are given a more suitable social and developmentally appropriate environment. But the young children regress. Where shall they play? Where shall they reside? And what shall they experience? (Myrdal, 1935, p. 9, my translation)

As shown in the above introduction to the research problem, contemporary Swedish society has organised and constructed many places especially reserved for children. There are playgrounds, children's museums, libraries, parks and preschools (De Coninck-Smith, 2014). The public concern to organise and reserve place(s) especially for children has, however, a long history that begins even earlier than the mid-1930s, when the social democrat politician Alva Myrdal wrote the lines quoted above in her book *Urban Children*.

In this chapter I will first introduce the historical background on the construction of a preschool as places specially reserved for children and thereafter present in what ways various preschool practices have made an effort to establish relationships with the urban city. The last heading of this chapter deals with the definition of public spaces.

The preschool as a collective space *for* children *in* society

The concern to reserve place(s) for children arose in the nineteenth century, when a growing urbanisation and industrialisation entailed great social, cultural and economic change (Eilard & Tallberg Broman, 2011; Rubinstein Reich, Tallberg Broman, & Vallberg Roth, 2017; Westberg, 2008). A large number of people moved from the countryside into the cities to seek work opportunities outside their homes (Eilard & Tallberg Broman, 2011; Eriksson Bergström, 2013; Rubinstein Reich et al., 2017). This move entailed a shift from the extended family to the smaller nuclear family, whereby there was no one to care for the children while their parents were working. The children were left unattended and were often seen playing in unsafe environments (Axelsson & Qvarsebo, 2017; Bjurman, 1995).

Overcrowded living conditions also served to force working-class children out into the streets, and during this time, they became a problem for cities. The

wealthier citizens perceived them as dirty, begging and pilfering street children, and this caused social distress (Bjurman, 1995; Hultqvist, 1990). The unsupervised children were seen as a nuisance to the cities' inhabitants, as their presence in the streets contested the modern ideal of a clean, healthy and moral urban citizen (Bjurman, 1995). The emergence of preschool institutions was part of the modernist project to get the children off the streets and, based on scientific knowledge and moral virtue, mould their behaviours to give them the chance of a better future (cf. Bjurman, 1995; Dahlberg et al., 2007; Hultqvist, 1990; Lenz Taguchi, 2000; Vallberg-Roth, 2002). Children's institutions (infant schools, crèches and kindergartens) were to various degrees constituted by the idea that civilisation (which stood as a high ideal) needed to be transformed and improved by a general structuring and organising of public society (Ekström, 2007, p. 8). In this way, urbanisation made children a public affair rather than a concern reserved for the private family (Axelsson & Qvarsebo, 2017; Tallberg Broman, 1995). The emergence of various preschool institutions was part of the growing project of modernity, which organised and structured society by separating the public and the private spheres (Ekström, 2007; Lenz Taguchi, 2000; Westberg, 2008).

The introductory quote from the Swedish social democrat politician Alva Myrdal presents an expanded idea of the preschool as an institution that should include children in the public spaces of cities. In the 1930s, the so-called Swedish 'folkhemmet' – 'the people's home' (Etzemüller, 2012) – stood as a political ideal to ensure the care and safety of all citizens (Ekström, 2007; Etzemüller, 2012; Hammarström-Lewenhagen, 2013; Lenz Taguchi, 2000). The welfare state aimed to function as a social engineering that could compensate poor family conditions and educate democratic citizens according to certain values (Ekström, 2007; Etzemüller, 2012; Hultqvist, 1990). The growing modernist belief at this time was that it was possible to change existing social structures. In this context, children came to be considered (to some extent) as having rights detached from their parents, and the care and education of children became a collective task for the welfare state (Ekström, 2007; Etzemüller, 2012; Hultqvist, 1990). Here, the modernist structures pursued societal engineering by adding another separating logic to the separation of public and private. Children were seen as different from adults, having different needs and interests (Hultqvist, 1990; Lenz Taguchi, 2000).

The growing political interest in society was formulated as an ambition to offer children rights to, and welfare within, the public spaces which had emerged through the new urbanised and modern conditions. The idea that children had different needs and interests than adults diverted the task of the preschool to foster a more child-friendly society. The welfare state could, through children's institutions, influence and constitute a future citizen who honoured democracy and equality, and thereby shape the new, modern society that would be based on scientific psychological theories (Ekström, 2007; Hammarström-Lewenhagen, 2013; Lenz Taguchi, 2000; Markström, 2005).

The social political ambition to offer children public but separate spaces, which would reconcile care and education outside the family sphere, is perhaps best described by Myrdal's suggestion to establish so-called 'large nurseries', located close to, or even on the bottom floor of, the tenement buildings the families lived in (Ekström, 2007; Markström, 2005). Myrdal suggested that the large nurseries should be placed in the bottom of HSB³ buildings so as to integrate children into modern public society, as well as to facilitate parents childcare close to their homes (Ekström, 2007; Etmüller, 2012). The interior architectural design of the preschool was considered to be well suited to children's needs and learning development (De Coninck-Smith & Bygholm, 2011). The spatial design of the large nurseries was organised to mirror the collective and democratic society. For example, larger play rooms (so-called 'play-halls', my translation) and outdoor playgrounds were designed as common and shared areas for all the departments of the nursery. These spaces were intended to create encounters and exchanges between the departments and the children's different ways of playing (De Coninck-Smith & Bygholm, 2011). Preschool activities were designed for the sake of the children and drew upon scientific psychological developmental knowledge (Folke-Fichtelius, 2008; Hammarström-Lewenhagen, 2013; Rubinstein Reich et al., 2017). The upbringing and education of children became a collective task for society, as it was believed that the family might pass on old and outdated values (Ekström, 2007).

The increasing public interest in children's wellbeing in cities enabled the Swedish welfare state to expand its influence over the children's upbringing (Axelsson & Qvarsebo, 2017; Hammarström-Lewenhagen, 2013). In this way, though it was not explicitly intended, the preschool institutions came to regulate the children's possibilities of moving freely in the city (cf. Lenz Taguchi, 2000, p. 41). The large nurseries, which were to be open to all the youngest children in society, can be seen as the foundation of the current Swedish preschool model, which rests on the idea of public education *and* care – the so-called 'EduCare model' (Hammarström-Lewenhagen, 2013; Vallberg Roth, 2004).

Public spaces are often designed with adults in mind, and children are supposed to be protected or guided by adults within them (Hickey & Phillips, 2013). Public spaces risk becoming places reserved for adults, which children do not have the same right to utilise as other citizens (van der Burgt & Cele, 2014). In this way, children become subordinated and marginalised in relation to adults (James & James, 2004; van der Burgt & Cele, 2014). The solution was, and often still is, to organise places *for* children, or to reserve space for children to construct their *own* places (Halldén, 2007; Rasmussen, 2004). The idea of the child as something different (with other needs and interests) than adults seems to require separated child and adult places. This is well in line

³ A cooperative association for housing in Sweden.

with the modernist logic of organising a society by spatially separating, for example, old from young, sick from healthy, academics from lay people, and other dichotomous relations, through institutions.

The preschool as creating connection *with* the (adults') city

It is also possible to understand the task of the preschool institution as public by taking into account that it functions as a bridge between societal matters and the private family sphere, *and* as a provider of civic democratic education (Bollig & Millei, 2018, p. 8). There have been several attempts to create a preschool practice that intends to create connections between the public spaces in the cities, which were originally designed for adults, and the preschool institutions specially reserved for children.

If the large nurseries intended to include children in modern society by situating them where everyday family life takes place, the preschools in the Italian city of Reggio Emilia have intended to create links to public actions in the city, and thereby include children in the democratic processes of creating society (Burlin & Emriksson, 2005). Here, the preschool is not just a concern specially reserved for children, teachers and parents, but a public concern towards maintaining a democratic society. The community of Reggio Emilia decided to locate the preschools close to the city centre so as to enable transactions between the preschool and the surrounding city (J. Bishop, 2001).

Rather than designating rooms as 'play halls' for meetings and exchange, the Reggio Emilian preschools have 'piazzas' (squares) as central shared spaces. Similar to the piazza in the city, all corridors and rooms in the preschool lead into the piazza, and it is often here that informal and formal discussions and negotiations take place at preschool (ibid.). A piazza is a meeting place of different cultural contexts and values, where diversity is the democratic foundation (Dahlberg & Göthson, 2005). The interior design aims, just like the large nurseries of the mid-1930s, to resemble the democratic urban city. However, it is still only children, teachers and parents who use the piazzas inside the preschool.

The Reggio Emilian preschools also aim to create a preschool practice where children are given a voice about what is going on in contemporary society, as well as to consider the children as qualified citizens who have a responsibility to contribute to the development and maintenance of public society (Burlin & Emriksson, 2005; Dahlberg & Göthson, 2005; Dahlberg et al., 2007; Lenz Taguchi, 2000). Anna Barsotti's book *The Town and the Rain* discusses how the children in the Diana Preschool in Reggio Emilia participate in presenting their city through documenting how the city is affected by, pro-

fects itself from and deals with rain (Barsotti, 1986). Through aesthetic expressions, they present aspects of their city which may be overlooked in everyday life.

During the 1990s, Swedish preschool practices took inspiration from the Reggio Emilian approach, but largely focused on the children's learning and the use of pedagogical documentation as a way to resist the psychological rationale of learning (Brulin & Emriksson, 2005, p. 25). Learning and pedagogical documentation also came to be a dominant focus for research, and several theses have been produced on this subject (Elfström, 2013; Lenz Taguchi, 2000; Liselott Olsson, 2008). The preschools democratic relations *with* the city and the children's right to participate in constructing public space, although very much a foundation of the Swedish Reggio Emilia approach, have been somewhat overshadowed by the intention to challenge the dominant views on children and children's learning.

There is also a growing interest within the field of childhood studies as well as in architectural pedagogy in studying children's independent, or at least interdependent, movements in the cities (Christensen & Cortés-Morales, 2016; Christensen & Mikkelsen, 2013; Christensen et al., 2011; De Laval, 2014, 2015; Hickey & Phillips, 2013; Horton et al., 2014; Ladru Ekman & Gustafson, 2018; Mikkelsen & Christensen, 2009; Nansen et al., 2015; Raittila, 2012). This body of research however rarely focuses on the *preschool practice's* possibilities to enable children's mobility. Rather, it focuses on the children's own descriptions of their movements in urban spaces (cf. Änggård, 2015b; Horton et al., 2014). Furthermore, these studies have not, to my knowledge, included younger children aged between one and three years old. All these studies will be described in the upcoming state of the art chapter. In the next section I will define the contemporary urban public space in terms of a space of transactions.

The denotation of public space as a place of transactions

The title of this thesis strongly indicates that it explores the possibilities to develop research methods that can enable experimentations on how to construct a preschool, together with children as the central agents of constructing preschool practice, that brings children into public spaces such as for example streets. The streets often function as a public space, where social injustice and moral or cultural conflicts become exposed (Franzen et al., 2016). Spontaneous interactions create informal democratic political encounters (ibid.). In working-class literature, the streets have often been used as a symbol of modernist urban life, and as public spaces where people across different classes encounter each other (Borg, 2011, p. 103). The streets figure in various metaphors, both positive and negative, which suggests the ambiguity of their meaning. We commonly say "to work both sides of the street" to refer how we take

two contrary positions at once. We say that something is “right up my street” when we want to emphasise that something is ideally suited or quite the opposite (Wilkinson, 2002). “Walking the streets” is a common euphemism for prostitution (Borg, 2011). On the other hand, the metaphor of “the man in the street” describes the average, ordinary citizen (Wilkinson, 2002). When we say that someone is “street smart”, we mean that he/she has the practical knowledge and skills to deal with the potential dangers of life.⁴ These metaphors demonstrate how the physical urban streets are filled with, and enact, the multiple actions, diversity and oppositions which always define a democratic society (Jacobs, 1993).

Thus, the streets, and the pedestrian tunnel in which the preschool practice participating in this study spent time, are in one sense open for everyone. Public space can thereby be understood as an open physical place which has a democratic function, as it is the physical location where a diversity of citizens meet and share space (Franzen et al., 2016). In one sense, it is in the streets that public urban democratic society becomes manifested (Jacobs, 1993). In the streets, we are exposed to divergences, negotiations and differences regarding both cultural and social issues. The streets can therefore work as a platform where both the private and the public, adults and children, and also children and children, meet each other without being separated by various organising institutions.

One might however ask how open these public spaces really are for everyone and how democracy is enacted there. The streets are often informally regulated by cultural and social norms, and not everyone is considered welcome to spend their time there. Beggars, for example, are today seen as a general public problem and it is regularly debated in the media whether the welfare state has a responsibility to take them off the streets.⁵ Street musicians and graffiti painters are also sometimes viewed as a nuisance. Moreover, a common understanding is that the streets are seen as unsafe for children to navigate alone (Christensen & Cortés-Morales, 2016; Malone, 2015; Valentine, 2004). Nevertheless, there are still a variety of people from different places, cultures, age groups and situations using the streets to travel from one place to another.

In this research project, I (the researcher) accompanied a miniature preschool group on a journey by bus and by underground metro in the city of Stockholm, Sweden. To access buses and metros, which in one sense can be seen as public spaces organised by the welfare state in order to enable citizens to commute, you need to buy a ticket. However, not everyone can afford to travel by bus or underground. The bus and the metro are therefore formally

⁴ <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=street%20mom>

⁵ <https://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/samhalle/a/kabbyB/kommunen-ska-stoppa-tiggeriet--med-ny-metod>; <https://www.svt.se/opinion/article18999390.svt>; <https://www.svd.se/hjalpor-organisationer-sluta-ge-pengar-till-tiggare>;

regulated public spaces, where people's access to them by ticket stations is monitored and controlled.⁶

The informal and formal public spaces of streets, tunnels, buses and metro trains are public, as they bring a diversity of people together. Most people who are on the street, bus, tunnel or metro share the same intention of travelling elsewhere. At the same time, there is a social distance between these people, as they are anonymous and unfamiliar to each other (Franzen et al., 2016). In this way, public spaces can be described as consisting of incongruity and contradictions (Franzen et al., 2016, p. 58). Public spaces always transform depending on who is utilising them. The researcher Catharina Gabrielsson's (2006) thesis shows how different disciplines, such as philosophy, art and architecture, conceptualise public space in different ways, and how Stortorget (the 'Grand Square', my translation) in Kalmar, Sweden, becomes constructed by the frictions that emerge when various people share the same place (ibid). What public space *is* cannot be clearly defined, as public space is activated through various spatial, physical, social and cultural relations (Gabrielsson, 2006; Lefebvre, 1991; Lefebvre, Kofman, & Lebas, 1996). The term "to activate" a place proposes a focus on transformations, potentials and possibilities (Sand, 2008, p. 81).

⁶ <https://sl.se/en/fares--tickets/>

State of the Art

This chapter presents previous research that relates to the present study. The aim of the present research study is performing a methodological experiment of constructing a preschool that can bring children into to the public space. To facilitate this, I came to curate a preschool's transactions with public space, by bringing two places into each other. In order to do so, I build on both earlier research in the fields of early childhood education, childhood sociology, childhood geography, as well as site-specific methods from art-research, which will be discussed in the upcoming chapter. In this chapter, the presentation of earlier research discusses studies which focus either on contexts of an institutional childhood *or* contexts where a more non-institutional childhood takes place. The first section introduces research which has focused on the spatial indoor preschool context where an institutional childhood takes place. Thereafter, I present those studies which have focused on children's mobilities in public spaces. These studies use different research methods which relate to the present study in various ways, but do not necessarily concern preschool, or even preschool-aged children.

Researching the preschool institutional childhood(s)

In contemporary society, children's independent movement in public spaces has declined, as parents fear the potential dangers of strangers and traffic in the streets (Valentine, 2004). As a result, institutional cultural and social spaces for children have proliferated (*ibid.*). Parents tend to engage their children in private and commodified activities after school such as music lessons or sports. Below, I present research studies which focus on the childhood that becomes institutionalised by preschool. Here, I address studies which focus specifically on indoor childhood contexts, and try to identify what these contexts consist of and how they become constructed.

Indoor childhood contexts are understood as social and cultural contexts which children belong *in*, where research has put effort in trying to understand the human interactions in a specific physical place. The indoor childhood contexts are also understood as organised and constituted *for* and *by* children. These definitions affect the research set-up to engage children and/or educators to inform the researchers about their lives and meaning making within

this specific context (Eriksson Bergström, 2013; Halldén, 2012; Markström, 2005). However, they also acknowledge how space is created by human interactions and negotiations (cf. Markström, 2005; Nordin-Hultman, 2004; Tellgren, 2004). The various childhood contexts presented here hence take into account that places are constructed, by adults, *for* children, and in which children construct their *own* places (Rasmussen, 2004). Thus, a large part of the studies considers the conditions for children to have agency and thereby participate in organising the preschool context.

However, among post-qualitative scholars there has been a dominant concern to consider how children's agency, childhood and contexts can never be studied only as human cultural contexts and constructs (Bodén, Lenz Taguchi, Moberg, & Taylor, 2019). The material agency of place and space also needs to be acknowledged, as context is always "multiple, subjective, and produced from a series of complex relations" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 836). Furthermore, these research studies take into account that even the researcher (or research study) is never separated from the preschool context they are studying, but produces knowledge through various collaborations and entanglements with material matters, children, theories, concepts, situations, etc. (Bodén et al., 2019; Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Lenz Taguchi, 2016; MacLure, 2013a; St Pierre, 2018b). In this way, the post-qualitative studies which focus on the childhood context often challenge the above-mentioned research's conceptualisations of children, childhood contexts and learning spaces.

The introductory and first chapter of this thesis depicted how preschool institutions emerged from the modernist idea of removing children from the streets by organising places where a 'good' childhood could be offered to them. The modernist institutionalisation of childhood hence created a separation between 'adult places' and 'childhood spaces' (Bollig & Millei, 2018). As a result, childhood spaces have become places that seem to disconnect children from the rest of society. However, within these places constructed places *for* children, children themselves construct their own, perhaps more symbolic, places (Halldén, 2007; Rasmussen, 2004). Therefore, research focusing on the spatial aspects of preschool often concerns the relations, interactions and negotiations that organise and construct the preschool institution.

Human-centred preschool childhood

A group of Swedish researchers have focused on the preschool as a place for an institutionalised childhood (cf. Eriksson Bergström, 2013; Halldén, 2007; Markström, 2005). In social studies of childhood, children are understood to have agency over their own lives and thereby participate in constructing the contemporary childhood (James & Prout, 1997). The contemporary childhood is not, however, a unified phenomenon. Recent studies stress that the many agents participating in constructing preschool as an institutional childhood also create a diversity of childhoods. Thus, the childhoods created in preschool

are “manifold, ambivalent and contradictory forms of institutionalised childhood” (Bollig & Millei, 2018, p. 9). Focus has therefore been put on how children create their own spaces within the preschool premises. For example, one Finnish study interviewed children on how they viewed the bathroom space at their preschool (Millei & Imre, 2016). The children’s stories present multiple discourses of a bathroom space. One dominant view of the bathroom was that it was a bathroom specially constructed for children’s bodily constitutions and needs. However, the children also present the bathroom as a place created by social interactions and thereby defined as a ‘children’s space’. In this way, children come to participate in constructing preschool childhood space, and preschool can thereby be understood as a space for political democratic actions (ibid.).

Sofia Eriksson Bergström’s (2013) thesis focuses on children’s discursive ways of creating a *preschool context* to belong to. Thus, what Eriksson Bergström’s thesis targets is the *creation of space* through the actions of the children. In her analysis of the collected empirical data, Eriksson Bergström searches for patterns and dependencies in order to understand children’s experiences of and involvement in the organisation of their preschool. The analysis shows that it is of great importance that educators empathise with and try to understand children’s perspectives, and thus their voices, regarding the preschool place. This leads to an understanding that preschool is a controlled and regulated milieu, but also a free zone where children have agency. The findings show that the contemporary modern institutional preschool childhood consists of a balance between individual and collective agency which limit and enable each other.

Another Swedish ethnographic study, performed by Skånfors, Löfdahl and Hägglund (2009), investigates children’s possibilities and strategies to withdraw in preschool, through analysing the children’s own perspectives. They define the preschool as a “context for children’s peer cultures and interactions” (Skånfors et al., 2009, p. 96). The focus on children’s peer culture put emphasis on the children’s own construction of places for withdrawal and the negotiations made. The study reports that children’s strategies for withdrawal consist of making themselves inaccessible by acting distant, reading books or hiding. For example, one popular place for withdrawal was the cupboard, where the children collectively created a hiding place where they could play undisturbed (ibid.).

There is a body of research that focuses on how the architectural design of the preschool organises pedagogical activities. De Jong shows how different flows and patterns are constituted through the placement of doors in Swedish preschools. Four different preschool floor plans are displayed, all with different connections between the rooms (De Jong, 2010, p. 262). De Jong analyses a number of spatial properties of the floor plans (2010). She pays specific attention to the spatial structure of the preschool and the connections between different rooms (ibid.). A room with two doors opposite each other signals that

this room is for passing through to another room, and hence offers little space for privacy or intimacy. This kind of layout of doors rather offers an easier overview of what is going on in the different rooms. However, a room which has two doors opposite each other can also be designed to offer children spaces to play undisturbed by the placement of furniture. The placement of doors is highly significant in signalling what kind of relations can be created in the room (ibid.). Researchers interested in the preschools architectural design's has detailed how the interior offers educators possibilities to monitor and control the children's activities and behaviours (De Jong, 2010; Eriksson Bergström, 2013; Matthews & Lippman, 2016).

A study by Lindh (2014) analyses the preschool's spatial organisation of an art studio. However, according to Lindh, the art studio does not signal only one way of using or understanding it. Lindh analyses how ten Swedish preschool art studio rooms (for arts and crafts activities) are organised to offer the children a more autonomous and heterogeneous exploration and experimentation with creative processes. Thus, Lindh claims the art studio to be a heterotopic room, which contains many ideas, intentions and meanings that can offer the children the opportunity to organise themselves the learning processes that take place in this room (ibid.).

Markström (2007) stresses how the hall in a preschool differs from the other rooms, as it works as an intermediate domain between the private and the public childhood. It is thus a space that is marked by negotiations and interactions between cultural and normative ways of organising space. In Markström's ethnographic study, the preschool institution is presented as a public space open for certain people: children, parents and educators (ibid.). The hall functions as a transit arena, where the citizens meet the institution (p. 116). It is a place where the children are left to the educators by the parents, as well as a place where children often leave and store their personal belongings. However, as Eriksson Bergström (2013) so eloquently shows, the children challenge the institutional rules by for example bringing in and hiding sweets and eating them in the hall, or half-opening the front door.

Transitions in the preschool place are in focus in another study by Nina Rutanen (2017). Rutanen (2012, 2017) performs an ethnographic fieldwork (observational field notes, video recordings, and maps of children's movements) by which she investigates transitions in a Finnish day care group for one- to three-year-olds. In order to consider the children's transitions in the everyday preschool practice, Rutanen (2017) applies the spatial relational perspectives outlined by Henri Lefebvre. She analyses how the children participate in producing space through the way space is constructed by the multiple ways in which we conceive, perceive and live in space. The analysis of, for example, the empirical events of a circle time session is guided by curricular documents and discursive ideals. These endorse the importance of circle time, and how the children and adults together construct the circle time practice through repeated routines and rhythms which move from one activity into the

activity of circle time. Rutanen (2017) shows how children's experiences emerge in the bodily relationship to physical and social settings. Space becomes negotiated, reconstructed and reorganised by the children's and educator's interactions in which they collaboratively create routines and rhythms through space transitions (Vuorisalo, Raittila, & Rutanen, 2018).

Lesley Gallacher (2005), like Rutanen (2017), is interested in how space, place and human agency are constructed by the rhythms and routines flowing in the preschool premises. They both focus on the spatiality of the institutional rhythms of a preschool, where they acknowledge a heterogeneity of agencies fluctuating. Gallacher uses post-structural theoretical analytic tools to consider a British toddler room as a "site of control" created by adults (2005, p. 2). She maps the toddlers' and staff's positions in the toddler room during a typical day at the nursery. Thereafter, Gallacher performs an analysis of how the staff and toddlers have various styles of trying to control the ongoing activities in the room (*ibid.*, p.14). The study takes on a participatory approach where Gallacher (2005) takes a "non-authoritarian adult role" to gain access to the children's perspectives (Gallacher, 2005, p. 3). The study shows that although the nursery staff control the room through time schedules, surveillance and spatial ordering, the toddlers "appropriate and reconfigure space in the toddler room for themselves" (Gallagher, 2005, p. 2). Thus, Gallagher's analysis enables a discussion on how toddlers modify space and time by inserting their own routines and rhythms and how an institutional childcare offers children possibilities to have their own agency.

In contrast to focusing solely on the interior perspective of preschool institutions, Marilyn Read (2007) addresses how the exterior design of a preschool contributes to "create a sense of place for the children who spend their time there" (p. 387). Read's study focuses on preschools in the USA. The article concludes with recommendations for how to use the exterior preschool building to create a feeling of belonging. The children and parents will feel more included, it is suggested, with the use of welcoming entrances that incorporate home-like elements and play materials. Read's article does not include the children's interpretations of how the buildings create a sense of place for them. She is, however, interested in how the buildings impact the children's desire to participate in preschool practice. The researcher's interpretations of the buildings contribute to predefined sets of assumptions about how to build in order to create a sound sense of belonging.

The playground connected to the preschool has also been of interest for research. The spatial structure of a playground is constructed by vegetation, fences, sandpits and other play material which affect children's experiences of belonging and interactions (De Jong, 2010). Pia Björklid (2005) asserts that outdoor playgrounds that have more natural areas encourage more interaction and cooperation between the children. Fredrika Mårtensson's (2004) thesis depicts how children's play and fantasy develops by taking inspiration from

the architectural design of the environment. Mårtensson stresses the importance of a varied environment that can offer different sensory experiences and ways of bodily movement. Research has also shown that younger children use their senses and emotions to explore and create a feeling of belonging in a place (Björklid, 2005, p. 16). Furthermore, the outdoor environment has to enable the children to create their own places (ibid). Karin Engdahl (2014), as well as Ingrid Engdahl and Eva Ärlemalm-Hagsér (2011), emphasises the pedagogical possibilities the outdoor preschool playground offers. Karin Engdahl (2014) describes the preschool playground as a central environment for children to make connections, participate in and exert influence over the everyday preschool practice. Elm Fristorp and Lindstrand (2012) analyse how the preschool playground offers children possibilities to create their own meaning and explore their interests. They also stress how the environment is a resource for learning and play, and that the design of this place becomes central for organising and offering certain pedagogical activities, but at the same time enables children to influence and regulate these activities to suit their interests.

De-centring the human aspects of childhood in preschool

The research studies outlined below aim in various ways to problematise the agency paradigm created in the 1990s, which focus children's *own* places at preschool, or *children's* participation in constructing institutional childhood places. The studies presented in the previous section centralise how space is inhabited and constructed through the relations between children and adults or peers. Research focusing on these human negotiations and connections quite often engages an ethnographic approach of inviting the children to participate in research in order to be able to present their own experiences and perspectives on childhood spaces (Mannion, 2007).

However, and as Mannion claims, research needs to take a more socio-spatial perspective into account when considering children's participation (Mannion, 2007, pp. 405–406). Thus, the view of children as social actors needs to be strengthened by the view that agency is created by entangled discursive-material relations and situations (an ontological assumption which initially Lenz Taguchi brought into the field of ECER, see for example Lenz Taguchi, 2000, 2010, 2012, 2013a, 2013b). Thus, what Mannion challenges here is the claim that children create their own spaces, thereby depicting child and adult spaces as two separated places. Rather, to create space is always an *intergenerational* process (Mannion, 2007, p. 409) and dependent on spatial and relational conditions. Therefore, Mannion (ibid.) calls for a research that focuses on the spatial-relational conditions for making children's voices heard. Thus, this body of research considers how agency is fabricated by discursive-material relations and thereby produces a more-than-human childhood (Blaise, 2016; Taylor & Blaise, 2014; Taylor, Blaise, & Giugni, 2013).

The post-qualitative studies presented below, which claim to take a posthumanist or new materialist stance on contexts, aim to address alternative and entangled material or discursive connections as ways to create new concepts by which we can think differently about empirical ‘reality’ (Kraftl, 2018; MacLure, 2013a, 2013b). These so-called post-qualitative inquiry has sprung out of a critique of how the dominance of qualitative research methodological aims of understanding and interpretation, limits our definitions of what research can be and produce (Lenz Taguchi & St Pierre, 2017; Richardson & St Pierre, 2018; St Pierre, 2018a). Instead, both St Pierre and Jackson proposes that the task of research should be concerned with the multiple encounters and assemblages that activates new types of thinking, and thereby produce knowledge *with* the world (Jackson, 2017; St Pierre, 2017b, 2017a, 2018b, 2018a). Within education, this body of research has often aspired to challenge and reconceptualise definitions of ‘the child’, ‘childhood’ and/or ‘learning’ (cf. Blaise, 2016; Lenz Taguchi, 2011; Nordin-Hultman, 2004; Liselott Olsson, 2012; Taylor & Blaise, 2014).

The Australian researcher Jane Bone (2018) acknowledges how the furniture in preschool “mediates relationships and ways of life” (p. 1—2). Through the methodological approach of assembling various data, from personal or fictional narratives and memories to visual films and notes on conversations and observations where furniture becomes especially in focus, Bone enables representation of the chair through multiple cultural times and places. Thus, the small chair which often appears in preschool practices can be analysed in various ways in order to present different spatial aspects of an everyday preschool context. For example, the small chair also conditions the adult bodies present in preschool. The adult bodies have to adapt to a smaller seat, but also the small chair can activate memories from the adults’ own childhoods. The chair can also supervise and control the children’s bodies, as it is often utilised to organise routines and activities in a certain way at preschool (ibid.) The preschool routines and activities are shaped and framed by the material-discursive preschool contexts.

Post-qualitative studies (Lather & St Pierre, 2013; St.Pierre, 2011; St Pierre, 2018a) corresponding to the above mentioned studies also acknowledge how the researcher’s discursive views on children, childhood and context participate in creating the empirical educational context (Bodén et al., 2019). One example of handling the complexity for research to represent agency is Sheri Leafgren’s (2013) (2013) attempt to describe an American classroom milieu through the material and non-human agencies of a pencil. By using Deleuzian thinking about the milieu as both striated and nomadic, Leafgren disrupts the common view of a classroom as clearly directing children’s actions in accordance with the teacher’s intentions. She shows how the children create collaborations with pencils in order to create heterogeneous classroom milieus simultaneously. However, and in line with a post-qualitative methodology, Leafgren blends her own observations, with children’s

drawings of the pencils they are using, with stories told by various children, educators and others and with findings from internet posts. With reference to Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 1994) the multiple sources are thought to map multiple relations between child, teacher and pencils in classrooms (Leafgren, 2013). Thus, Leafgren (ibid.) uses various discursive sites to describe and analyse what a pencil is or not; the pencil can be thought of in many ways depending on where it is thought (ibid.). Hence, data is not only found in observations of the child-context preschool or in the children's drawings, but also in the researcher's more personal material-discursive sites (ibid.).

Both Eva Änggård (2015a) and Lena Magnusson (2017) carried out studies in which children were given cameras to take photos of their everyday preschool practices. They concentrate their analyses of their ethnographical fieldwork on how the children and the cameras create and produce data about the preschool practice. Both Magnusson and Änggård use the physicist and theorist Karen Barad's (2007) thinking on how the materials, stuff, or physical phenomena in the world also have agency to create meaning and that non-humans and humans intra-act to create a joint agency (Änggård, 2015a; Magnusson, 2017). The context of preschool becomes presented by the material-discursive actions taken between the child and the camera.

The Canadian researcher Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw's (2013) transcriptions of video observations are utilised to disrupt the common notion of transitions in early childhood education. In early childhood education, 'transitions' often refers to the situations that concern the transfer from one activity and routine into another. Pacini-Ketchabaw shows how the focus on transitions within early childhood education practice often consider transitions as a *context* to study in order to understand the preschool child. However, rather than defining time as units following each other, Pacini-Ketchabaw takes on the relational-materialist thinking of time as emerging through material-discursive rhythms, where the past, the present and the future are entangled (ibid.). Thus, the history of an activity still exists in the transition to other activities (p. 226). Pacini-Ketchabaw urges us to think about transitory spaces, rather than the transitions as actions, and how these places offer a pedagogical opportunity.

Researching childhoods in urban public space

As the present study is placed in public places outside the preschool premises, children's outdoor mobilities in urban public spaces are important to consider. I present here the methodological aims claimed by studies on children's urban mobilities, as well as the methods and reported knowledge outcomes. The research studies presented below do not however report specifically on preschool or preschool-aged children, but relate to the present thesis by their research methods and knowledge production.

The below text shows how the study of children's mobilities is often situated within the disciplines of geography and sociology. In these disciplines, childhood is seen as a particular social phenomenon which should be given specific attention by research. In the new paradigm of childhood studies that emerged in the '90s, the methodology of ethnography was presented as offering the best method to study children's agency and actions in contemporary society (James & Prout, 1997). The first section presents the research method of guided walks as useful to gain direct information from the children about their whereabouts and movements in public urban spaces.

The second section considers posthumanist or new materialist research studies, which focus on the educational aspects of enabling children to connect to various urban spaces. In these studies, the children are seen as active research participants and co-researchers (Rautio, 2014) in order to enable the researcher to think differently about the empirical world. These studies also stress the sensory, situational and embodied relations which emerge when various educational practices connect with other places. Posthumanist walking methods enable us to think differently *with* the empirical world (Springgay & Truman, 2017b, 2018).

Guided walks in the city

One body of research, which is situated within childhood studies and children's geographies, focuses on children's movements in (mostly urban) environments, and how the children establish various meanings and relations. Pia Christensen and Susana Cortés Morales' extensive review of the body of research concerning children's outdoor mobilities identifies the most common methodology and methods to gain knowledge of the questions raised (Christensen & Cortés-Morales, 2016). This body of research attempts to identify the movements, activities, interactions and connections that children make with their neighbourhood or the surrounding urban environment. Another dominant concern for mobility studies is to feature children's possibilities to move independently in the city (ibid.). The dominant disciplines carrying out this research are social studies of childhood and children's geographies (Holloway & Valentine, 2000 in Christensen & Cortés-Morales, 2016, p. 3; Holloway, 2014). This research group ground their research in the paradigm defining childhood as a social construct, where children also have agency in constructing childhood (James & Prout, 1997). Furthermore – and in line with the ethnographic vocabulary – these studies tend to focus on the *everyday* places where childhood becomes constructed and the spatial discourses which affect views of childhood (Holloway & Valentine, 2000).

As a consequence, research on childhood mobilities has often come to strive to understand *children's* experiences, relations and social constructs when moving in various urban environments (Christensen & Cortés-Morales,

2016, p. 6). In order to gain knowledge on children's mobilities through different interactions and interrelations, place has been defined as something more than a container where children move from point A to point B (Christensen & Cortés-Morales, 2016; Horton et al., 2014). Rather, place is seen as constructed by movement and relations. Thus, not only is childhood a social construct, but place itself is also socially constructed (Änggård, 2015b). In this way, one important focus becomes the children's bodily experiences and ways to create a sense of belonging in these places (Änggård, 2015b; Horton et al., 2014; Horton & Kraftl, 2006).

One quite common way of gaining knowledge about children's experiences and meaning making regarding public spaces is to observe and follow the children walking in particular places. A number of ethnographic studies have been conducted in order to understand children's everyday lives and experiences of place through what has been labelled in terms of 'walks' (Cele, 2006), 'guided tours' (Halvars-Franzén, 2010) or 'walking tours' (De Laval, 2014; Hickey & Phillips, 2013).

Studies on children's mobilities often concern children's possibilities for autonomous movement in public spaces (Cele, 2013; Christensen & Mikkelsen, 2013; Horton et al., 2014; Nansen et al., 2015). However, some researchers have recently come to question the focus on independence and rather turn to further investigate *interdependence*. Thus, children's agency in constructing place is highly and mutually dependent on multiple relations and materialities (Christensen et al., 2011; Mikkelsen & Christensen, 2009; Nansen et al., 2015). This research gives examples of how mobile Devises can trace and map children's mobilities in a larger city in the UK (cf. Christensen et al., 2011) or how travelling with a group of friends in Melbourne, Australia (cf. Nansen et al., 2015) affects the children's experiences of and agency in these places. Studies exploring children's independence and interdependence often focus on school children or teenagers. However, there are a few studies that focus on younger children even though the children aged between one and three years old have not been included in such studies.

Eva Änggård (2015b) performs an ethnographic study in Sweden, which employs 'walking tours' in outdoor surroundings, with a small group of children aged six to eight years.⁷ The study's concern is to investigate the children's experiences and relations to various places close to their school. Änggård finds that the walking tours enable children to more easily be reminded of their own experiences, which are then more easily expressed. Moreover, the walking tour enables more bodily expression which better communicates

⁷ Children aged 6 years in Sweden are enrolled in a preschool class. Preschool classes are a compulsory separate type of school form that intends to work as a transition between preschool and comprehensive school. <https://utbildningsguiden.skolverket.se/languages/english-englishka/preschool-and-preschool-class>

the children's meanings of the place to the researcher. Änggård's (ibid.) walking tours create knowledge about what kinds of experiences the children express in their everyday outdoor environments. The children in the study prefer places that are strongly related to physical activities. In the walking tours, the children show Änggård their embodied experiences of the place. Furthermore, the children often point out details in the environment, which are hard to explain verbally. In the playground, they point at swings, sand pits or slides. While walking in nature, they mark out big stones, climb trees or stumps, and use sticks for building huts. Änggård (2015b) is also often guided to special places which the children associate with certain games or ways of playing. Here, the play is developed in close relation to the place (Änggård, 2015b, p. 103).

Raija Raittila (2012) is also interested in the surrounding environment of the preschool. Raittila takes children aged four to six years on ethnographic city block tours in a town in central Finland, as a method to gain understanding of how children construct their meaning of their everyday environment through various actions. The researcher and a small group of children stroll through the city. The researcher takes part in the children's actions and follows their choices on where to go, but stays in the background so she does not influence their actions and selections (ibid.). Their everyday city environment is situated in a medium-sized town in Finland. The data was collected from 20 tours. The children's speech and actions during these tours was analysed and categorised in terms of the two categories of *moving* and *stopping*. These categories helped to distinguish how meaning emerges in relation to the children's movements in the place they are in. Thus, children's lived constructed meaning of places is a "...transactional process of everyday life in which human, physical, social, cultural and societal factors are present" (Raittila, 2012, p. 277). Thus, there is no general way for children to construct the meaning of places, as it is relational and highly dependent on the situations that emerge momentarily.

In both of the above-mentioned research projects conducted by Änggård (2015b) and Raittila (2012), the researcher becomes informed by the children about their everyday lives and experiences. The children's actions and expressions of their experiences become the data of the study. The researcher initiates the method of walking, but thereafter stays in the background to observe the children's actions and meaning making. Thus, the walks become acts of what can be conceptualised as "child-curated walks" (Hickey & Phillips, 2013, p. 126), which work as a method to observe children's meaning making of and in a place. These observations are then analysed by the researcher using various theoretical perspectives applied to data to produce analyses of different kinds. Importantly, and to repeat and emphasize the above, these researchers produce knowledge about both the children's experiences of the preschool's surrounding outdoor environment, and the children's way of using

different environments for different means. This is understood with various theories applied to data.

A focus on children's experiences outside the preschool premises is also seen in the work of the Swedish researcher Yvonne Lindh (2017). However, in Lindh's ethnographic project, the focus is on children's experiences of public art. Lindh takes a preschool group out in public on so-called 'sculpture strolls' to study children's encounters with art (Lindh, 2017). In the sculpture strolls, the children were permitted to look at, touch and sometimes climb the sculptures. Afterwards (back at preschool), they were asked to draw something, preferably a sculpture. These sculpture strolls embrace numerous democratic perspectives, featuring an ambition to equalise the children's and adults' interactions through play *in*, *with* and *through* the encounters with sculptures. The strolls aim for children to be part of an interactive pedagogy, where their voices matter (ibid.). They also constitute a technique for stating that art is for every citizen, including preschool children. The study reports knowledge about children's perceptions of art through photographs taken on site, alongside the children's own representations in the form of drawings and other kinds of work. The recommendation from Lindh is to plan for preschool activities where children are enabled to take part in public art, as to assure the children's democratic rights as citizens.

Katarina Gustafson and Danielle Ladru Ekman (former van der Burgt) (2015) are interested in how a so-called Swedish 'mobile preschool' can enable children to become active citizens in various public spaces such as parks, playgrounds or shopping malls (Ladru Ekman & Gustafson, 2018). The research project *Mobility, informal learning and citizenship in mobile preschools* aims to understand how a preschool accommodated in a bus transforms the conditions of the routines and activities performed in a stationary preschool (Gustafson & van der Burgt, 2015, p. 202). The study reports that even though the children move to different locations, mobility inside the bus is highly restricted, and that non-adult-led mobilities in new places are more difficult to endorse when the boundaries constantly need to be re-established in each new place visited (Gustafson & van der Burgt, 2015). Ladru Ekman and Gustafson (2018) claim to conduct a mobile ethnography, where they join children aged four to five years old and educators in their travels, taking field notes and video recording.

The article 'Yay, a downhill!': *Mobile preschool children's collective mobility practices and 'doing' space in walks in line* reports the empirical fieldwork. It focuses on two empirical examples of walking-in-line, which is a common and mundane configuration of a preschool out and about in the city. The analysis of this walking-in-line activity (in relation to the places in which it was conducted: going down a hill in a forest and going down a moving walkway in a shopping centre) brings attention to how place shapes and frames daily activities. However, the analysis shows how the children's activities create the place anew. The mundane routine of walking-in-line thereby

constitutes an informal kind of learning that makes bodily adjustments to the place in which it is performed. In this study, the children's participation is seen in relation to public space and the children are understood as citizens participating in society. The study gains understanding of how a "mobile preschool provides children with a larger palette of agencies and creativities and play and/or educational routines, resulting in various embodied and social learning processes" (Ladru Ekman & Gustafson, 2018, p. 106).

Educational embodied and sensorial thinking-with-the-world

So far, I have identified research focusing on children's agencies in relating and connecting with urban places as somewhat autonomous or (at least) interdependent movements in the city. In this section, the body of research engaging posthumanist or new materialist theories is presented. These studies assume onto-epistemological relationships between objects, places, material, non-human and discursive matters. Thereby the phenomena in scope for research can be multiple and constantly changing. Thus, this body of research does not focus especially on children, nor mobility or the everyday as a critical focus for childhood studies, but can invite other (not entirely obvious) disciplines and rationales to play a significant role in how to think about these concepts differently. There is no way of focusing on *one* separate phenomenon in the world, since we as researchers are part of this world at the same time as studying it. This is key to the onto-epistemological approach to research where being and knowing are entangled processes, always in the making and co-constituting each other (Barad, 2007; Haraway, 1988, 2016). In this way, the research analysis often tends to be the focus of a pedagogy that, rather than teaching children about the world, aims to offer opportunities for children to learn *with* the world and in a direct manner. The studies presented below rather deconstruct the ontological assumptions about childhood, children, learning and teaching, to enable the construction on new knowledge *with* the world.

Walking methods, as those already presented above, are also employed by posthumanist or new materialist researchers. However, there is a different methodology behind these methods. Rather than focusing only on the researcher's possibilities to become informed by the participants, this type of research considers how our knowing is deeply connected with our ways of living in the world, as indicated above with references to a couple of key new materialist and posthumanist theorists. In line with Donna Haraway's conceptualisation of knowledge as situated (Haraway, 1988), Stephanie Springgay and Sarah Truman, use methods of walking as a sensorial way of *thinking with* the world (Springgay & Truman, 2017b, 2018). Thus, there are multiple ways of walking, which can expose the political and cultural aspects of experiencing place (Springgay & Truman, 2018). Rather than claiming walking methods as pre-existing methods which gather data *about* the world, walking methods

emerge *with* the world, and *in* situations (Springgay & Truman, 2017b). Walking can thus be a method which inquiry the “sensory, material and ephemeral intensities beyond the logics of representation” (Springgay & Truman, 2017a, p. 28). Springgay and Truman (2017a) also stress how methods of walking as ways of understanding movement can be used as a pedagogical tool. They show how sound walks – where audio tracks are listened to when walking – can be used as sensing places is connected to sounds and experiences made in other places. Soundwalks becomes an embodied understanding of the material-discursive places (ibid.)

Springgay and Truman (2019) give two other examples of walking as a method to engage students in various art practices. Springgay initiates (together with educators) walks with classes with Canadian children aged eight to 13 years (often newly arrived to Canada), in order to disrupt the more traditional definition of landscape art. The classes walked along the Don River, close to the school, and created landscapes with a series of wooden panels and digital cameras. Thus, landscaping became more than imaging and representing the land on a canvas. The walking becomes a way to intervene in the landscape and a way for the children to speculate about the future landscape (Springgay & Truman, 2019). Truman describes how she takes 18 English year ten students on so called ‘read-walks’ in the school grounds. These walks explore the relation between thinking-in-movement and writing as a literacy practice (ibid.). In this way, writing becomes situated and in direct relation with lived experience, rather than a way to narrate lived experience post-representation.

Kim Atkinson (2015) engages a so-called multi-species ethnography to take a group of children out on walks in the park on southern Vancouver Island in Canada. Together with the children, Atkinson makes an inquiry into the impact of their walk on nature. Hence, in line with Donna Haraway’s call for situated knowledge (1988), the researchers try to *think with* a common world framework. It is based in an ontology where humans, culture, nature, and material relations are non-hierarchical – flattened out – and interdependent (ibid.) Atkinson’s (2015) aim for the walks is thus not to teach children *about* nature but to shift the pedagogy to one that enables “thinking with wasps, bees, and mushrooms and helps us glimpse possibilities for a multi-species ethics of environmental vulnerability” (p. 78). The aim of the study is to describe an empirical event that could awaken a preschool pedagogy where children learn to live *with* other species as companions.

Posthumanist childhood environmental study enables a focus on the pedagogy of learning through interspecies encounters (Atkinson, 2015; Taylor & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2015). Affrica Taylor and Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw are also interested in the relations between children and animals that are created in encounters. In order to be able to focus on interdependencies and exchanges, Taylor and Pacini-Ketchabaw (ibid.) engage two *multi-species ethnographies* performed in Australia and Canada. However, the researcher is

also a companion in creating the practice that enables children “to sense and register, in more than cognitive ways” (p. 512), and thereby themselves learn to be affected. Multi-species ethnography opens up for researchers to “ask questions, open for possibilities” (ibid. p. 515) and admit that the world is complex, which makes it impossible for a researcher to register, analyse and rationally explain.

The above examples show how posthumanist researchers within education have an ambition not to oppose nature to humans (Malone, 2016; Nxumalo & Cedillo, 2017). Thus, humans are also seen as nature. Moreover, these studies are also inclined to deconstruct the divide between nature and urban spaces and rather focus on the nature that emerges through different constellations in specific situations (Malone, 2016). When engaging in a posthumanist geography to analyse children’s (aged six to 14 years) photographs of their everyday spaces in La Paz, Bolivia, Malone (ibid.) redirects the research focus to consider how children engage with nature in their everyday urban life in a poor neighbourhood. Here, for example, stray dogs are seen to have the same agency as the children and together they create everyday life through reciprocal exchange (ibid. p. 53). Furthermore, this study critically highlights how earlier research often defines nature from a white middle-class position. Earlier research has tended to idealise children’s connections with nature as taking place out in the woods hiking, fishing or camping, while Malone’s study enacted in La Paz in Bolivia considers the nature present in urban streets, i.e. stray dogs (ibid.). This is in line with Horton and Krafl’s (2018) suggestions of how the nature that children encounter in east the parts of London (UK) also consists of the un-idyllic environment. For example, the children in their study often talked about the rats in their neighbourhoods. The study shows that children’s social and cultural identity is not only a discursive organisation, but also very much connected with geography and materiality (Horton & Kraftl, 2018).

Another posthumanist and new materialist focus of research is children’s place literacies (Hackett & Somerville, 2017; Somerville, 2013, 2015). These studies aim to understand “the relationship between language and the world” (Hackett & Somerville, 2017), and thus deconstruct the divide between what we consider to be nature and culture (Somerville, 2013). Language is seen not as a mere representation of the lived world, but as “[coming] into being simultaneously with the world itself” (Somerville, 2013, p. 410). Margaret Somerville analyses the drawings and writing of two three and four grade classes (aged eight to 10 years) about what they had learned when visiting the Morwell River Wetland in Australia. Somerville treats the children’s work as “place-learning maps” (ibid., p. 411), as they show how the children’s thinking is in deep connection with the situated place, but also enable alternative meanings of the experience of the wetlands. Thus, literacy learning needs to be closely connected to different material and cultural places.

A similar result is reported in the article *Displacing identity – placing aesthetics: early childhood literacy in a globalised world* by Liselott Olsson, Gunilla Dahlberg and Ebba Theorell (2016). The Swedish researchers engineer *empirical events* where children are invited to elaborate and perform experimentations on place and space. The empirical events are intended to create ‘uncertain spaces’ and refer to the anthropologist Augé’s non-places to describe how these places allow potential experimentation on their meaning and significance (ibid., p. 10).

Furthermore, the early childhood education researcher Liselott Olsson (2013) arranges a ‘mirror project’ inspired by the site-specific artist and researcher Monica Sand’s ‘mirror travels’ in the Swedish urban metro system. Sand’s work, in turn, is a collective rework of the artist Robert Smithson’s mirror travels in the Yucatan, Mexico (Sand, 2012b). Olsson’s mirror project collectively “creates situations together with the children that would encourage a closer connection between the mirrors and language, reading and writing” (Olsson, 2013). In the first created situation, the adults (researcher and educators) emptied a room at preschool and placed mirrors in “an inviting way” (ibid., p. 236), then let the children enter the room and, together with Olsson and a dance artist, enacted experimentations with the mirrors that provoked questions on language representation. Another created situation was to “perform a mirror installation on the subway and the children would use language, reading and writing in their preparations and performance of this installation” (ibid., p. 241).

Olsson (2013) claims that these methods are “close to ethnographic methods” (ibid., p. 232), but at the same time address how the processes of understanding comes into being through the formulating of questions and the children’s “drive for learning” (ibid., p. 233). The methods can be described as place-methods, as they always adapt and become constructed in the context in which they are used (Olsson et al., 2016). Thus, the study produces place-methods for literacy learning where children are enabled to create, construct and experiment with the relations between language and place, rather than just being taught about the place or language separately. In this way, the children and researchers engage in “co-creation and co-production in, of and with the empirical” (Olsson et al., 2016, p. 11).

Pauliina Rautio and Joseph Winston (2015) also show how language is a profoundly material matter and can be understood as a playmate which together with the children constructs play. So called child-matter relations are investigated by Rautio (2014) when she brings 12 Finnish children (aged four to seven years) into “a large half-empty hall that used to be a library at the university” (Rautio, 2014, p. 4). This place is seen as place for passing through, where people rarely stay for a special reason, and rarely are children seen in a university institution. Therefore, Rautio terms this place a ‘non-place’, and, similarly to Olsson (2013) makes a reference to Augé to assert the uncertainty that the place contains a shared meaning. In an attempt to create

learning possibilities in which children come into knowing *with* the world rather than *about* the world, Rautio (2014) focuses on the children's intra-actions with objects and materials which together come to produce the place. Rautio considers that the children, educators and researchers are participating together in creating knowledge through empirical events. The study is methodologically described as using observant participation, where observation is focused on how things, children, and researchers interact (Rautio, 2014, p. 4). Thus, the researcher is not studying a natural setting, but also engaging and intervening in creating place. The study shows that children can "challenge norms, engage in nonsense (which is not necessarily non-sense), become things, relate to things as beings, become beings that are animated by things" (ibid., p. 12) in these produced material-discursive places.

Emerging and self-differentiating methods

The empirical material is produced jointly through experiments directly in and through the social situations in which we researchers act and intervene. We proceed from the material and metaphorical conditions of the place (or the means of transport) and create a set of new rules through collective interactions taking place. (Sand & Atienza, 2014, pp. 136–137, my translation)

The first chapter described this thesis' aim to experiment with displacing preschool practices from their institutionalised place into public spaces, inspired by various site-specific artistic place-based methods, in order to develop situated onto-epistemological research methods for early childhood education research. Thus, this thesis sets out to *produce methods* by experimenting together with toddlers and what emerges as different events, featuring multiple other agents as well in public spaces. In this way, the methodology of this thesis aligns with Springgay and Truman's work which calls for methods to emerge in processes and out of collaboration with other people (2017b, p. 204). They presuppose that we need to develop research methods that are not pre-constituted or formulated in beforehand as a "set of directions or rules that contain and control movement" (ibid.) Rather, research methods need to go beyond the pre-procedural configurations, and be experimented with in the actual procedures of the empirical fieldwork.

In this chapter, I will describe, discuss and problematise the methodology of this thesis which can be understood as a methodology that is designed to make research methods emerge in the process. What does it mean to claim that methods emerge in the process and what potential does this hold for educational research? This means that this chapter will respond to important aspects of the first research question: *What kinds of early childhood research methods will emerge in these displacements when preschool practices are put into transactional interactions with public spaces of streets, buses, metro-trains and pedestrian tunnel and the agents within them?*

Firstly, I will discuss and describe the ontological and epistemological takes which set out to produce research methods. Secondly, I will describe how this thesis defines place as material-discursive by presenting three theorists' notions of the relations between the concepts of space and place. Thereafter, I will describe and problematise how artistic site-specific approaches have strived to produce sites for art in public spaces by using the material-

discursive relations constructing place and where different methods emerge in the ongoing processes.

The onto-epistemological notion of research methods

This thesis aims to experiment with displacing preschool practices from their institutionalised place into public spaces, inspired by various site-specific artistic place-based methods, in order to develop situated onto-epistemological research methods for early childhood education research. These emerging methods aim to enhance interaction between the preschool institution – including the children – and public spaces, as spaces of societal interaction and transaction between different actors.

This aim indicates that the researcher is directly and actively participating in the experimentations in order to, together with the preschool practices including the toddlers and educators, *produce* research methods in a number of public spaces. This means that the researcher's methods to do research in these places and situations are understood to enable the transactions⁸ by which public spaces are constituted. The direct and active participation in the empirical world is thus based on what the physicist Karen Barad (2007) terms an onto-epistemological theoretical stance, where research cannot be seen as separated from the everyday practices it often claims to study. In this onto-epistemological way of thinking about research, research is thought to be only one practice amongst other practices that produce the life in the world we are living in.

Describing research methodology in this way is not new in the field of child and early childhood education studies. The post-qualitative research projects presented in chapter three, presenting previous research, also address how researchers and their practices participate in constructing the empirical data (Leafgren, 2013; Magnusson, 2017; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2013).⁹ These studies highlight that the theoretical stances taken in relation to ontological issues about reality also participate in producing different ways of thinking about reality (Kraftl, 2018; MacLure, 2013b). However, the post-qualitative stance

⁸ As already outlined in the introduction of this thesis, transactions are mobile enactments in the process of change through relational encounters (Braidotti, 2006).

⁹ However, in order to assert that this thesis performs collaborative experimentations that produce research methods, I have chosen not to use the concepts empirical field work and data, as they traditionally signal a fundamental difference between research practice and layperson's practices. Stengers (2018) and Mol (2002) often use the concept *empirical* to discuss how reality is produced in multiple ways, and that research and laypersons practices overlap and intervene with each other. In my articles I have described the experimentations as empirical field-work. When writing the thesis text, I have however decided to describe my work in terms of collaborative experimentation and the production of documentation to co-produce new research methods for ECER, and in order to avoid the reader to understand my work in terms of field-work and interpreting children's experiences.

is still somewhat different to the stance taken in this thesis. Here, the researcher participates in reality in which the research methods emerge which will facilitate a preschool and preschool children to take place (not only participate in creating events but also take up physical space) in order to actively transform these places. The earlier mentioned post-qualitative projects imply an implicit researcher participation, which relies on the researchers' *thinking with* theory and the empirical data, primarily as something that takes place after an engagement with practices.¹⁰

This thesis has taken on the philosopher Isabelle Stengers' (2018) call for another way of understanding the role of research, which demands collaboration and transactions between *different* practices' ways of using and producing knowledge in *different* situations. Thus, knowledge produced within research needs to directly adapt to, as well as interfere with, the situations it is transferred into handling, enacting and producing (cf. Abrahamsson, Bertoni, Mol, & Martín, 2015; De Laet & Mol, 2000; Mol, 2002; Stengers, 2018). Therefore, it becomes central to develop onto-epistemological research methods which are situated and emerge in collaborations with the concerned everyday practices (in this thesis it is the preschool practice). The emergent onto-epistemological research-methods thus enables collaborations and transactions which construct the involved public spaces.

The methodology put to work here is thus to produce research methods, rather than to produce knowledge about a certain phenomenon. The early childhood education researcher Hillevi Lenz Taguchi has long advocated that preschool practices must offer self-differentiated pedagogical possibilities, in order for children to experience themselves in other and different ways (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). Consequently, she has also called for self-differentiating research methods, which embrace a multiplicity of (onto-epistemological) knowledge productions (Lenz Taguchi, 2017). This thesis hence performs a methodological experimentation on what kind of research methods that facilitate a preschool practice that children participate in constructing, which can enable children to take place in transactions of public spaces.

Based on these theoretical premises for the present thesis, it becomes possible to state that the research phenomenon studied is neither children nor childhood. The phenomenon studied as well as enacted is research methods. Or, rather, this is a study that facilitates and enables research methods to

¹⁰ Post-qualitative research studies has often thoroughly described the researcher subjectivity as always affect the outcomes of the studies (see for example Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, 2013). While the methodology of this thesis agrees on the importance of the researcher's subjectivity influencing the knowledge productions, it will not further describe my prior experiences and background as that would demand me to also describe all the individual toddler's subjectivities, as well as the places detailed material compositions of for example the thickness of the corrugated steel in the tunnel walls. These kinds of descriptions would of course trace and map the emerged entangled relations, but not afford me to focus how these entangled relations together come to *produce* methods.

emerge through adapting and intervening with the situations that occur in, for example, the *vocal strolls* enacted with toddlers and assisting educators in public spaces (article 1). Together we investigate the potentials and what is made possible while enacting these *vocal strolls*, and we experiment with how to *do* preschool in this way. What kind of preschool that facilitates children to take place is thus dependent on how the research methods respond to the various transactions enacted in public spaces: what preschool is thereby becomes constituted by different and multiple concerns that become self-differentiated by the multiple methods that emerge in the doing. Therefore, the methodology of this thesis can be described as a *relational ontology of differing/difference* with references to some of the main theorists of onto-epistemology (Braidotti, 2006, 2013a; Braidotti & Regan, 2017; Mol, 2002; Stengers, 2018). This refers to the condition that different versions of the empirical (Mol, 2002) will emerge in the use of different research methods.

The research methods of *vocal strolls*, *mappings*, *displacements* and *metaphors* will be described as emerging through various material and discursive transactions. The development of these methods has been inspired by artists working with site-specific methods, which long has been interested in producing methods for art in public spaces through collaborative transactions. The forthcoming sections in this chapter will therefore first theoretically define place as material-discursive. Thereafter, I will provide further descriptions on the artistic site-specific methods, which have inspired the situated development of onto-epistemological ECER *methods of vocal strolls*, *vocal mappings*, *metaphors and displacements*. All of these methods have emerged simultaneously. In order to make it easier for the reader to understand the differences between them I have chosen to present them one after the other.

Theoretical notions of place as material-discursive

In this section, I will present three ideas of space and place from the political philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre (1991, 2004), the geographer Doreen Massey (2005) and the anthropologist Marc Augé (2008; 2002), respectively. These three ideas have been used in the thesis articles in order to emphasise how the notion of place as material-discursive enables methods to emerge in the ongoing processes and events. These theorists are all interested in how the interdependencies between spatial and discursive conditions produce place as a *place-space*. Rather than understanding place only as something existing a priori to the experience of it, they focus on the interactions and dialectic relations.

Place is social – Henri Lefebvre

Lefebvre is interested in the everyday social practices of urban society (Lefebvre, 1991, 2004). He criticises the binary notion of place and space, as the life of the city is always characterised by a close connection between the two. Lefebvre's critique suggests that the separation of place and space has treated place as a neutral container, in which everyday social practices are played out (Lefebvre, 1991; Shields, 2011). Such a concept of place would only produce knowledge *on* place.

Instead, Lefebvre claims that place is social and that the social should be understood as physical and material, as it is composed by social and biological rhythms and routines (Lefebvre, 2004; Lefebvre et al., 1996). The bodily aspects of routines derive from our biological rhythms (hunger, sleep, thirst, etc.). The social rhythms of place arise from the organisation and management of these biological rhythms (for example, institutions like preschools or hospitals which organise bodies and their biological needs in order for society to run smoothly). Thus, place is a physical reality that transforms through the organisation and construction of urban society. In this way, the physical and the social are dependent on and construct each other.

Lefebvre (2004) proposes that different positions can be engaged to analyse the rhythms of urban spaces, and to comprehend how these rhythms affect as well as construct people's everyday lives. While sitting by a window above a lively street, for example, it becomes possible to distinguish and separate various rhythms from each other: sound rhythms, traffic rhythms, walking rhythms, habitual rhythms, etc. (ibid., p. 28). The view from a window can reveal a certain ordering as well as multiple conditions that *together* shape and frame the rhythms of the street. It becomes possible to listen to and observe these rhythms. However, if you are walking among the rhythms of the busy streets, they become felt as your body is required to respond to various different rhythms simultaneously (Lefebvre, 2004). Here, rhythms and routines become lived. Lefebvre's (2004) idea of space as social through the constructed rhythms and activities, and as conditioned by the spatial settings, has been used in all three of my articles.

Relational processes of spatial construction – Doreen Massey

If Lefebvre is interested in everyday social urban life, the cultural geographer Doreen Massey instead investigates how people produce place differently due to their economic, social and political position (Massey, 2005). For Massey, place has no *immanent* boundaries. Rather, the boundaries are constructed: spatially, politically, economically, theoretically or technically. Thus, place has multiple identities occurring simultaneously. The conceptualisation of place that one takes will affect the production of it (ibid.). Massey stresses the necessity of conceptualising the social and the spatial structures together, and

thereby considers how place is produced as a *relational process* (Massey, 2005).

Place is not just *a* static entity, but is multiple, heterogeneous and transformative by way of multiple economic, social, cultural and political dimensions. What we define as *a* place, can co-exist with other definitions of the same place. The way we define place, which is highly dependent on the position we have in a specific situation, will participate in the production of the place (Massey, 2005). The transactions between the material conditions and the discursive experiences and actions, collaborate in constructing the place. Therefore, defining a place solely by its physical boundaries, for example inside or outside, becomes a much more complex process (Massey, 2005). Moreover, as noted above, the boundaries of a place are also produced by cultural, social, political and economic power relations.

Non-places – Marc Augé

The third theoretical notion of place and space that I want to discuss comes from the anthropologist Marc Augé (2008, 2002). Anthropology sets out to study how cultural meaning and identity evolves in human groups (Augé, 2008, p. xviii). In order to gain knowledge on cultural meaning and identity, the anthropologist tries to map the patterns of a group's activities, norms, values and traditions. To enable study of the evolution of human culture, the early cultural anthropologists visited and stayed in often isolated societies, where contained cultures could be studied (G. Sandin, 2003, p. 89).

However, Augé (2008) is interested in the local culture of his native Paris, in terms of spaces such as the metro system, which he studies using methods from his anthropological fieldwork in Africa. Augé notes how his own contemporary society reserves specific places to accommodate certain activities and shared interests. This way of organising cultural places *separates* places from each other. Modernist society has come to develop into what Augé terms 'supermodernity'. The separation of different cultural places under modernity in turn gave rise to a new kind of place, such as for example the public transport system, as people were obliged to travel between the separated places (Augé, 2008). However, these places – the 'non-places', as Augé calls them – do not seem to be concerned with offering people a shared context to belong to and identify with (Augé, 2008).

In my enacted collaborative experimentations, we visited non-places such as the Brunkeberg tunnel and the metro platform. These non-places explicitly and implicitly give directions on how to act and move in these places. You pass the ticket barriers, go down the stairs and wait at the platform for the train. In the tunnel, there are lines in the floor-tiles to direct pedestrians on one side and cyclists on the other. Non-places thus provide an overload of non-verbal information, but do not invite communication or contact between people (Augé, 2008, pp. 63–64). People only pass through the non-places, and

they are rarely seen as a places in which to intentionally spend time (G. Sandin, 2003).

Augé (2008) concludes that the places of public transport cannot easily be described by studying the evolution of a shared culture, history or identity. Rather, they offer an opportunity to study how different cultures *relate* to each other (G. Sandin, 2003). When Augé (2008) focuses on the shared meaning of non-places, he identifies that the only shared meaning they appear to signal is that of travelling elsewhere, which of course entails different destinations for different people (Augé, 2008). Thus, supermodernity can also be said to consist of people with *various/different* meanings that share the same places (Augé, 2008; G. Sandin, 2003).

The production of artistic sites by movement out from institutions

The previous section described the notion of place as material-discursive. Site-specific art practices have made use of spatial material-discursive relations in order to *produce sites* for art (Kwon, 2004; G. Sandin, 2003). The relation between the artwork (or process) and the place is central to site-specific art practices (Kaye, 2000). Artistic site-specific interventions actualise situations through experimenting with relations between spatial, physical, social, cultural, and discursive boundaries (Kwon, 2004).

Artistic sites become produced by placing the art object outside the museum, thereby exposing how art and place together create meaning (Kwon, 2004). Such sites also become produced by establishing collaborations with other social, cultural, economic and political processes enacted outside of the context of the art institution (*ibid.*). In this way, a site can be constructed by multiple concerns and meanings. The movement of art out from institutions came to function as a way to direct a critique of such institutions (i.e. museums, galleries, art studios) as having exclusive rights to art (Kwon, 2004).

Through the production of sites (for art) outside the museums, *non-artistic* practices and people were invited to collaboratively produce sites for art. These artistic sites can thus involve processes and interventions, rather than being static art objects or exhibitions in public spaces for non-artists to experience. Moving the artistic site outside museums, galleries and studios also gave rise to artistic methods in the material form of photographs, film, and physical and embodied walking and mapping processes (Kwon, 2004). Hence, the production of an artistic site is understood as mobile, shifting and emerging in the ongoing interaction and exchange with other practices, discourses and disciplines (Malm, 2017).

As noted above, the moving of art outside the institution also exposes that the white, supposedly neutral walls inside the museums contextualise an art

object (e.g. painting, sculpture or photograph). The historical emergence of art institutions can now be seen as an effect of the modernist organisation of society, where art was separated from the everyday life going on outside the institutional walls (Arrhenius, 2014). The artist Robert Smithson affirms how:

[...] our older museums are full of fragments, bits and pieces of European art. They were ripped out of total artistic structure, given a whole new classification and then categorised. (Smithson, 1996, p. 48)

Museums, according to Smithson, are tombs for art, as they cancel direct action and exclude the direct contextual life (Smithson, 1996, pp. 42–43). Art institutions situate art in an in a historical impermanence, where the production of art always lies in the past.

To summarise, site-specific art interventions moving art out from institutions exposed museums as places which exclude the vibrant everyday life taking place outside the institutions. Moving art and artistic processes out from the museums, galleries and studios and into public spaces has had the effect that new artistic methods and processes have emerged (Kwon, 2004).

Furthermore, Smithson's concepts of Site and Non-site¹¹ have become a central figuration to describe how art functions not as a practice that observes place, but as *producing place* (Gabrielsson, 2006, pp. 288–289). Initially, Smithson's concepts of Site and Non-site are seemingly straightforward: a Site is an outdoor location with open limits; the Non-site is the representation of the Site inside the confines of the museum or gallery, and creates closed limits (Gabrielsson, 2006; G. Sandin, 2003; Smithson, 1996). As a countermovement to the understanding of a *place* as holding an essential and stable identity, Smithson suggested that a Site does not have an identity before it is selected for a specific reason (Sand, 2008, p. 51; Smithson, 1996, p. 178). This understanding of the concept of Site hence brings to attention that a place *gains* meaning by the cultural, discursive, spatial and material limits imposed on it.

Smithson's Site and Non-site concept breaks up the dichotomy between the representations of art and the everyday places art sets out to represent. It emphasises that space is not a background against which art is to be consumed, but that art produces specific sites through representations (Reynolds & Smithson, 2003; Smithson, 1996).

Thus, as described in article three (Eriksson, 2019), Smithson collects fragments of the selected site, such as stones, gravel, maps and photographs, and places them into constructed geometric structures inside the museum. In this way, material from the Site outside is placed inside the art institution as a constructed Non-site, which represents the Site. Smithson writes: "Non-site is a container within another container – the room" (Smithson, 1996, p. 153). The

¹¹ The concept 'Non-site is not to be confused with Augé's 'Non-place', which aims to describe places where people with different concerns share the same place.

museum functions as a place which produces the limits of the absent Site. The Site and Non-site always function in a dialectic relationship: the closed Non-site only exists in relation to the chosen Site. Outdoor sites, which are often understood as nature, are nevertheless always understood by cultural and discursive meanings (Sand, 2008; G. Sandin, 2003; Smithson, 1996).

This thesis uses the Site and Non-site relationship in a somewhat reversed order. While Smithson's Non-site represents the Site outside the boundaries of the institutional walls, I experiment how the indoor preschool institution becomes represented in public spaces. Article three delineates the preschool as a Non-site, which becomes produced in the Sites of the tunnel through the miniature preschool's activities. The preschool comes to activate the place (the tunnel) by bringing in the routines and rhythms constructed inside the preschool. In this way, the site of the tunnel transforms from merely a passage into somewhere else, into a place for preschool.

Art taking place outside the institutions is still dependent on those institutions in order to be defined as art (Gabrielsson, 2006, p. 306). The critical aim of site-specific art is therefore not to erase the institutional organisation of art experiences, but rather to open up for other methods of producing art by connecting with other sites, cultures and practices (Kwon, 2004; Malm, 2017). There is thus an implicit critique that art institutions of the monopoly exercised by art institutions over the spatial orderings and definitions of art (C. Bishop, 2012; Cartiere, 2008; G. Sandin, 2003).

Other site-specific practices have tried to re-connect art with everyday contemporary life. These works expose how the artist is not the exclusive producer of art. For example, in the work titled *Here Whilst We Walk*, a group of participants silently walked the streets of Lisbon while surrounded by an elastic band (O'Rourke, 2014, p. 45). The elastic band creates mobile interiors and exteriors which can be physically experienced simultaneously. Both the group inside the rubber band and the people outside it participate in producing the elastic band as limits of interior and exterior. They produce a collective identity (ibid.). Walking is here understood as an artistic method of producing a 'mobile architecture' within public spaces (O'Rourke, 2014, p. 45).

The movement of art out of institutions requires the generation of new methods and processes adapted to these specific situations. As the ambition of the present study is to facilitate a preschool that takes place in public spaces, the methods developed by site-specific art practices have needed to be transformed for use in the field of ECER. Onto-epistemological early education research methods have thus emerged as an effect of the direct and physical movement out of the childhood institutional setting. In the sections below, I will describe the artistic site-specific methods of strolls, mappings, metaphors and displacement, and how they have been transferred into the field of ECER. In other words; I will describe below how the methods that have been elaborated in art, in order to move art into public spaces and do art differently, have

been guiding my own experimentations and the (re)emergence of these methods as research methods for ECER.

Methods emerging in movements and processes

Methods of vocal strolls

In ECER, walking methods have most often been used to gain information about children's experiences and connections with places (see for example Änggård, 2015b; Hickey & Phillips, 2013; Nansen et al., 2015; Raittila, 2012). This thesis has a slightly different purpose, which is more in line with Lindh's 'sculpture strolls' (Lindh, 2017). In Lindh's strolls, walking is used as a method to enable children to experience and connect with sculpture placed in public spaces. However, the methods of strolls employed in this thesis differ from Lindh's, in that they more explicitly function as *research methods* to enable children to participate in constructing public space.

In site-specific art practices, walking is considered as a method for movement and as an embodied experience of place (Cardiff & Schaub, 2005). This aligns with Springgay and Truman's ways of describing walking *with* the world, where walking is a sensuous and bodily method of gaining experience and information in direct relation with the world (Springgay & Truman, 2018). The action of taking one step after another also *creates* meaning *and* the situation itself (Cardiff & Schaub, 2005; O'Rourke, 2014; Sand, 2009). Different ways of walking become *activated* by the spatial conditions and the specific situation, but they also *activate* the place and the situation (Sand, 2009). The walking is thus always done anew and cannot be repeated in the exact same way (Cardiff & Schaub, 2005; Solnit, 2014).

The artist Janet Cardiff creates audio walks where participants wear headphones and listen to her recorded voice recounting stories, historical moments, or experiences from the past. One such audio walk, *Her Long Black Hair* (Cardiff & Schaub, 2005), takes the listener through Central Park in New York. During the walk, the voice in the headphones narrates histories that are visually represented by photographs brought along the walk. This walk exposes the multiple temporal and audible dimensions of a place (Cardiff & Schaub, 2005). Cardiff's walks reveal that we experience more than we can see with our eyes. In *The Alter Bahnhof Video Walk*, Cardiff and Miller use the medium of film to produce a site where it becomes possible to experiment with inserting the past into the present.¹² The video walk was made available to visitors to Alter Bahnhof in Kassel (Germany), where they were offered an iPod from which they could see a video at the train station. The video, shot by

¹² <https://vimeo.com/73251458>

the artists, shows the same location but at another time. The voice on the iPod also narrates cultural and personal memories of the place. The video can be understood to question “the validity of memory and ponder the ways in which it becomes constructed”, according to Bertens (2019, p. 3). The video also demonstrates the function of audio walks as methods of activating other times and places in the present situation.

Artistic walking methods often intervene in everyday public places by inserting playful and collective experimentations of moving in different ways (Sand & Atienza, 2014). The artists and researchers Sand and Atienza facilitate and participate in a group’s collective actions. These actions intervene with the sound space of the city the participants in the group ways of “running, shouting, singing, reading, narrating and imitating sounds in different rhythms and tempo” (Sand & Atienza, 2014, p. 133). Each place has certain rules for how to move within it, which forms a collective rhythm of the place. Collective artistic walking interventions both expose and interrupt these rhythms (Sand & Atienza, 2014).

Although Emma Nilsson is not an artist, the way her thesis (2010) handles the city as a playground has connections to the artistic interventions in public spaces mentioned above. Nilsson, who is an architectural researcher, considers the relationships between the city and the bodily actions of play (so-called Ubi sports such as parkour, skating and bouldering). Her interest lies in the idea that “[the] spatial and material qualities of architecture set limits and create conditions for how we make use of it” (E. Nilsson, 2010, p. 224). The way play becomes activated is highly dependent on the reactions between human bodies and elements such as differences in level, the density/softness of surfaces, and the architectural organisation of the street.

These methods of walking and play became fundamental for the experimental work of this thesis, in which I came to term the walking research methods *vocal strolls*. There was a planned travel route which we walked, but the vocal methods enacted and explored other material-discursive courses of the route. The term *strolls* accentuate that we were not in a hurry, and did not even need to reach the intended goal (the Brunkeberg tunnel). Rather, we strolled in the urban environment as a method for children to, in a playful way, take place by their voices and their bodily relationships with these places (see article 1 and article 2). We walked and responded to the situations that emerged. The preschool *vocal strolls* became activated by the situations we encountered and at the same time activated place through playful interventions with our voices and bodily ways of moving. The fact that toddler bodies move differently to adult ones meant that the walking strategies intervened with the daily rhythms of the public streets and transport system. For example, the toddlers walking down the steps to the metro platform slowed down the rhythms and packed the stairs with people.

Methods of vocal mappings

Maps are often intended to give a geographical overview of the interconnections and relations between, for example, different countries, cities or streets. The map is often used to find one's way. Researchers in children's geography have set out to map children's movements in cities (Christensen & Cortés-Morales, 2016). Other researchers use floor plans as maps, where marked dots show the children's movements inside the preschool premises (Gallacher, 2005).

In post-qualitative studies, research methods of mapping has turned to the more-than-human and non-human aspects of how preschool is constructed by material-discursive *situated* relations (Bone, 2018; Leafgren, 2013; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2013; Springgay & Truman, 2019). These studies also emphasise mapping as a method of exposing and experiencing the material-discursive relations and experiences of place (for example Springgay & Truman, 2018). In parallel with the post-qualitative studies mentioned above, I have, in my articles, challenged the idea of the map as purely a representation of a geographical place. Mapping, on the contrary, also became a research method to intentionally getting lost (Solnit, 2005).

In a site-specific artistic methodological perspective, mapping functions as an embodied method of exposing an ongoing process in a direct situation (O'Rourke, 2014; Sand, 2009). The word 'method' comes from the Greek words *meta* and *hodos*, meaning 'along the way' (Sand, 2009, p. 52), and highlights the fact that a map may transform and develop through movement. Mapping is thus "an ongoing construction" (Sand, 2008, p. 109) which transforms by the steps taken along the way, rather than a representation of reality which gives an overview and a sense of direction (O'Rourke, 2014). Site-specific artistic interventions strive to produce other processes and methods of mapping (O'Rourke, 2014, p. 118). The making of a map – mapping – functions as a *method* to map the tactile, cultural, discursive, emotional and sensuous aspects of a place.

Methods of artistic mapping can function as ways to try to delineate the non-visual aspects of a place, for example temperature, sounds, rhythms and pace, which of course also conditions the walking (Sand, 2009). Sand and Atienza (2014), as well as Labelle (2010), create sonic mappings of different urban spaces. The map thus becomes three-dimensional and in constant transformation as sound moves in multiple directions simultaneously (Sand, 2014). The sonic mappings mark the three-dimensional place, as the voices are mapping the place through the resonating soundwaves that travel in many directions at once. The sonic mappings are always produced in direct relation to a place while producing situated and temporary maps, as sounds fade away.

The indigenous Aborigines of Australia traditionally used singing to navigate their travels. By creating invisible lines – songlines – they sing the land into existence (Chatwin, 1988). Through the rhythms of singing and walking,

the land comes to belong to them, if only temporarily, as the song diminishes and directs the walking somewhere (ibid.). Similarly, the artist Viv Corringham sings during her walks through cities so as to affirm that experience is not only a question of listening to the organisation of rhythms in the city, but to also participate in producing them (Belgiojoso, 2014).

Robert Smithson's (1996) dialectic relations between Site and Non-site also works to expose how a map is an abstraction and a representation of the actual site. Thus, the Non-site, consisting of materials and photographs taken from the Site, functions as a three-dimensional map, which does not fully represent the Site when placed inside the museum. Stones and gravel are not the Site, but function as abstract and fragmented representations of it. The 3D Non-site map will point to the Site outside the museum, but will not function as a map that will help you to navigate the Site when you get there (Smithson, 1996, p. 249). The Non-site produces a fragmented, limited and dispersed representation of the Site.

The map can thus be used as a way to get lost, rather than to find our way (Sand, 2011; Solnit, 2005). The meaning of getting lost also refers to a more metaphysical experience, which does not necessarily mean that you do not know where you are (Solnit, 2005, p. 22). The writer Rebecca Solnit claims that the act of putting yourself into situations of uncertainty is a way of living and differentiating life. Thus, commonly we say that something is differentiated *from* something else. However, in this thesis, life becomes *self-differentiated* (differentiated from itself) (Lenz Taguchi, 2017) by being present in unfamiliar situations. Not-knowing is the basis for learning to live life (Solnit, 2005). This kind of 'getting lost' stresses the potential to encounter things in life that are yet unknown to you (Solnit, 2005). To intentionally try to 'get lost' offers an opportunity to learn how to deal with the feeling of insecurity that comes with being in unfamiliar situations and places (Sand, 2011).

Solnit emphasises that to get lost is to open up for things that one cannot plan or prepare for (Solnit, 2005). The intention to get lost holds the potential to offer room for manoeuvre outside your own knowledge (Sand, 2011). Even with a map and a specific destination, the strategies you use to orient yourself in the direct situations encountered and which are constituted by transactions (O'Rourke, 2014, p. 47).

The three articles of the present thesis concern mapping as a research method in different ways, perhaps most explicitly in the second article (Eriksson & Sand, 2018). Here, maps are created by the preschool's *vocal strolls* in the public spaces, produced in the ongoing situations. The children map the cavities of the streets by their voices (shouting, howling and singing). The non-visual vibrations of the train become mapped when the children make drawings on the metro train floor. I have termed these mappings *vocal mappings*. As outlined in the first article, the *vocal strolls* also function as a way for the children to connect to situations that are unfamiliar to them (Eriksson & Sand, 2017). For example, when the preschool group entered the tunnel for

the first time, the toddlers did not know what to do. As a researcher, I also sometimes got lost, as I found myself in unfamiliar situations where I was no longer the leader, with the toddlers guiding and leading me into new situations (Eriksson, 2019).

Methods of metaphors

This chapter describes an onto-epistemological stance, where research – the researcher and research practices – actively participates in constructing the everyday actions and situations. In response to the onto-epistemological theoretical aspirations this thesis takes it becomes crucial to consider the researcher's task of writing as a way of actively constructing the empirical field of research. Traditionally, the researcher writes *about* the empirical fieldwork that is carried out before the writing begins, and thereby divides the empirical from the theoretical (see for example Eriksson Bergström, 2013; Magnusson, 2017; Markström, 2005). In the present study, the writing process is closer to post-qualitative research, where putting theory to work in relation to empirical examples entails a theoretical production of research analysis during the writing process (St Pierre, 2018b). In post-qualitative research, metaphors function as a method of inquiry to *think about* concepts differently and bring out the researcher's voice in an academic text (Richardson, 2003).

In the present thesis, metaphors have become a method of attempting to bridge the theory-practice divide and challenge the dichotomous relationship between (academic) written words and (empirical) everyday places. This is done by bringing the metaphors into the experimentations.

The linguist George Lakoff and the philosopher Mark Johnson (1980) emphasise that everyday language is full of metaphors. As described in article one, even the word 'metaphor' is a metaphor which means to 'carry over' (Sand, 2011, p. 64). The meaning derives from the Greek word *metaphora*, which means 'to transfer' and was the name given to the first horse-driven trams which carried passengers from one place to another (Sand, 2011). Metaphors may be defined as linguistic abstractions which originate from a concrete specific situation, used to describe a more general or universal meaning (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Lakoff and Johnson emphasise that *concepts* are also metaphorical, as they often set out to describe an everyday situation as something more and other than the actual situation (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Sand has often tried to load metaphors with new meanings by *re-placing* metaphors into material and concrete situations (Sand, 2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2014, 2019). The common definition of 're-place' is to substitute something for something else. In this context, however, the re-placement of metaphors refers to *placing again*, i.e. placing the abstract metaphor into a material situation (Sand, 2011, p. 67). For example, Sand organises a tourist walk around the City Hall where a group follows flautists playing in order to pay attention

to the acoustic environment (Sand, 2014). Here, Sand activates the metaphor of resonance as a method to expose that what happens during the walk it is not merely sonic, but as also activating history, and the visible and material spatial conditions of a place (Sand, 2011, 2014, 2019). In other interventions, Sand (2019) uses voice and/or dance as a resonating system. Here, resonance functions as a dialogue between the body and the surrounding space. Thus, the production of vocal sounds or dance movements creates vibrations which are amplified and modified by the spatial conditions. Resonance becomes a practical and corporeal method to resonate with different places in the city.

The artist Laura Ruggeri (2007) uses metaphors as methods to produce new ways of understanding the city of Hong Kong. In her work *Inscriptions of Hong Kong*, Ruggeri takes metaphors used to advertise the city with her on her walks there. In a night-time walk around the streets, Ruggeri tells the story of *The City That Never Sleeps* that reflects Hong Kong as a city where people work overtime and night shifts. Similarly, she takes the metaphor *Hong Kong Takes Your Breath Away* and transfers it to a more material and literal meaning connected to the SARS virus and air pollution, both of which have plagued Hong Kong (ibid.). Ruggeri thus uses metaphors as a ‘cross-domain’ (2007, p. 103) of space and language. Metaphors are understood differently when transferred into real situations and conditions.

The site-specific art practice of using metaphor as a research method has been used in this thesis as a way to endorse collaboration between theoretical and practices of doing research. In my work with metaphors, *I re-place* (meaning to place the metaphor into the concrete material situation again) the general and abstract meaning a metaphor often carries, in order for it to become materialised and situated. In this way new concepts emerge, and function as a way to describe the particularity of the methods for experimentations. For example, in article one I describe how the preschool travels came to transfer the metaphorical concept of ‘giving children a voice’ commonly used within research concerned with children’s participation and rights in society (Mannion, 2007). When the preschool practice re-replaces the metaphor of ‘children’s voice’ into the material streets, new concepts such as ‘voice meetings’, ‘voice orientations’, ‘voice rooms’ and ‘vocal memory’ emerge. These concepts accentuate the methods of voice as a way for preschool to take place in these public spaces (Eriksson & Sand, 2017).

Methods of preschool displacements

In the background and earlier research chapters, I discussed how different post-qualitative studies have intended to deconstruct ways of defining children, childhood and/or learning which have often sprung from psychological knowledge constructions (Blaise, 2016; Elfström, 2013; Lenz Taguchi, 2000; Nordin-Hultman, 2004; Liselott Olsson, 2008; Taylor & Blaise, 2014). The methods of *displacements*, that have been used in this thesis have similar deconstructive ambitions. Here, deconstruction becomes first and foremost a question of displacing the spatial boundaries and conditions for what constitutes preschool. The Latin prefix *dis* is used to give a word the opposite meaning.¹³ In this study, displacement refers to the movement of the preschool out from the institutional building. The institutional places are thus conceived as the opposite of non-institutional places.

On the other hand, displacements comprise more than physical relocation. In article three, I describe displacements as also involving spatial dimensions and positions. Displacements in this sense concern where, when and by whom places becomes activated as sites for preschool and preschool practices which the children participate in constructing.

The notion of displacement has been used by some site-specific art practices to expose and experiment with various boundary relations (Sand, 2008). The methods of metaphors, walking and mappings can be described as comprising displacements of different sorts. For example, when metaphors are replaced into real-life situations, they come to displace the boundaries between abstract language and concrete situations and create notions of a situated language. The sonic walks described above can all be said to displace the experience of a physical place having spatial (sonic) and discursive (historical) features. Mapping becomes displaced from merely offering an overview, directions and locations, into also comprising an artistic method of intentionally getting lost (see article 3).

Displacements can also concern experimentation with the boundaries between art and what is considered as non-art (everyday walking in public, for example), or with the artist or audience as collaborative producers of art (Gabrielsson, 2006; Kwon, 2004; Sand, 2008). Displacements have thus transformed the perception of art as an object, of the artist as the producer of art, and the location of the audience (Gabrielsson, 2006; Kwon, 2004; Sand, 2008). When boundaries are displaced, they transform, and thereby produce other boundaries (Sand, 2008).

For his work *Floating Island*, the artist Robert Smithson planned to displace a piece of land from Central Park, Manhattan in New York, to be put on a tug boat and towed around the island of Manhattan (Yusoff & Gabrys, 2006).

¹³ https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/dis_2

This displacement, installed after his death, portrayed Manhattan circling itself. It becomes a geography where the scale of land becomes displaced (Yusoff & Gabrys, 2006, p. 444). Others of Smithson's works are displaced from physical three-dimensional processes into two-dimensional representations such as films, photographs, texts and drawings (Flam, 1996, p. xviii).

The artist and researcher Monica Sand displaces common social constructions of everyday life contexts by activating different routines and rhythms (Sand, 2008). For example, she puts swings under a bridge and in a church, and lets a dance artist or the public use it. The physical displacement of the swing exposes that we implicitly know the rules, routines and rhythms of walking on the bridge or being still in the church. We know that a swing does not belong to these places (Sand, 2008). The displacement of the swing into other places constructs new places (Sand, 2008 p.115). A society is constructed and organised in a specific way, and artistic site-specific interventions such as Sand's swing displacements expose this structure by experimenting with constructing society differently (Sand, 2008).

Kwon attends to the risk of site-specific art becoming a commercial practice, moving art "from one place to another" (2004, p. 156). If an art process or work can be moved anywhere, this risks making art rootless and "liberated" from any enduring ties to local circumstances" (Kwon, 2004, p. 160). Furthermore, when an artwork, process and performance is enacted in one place, and thereafter moves on to the next place, the locality and particularity of a situation is abandoned. The risk is immense that no one takes responsibility for the effects and consequences of the artistic work (Kwon, 2004). Methods of displacements consider ways to move one place *into* another and thereby activate multiple, mobile places which transform within themselves.

I have transferred these methods of displacement from artistic practices into ECER to displace a preschool practice into the public transport places detailed in the three articles (Eriksson, 2019; Eriksson & Sand, 2017, 2018), which can be summarised in the following way.

Article three has taken inspiration from Smithson's (1996) displacements of mirrors in Mexico, where he installs nine mirrors at various points in the Yucatan to create representations directly in the Site. In line with Sand's (2008) displacements of swings, the research method *vocal strolls displace* the preschool into different public spaces, and thereby expose the understanding that both preschool and research are not ordinarily understood to take place in a tunnel as described in articles one and two. By enacting the routines, rhythms and activities often performed inside the preschool institution, the displacements expose how society is organised. A preschool institution can be described both as forming the architecture of society and as placing the children outside public spaces. Similarly, to Smithson's 'Floating Island', the

miniature preschool travels therefore displace preschool to move through society, which is organised in part by buildings, some of which are preschools. In a way, the preschool comes to circle around itself.

To bring the children into public spaces such as streets is in itself a displacement, drawing on Gabrielson's (2006) and Sand's (2008) notions of public spaces as produced by difference. The miniature preschool travels come to produce a society created by difference, where each institutional practice does not necessarily stay in its designated place. This is not the same as the idea behind the so-called mobile preschools studied by Gustafson and van der Burgt (2015), which are described in chapter three. Whereas the mobile preschools move from one place to another in society, the vocal strolls *displace* the preschool into the particular public spaces of the streets. The research process is thus about displacing the preschool practice *into* the public streets. It is not a question of erasing either the preschool premises or the common ways of acting in public areas; it is rather an intention to bring these places together in order to create something new.

A methodology of curating context

The experimental work of this research has been organised to enact the movement of a preschool out from the preschool premises and into the public spaces of the streets. When the preschool leaves the preschool building and the common context changes, the role of the researcher becomes to facilitate, organise and take responsibility for this movement. The word *curate* derives from Latin meaning 'to take care of'.

All artistic curatorial practices consist of the work of facilitating and organising the settings for art (Malm, 2017; Mur Dean, 2017). Within site-specific art practices, the emergence of art in a particular location and situation can be described as a *curating of context* (Malm, 2017; Szylak, 2013). Hence, the task of the curator curating the context, diverts from the definition of a curator as displaying artworks into as also producing the context of art (Szylak, 2013). It becomes a 'a mode of being with context' (Szylak, 2013, p. 216), rather than exhibiting art within a pre-established context.

The curatorial methods work with artistic processes where 'the setting of the work is never given but needs to be created anew every time' (Malm, 2017, p. 8). Curating context hence refers to the processes of art that take place outside art institutions, where the meaning of an artwork emerges in relation to the situation (Malm, 2017, p. 8). Context, rather than being the backdrop for art, participates in constructing meaning. This means that the artists and curators have multiple roles in site-specific interventions: as facilitators, organisers, participators and observers (Sand, 2012a). Thus, to curate context becomes a question of staging *and* enacting situations within a specific context (Malm, 2017; Mur Dean, 2017; Szylak, 2013).

O'Rourke emphasises that artistic walking and mapping practices always need some sort of preparation (O'Rourke, 2014, p. 74). These preparations are part of *curating context*. The next section will outline the kind of preparations this study made in order to set up the experimental work of moving the preschool into the social places of streets and tunnels.

This thesis also expands the notion of curating context into an understanding of it as a *collective* assemblage where research, children, educators and the passers-by come to curate context by their different ways of responding to a situation (Eriksson, 2019). Here, the *collective curating* context refers not to preparation, but to the different ways we respond to the place and take responsibility for how these interventions and integrations are activated by the conditions of the place and the surrounding context. Sometimes, the toddlers in the *vocal strolls* staged interventions in the ongoing rhythms and routines of public spaces, where I as a researcher became activated, and at other times it was the other way around (see articles 1 and 2). Through the various transactions of methods between different practices and people, the context becomes curated. Thus, to intervene with a specific way of acting in a certain place becomes a question of staging and enacting situations within a specific context (Doherty, 2015).

Practicalities and conditions of the experimental set-up

It doesn't say what it is in and of itself, for nothing ever "is" alone. *To be is to be related*. The new talk about what is does not bracket the practicalities involved in enacting reality. It keeps them present. (Mol, 2002, p. 54)

The various practicalities that a research study always has to address in one way or another, will to a great extent condition and construct the knowledge produced. The above quote from the philosopher and actor-network theory (ANT) researcher Annemarie Mol (2002) highlights that methods involve practicalities which need to be both accounted for and dealt with in direct situations.

In this study, however, there were some conditions that I as a researcher needed to consider *before* the travels with the children and educators were to take place. The ethical research guidelines required by law also regulate the set-up of a research project involving children (SFS 1994:1219; SFS 1998:204; SFS 2003:460). Under the following headings, I will present how the preparations taken before the experimental work were enacted, the ethical considerations and the experimental set-up, which took place over a period of four months, about three days a week (March-June 2016).

Curating context – *preparations*

This thesis sets out to enact methodological experiments where research directly participates together with other practices in order to produce new research methods for ECER. This meant that the methodology of moving a preschool out to the streets could not be fully designed in beforehand. The methods needed to emerge in the situations and processes. The researcher role in this study entails to *curate context* in the process, but also to prepare herself for different eventualities and practicalities when (dis)placing a preschool into a public space such as pedestrian tunnel.

In order to prepare myself for the eventualities and practicalities of taking a preschool out in the streets before I actually took the preschool group out on the travels, I tried to understand and learn about the places we were about to travel. I visited the Brunkeberg tunnel at different times of the day, and thereby

learnt the rhythms and routines by spending time there. I also participated in sound experiments together with students from the University of Arts, Crafts and Design. Thereby, I got an embodied experience on how to work with the material-discursive aspects of place. At one point, I invited colleagues and friends to perform some voice-experiments with me in the tunnel. During that visit I realised that I needed to put up a sign on each door informing others of that there were toddlers playing in the tunnel.

When the selected preschool had accepted to participate in the study, I also travelled the route from the preschool to the Brunkeberg tunnel by myself. I timed the trip, and then repeated the trip in a much slower pace which I thought the toddlers would have. The different direct experiences of the places, the travels and the experimentations gave me an embodied knowledge on my responsibilities to secure the children's safety along the trip. The *vocal strolls* were thereby in one sense exceedingly prepared, but still left open for collaborations. It was not a question of taking the children anywhere, wandering around doing anything, but taking them on specific visits to a place in order for the children to take place in this space.

Planning practicalities and selection procedures

The overall purpose of the research was to experiment on how to construct a preschool that brings children into to public spaces. This aim did not require selecting a preschool that could represent preschools in general (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018, p. 226). In this sense, the selection procedure can be described as a non-probability sample, where the selected preschool "simply represents itself" (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 217.). The generalisability of the study is therefore not at issue here, as the aim was to experiment, together with children, with how a preschool practice can be constructed in public spaces.

In order to get access to a preschool, I first formulated three criteria that the participating institution needed to meet (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 218). Firstly, it needed to be a preschool department for the youngest children at preschool (one to three years old). Secondly, the preschool had to have proximity to streets and a public transport system. Lastly, the preschool educators should preferably have experience in doing excursions with the toddlers outside the preschool premises, so that the travels could be organised without creating too much disturbance or complications for the ordinary preschool practice. When these selection procedures were outlined, I decided to engage a so-called "convenience sampling" (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 218). This meant that I chose a preschool I was recommended and which fit the above criteria.

The selected preschool had a unit reserved for the youngest children at preschool. The unit had 31 children enrolled and six educators at various levels. The preschool had previously worked out routines for doing excursions with

the children, which created favourable conditions for the study's implementation. Both children and educators were accustomed to and felt confident in moving around the city streets. The preschool was centrally located, and a trip by bus and underground train to the Brunkeberg tunnel took about 30-40 minutes.

The 31 children enrolled in the preschool were between one and a half and three years old. Six children participated in each trip to the Brunkeberg tunnel and two educators always accompanied us. The young age of the children informs the ways in which it is possible to travel by public transport. The children's shorter legs, their inability to know their way, and their lack of awareness of time, conditioned our travels into strolls. When walking to the bus stop, for example, the destination and the time taken became secondary for the children, and the actual strolling in the streets became primary (although we always managed to arrive at the Brunkeberg tunnel on each travel). In addition, their different experiences of the city were crucial to how the strolls activated the public places.

The educators alternated between themselves to accompany us. The composition of the small group of six children was decided the same day, just before leaving the preschool. It was usually informed by a combination of what the educators recommended and which children were present that day. Therefore, the children in the group varied during each stroll, although we offered all children whose parents had given consent for their child to participate in the research, to join in at least once.

The fact that the preschool's youngest children participated in the construction of *vocal strolls* meant that these became different than if older preschool children or adults had participated. My decision to focus on the youngest children was based on the fact earlier research has not invited the youngest children in society into partake in any kind of guided walks. Moreover, small children tend to communicate in a more bodily and direct way, to create relations with and to the world around them. This facilitated me to focus on the production of place rather than on their experiences and understandings of the place.

During the first weeks, I got to know the preschool department's routines, rhythms and activities, in order to gain an understanding of how my research project could be integrated with, as well as intervene with the established practices of the preschool. After three weeks, I knew the children, the educators and the organisation of the preschool practice well enough to start to plan for and conduct the *vocal strolls* two mornings a week between 09:00 and 11:30 am. However, since both I and the educators fell ill on different occasions, and because the preschool sometimes had other engagements, in the end we were only able to do two *vocal strolls* every week.

The travels to the Brunkeberg tunnel were performed on Wednesdays and/or Thursdays. I started my day at 8:30 and spent about half an hour together with all the children in the preschool playground before we went on our trips downtown.

In the afternoons, after lunch and nap time, I participated in all the ordinary activities of the preschool until around four in the afternoon. On Fridays, I met with the educators in staff meetings to provide an opportunity for them to ask me questions, and for the educators to give me recommendations and ideas for the upcoming travels. During the staff meetings, the educators often shared their stories about how the children had used their experiences of the travels to the Brunkeberg tunnel in activities that took place inside the preschool premises. For example, one educator told me how the children often played “travelling on the underground train”. After recently having participated in a *vocal stroll*, they would shout out as if to imitate the loudspeakers of the train: “Next train stop, Grandma’s place!” It therefore became important for me to get to know the situations, routines and rhythms that took place inside the preschool, in order to effectively place them in the public spaces outside the premises.

The relational and transformative ethics of human participation

Ethical issues are an important part of conducting a research project, and need to be considered before the experimental work is conducted in order to ensure the security and integrity of the participants (SFS 1998:204; SFS 2003:460). This section will report on the ethical considerations taken into account. Firstly, I will briefly discuss how the statement that this research is based in a relational ontology of differing/difference presented in the previous chapter affect the ethical considerations (Braidotti, 2006; Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Stengers, 2018). Thereafter, I will describe the more practical preparations undertaken to ensure the participants’ security and integrity.

In the context of this study, research takes part in producing what we consider preschool to be. In relation to this ontological stance, the ethics of research is relational, and dependent on the fact that research participates in an assemblage of different practices of living and being together in the world. Life itself is an ethical concern, as the globalised world we live in today encompasses multiple and complex modes of defining good and right ways of living (Braidotti, 2006). Relational ethics presumes that knowledge is always situated by specific conditions and circumstances (Haraway, 1988). Produced knowledge is always dependent on where it is utilised (De Laet & Mol, 2000; Mol, 2002).

In order to handle this complex ethical relationship, where different transactions empower the multiplicity of how to live in a diversified society, research must be prepared to be transformed by the invoked reality it is participating in constructing (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). Thus, collaborative experimen-

tations need to account for the fact that life is filled with complex and composed premises, where the researcher is only one of the actors participating in producing knowledge (Lenz Taguchi, 2013a; Taylor et al., 2013). *Who* participates in *what* becomes a question continuously elaborated with throughout the experimentations of this research. Is it the researcher participating in the children's activations of space? Or is it the children participating in the researcher's activations of space? Could it better be described as a group of people (children, researcher, passengers, etc.) participating in being activated by space? The relational ethical aspect of participation becomes more complicated than when claiming that it is the *children* participating in research. Different people are participating in constructing and constituting each other by different means and methods (Rautio, 2014).

The ethical criteria formulated by the researcher beforehand always need to be adapted to the situations that emerge in the experimentations enacted. Knowledge transforms due to different connections and heterogeneous styles of knowing (Braidotti, 2018; Stengers, 2018). The actor-network theory (ANT)-driven ethnographer Annemarie Mol emphasises that research is always about transforming methods to work in relation to where they are situated. Thus, pre-defined methods always only fit partially (De Laet & Mol, 2000; Mol, 2010). The same goes for ethics: ethics emerge and transform when situations become activated by different people, practices, conditions, positions and experiences, as well as the situation transforming people, practices, conditions, positions and experiences, in turn. Ethics thus becomes a collaborative act, which emerges by different assemblages of participation. In this way, it becomes a question of taking responsibility for the direct and embodied productions of knowledge which emerge in specific situations that cannot be pre-established or predicted beforehand (Lenz Taguchi, 2010).

Within early childhood educational research (ECER), this has driven researchers to directly experiment together *with* teachers or children in order to try to form a 'best practice' (Lenz Taguchi, Palmer, & Gustafsson, 2016; Liselott Olsson, 2008). For example, children's questions, actions and suggestions are seen as productive for *how* to produce knowledge, rather than imposing given answers on what to learn directly on the children (Chimirri, 2014; Liselott Olsson, 2008, 2013). Furthermore, Chimirri (2019) asserts that doing participatory research is not about solving the hierarchical power relations between children (as participants) and adults (researchers), but about creating possibilities for different ways of respond to and learn from each other.

To think of ethics as relational is to attend to and take responsibility for power imbalances, by acknowledging that we all have different possibilities to respond to a given situation. A three-year-old will respond to a tunnel in a different way than a researcher, artist, or business woman, etc. On the other hand, two different three-year-olds may respond differently to the same situation according to their specific life experiences. When and how we respond is conditioned by the fact that we have many different experiences and positions

that relate to certain situations (Mol, 2002). The ways to respond are multiple in one and the same person. Moreover, Blaise, Hamm and Iorio (2017) state that this response-ability does not necessarily refer to an individual human participation, but rather a created collective discursive assemblage that can transform due to how different actors (both human and non-human) respond to each other. The tunnel and the streets participate in responding to the children's actions, and thereby participate in creating conditions for ethical actions. It rather becomes a matter of "co-composing research activist encounters" (Renold, 2018, p. 50), where actors other than the researcher can shape and frame the production of research methods.

The ethical considerations of response-ability applied in the present kappa text have therefore been heavily influenced by earlier research projects in the field of education working collaboratively with young adults or children (Blaise et al., 2017; Chimirri, 2014; Olsson, 2008; Olsson, Dahlberg, & Theorell, 2016). It has also taken support from site-specific artistic research projects delineating the spatial aspects of response-ability (Meskimmon, 2017; Sand, 2019; von Rosen, Sand, & Meskimmon, 2017). These projects assert that the ability to respond to the situation is highly conditioned by the spatial, cultural and discursive positions taken in a physical place. Our ability to respond – to take response-ability – transforms when the situation and place changes. A response-ability is thus never pre-established or pre-defined.

Below, I will discuss the pre-established ethical requirements (SFS 1994:1219.; SFS 1998:204; SFS 2003:460). Before the experimental work started, the research study was approved by the Swedish Council on Ethics. This application has functioned as an ethical foundation throughout the whole PhD project, and has also accounted for the relational aspects of ethics that emerge when research participates in constructing reality (i.e. constructing a preschool that takes children into to the streets).

Consent and integrity

An important ethical question when conducting an experimentation such as this, in which young children are participating, is how to protect the participants' integrity, as well as obtaining informed consent for their participation. This allows the study to be conducted in an ethically correct manner (National Research Agency, 2017; SFS 1994:1219; SFS 1998:204; SFS 2003:460). Before the experimental work was performed, the ethical aspects of this study were approved by the Regional Ethical Vetting Board in Stockholm (SFS 2003:460).¹⁴

I initiated the experimental work by contacting the head of the selected preschool. The head then asked the educators at the unit for the youngest children whether they were interested in inviting me to present my research study.

¹⁴ Reference number for the report: DNR 2015/2192-31/4

In January 2016, I met the educators and informed them about the research project and invited them to ask questions. I also distributed a written consent form (see appendix 1) to the educators, and gave them a week to carefully read it and consider whether they wanted to participate. All six educators signed the informed consent forms and expressed their enthusiasm about the project and their participation. They also informed me that they were starting up a project about the Stockholm metro themselves, and that I could begin my research study by participating in *their* planned trips, which would involve visiting metro stations and viewing the trains. In this way, I was able to pick up and use their routines around travelling in my experimental events. I also made sure the educators understood that they could withdraw their participation at any time, and there would be no enquiry as to why or any other consequences. If they did not want to participate in the travels on the public transport system with me and the children, they could stay at the preschool and proceed with their ordinary activities.

The educators invited the parents to a meeting where I informed them about the research project and asked for their consent on behalf of their children to participate. However, only the parents of seven children came to the meeting. I put up a note on the information board in the entrance hall and stayed late one afternoon when the preschool invited the parents for coffee. This enabled the parents who signed the formal consent letter (see appendix 2) without having met me in person, to ask questions. All the children's parents, except for one child, gave their consent for their child to participate in the study. One child's parents did not consent to the strolls/travels, but consented to their child's participation at the preschool involving the photos and films from the walks.

Even though it is the parents who give formal consent for their children to participate in the research, the children were also asked if they wanted to participate, and to give their verbal consent according to age and maturity. Before each trip, the children were outside playing in the yard. They were asked if they wanted to join in travelling to the tunnel together with Christine (me). Six children who agreed were then taken indoors. There, I showed them photos from the first trip hanging on the wall close to the entrance. I pointed to the photos and asked again, "Do you want to join Christine to go to the tunnel?"

The children often pointed at the photos, saying "Stin" (Christine) or "tunnel". The children also responded to the question both verbally (saying yes or no) and in a bodily manner. The children were eager to participate; they nodded their heads or ran to get the fluorescent vests they always wore when going out in the streets. Sometimes there were other children shouting "Meee!" and flocking around the door with hopes of joining us. The educators staying behind tried to divert these children's attention by taking their hands and going to play in the sandpit.

During the whole period, there were only two children who said no, by shaking their heads and walking away. However, we continued to ask them every Wednesday or Thursday if they wanted to join in. Also, during the period two new children were enrolled at the preschool. We chose not to invite these children's parents to agree to participate, as they were occupied with getting to know the preschool premises, routines, children and educators. At one point, there was a child who expressed dislike about being in the Brunkeberg tunnel. She cried and did not want to participate in the activities. We chose, after a brief deliberation, to travel back to the preschool. The children's consent to participate in the trips was continuous and activated an "ethical radar" (Skånfors, 2009), whereby I strove to carefully observe their bodily expressions rather than relying solely on their verbal consent (Dockett, Einarsdottir, & Perry, 2009; Palmer, 2012; Skånfors, 2009).

Safety, security and confidentiality

Ethical considerations that secure the children's consent and integrity when participating in research are important, as it can be very difficult to interpret whether young children understand what they are consenting to (Palmer, 2012; Skånfors, 2009). It becomes the researcher's responsibility to offer several possibilities and modes for the children to express themselves. On one stroll, a child lifted his hands and communicated that he wanted to be carried, and we worried that he felt insecure. After a while, however, we realised that his shoes were too big, and that he became easily tired when running in them. He simply wanted to rest in our arms.

In this study, I as a researcher relied much on the educators' recommendations on how to interpret the children's consent or dislike, as they had known the children longer than I had. After a while, however, I established a personal communication with each child, and came to understand their signals quite well. Each morning when I arrived, I greeted each and every child in a personal way. One child wanted me to greet him by our noses touching, and some children wanted me to hug them. Another did not want me to look her directly in the eyes at first. Later, I was able to say "Hi" and ask how her day was, and make brief eye contact. Once, I hesitated to say hello to her, and after a while she took my hand, saying "Hi", and the ordinary hello-procedure could take place. I have never in my life felt so welcomed as by the children and educators at the preschool during my experimental study; it was quite overwhelming with all the affection they showed me. We all made a joint effort to create a safe and secure relationship to each other, which was crucial for travelling together to somewhat unfamiliar places.

Nonetheless, I as the researcher had the sole responsibility for the children's safety on the trips. Six children and two educators at a time joined in the travels. This meant that each adult (myself included) could hold the hands of two toddlers each. The children also wore fluorescent vests to make them

more visible in the sometimes crowded public spaces. When we arrived at the Brunkeberg tunnel, the children sat down on a doorstep and ate some fruit while I went to the entrance of the tunnel and put up notes that read: “Be aware, ongoing research. There are currently young children in the tunnel!” The note was intended to inform the public entering the tunnel. However, it often seemed to work as an invitation to join in, since the people passing often stopped and asked us questions, or replied to our calls and songs in the tunnel.

Ethical regulations demand that participants’ identity and integrity are protected through confidentiality (National Research Agency, 2017; SFS 1998:204). The children’s real names are not mentioned in any textual or oral presentation of the research study. The vests the preschool usually used bore the preschool’s name and phone number, and therefore these were replaced with vests without this information. There is also a voice recording published as part of my first article which situates and exemplifies the children’s voice sounds in the Brunkeberg tunnel. No individual voice can be traced to the identity of a child.

Places participating in the research study

Participation is not a purely human aspect in this study. The places that are folded into each other can also be understood to create conditions and possibilities for the research project. These places therefore need to be presented in terms of both their physical location and organisation, and the more discursive, cultural and historical relationships that also create a place (Lefebvre et al., 1996; Massey, 2005). Thus, place both enables and conditions this research study. The sections below will present a more in-depth description of the places which are displaced into each other.

The preschool institution

Spatial organisation

The preschool that participated in the research study was situated in a tenant building, in a converted apartment in central Stockholm. The premises were not designed to fit a preschool practice, but more likely originated as several smaller apartments that could house families.

The preschool apartment was over 100 square metres and on the second floor, which meant that the children, the teachers and I started our *vocal strolls* by taking the stairs down to the ground floor at the street level.

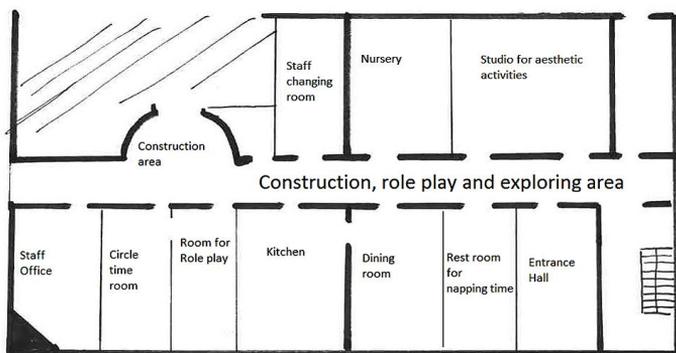
The preschool also had an outdoor playground in the courtyard, but on the same level as the apartment. The playground held a sandpit, fixed rocking installations and large wooden tables with benches. It also had glass barriers so

that the toddlers could look down to the playground on the ground floor, where the older preschool children played.

The indoor floor plan of the preschool consisted of a long, rather narrow corridor that ran through the whole apartment, which opened onto different rooms to the left and right of the corridor (see floor plan below). The preschool consisted of an entrance hall, an eating area and kitchen, toilets, cloakroom, an arts and crafts room, a construction room, a room for role play, a room for circle time (group activities such as singing and reading together), a room for napping after lunch, and a staffroom (Eriksson & Sand, 2018, p. 4).

The corridor was organised by the teachers in order to stop the children running and chasing each other and risking getting hurt (Eriksson & Sand, 2018). Different activities, such as tactile books, lite cubes (square formed large lamps) and a bookshelf made to look like an underground train, allowed the corridor to become the heart of the preschool practice (ibid., p.4.) Also, spending time in the corridor meant that it became easy to know what was going on in the different rooms. A corridor is commonly a place reserved for transport into adjoining rooms where specific activities are to take place (Kärrholm, 2004, p. 216). The corridor in the participating preschool, however, sometimes seemed to work the other way around: the children went into the connecting rooms and fetched things to bring out into the corridor.

Just outside the art studio, the teachers had installed a rectangular bookshelf put on the floor, decorated it to look like a metro train, and put up maps of the underground transport system on the wall above. Here, the toddlers were playing that they were travelling through the underground transport system. The toddlers often ran into the role-play room to fetch picnic equipment or shoes and hats to bring into the underground metro travels.



Floor plan (Eriksson & Sand, 2018, p. 4)

The spatial arrangements and conditions strongly influence the organisation of a preschool as a place of public education for young children (de Jong, 2010; Eriksson Bergström, 2013). They need to function in ways that both

make it possible for the teachers to keep an eye on the children wherever they are in the preschool, and enable the children to explore and play more independently. There were no doors to close off the hallway, the eating area, the cloakroom, the role-play room, or the group activity room, since this allowed the children to enter and exit the rooms whenever they wanted. The art studio had a gate that could be closed, but that still allowed children to see what activities were available there; they could then fetch a teacher who could help them pursue these activities. The rooms of the preschool were organised to facilitate the children to become more independent, with shelves placed at a lower height. This made it possible for the children to reach materials and toys, and to be able to put their caps, mittens or other personal belongings in their boxes in the hallway. The tables and chairs were also at a lower height to facilitate easier access for the toddlers. The rooms were decorated in bright colours to indicate that this was an environment for children.

Preschool routines and schedules

There is also a temporal dimension to the organisation of a preschool practice (cf. Halldén, 2005, 2007; Markström, 2005; Rutanen, 2017). The preschool opening hours were 07:00-17:30. However, during the first and last hour of the day, the children moved to another unit within the preschool. The educators organised routines and activities throughout the day so as to create a safe and secure environment for socialisation, play and learning.

The toddler unit always started the day outside in the playground (at around 08:00), where the children were dropped off by their parents. The toddlers chose what to play and the educators participated in the play or organised activities such as painting or dancing to music. At around 10:30, all the children went inside to be divided into groups doing different activities. Here, the educators had responsibility for a smaller group which had access to different rooms on different days (for example, one educator had the art studio on Tuesdays, and the role-play or construction room on Wednesdays, etc.). In this way, the toddlers were able to develop a closer relationship to one of the educators and try out different activities at the same time.

After the activities, the whole preschool group gathered in the circle-time room and sang songs together. The children were supposed to sit in a circle on the carpet, but more often they just sat down on the carpet in a more disorganised way. There were at least two educators who participated in circle time, while the others organised lunch, took care of children who did not want to participate, changed nappies, or planned other activities. When lunch was ready, one educator came and knocked on the door to signal that it was time to eat. The educators let a few children at the time leave the circle-time room to go to the dining room.

The children sat around low-set tables. They were allowed to take food themselves, though the educators usually helped them to get the right amount of food on their plates. During lunch, the children and educators would chat

about this and that. When all the children were finished, the educators let a few children at a time to go and have their nappies changed, and then move into the rest room, where they had their nap. All the children slept for approximately one hour. At least one educator stayed with the children during the nap, while the other educators took their lunch break.

The afternoons were most often spent indoors playing or taking part in different activities that the teachers organised. This split the children into smaller groups doing different things in separate rooms, which promoted a calm and safe environment. Sometimes, a few children wanted to go outside, and the educators often quickly made this possible.

The day at preschool was organised around routines of changing the toddler's nappies, undressing them from their outdoor clothes, and making sure they washed their hands correctly before eating lunch. Everything had to go smoothly and follow a certain schedule in order for the teachers to be able to take their lunch breaks and not become overburdened with duties.

The children learned the daily routines and rhythms quickly and often contributed to the organisation of the daily activities (cf. Rutanen, 2017). The children followed the routines, but also suggested variations, such as going outside even though the educators had planned otherwise, or knocking at the door to signal lunch even though lunch was not yet ready. They also suggested that the educators read to them by bringing books to them (Eriksson & Sand, 2018). The educators were eager to listen to the children's suggestions, even though they could not always abide by them.

The non-institutional public spaces

Spatial organisation

When the miniature preschool group enters the streets, it becomes activated by a different spatiality than inside the preschool premises. Cities have always evolved gradually and where the design is based on certain typical ideals of how to organise the society (T. Johansson, 2004). Today, the streets constitute about 80 % of public spaces in cities (Transportation Officials National Association of City, 2013). The *vocal strolls*, performed by the miniature preschool and me as researcher, mainly went through parts of Stockholm which have largely been inspired by the modernist ideal of creating separated zones for specific activities (Kärholm, 2004; Stahre, 1999). Stockholm is considered to be heavily influenced by the architectural ideal of functionalism that sought to build a modern urban city which designated "different areas for housing, production and recreation" (Stahre, 1999, p. 18). However, the city does not maintain the same design but rather transforms over time, and the areas in which our *vocal strolls* took place today consist mainly of business areas, with some housing and shops. The streets in these areas are organised

according to modernist architectural design principles, as they signal movement and clearly separate cars, cyclists and pedestrians by road markings and pavements (Björk, Nordling, & Reppen, 2018; Kärrholm, 2004).

The *vocal strolls* started with a walk along the streets to the bus stop. A bus stop can be seen as demarcated space within the streets where a specific action is to take place (Kärrholm, 2004, p. 73). Thus, standing around the bus stop indicates that you are travelling somewhere else, via buses that arrive according to a time schedule and require tickets (ibid.). In 2015, a survey was conducted concerning the travel habits of citizens of Stockholm County.¹⁵ This survey reports that 49% of motorised travel undertaken during weekdays is by public transport, where bus and underground train are the most common means (ibid.).

To get to the bus stop, the miniature preschool group had to walk through the streets. The bus stop was only a couple of blocks from the preschool, and for an adult it only took a few minutes to get there, but for the miniature preschool group of six children and three adults, it took about ten minutes.

The city streets rarely evolve all at the same time, but through urban expansion (Barthelemy, 2018; Svallhammar, 2008). Thus, different time-honoured ideals influence the emergence of the streets and the ways they become utilised. The streets evolve as a network, connecting the city in multiple and intertwined directions (Barthelemy, 2018). Pedestrians, bikes and cars as well as public transport systems all participate, to different degrees, in organically creating the network of the urban city.

When we got off the bus, we had to cross a big, busy road in order to enter the underground station. Thereafter, we took the underground train to Hötorget station, and from there we walked up the stairs and approximately 100 metres along a pedestrian street to reach the Brunkeberg tunnel. Similarly to the streets, the subway system has advanced in response to “various geographical constraints and historical paths” (Barthelemy, 2018, pp. 132–133). The somewhat self-organised shape of the Stockholm subway system works as a grid which connects different places and times with each other (ibid.).

On the bus and the underground train, the seats were adapted to adult bodies; the children had to climb up onto them and their feet did not reach the floor when sitting down. The stairs down to the metro station were also a challenge for the children’s short legs. Yet another demanding task was the step over from the platform and into the underground train. For an adult, this is a small step, but for a toddler it is quite a jump.

Our final destination was the Brunkeberg tunnel, a pedestrian and bicycle tunnel located between two of the busiest roads in the centre of Stockholm. The tunnel is 231 metres long, 4 metres wide and 3.8 metres high, and was built by the Swedish engineer Knut Lindmark to provide a shortcut through a

¹⁵<https://www.sll.se/globalassets/2.-kollektivtrafik/kollektivtrafiken-vaxer/su/resvaneundersokningen/resvanor-i-stockholms-lan-2015-version-20160817.pdf>

ridge in the city centre. It took two years to complete, and incurred higher costs than first estimated due to technical problems encountered in stabilising the gravel and rock masses that risked collapsing and demolishing the construction of the tunnel (Kock & Schütz, 1973). Another issue that Lindmark had not expected was that the citizens did not see the value in paying for a faster route when there was the option of a route above ground (on the streets) for which one paid nothing at all. The economic failure of the Brunkeberg tunnel is seen to be one of the reasons for Lindmark's suicide in 1882 (ibid.). Today, access to the tunnel is free, though it does have sliding doors which are only open between 06:00 – 22:00. Inside the tunnel, there is a line drawn on the floor tiles, directing pedestrians to use one side and cyclists the other. The resonance in the long tunnel is somewhat subdued, which indicates that the designers used materials and paint which reduce noise in order to create a more sound-absorbing environment. As a result, the sounds of the children shouting and singing in the tunnel did not become overwhelming, and passers-by often commented that it was lovely to see and hear the children playing.

Rhythms of the public transport system between 09:00 and 11:30 am

The miniature preschool travelled in the public transport system in the mornings. Before 09:00 am, it is rush hour, as people are travelling to work. In rush hour, the rhythms of the streets, buses, and underground metro is busy, fast-paced and constantly moving forward. However, after 09:00 the rhythm slows and there are fewer people travelling.

When the preschool group arrived at the tunnel, there were still commuters passing through, often at a fast pace and with suitcases in their hands, and/or talking on their mobiles. At the same time, there were also pensioners strolling at a leisurely pace, often walking arm-in-arm and chit-chatting. There were sometimes other school or preschool groups passing through, walking in a line, with one educator in front and one educator at the back. There were other people passing through the tunnel who did not seem to be in any particular hurry. The rhythms of the public transport system were relatively calm and quiet.

Sometimes there were beggars in the tunnel, and every now and then there was a musician with an accordion who played in the middle of the tunnel (where the resonance was at its best). There were also some bike messengers, who had their own bike-line through the whole tunnel.

We mostly got a positive response from passers-by. Only one person – the musician – once offered us a grumpy comment that we should take the children outside, preferably to the woods. The reason for this comment was perhaps that we occupied his sound space (see article 1).

Documentation of the experimentations

Above, I have delineated how humans, places, and rhythms and routines participate in creating the experimental set-up of the present research study. However, the documentation of the experimentations also highly conditions what kind of reality that can be produced. Therefore, I will claim that the methods of documenting the experimentations also participate as agents in the study (Nordstrom, 2015). Thus, there is no clear divide between the studied reality and the documentation representing the reality, if the aim of the research study is to construct research methods that enables a preschool to take place in public spaces, rather than to study it (i.e. Braidotti, 2006). The phenomenon studied by research is not fully “separate from the linguistic or category systems that ‘represent’ it” (MacLure, 2013a, p. 660).

Thus, the documentation works as reality in different places. What counts as documentation of research events is dependent on the situation in which it is utilised (MacLure, 2013a). This means that ways of doing research and the production of documentation of this research cannot be fully outlined beforehand by the researcher alone. The research, as well as the forms of documenting it, evolve in relation to the specific situations, places or spaces where it takes place (e.g. Nordstrom, 2018; Springgay, 2019). By this way of defining valid knowledge, the documentation of the research becomes *re-presented*, as presenting the *vocal strolls* again (see article 1), established in text, theories and academic writings. A photograph, for example, not only represents an in-situ, site-specific event that took place, but also *displaces* it into new, present situations.

The experimentations were documented via notes, photographs, video recordings, and sound recordings, as well as embodied, in-situ knowledge experiences. The study meant engaging with many different materials and techniques to document the in-situ, site-specific events. This is based on the assumption that it is possible to describe, experience, understand and think differently through different materials and techniques (Sand, 2008).

In this study, place and space have become central methods of experimenting together with children and others to construct a preschool that brings children into to the streets. Certain aspects of place and space, such as rhythms and resonance, are difficult to document via textual or visual methods. For example, when watching the rhythms of a street on a screen or listening to the resonance of a tunnel through headphones, the current conditions add to or change the rhythms and resonances of the places being studied.

In the present study, it became crucial to consider the situated embodiment of knowledge as documentation of the event, where the bodily experiences of walking in the streets, or mapping through voice and displacement activities, are strategies for documenting rhythms and resonances (cf. Springgay, 2019; Springgay & Truman, 2017b, 2018). Importantly, these strategies depict place and space in other ways than a video recording or textual field notes can do.

After concluding my collaborative experimental work, I went through the textual, sound and visual documentation, which put me in touch with the embodied experience I had had during the *vocal strolls*.

Education research acknowledges the presentation of documentation of the performed research, which in qualitative research is generally referred to as data, as central for the validity of the material (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 246). The way the data is processed and selected legitimises the validity of the knowledge produced from a specific study. Moreover, the presentation of data works to enable the reader to determine the researcher's impact on the collected data (ibid.). This kind of reasoning especially finds its logic when the methodology aims for understanding and thinking through methods of participative observation and interpretation of a naturalistic context/phenomenon.

The methodological focus in the present study, however, is all about *producing* research methods which facilitates a preschool, and thus the preschool children, to take place in public spaces. This is why I have chosen not to use the word data, since this implies harvesting or collecting data as representations of a phenomena to be interpreted or understood. In my study, I sensed the risk of documenting too much of the collaborative experimentations, because of the risk of activating the idea of having fully represented the event. In other words, there is a risk that the documentation will potentially come to constitute and affect the very in-situ doing of the experimentation of, in our case, the doing of preschool in public spaces. Therefore, I have chosen not to document the *vocal strolls* in their entirety, but only short sequences of photos and film (often 20 seconds at a time, but sometimes more and sometimes less). For the purposes of the present study, the legitimacy of the knowledge produced is thus measured, not only in the number of hours of material, but also through what the short sequences can tell about the doings that emerged in that in-situ, site-specific situation.

Below, I present the range of the documented materials – photographs, film and audio recordings, and notes – summarised in a matrix. Thereafter, I discuss the focus and procedures I have employed to deal with this documentation in different ways.

Vocal strolls	Photography	Video recording	Audio Recording	Notes from experiments	Children's drawings
15 vocal Strolls that took approximately 1 ½ h each	Vocal strolls: ≈ 220 photos	Vocal strolls: ≈ 55 min 105 sequences	<u>Stereo Dictaphone:</u> ≈ 5h 45 min 69 sequences <u>Bracelet:</u> ≈ 5 h 30 min 53 sequences	≈15 pages written on computer	10 drawings from the underground metro event.
	Preschool: ≈ 210 photos	Preschool: ≈ 34 min 38 sequences	At Preschool: (stereo Dictaphone): ≈ 33min 26 sequences		

We enacted 15 strolls in total. During the travels, the educators and I documented proceedings with my cameras (the data material belonged to me and was used exclusively in this research study and not for any other means). The educators took photographs and video recorded the events that I initiated together with the children. In this way, the educators worked as extensions of me, since I could not activate, be activated, and document at the same time. Inside the preschool, I documented events on my own, mostly by taking photos, and sometimes filming.

The documentation from the *vocal strolls* paid specific attention to place and space. In particular, listening to the audio recordings (or the videos with eyes closed) gave me direct access to the in-situ, site-specific events. This often evoked a wider, sensory memory span than the video could achieve. The audio recordings also made me pay more attention to the reactions of the people around, as one can listen closely to what they are talking about or saying to us as they pass by.

The sound recordings were done with a stereo Dictaphone that takes up sound from various directions. We also used three bracelet-Dictaphones that the children were offered to put on their wrists. In this way, I was able to retrieve sound from different locations, as well as from events when the children were moving freely in the tunnel. However, the sound quality from the

bracelets was sometimes very poor, and sometimes the device stopped recording. Also, the children were able to turn the recording on the bracelets on and off themselves. For example, in a recording from one bracelet, a child is evidently pressing on and off constantly during the singing of the song 'Old MacDonald'. Each sequence is about 1-2 seconds long, and it is possible to hear one or two lines in each sequence. This kind of material made me laugh when listening to it, but was not very useful for describing our activities when doing preschool in the tunnel. There are quite a few 1-2 second sequences where everything is quiet and nothing can be heard. I have not counted these in the matrix above.

The notes from the experimentations, together with the sound recordings, have been very important for me in order to re-experience the experimentations. In the notes, I wrote about things that I found especially interesting or significant during the travels. For example, in my second article I describe an event where a young man passing by in the streets joins in our singing of 'Baa Baa Black Sheep'. This event was not documented on film or audio recorded. I did however write about it in my notes.

The documentation done at the preschool mostly served to note the routines, activities and rhythms of the preschool, as well as its spatial conditions. Many photos and films were taken of groups of children playing, singing, dancing, or reading in different rooms. Activities such as circle time were sometimes documented with both photos and video recordings. The Dictaphone was used scarcely at preschool, and only for the purpose of paying specific attention to how the acoustic properties of the preschool apartment differed from those in the Brunkeberg tunnel (see article 1). The preschool documentation was then used in order to be able to describe the routines, rhythms and activities displaced from the preschool premises into the public transport system.

After each *vocal stroll*, the documentation was transferred over to Stockholm University's secure encrypted storage service and put on a removable hard drive that was kept in a fireproof, locked safe. The documentation was then erased from the memory cards of the cameras and audio recorders.

The selected in-situ, site-specific events described in my articles were chosen because they express and describe common preschool activities through rhythms, routines and resonance that can be displaced in different ways and to different places and spaces. In my first article (Eriksson & Sand, 2017), the sound recordings make it possible to distinguish our (the children and my) experiments in vocal place making. Here, I pay specific attention to the film and sound sequences, pinpointing resonance and how it provoked various reactions from the by-passers. In my second article the selected documentation focus on how belonging is constituted and conditioned by the spatial features of space and place. In the third article, I discuss the spatiality of methods where the concepts of locations, dimensions and positions guided me to select suitable descriptions.

Summaries of articles

In this chapter, the three articles of the thesis will be presented. This section locates research methods in the articles, which will be conceptualised as *vocal strolls*, *vocal mappings* and *displacements*.

Each article stems from concepts and insights dealt with in earlier research within ECER, as well as from methods inspired by site-specific art. All three articles deal with transferring methods from site-specific art disciplines and practices into ECER through experimentally elaborating them in-situ. The methods of strolls, mappings and displacements are hence situated and concretised, and theories about place and space, as well as preschool, are reported in relation to these concrete situations in which the methods emerge.

The overall purpose is to produce methodological experimentations on the possibilities of constructing a preschool which facilitates for preschool and preschool children to be present and take place in, and thereby participate in the construction of public spaces, together with other actors and the places themselves. As a result, primarily working with the methods of metaphors a number of new concepts has emerged. All three articles present such concepts in order to describe and discuss the methods that emerged in the experiments performed with the toddlers in the various public spaces. These concepts are presented in *italics*.

Article 1

Placing voice meetings through vocal strolls – Toddlers in resonance with public space

Joint authorship with Monica Sand, published 2017 in *SoundEffects* 7(2), 64-72. <https://www.soundeffects.dk/article/view/102927>

This article deals with the emergence of the research methods of *vocal strolls* within ECER, which stems from walking methods from artistic site-specific walking methods (Cardiff & Schaub, 2005; Kwon, 2004; Sand, 2008, 2009). In the *vocal strolls*, voice becomes a physical and material *method* for the children and adults to experiment on how the preschool can enable children to *take place* in the public, and a way to create encounters with other people. The

article outlines *vocal strolls* as methods to both activate and be activated by place, and to explore the metaphor of ‘children’s voice’ commonly used in ECER. The *vocal strolls* enacted in the Brunkeberg tunnel were developed as a research method to meet with, respond and react to the unknown and unexpected. Thus, *vocal strolls* can only be enacted, sensed and experienced in place, through the relations and movements that emerge right then and there. The *vocal strolls* are organised in a collective manner, but the different ways of enacting them in our group were individual and incomparable. In this way, the various *voice-ways* came to self-differentiate the place. Thus, different voices performing the same sound does not sound entirely alike. The resonant bodies create relations with places in different ways. As the *vocal strolls* were actively organised by a researcher in order to ‘give children a voice’ in public places in society, one important methodological aspect became to *place voice meetings*. The phrase *to place* alludes to the fact that the researcher physically places the preschool into new situations and spaces. In these situations and spaces, children’s voices both create place and become activated by place. However, this placing cannot be planned beforehand, as it is impossible to know what to expect and what will be encountered. The *vocal strolls* thus both integrate with the common routines and resonances enacted in the tunnel, and at the same time break these rhythms, through the children’s calling, shouting and singing. In order to describe this relation, the concepts of *voice ways* and *voice meetings* emerged.

Voice is thus always a relational assemblage that *takes place*, both materialised and as an ongoing action at the same time. *Vocal strolls* hence create place, because even though voice cannot be seen, it still constitutes and conditions the architecture of the tunnel in a four-dimensional way. The concepts of *voice rooms* and *voice orientations* emerged during the *vocal strolls*, as methodologies of vocal strolls.

Vocal strolls also compose *voice refrains*. This methodological aspect addresses how the toddlers bring earlier experiences from other places as a method of sensing and dealing with the unknown place of the tunnel. The refrains create a sense of the unknown for them.

The article ends by delineating how *vocal strolls* have a methodological aspect of re-presenting, i.e. presenting voice again. This will always be done in relation to different resonances, rhythms, routines and refrains. The concept of *vocal memory* is outlined as a method to describe how encounters always transform our memory of a place. Thus, singing a song in one place and then re-placing it both preserves and transforms previous memories and experiences at the same time.

The *vocal strolls* brought preschool activities out into the public urban society, instead of processing the experiences of the public urban spaces back at the preschool. This generated a call for a preschool practice that connects with various public spaces that encompass differentiated resonances, rhythms and routines.

Article 2

Belonging-in-transience – Vocal mapping for a commuting preschool practice

Joint authorship with Monica Sand, published 2018 in *Emotion, Space and Society*, 29.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1755458617301688> .

In this article, the research method of mapping public space through voice, i.e. *vocal mapping*, is outlined. The core question concerns how a preschool practice can belong in public spaces that are characterised by transience, and where *vocal mappings* orientate these ways of belonging through voice, i.e. *voice-belongings*. Thus, the *vocal mappings* embody the preschool's presence in these places through the rhythms, pulses and vibrations of voice. *Vocal mappings* both orientate and organise public space, and the preschool practice becomes physically, culturally, and socially displaced into the public spaces of transience (i.e. the public transport system). It therefore became crucial to describe both the preschool as an institutional place, and the public spaces as in transience. These spaces offer different kinds of belonging through physical and bodily rhythms (Lefebvre, 2004), social and political dimensions (Massey, 2005), and cultural meanings and significances of place (Augé, 2008). The article also turns to site-specific art (cf. Kwon, 2004; Sand, 2008; O'Rourke, 2014) to describe the relationship between place and space. Here, displacement becomes a *vocal mapping* strategy to differentiate one place from another, by displacing one place into another (Kwon, 2004). Inspiration taken from site-specific artists and researchers on how to displace art outside the art institutions (i.e. museums and galleries) and put them into relation with other public spaces, acknowledges the specific conditions and possibilities of a physical place. These conditions and possibilities can be physically felt, performed and activated by walking in a place, and outline how a body both integrates into and intervenes in a place (Koch & Sand, 2010; O'Rourke, 2014; Sand, 2008, 2014). Site-specific artistic *displacements* were adopted for the experimental events of the preschool travelling in the public transport system, and thereby *vocal mappings* of *voice-belongings* were developed through experimentation. When the preschool practice moves from its familiar premises at the preschool into the streets, the bus, the metro and the Brunkeberg tunnel, their common strategies on how to belong must be integrated with the rhythms and routines that these places organise. In this way, they transform these non-places of transience into places for preschool *belonging-in-transience*. Thus, *vocal mappings* recognise how place participates in creating belonging for the preschool practice in the public transport system. The *vocal mappings* became methods of orientating in the uncertainty of how to act or what to do in this

place of movements. It became a direct in-situ experimentation in the actual moment and situation of belonging that is always transient and fluctuates through places. Furthermore, in order to be able to describe how these *vocal mappings* created connections more specifically, the concept of *voice belonging* emerged, which expresses how voice is transient and always produced in relation to an actual place.

Article 3

The Art of Displacement – Curating a preschool context in a public transport system

Single authorship, published in *Children's Geographies* 2019

This article discusses ways to enable children to participate in constructing public space in the Swedish transport system, through the travels of a 'miniature preschool'. The article takes its starting point in a methodology of curating site-specific art, which aims to stage and situate various enactments and elaborations in public contexts so that the meaning of art will be produced through collaboration between practices. In the context of this study, the *vocal strolls* came to through collaborative experimentations curate a 'miniature preschool' in the Swedish public transport system. Both the researcher and the children activate space collectively by their different embodied enactments and heterogeneous suggestions on what to do in this place. For example, some toddlers initiated running and chasing as an activity in the tunnel, while I suggested singing the songs we usually sang in preschool. Also, our different ways to respond to each other's suggestions activated the situation in multiple way. My way of chasing was different from others and vice versa. Furthermore, the article engages site-specific approaches of displacement to elaborate on how to converge a preschool context into the context of travelling in public spaces. *Displacements* always emerge in, with and through the situations. Three coexisting preschool *displacements* are identified to emerge through the situations and connections: locations (where), dimensions (when) and positions (who).

The *first preschool displacement* concerns *locations* and how the physical conditions that we are able to experience both facilitate and limit the approaches taken in order to locate oneself. The miniature preschool group however changes the rhythms of public spaces by placing the rhythms and routines of a preschool into them. The locations of the preschool context are described to be *mobile but particular*. Thus, in the physical location of the tunnel, the activities of a preschool practice transform both themselves and the place where they are located. The rhythms and routines of the traveling preschool

practice transforms by intervening and integrating with the rhythms and routines enacted in the public spaces. The public spaces also transform by the preschool rhythms and routines being repeated in this place.

The *second preschool displacement* focuses on the matter of unsettling reality in a temporal sense. The rhythms at 10:00 are constituted by the organisation of time, but also by historical and cultural dimensions. These rhythms were displaced in various ways by bringing children's play with the vocal resonance into the tunnel. Thus, the toddlers play and voices interfere with the common rhythms of the streets. At the same time, this exposes the common implicit rhythms which form the three-dimensional aspects of the streets. Thus, voice moves in multiple directions simultaneously and brings other historical and cultural experiences into the particular situations elaborated on in the public spaces. A *vocal mobile architecture* of the miniature preschool causes place to fluctuate.

The *third preschool displacement of positions* deals with the embodied responses to a situation. The displacement of positions presents how we all have different experiences from different situations and places, and therefore different abilities to respond to a situation. Furthermore, when revisiting a place, previous experiences transform as a new situation emerges. Positions, which are simultaneously spatial, cultural, social and discursive, are therefore highly dependent on our ability to respond to a specific situation. This response-ability – a concept inspired both from Barad (2007) and artistically developed by von Rosen, Sand and Meskimmon (2017) – creates *multiple and mobile positions* in one situation.

The article concludes that preschool practice can be collectively curated by an assemblage of actors taking place in public spaces. The repetitions of various routines and rhythms of the preschool practice enacted inside the preschool premises comes to *curate context* in the public spaces. This creates a *public transport preschool practice* which can offer self-differentiated experiences by moving one place into another. Furthermore, the 'miniature preschool' participates in constructing the public spaces in new ways, which includes the preschool practice as a participant.

Research methods making other preschool constructions possible

Instead of putting ourselves in the position of our children or our children's children, we might envisage today's answer to our students if they were to ask us: 'What are you doing with what you know? How is it changing your matters of concern?' (Stengers, 2018, p. 140)

In this final chapter I will discuss the aim of this thesis and the research questions, as well as what kinds of knowledge this research can contribute with to the field of ECER. This thesis kappa text has been guided by five quotes, introducing some of the chapters. These quotes provide a short recapitulation of the foundations and concerns of the study as a whole. The first quote, by ECER researchers Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (2007, p. 62), emphasises an understanding of preschool as something socially constructed to meet the needs of contemporary society. In the beginning of the background chapter the social democrat Alva Myrdal's (1935, p. 9) quote narrates that the historical construction of the preschool institution rests on a modernist ideal. This is an ideal based on the need for society to construct institutions, both to offer children places in society, and to form and shape children to become well adapted and civilised members of society. In the methods and methodology chapter, the quote from artist and researcher Monica Sand (Sand & Atienza, 2014, pp. 136–137) puts focus on how research methods emerge through direct experimentations and interventions taking place and thereby producing the empirical reality. The ANT researcher Annemarie Mol's (2002, p. 54) quote, which introduces the chapter on the study's experimental set-up, highlights how methods of enacting experimental work such as the one in the present study emerge through different practicalities and conditions. The present and final chapter presents a quote by the philosopher Isabelle Stengers (2018), in order to emphasise how the researcher and the engaged research methods also participate in constructing the empirical *reality*, and has a societal responsibility to do so. The protagonists of this thesis are thus the research methods which evolve in the research experimentations performed, and not the understandings, interpretations or descriptions of children's everyday lives and learning in these spaces.

The overall purpose of this thesis has been to produce methodological experimentations on the possibilities of constructing a preschool, which facilitates for preschool and preschool children to be present and take place in, and

thereby participate in, the construction of public spaces, together with other actors and the places themselves. Thus, the collaborative experimentations enacted have displaced the preschool practices from their institutional space and into non-institutional public spaces. The public spaces of streets, underground metro trains, and pedestrian tunnels are places which gather people with different interests and reasons for being there. The term public space indicates that it is a space open for everyone and thus demarcates how democracy can be manifested in these places (Franzen et al., 2016; Jacobs, 1993). However, and as earlier research has shown, children do not seem to have access, or even the same rights, to spend time in public spaces compared to adults (Mikkelsen & Christensen, 2009; van der Burgt & Cele, 2014). The onto-epistemological research methods emerged through the collaborative experimentations (researcher, preschool and children) with the overarching question in mind of how a preschool can be made possible that facilitates children to *take place* in public spaces, and thereby become agents, among other agents, which together construct the democratic society by being in an encounter with each other in all of their respective differences. To *take place*, hence, not only refers to the common signification of a social event occurring, but also how the preschool – and the preschool children – can be enabled to take up physical place within public spaces, whereby our society’s youngest citizens can be invited to participate in transactions that construct the diversity of public spaces.

The experimental intention of this thesis thus emphasises that the research methods of, for instance, *vocal strolls*, emerge by ways of collaborations between the researcher, the preschool toddlers, the educators, the by-passing people and the rhythms and routines of public places themselves. This thesis thus takes an onto-epistemological theoretical stance, which means that research is not separated from the everyday practices it is commonly supposed to study (Barad, 2007). The aim of this thesis is thereby to experiment with displacing preschool practices from their institutionalised place into public spaces, in order to develop situated onto-epistemological research methods for early childhood education research.

Below, I will return to the research questions and in various ways try to respond to them and discuss what kinds of knowledge they can offer within the field of early childhood education.

Emergent, differentiated and situated research methods

The research question that will be addressed here is:

- What kinds of early childhood research methods will emerge in these displacements when preschool practices are put into transactional interactions with public spaces of streets, buses, metro-trains and pedestrian tunnels, and the agents within them?

As this thesis is interested in developing research methods which experiment with enabling transactions, I have found inspiration in site-specific art practices that has experimented with curating a context for collaboratively experimenting with methods for art in public spaces. Artistic site-specific practices are, like many other art practices, *method producing practices*. This means that they do not enact pre-established methods to gain knowledge about art, but rather experiment with the construction of new methods for them to become an art production. Therefore, the experimentations in the present study has had the intention to produce *early childhood research methods*, which, correspondingly to the site-specific art practices, can displace the institutional preschool into public spaces, as to produce preschool practices differently in these spaces. So, how might these produced research methods, which are collaboratively developed in the emerging situations when preschool is moved out from the institutional buildings, be described?

The short and more accessible answer is that the researcher functions both as a *curator of a context* for a preschool taking place in public spaces, and as a collaborator experimenting with how a preschool might take place in the public space by *curating context*. The research methods thus need to work as to enable different people (children, researcher, educator, by passers) to *take place* differently, and thereby offer each other suggestions on how to act by ways of transactions. The site-specific inspired ECER methods of *vocal strolls*, *vocal mappings*, *displacements* and *metaphors* do, in different and multiple ways, enable such collaborative experimentations. These onto-epistemological research methods are thus emergent, differentiated and situated. They emerge as a response to a specific situation and are therefore always situated. The emergent research method of, for instance *vocal strolls*, shapes and frames the context, always depending on by whom, where and when they are developed.

The different onto-epistemological early childhood research methods – *vocal strolls*, *vocal mappings*, *displacements* and *metaphors* – which emerged when I as a researcher displaced the preschool practice into public spaces, will be further detailed in the following two sections.

A longer and more elaborated answer to the first research question is discussed in the upcoming sections, with some risk of repetition that the reader needs to have some patience with.

Onto-epistemological research methods in ECER

The methodological foundation of research based on an onto-epistemological (Barad, 2007) stance holds that research practices themselves participate in the construction of knowledge. Thus, the theoretical physicist Karen Barad stresses how science is also part of the world and that it would be more ethical to acknowledge that research-produced knowledge is inseparable from the everyday practices of living in the world (ibid.) The onto-epistemological research methods developed in this thesis thus enables the social science of early childhood education to collaborate in the production of preschool in experimentations together with the preschool practices and the children within the displaced context of public space. In this thesis, the experimentations are enabled by the onto-epistemological inseparability between research-produced knowledge about the preschool and the present enactments of doing preschool in public spaces. Onto-epistemological research methods can therefore function to produce a *direct knowledge* in the emerging situations of living.

Importantly, this thesis concerns the development and production of *research methods*. Therefore, it remains to be further investigated what it might entail to transform these methods into *pedagogical methods* that educators themselves can utilise to organise a preschool in which children are given the possibility to take place in public spaces. Hence, with the risk of repeating myself, this is not a thesis about pedagogical methods, but about the possibility of constructing onto-epistemological, and thus situated and evolving research methods for early childhood education research.

An important lesson learnt in transferring site-specific art methods into ECER is that research actually can be about method-producing practices. In fact, this may – at least hypothetically – define the very core task of ECER. That is, that early childhood education research should perhaps not first most be done in order to understand and explain the world (preschool or children), but to *produce the world* (possible ways of living). The research methods of *metaphors*, *vocal strolls*, *mappings* and *displacements* are produced in a direct relation to emerging situations and contexts in the world. Thus, these embodied and direct research methods are dependent on knowledge produced on how children negotiate and participate in constructing an institutional childhood (e.g. Eriksson Bergström, 2013; Gallacher, 2005; Rutanen, 2017). Consequently, the onto-epistemological research methods developed in this thesis do not produce knowledge about children, childhood or learning but rather produce other sets of research methods.

Another research method which emerged through the displacement of the preschool into public spaces is the method of metaphors. *Methods of metaphors* has functioned as a way of bridging the theory and practice divide. By ways of producing and enacting metaphors, the written words of research and the preschool embodied actions can create new meanings and concepts together, in order to describe the ways in which preschool takes place in the public spaces by ways of the methods discussed above. The meaning of a metaphor becomes materialised by being *re-placed* (as in *placed again*) into situated contexts. This is somewhat different from post-qualitative research, which uses metaphors to *think* differently about the theoretical production entailed by the writing (Richardson, 2003; St Pierre, 2018b). For example, when the metaphor of ‘giving children voice’ was re-placed in the tunnel, the material relations between the children and the place enabled concepts as *voice ways*, *voice refrains*, *voice meetings* and *voice orientations* to emerge as describing the ways to take place, and thus embodying the connections between conceptualized research text and the physical enaction of, for instance, voice meetings.

The onto-epistemological stance asserts that research methods are not superior to other, perhaps more mundane, methods in terms of ways of living in the world. Social science and educational researchers have validated their research methods exactly by distinguishing them as different from the layperson’s ways and methods of living and coping with their everyday life (e.g. Cohen et al., 2018, p. 4). However, this thesis sets out to facilitate a research context in which lay persons are invited to affect, as well as develop, the emerging research methods. Hence, if the intention is to enable a preschool which facilitates children to take part in public spaces and various transactions taking place there, the research methods cannot be constituted as a set of pre-established methods. Rather, the researcher *curate’s context*, by displacing the preschool from the institutional settings, by walking and mapping a space with, for instance, children. However, how these methods evolve will necessarily be different depending on who and what is, or enters into, that displaced context. The *difference* that emerges between various ways of strolling, mapping and displacing preschool enables research methods to emerge through transactions between places, practices and people (an assemblage of multiple spatial, discursive, cultural, social, economic and political matters). For example, the layperson’s methods of living always affect and influence the development of research methods and vice versa. This is the very essence of transactions.

The *vocal strolls* discussed in the present study have, in this way, taken up the call for a new science, made in the quote by Stengers (2018) introducing this chapter. Such a science engages with, and takes responsibility for, an ongoing creating of reality in collaboration and engaging with multiple and different agents in specific situations, places and practices which shape and frame everyday life.

In Stengers' (ibid.) way of thinking about research, the researcher has responsibility to experiment, together with those the research concerns, in order to learn more about how the produced knowledge can be put to use in different situations. Hence, *vocal strolls*, *mappings*, *displacements* and *metaphors* can be described as a "science in the making", to paraphrase Bruno Latour (1987, p. 4).

This research project therefore takes a view of research as one practice among many other practices constructing public places. This relates back to the material-discursive theoretical research perspective outlined in the chapter on earlier research, which stated that children's agency is always intertwined with the spatial-temporal-discursive matters which constitute an event (e.g. Lenz Taguchi, 2010, 2011; Mannion, 2007). The emergence of research methods is an effect of the transactions of the *different* ways of enacting in public spaces. The research methods of *metaphor*, *vocal strolls*, *mappings* and *displacements* are all open for *different* human and non-human transactions to take place. What is more, even if you repeat one method in another place, the method will self-differentiate (Lenz Taguchi, 2017) as the conditions might have changed. Thus, the same voice will change because the acoustic properties has changed, and the strolling will adapt to the new conditions which constitutes the place.

The above reasoning of research methods as emerging and self-differentiating depending on the situation, is well in line with the call by post-qualitative researchers for research methods that are non-procedural or not pre-established, and where methods are allowed to emerge in and through situations (Springgay & Truman, 2017b; St Pierre, 2017b, 2018a). However, this thesis' delineation of research methods as emerging through collaborative transactions that will self-differentiate what we consider research methods to be, also forms a critique of post-qualitative research in its suggestion to break with research methods once and for all, or to apply an 'anti-methodology' (Nordstrom, 2018), to think 'without methods' (Jackson, 2017), or to go 'against methods' (Manning, 2015).

The research methods elaborated in the thesis have rather tried to answer Lenz Taguchi's call for *more* methods that offer children possibilities to self-differentiate their experiences and identities (Lenz Taguchi, 2016, 2017). The research methods elaborated in thesis have also expanded this call to consider how a *preschool* can facilitate this, when the self-differentiation of *places* and *methods* to live our lives become included.

Place as method for research and for ECER

The research methods which emerge in this thesis aim to *curate context*. In the curating of contexts, the children bring their methods of constructing their preschool place into the public spaces, and thereby participate in constructing public space. The methods of bringing the rhythms and routines from two places together are methods of experimentation with the meaning(s) we make in and of places. In this fashion, *place becomes a method* for enacting early childhood education in *different* places. We collaboratively bring a preschool practice into the public spaces of the streets, where the question of what is considered to be ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ becomes displaced. Perhaps the displacements of preschool may be conceptualised as research *methods of response-ability*, where it is not clearly stated who is participating in what. Rather, the displacement puts emphasis on what kinds of abilities we have to respond to in a particular situation and context.

To curate context can be understood to build on and supplement the body of research which has conceptualised ‘places *for* children’ and ‘children’s places’ (Halldén, 2007; Rasmussen, 2004). Displacing and curating context for preschool practices, when place is also understood as an active agent in the making, becomes a *method for bringing children’s places into adult’s places* outside the preschool institution. In doing so, it accentuates the risk of that when taking for granted places ‘for children’, where ‘children’s places’ can *take place*, might disconnect children from the possibility of everyday democratic action in public spaces such as the streets. To conclude the elaborated answer of the first research question: these kinds of place-methods can thus be understood to enable an onto-epistemological approach to research, as they do not separate research from everyday practices. One way of summarizing what kind of knowledge that has been produced in this thesis in relation to the first research question can be formulated in the following way.

- Together, and *in situ* – on site – the researcher, preschool children, educator, the place and the agents within these places, have produced knowledge about what new kinds of *possible ECER methods* that can be collaboratively developed, and which enable preschool and preschool children to be present and take place in public spaces.

Creating relations between institutional and public spaces

The upcoming section concerns the second research question:

- What can be learnt about the role of the preschool institution in society from these methodological experimentations?

The onto-epistemological research methods of *vocal strolls*, *mappings*, *displacements* and *metaphors* are highly inspired by various site-specific art practices method producing interventions in public spaces. As the reader may have gathered from previous sections, there are parallels between art institutions and early childhood institutions. Both have emerged as part of the organisation of modern society. Taking inspiration from site-specific art practices of creating sites outside of art institutions can enable another view of how to organise a preschool institution in public spaces. The main lesson learnt on my part in transferring site-specific art methods into the field of ECER was the need for ECER to take an exterior view of our ways of organising preschool and research about preschool. The construction of preschool is affected by the challenges, conditions and beliefs that characterise the wider society. Research can enable a displacement of the tasks of preschool in line with what is happening in contemporary society. The relationships between preschool and the exterior society cannot be studied by focusing solely on the interior organisation of preschool, or the children's experience of this interior. Instead, there is a need for the preschool – encompassing our youngest citizens – to enter into transformative connections with the world outside and participate in transactions of constructing public spaces. This is different from many earlier research studies which have emphasised how children are enabled to construct their own places within preschools, precisely because adults have organised institutional places for children (cf. Eriksson Bergström, 2013; Gallacher, 2005; Halldén, 2007; Skånfors et al., 2009).

The short and perhaps most accessible answer to the second research question is thus that preschool needs not necessarily be founded solely on the modernist principle of organising places *for* children in order for them to participate in society. Rather, preschool can function to take responsibility for engaging children in the creative processes of proximity *between* different places in society. Thereby, a reconceptualised understanding of preschool is that it can enable children to participate in transactions which construct the public places, where democracy is manifested as the right for all citizens to take place.

When preschool takes place mainly in places especially constructed for children, the task of the preschool institution becomes to learn *about* the society going on outside the preschool walls. Here, the preschool functions as a miniature society (inside a bigger society that of course affects the miniature

preschool society), in which children can create their own places and ideas about society. However, if the preschool brings the children into the streets, the preschool practice becomes a question of enabling a direct and embodied life *within* a society with even greater heterogeneity than the preschool institution can create inside the walls of a preschool.

Another important factor to be emphasised as a result of this thesis is that earlier research has underlined the importance of children's possibilities to enter public spaces. However, the children participating in these studies have generally been older than four years (Änggård, 2015b; Ladru Ekman & Gustafson, 2018; Lindh, 2017; Liselott Olsson, 2013; Raittila, 2012; Taylor & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2015). It seems that there is a contemporary agreement founded on an assumption that the youngest children do not need to and/or have the competence to participate in public places. This is an idea that this thesis opposes. If we exclude any group in society from taking place in public spaces, the very function of democratic action becomes demolished. The onto-epistemological research methods of *vocal strolls*, *mappings*, *displacements* and *metaphors* enacted in this thesis show how the youngest children can take place in society just by walking the streets. In this way, the children both integrate into and intervene in public spaces and the actions going on there. With this thesis, I suggest that the preschool can function as an institutional practice which can, even if ever so little, facilitate the youngest children in society to participate, safely and securely, in constructing public places.

A more detailed answer to the second research question will now be presented in the two sections below.

A preschool that brings places together

In the introduction and background chapters, I described how the preschool institution evolved from the modernist ideal of organising specific places for children in society. These institutions separated family life from the wider life of society, adults from children, older children from younger, by creating specific places where their particular needs and desires could be fulfilled (Bjurman, 1995; Ekström, 2007; Lenz Taguchi, 2000; B. Sandin, 1986). The historical emergence of the preschool institution is an important foundation of our society, and the architecture of the preschool is highly conditioned by modernist practices of organising a society. Thus, if the logic of institutional separation had not formed the preschool, it is quite possible that there would be no preschool at all. The organisation and definition of a preschool is dependent on the boundaries of a preschool *as* a societal institution.

What I have learnt is thus not to construct a preschool moving from one place to another, such as for example the mobile preschools described in Gustafson's and Ekman Ladru's (former van der Burgt) study (Gustafson & van der Burgt, 2015; Ladru Ekman & Gustafson, 2018). The mobile preschool ra-

ther suggest that we can abandon the modern ideal of an institutional preschool, while I suggest that we should expand the boundaries of an institutional preschool practice by bringing one place *into* another. Thus, the places chosen for the experimental study of this thesis are not randomly picked. I have chosen the streets, the bus, the metro and the Brunkeberg tunnel precisely because they are constituted by social divergences, differences and negotiation on *who* and *what* has the right to take place there. These places enable transactions which construct the public spaces.

The *vocal strolls* enacted as experimental events in this thesis take inspiration from the artist Robert Smithson's (1996) ways of bringing two places into one another. While Smithson brings Sites into Non-sites of the museums, I bring the preschool practice (None-site) to the streets (Sites), which is not a common site for preschool practice. This has made me reconsider how we organise a preschool practice. A common pedagogical practice is to make excursions to various public spaces (often parks, museums or libraries) and then process them when coming back to the preschool, by producing representations of the experiences from those places. However, if we bring the preschool practice to public spaces such as streets, busses or tunnels we will represent the preschool by repeating the rhythms and routines commonly enacted inside the institutional walls. When the routines and rhythms are integrated in these public places they both transform by adapting to the new conditions, and transform the conditions of the public space.

What site-specific art practices have taught me is that the representation of place *into* another place is really a new way of organising and structuring place. My thesis suggests the potential of offering the children a preschool that takes place in the realm of the public streets. Through a direct movement out from institutions, the children come to organise society differently. To bring the preschool out into the streets opens up for other human and non-human transactions that participate in enacting a preschool. Moreover, the preschool in this way interacts with people who sometimes do not know much about the life going on inside the preschool. I found that several people we met in the public places were interested in interacting with the toddlers; it is possible that they never meet small children in their daily lives. I started to think that an important task for preschool might also be to enable connections between people of different backgrounds and ages.

‘Taking place’ as early childhood education

Another important lesson learnt concerns the question of how the notion of the material-discursive affects how we think about ‘taking place’ as an important task for early childhood education. In response to the call from earlier childhood research for children to be given more possibilities to move in public spaces (Christensen et al., 2011; Hickey & Phillips, 2013; van der Burgt & Cele, 2014), this thesis has experimented with facilitating methods for a preschool to enable children to participate in democratic action by *taking place* in public spaces.

When thinking about children taking place, it is important to note that the children’s bodies are differently constituted than the adults. By letting early childhood education take place in the public realm, the task of preschool can be partly renegotiated as being more active in participating in the construction of society, as discussed already in the section above. It may seem as a small task, but looking at it in a societal view of organising a democratic society, which is to offer public spaces for everyone, this is an enormously important task. Now you might as a reader of this text ask yourself if the mobile preschools described in Gustafson & Ekman Ladru’s study (Gustafson & van der Burgt, 2015; Ladru Ekman & Gustafson, 2018), or the guided walks enacted by various researcher (Änggård, 2015b; Hickey & Phillips, 2013; Raittila, 2012), is not already enabling children to take place in public spaces. Are not also Lindh’s (2017) and Liselott Olsson’s (2013) studies also enabling children to take place in public spaces? My answer is that they are indeed doing so. However, this was not the explicit focus or intention of these studies. There are no descriptions that describe the intentions of children taking place in public spaces as a one of the preschool’s most central tasks of integrating children in society. Rather, the focus lies on the children’s relations, experiences and learning *of* and *in* these places.

This thesis instead suggests a shift of focus from the task of preschool to merely educate *children*, to an objective of creating societal transactions, in which *all* agents present in that context learn to live well in a world filled with dissensus and conflicts. The philosopher Claire Colebrook proposes that life itself can be understood as education, where education does not have to correspond to pre-formulated goals about what is needed to be learnt or known (Colebrook, 2017, p. 653). This aligns well with the ideas of constructing a preschool that brings the children into public spaces, in the sense that the children then are enabled to participate in various transactions that will construct public space itself.

The research methods of *vocal strolls*, *mappings* and *displacements* that emerged as a result of this study promote an idea of a preschool education that encompasses learning to deal also with an important aspect of ‘not knowing’ (Colebrook, 2017, p. 652). Not knowing what to expect and how to respond. The intention of not knowing in this context constitutes a preschool that might

enable the children to ‘get lost’ together with their educators and other agents, in places outside the preschool premises; in order to experiment with finding alternative or new creative ways to handle a situation, or to interact in a new context – *to live* and to perhaps live better or differently in your relations to others and to other places. A way to summarise what kind of knowledge that has been produced in relation to the second research question can be articulated as follows.

- Together, and *in situ* – on site – the researcher, children, educators and other agents moving in these sites, have produced knowledge about what *preschool as a societal institution can become*, when preschool and preschool children take place in non-institutional contexts, such as public spaces of streets, tunnels, buses and subway trains.

Suggestions for future research

The main suggestion for further research that I propose is to develop more research methods within the field of ECER that emerge in relation to place. Thus, there is not only a need for multiple research methods to be used in general; rather, it is equally important to enable research methods to self-differentiate by acknowledging place as also constructing and organising methods. This is one way to respond to Stengers’ (2018) call for another kind of science, which takes responsibility for constructing a sustainable society together with laypersons – the people the research concerns. I have used artistic methods to develop place-methods within ECER, but there are many other disciplines relating social and spatial processes to each other. However, this does not imply that other disciplinary methods should be directly transferred into ECER without being adapted to the conditions within this field. It rather suggests how different disciplinary methods can influence each other in order to produce knowledge in different ways.

Another suggestion is to perform methodological experimentations on how to facilitate a preschool taking place in other public spaces than the streets, buses, metro trains and tunnels. Different public spaces have different functions, rhythms and routines. The research methods of taking the children into the streets, etc., developed in this thesis need to be *re-placed*, as in placed again, and thereby both be adapted to the situations emerging, and simultaneously intervene. I suggest that experimentations may be performed in public places of society which are associated with more formal democratic actions. It would be interesting, for instance, to see small toddlers take place by their voices in places such as the Swedish parliament, or in the building where the public radio is situated.

Lastly, one might ask how the research methods developed in this thesis might possibly also be transformed into pedagogical methods. The research

methods of *vocal strolls*, *mappings*, *displacements* and *metaphors* were partly transferred from artistic practices based on similar features with the aim to produce art. In that process of transference, these features needed to adapt and change in significant and multiple ways, and thus enacting new methods for early childhood education research. This would also be the case if any research methods from ECER were to be transformed into pedagogical methods. The methods that were constructed in the processes of this particular study, would, in such a process of transfer, emerge differently when enacted once again; in a different context, with different children, different preschool practices and curated by educators rather than a researcher.

Svensk sammanfattning

Introduktion

En av de mest centrala uppgifterna för förskolan har varit, och fortsätter att vara, att integrera barn i samhället. Det har ofta gjorts genom att skapa specifika platser för barn, t ex. förskolan, där barnen får utrymme att skapa sina egna platser. I andra offentliga rum såsom gator, offentliga transportmedel och gångtunnlar verkar barn ha små möjligheter och agens att skapa sina egna platser. En övergripande avsikt med den här avhandlingen handlar om huruvida det är möjligt att konstruera en förskola som kan möjliggöra för små (inte bara yngre) barn att vara närvarande i, ta plats och skapa utrymme i offentliga rum, som gator, bussar, tunnelbanetåg och gångtunnlar. Dessa offentliga platser samlar människor med heterogena intressen och kan därmed förstås som platser där sociala skillnader, friktioner och konflikter äger rum och exponeras. Gatorna kan då förstås som platser där demokrati i en specifik mening, förhandlas genom olika aktörers direkta närvaro, möte och interaktion med varandra (Franzén, 2004; Jacobs, 1993). Detta väcker frågor om vem som har rätt att ta plats, och vad som får äga rum i dessa utrymmen.

Den övergripande avsikten med detta avhandlingsarbete är således att utföra ett metodologiskt experiment för att undersöka möjligheterna att konstruera en förskola som gör det möjligt för förskolan och förskolebarnen att vara närvarande och ta plats i, och därmed vara delaktiga i att konstruera den offentliga platsen, tillsammans med andra aktörer och platserna själva.

Det handlar här om en förskola som, genom att ta med barnen ut i det offentliga rummet bestående av gator, tunnelbanor och gångtunnlar, ger möjlighet att öppna upp för andra sätt och platser att göra en institutionell barndom. En förskola där utbyten mellan förskolans praktiker och det offentliga rummets praktiker exponerar och producerar skillnader som kan leda till transformation och förändring av såväl förskolan som av samhället. Kanske kan därmed forskarens avsikt att handgripligen förflytta förskolepraktiken, och därmed förflytta förskolebarn till det offentliga rummet, underlätta för barnen, våra yngsta medborgare, att delta i sådana utbyten och interaktioner med andra som vistas i dessa rum?

För att skapa förutsättningar för dessa metodologiska experiment har jag tagit en onto-epistemologisk teoretisk ansats. Det innebär att jag som forskare direkt deltar i att möjliggöra och skapa sådana utbyten. Detta skiljer sig från att som forskare delta med syfte att producera data för att studera – beskriva,

tolka eller förstå – de dagliga utbyten som pågår i förskolepraktiker. En onto-epistemologisk forskningspraxis kan således varken tänkas eller genomföras som åtskild från den praxis som redan pågår i vardagen (Barad, 2007). Den onto-epistemologiska ståndpunkt som tas i denna avhandling gör det möjligt för forskaren och förskolan (och därmed barnen som centrala agenter i förskolan) att tillsammans utveckla de forskningsmetoder som kan underlätta att en förskola äger rum, och därmed låter barn ta plats, i offentliga utrymmen.

I avhandlingens experimenterande arbete använde jag plats-specifika konstnärliga metoder som inspiration. Som forskare tog jag med mig en förskolegrupp (bestående av 6 barn och 2 pedagoger som varierade från tillfälle till tillfälle) på en experimenterande resa. Vi gick på gator, och reste med buss och tunnelbana till Brunkebergstunneln, en gång- och cykeltunnel i centrala Stockholm, och interagerade med platsen och de många olika människor som passerade där. Dessa offentliga platser kan förstås som platser som rymmer olikhet, inkongruens, friktioner och motsägelser av olika slag (Franzen et al., 2016; Gabrielsson, 2006). På, och i interagerandet med, dessa platser kom vi att tillsammans utarbeta forskningsmetoder som jag menar möjliggör en förskola där barn tar plats i det offentliga rummet. Det var med våra röster, och genom att föra in de dagliga förskole-aktiviteterna, rutinerna och rytmerna, som vanligtvis bara förekommer inom förskolans väggar, som barnen, pedagogerna och jag interagerade med dessa offentliga rum. I de här interaktiva aktiviteterna kom barnen att både aktiveras *av platserna* och situationerna däri, och samtidigt aktiverade barnen *platserna* på helt nya sätt. Barnens närvaro och aktiviteter, där deras rutiner och rytmer infördes i platsens egna rutiner och rytmer, transformerade inte bara platsen i sig utan även människornas rutiner och beteenden på dessa platser. På detta sätt kom forskningsprojektet att i en specifik mening skapa en förskoleverksamhet där barn, pedagoger, forskare, tunnlar, gator och andra passerande människor *tillsammans* kom att (om)skapa de offentliga platserna i sina möten; på grund av sina *olika* förutsättningar och villkor att ta plats just där.

Bakgrund

Den svenska förskolan har organiserats genom att reservera specifika platser *för* barn i samhället. Att organisera förskolor för barn uppstod som ett svar på den växande urbaniseringen i Sverige, där människor flyttade in till storstäder för att söka arbete (Eilard & Tallberg Broman, 2011; Rubinstein Reich et al., 2017). Den rurala storfamiljen kom att bli en kärnfamilj, där båda föräldrarna arbetade och ingen kunde passa barnen. Många av arbetarbarnen tillbringade sina dagar med att driva runt på stadens gator och den rikare borgerliga befolkningen såg dem som ett störande inslag i samhället (Bjurman, 1995; Hultqvist, 1990). Framväxten av olika förskoleinstitutioner var en del av det modernistiska projektet för att få barnen bort från gatan och forma dem som

goda demokratiska medborgare (Bjurman, 1995; Hultqvist, 1990; Vallberg-Roth, 2002). Civilisation sågs som ett högt modernistiskt ideal, och detta kunde upprättas genom att organisera ett samhälle som formade den moderna urbana människan (Ekström, 2007). Barn och barndom blev på detta sätt en fråga som inte bara gällde familjen utan också kom att få betydelse för hur staten organiserade plats för dessa i samhället (Axelsson & Qvarsebo, 2017; Tallberg Broman, 1995).

De första versionerna av dagens förskola, t. ex. Barnstugor, Barntädgårdar och Storbarnkammare, kom därför att organiseras genom att separera det privata och det publika och organisera specifika platser *för* inte bara barn, utan även för utbildning, sjuka, gamla, straffade, hälsofrämjande aktiviteter, fritid, osv. (Foucault, 2003). Förskolan kom att bli en plats som tillgodosåg barnens rättigheter till en trygg och säker plats, där de kunde få möjlighet att utvecklas till goda medborgare (Ekström, 2007; Hammarström-Lewenhagen, 2013; Lenz Taguchi, 2000; Markström, 2005). Att organisera en specifik plats för barnen – förskolan – kom att bli ett sätt att ge plats åt barnen i samhället.

Det är inne i dessa förskolor som barn får möjlighet att konstruera sina egna platser (Halldén, 2007; Rasmussen, 2004) och delta i demokratiska processer om hur verksamheten ska upprättas (Eriksson Bergström, 2013). Dock finns det också förskolor där man aktivt försöker upprätta relationer med det offentliga samhället utanför förskolans väggar. Det kan handla om att upprätta så kallade mobila förskolor som har sin verksamhet i en buss som åker till olika områden i närheten av sin stationära förskola (Gustafson & van der Burgt, 2015; Gustafson, van der Burgt, & Joelsson, 2017). I en annan studie studerar Lindh (2017) hur en förskolegrupp får ta del av publik konst i form av statyer i stadens offentliga rum genom s.k. ”statyvandringar”. Rautio (2014) och Olsson (2013) genomför forskningsprojekt som aktivt placerar förskolan i semi-offentliga eller offentliga rum för att etablera lärande tillsammans med andra miljöer, människor och situationer. I alla exempel ovan får barnen möjlighet att ta plats i det offentliga samhället genom förskolan, men där fokus är barnens lärande i och om det offentliga rummet.

Denna avhandling fokuserar dock hur förskolan kan möjliggöra för att barnen ska kunna ta plats i offentliga rum, genom att aktivt delta i och *skapa* det offentliga rummet. Detta initierar en diskussion om hur förskolan, en institution som med sin specifika plats syftar till att separera barnen från offentliga rum, kan upprättas också – tillfälligt – i icke-institutionella rum, som gator, transportsystem och tunnlar.

Mot bakgrund av ovanstående introduktion och bakgrund är syftet med detta avhandlingsarbete att experimentera med att förflytta förskolans verksamhet från dess institutionaliserade plats in i offentliga rum, inspirerad av olika plats-specifika konstnärliga metoder, för att utveckla situerade ontogenetiska forskningsmetoder för förskoleforskning. De metoder som växer fram genom det experimenterande forskningsarbetet har som syfte att

öka interaktion mellan förskoleinstitutionen – där barnen inkluderas – och offentliga rum, som platser för samhällelig interaktion och utbyten mellan olika aktörer.

Forskningsfrågorna lyder:

- Vilka slags förskoleforskningsmetoder kommer att uppstå i de förflyttningar där förskoleverksamheten interagerar och skapar utbyten med offentliga platser som gator, bussar, tunnelbanetåg och gångtunnlar, och de aktörer som vistas i och på dessa platser?
- Vad kan man lära sig om förskoleinstitutionens roll i samhället genom dessa metodologiska experiment?

Tidigare forskning

Denna studie har relaterats till tidigare forskning som producerat kunskap gällande a) förskolan som en institutionell kontext där barnen skapar sin barndom, samt b) barns mobilitet i offentliga rum i samhället.

Det har producerats en hel del forskning om förskolans spatiala villkor och förutsättningar. Här är förskolan ofta beskriven som en institution som är organiserad *för* barn och där barnen får möjlighet att producera sina egna platser (Halldén, 2007; Rasmussen, 2004). Barnen förstås ha agens att skapa platser, och genom barnens plats-skapande uppstår en mängd olika institutionella barndomar inne i förskolan (Bollig & Millei, 2018). Denna typ av barndoms-sociologisk forskning producerar kunskap om hur barnen bidrar till att skapa en förskolekontext. Barnen i förskoleverksamheten förhandlar med pedagogerna, och på så sätt bidrar de till att skapa förskolans verksamhet (Eriksson Bergström, 2013). Många studier har därför studerat hur barnen konstruerar sina egna platser inom förskolans väggar (Eriksson Bergström, 2013; Millei & Imre, 2016; Skånfors et al., 2009).

Andra har studerat hur arkitektur organiserar förskolans pedagogiska verksamhet. De Jong (2010) analyserar olika förskolors planlösningar och visar på hur exempelvis placering av dörrarna såväl möjliggör som hindrar kontakt, intimitet, osv. Ett annat fokus är att studera hur relationen mellan barn och plats konstruerar olika rytmer och rutiner som kan sägas bli avgörande för förskolans verksamhet (Gallacher, 2005; Rutanen, 2012, 2017). Rutanen (2017) beskriver hur barnens erfarenheter uppstår i relation till de spatiala och sociala miljöerna inne i förskolan och hur olika rum upprättas genom interaktion mellan barn och pedagoger. Gallacher (2005) studerar hur barnen och pedagogerna rör sig mellan de olika rummen på förskolan. Hennes analys visar hur barn och pedagoger försöker styra och kontrollera de olika aktiviteterna som pågår i dessa rum.

Andra studier har använt sig av så kallade post-kvalitativa analyser för att försöka om-konceptualisera definitioner av vad ett barn, barndom och/eller vad lärande är. Post-kvalitativa studier syftar till att vidareutveckla etnografiska forskningsmetoder från att i huvudsak fokusera på att förklara och förstå *barnens* agens, till att istället ha fokus på hur agens uppstår mellan olika agentiska krafter som kan vara icke-mänskliga eller mer-än-mänskliga (Änggård, 2016; Magnusson, 2017; Taylor & Blaise, 2014). I post-kvalitativa studier blir det också relevant att ifrågasätta forskarens roll i kunskapsproduktionen och visa att data-insamling alltid är villkorad och möjliggjord utifrån de procedurer och avgränsningar som forskaren upprättar (e.g. Jackson, 2017; Nordstrom, 2018; St Pierre, 2016). Bland dessa återfinns bland annat Leafgrens (2013) studie. Den laborerar med att generera data om klassrumsmiljöer och pennans agens i klassrum, men inte bara från observationer av klassrum, utan också från forskarens egna minnen och internetinlägg (Leafgren, 2013). Leafgren (2013) visar att det är av stor betydelse *var* tänkandet om klassrumsmiljöer äger rum, eftersom det kommer att avgöra vilken typ av beskrivningar som väljs och formuleras.

Forskning som behandlar barns mobilitet i offentliga rum har inte i någon betydande utsträckning fokuserat förskolans verksamhet. Dessa studier fokuserar på hur barn rör sig i urbana miljöer, vad de gör och vilka relationer de upprättar (Christensen & Cortés-Morales, 2016; Christensen et al., 2011). Här används ofta gå-metoder som forskningsmetoder för att få en djupare kunskap om barnens erfarenheter och meningsskapande av olika platser (Änggård, 2015b; Hickey & Phillips, 2013; Horton et al., 2014; Raittila, 2012). Gustafson och Ladru Ekman (2018) har dock följt en mobil förskola som genomför sin verksamhet genom att åka till olika närliggande platser med buss. Denna studie visar hur barnens informella lärande på olika platser erbjuder variation, och att barnen anpassar sig till platsens förutsättningar och villkor (ibid.). Även Lindh (2017) är intresserad av hur förskolan kan erbjuda barnen en möjlighet att ta del av publik konst. Barnen besöker, betraktar och ibland klättrar på statyer placerade i stadens offentliga rum, och bearbetar sedan dessa erfarenheter på förskolan genom att rita och berätta om dem (Lindh, 2017). På detta sätt antas barnens demokratiska rättigheter till offentlig konst bli jämställda med vuxnas.

Post-kvalitativa forskningsmetoder har också använt sig av liknande gå-metoder, men här är syftet att använda gåendet som ett pedagogiskt verktyg för att barnen ska kunna lära sig att tänka *med* världen (Springgay & Truman, 2017a). Dessa studier skapar exempelvis kunskap om hur barnen lär sig skapa relationer med djur och natur genom direkta upplevelser och erfarenheter (Atkinson, 2015; Kahn, Weiss, & Harrington, 2019; Nxumalo & Cedillo, 2017; Taylor & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2015). Andra post-kvalitativa forskningsmetoder syftar till att öppna upp för att forskaren ska förstå lärande på nya och oväntade sätt. Här produceras resultat om barns språkande i ett kommunicerande med de olika platser där de befinner sig (Hackett & Somerville, 2017;

Somerville, 2015). Olsson (2013) etablerar en spegelresa i Stockholms tunnelbanesystem för att iscensätta olika *literacy events*, där barnen skapar olika relationer till rummen vilket ifrågasätter språkets generaliserbarhet.

Metoder uppstår och självdifferentieras genom experimenterande situationer

Den här avhandlingens har dock inte fokuserat på att skapa djupare förståelse om barns relationer till offentliga platser, eller hur och vad barn lär sig när de befinner sig på olika platser. Den här studien har intresserat sig för att experimentera fram forskningsmetoder som möjliggör för förskolan att ta plats – få utrymme och äga rum – i det offentliga rummet, till exempel på gator, bussar och i gångtunnlar. Därmed blir den övergripande intentionen med forskningen, som redan uttryckts ovan, att på detta sätt möjliggöra för de yngsta förskolebarnen att *ta plats* i offentliga rum. Genom att ta plats i dessa rum blir barnen också medskapare till det offentliga rummet. Det offentliga rummet är en plats där människor med många olika syften och intressen vistas, vilket väcker frågor om vem som har rätt att ta plats i dessa utrymnen (Gabrielsson, 2006). I den här studien är således varken barn eller barndom förgrundsgestalter. Det är *metoderna som uppstår* när man förflyttar förskolans aktiviteter, rytmer och rutiner ut i andra offentliga rum, som är studiens huvudfokus. Forskningsmetoderna är därmed inte färdigformulerade eller utprovade *innan* studien görs, utan upp- och utarbetas *på plats* tillsammans med barnen, pedagogerna, platserna och de människor som samtidigt passerar på dessa platser.

För att möjliggöra att metoderna uppstår på plats i det experimenterande forskningsarbetet har dock en del teoretiska antaganden formulerats samt en rad metodologiska förberedelser gjorts. Jag kommer här att mycket kortfattat redogöra för dessa.

Studien definierar forskningens uppgift utifrån en relationell ontologi som utgår från ett antagande om varat som ett pågående skillnadsskapande (Braidotti, 2006, 2013b; Braidotti & Regan, 2017; Mol, 2002; Stengers, 2018). Det betyder att metoder alltid kommer att bli olika beroende på vem som använder dem, samt var och i vilken situation de används. När jag som forskare såväl aktivt etablerar en förflyttning av förskolan ut i offentliga rum, som deltar i att experimentera med metoder att ta plats på dessa platser, erbjuder själv också skillnad i hur man tar plats. Utgångspunkten för denna studie är därmed att forskningen tar en onto-epistemologisk teoretisk ansats (Barad, 2007) som innebär att forskning inte ses om separerad från den vardagliga och pågående praktiken i ett visst sammanhang där forskningen pågår. Här ses snarare forskning som en praktik bland många andra praktiker som deltar i att

producera det liv som levs och som produceras i en interaktion mellan olika aktörer.

Många post-kvalitativa studier har sedan länge hävdat en onto-epistemologisk ansats. Min ambition är att ta den post-kvalitativa ansatsen ett steg till för att fokusera på forskning som *metod-producerande*. Här blir kollaboration och utbyte mellan olika praktiker det som producerar själv-differentierade metoder. När vi exempelvis går, tar steg, görs detta på olika sätt beroende på platsens villkor och organisation. Kroppen och stegen anpassar sig till platsens förutsättningar. Dessutom är det möjligt att påstå att vi alla – i vardagen – använder metoden gående/att gå. Eftersom våra erfarenheter och fysiska kroppar skiljer sig från varandra kommer gåendet att vara olika för olika personer, även när vi går på samma plats. Tydligast blir detta med det lilla barnets kropp, för vilken ett vanligt trappsteg är betydligt högre än för en vuxen, samtidigt som barnets kropp är mjukare och mer flexibel. För en vuxen är oftast trappan en transportsträcka, medan för barnet kan trappstegen bli en utmanande lekplats.

Detta för mig vidare till att teoretiskt definiera plats som både materiellt (fysiskt) och diskursivt (kulturellt) producerat. Det vill säga, en plats består av upprättade relationer mellan platsens fysiska-spatiala-materiella design och förutsättning, och de sociala-kulturella-diskursiva aktiviteterna som sker på dessa platser. För att iscensätta plats som materiellt-diskursiv lutar jag mig mot tre teoretiska resonemang kring plats och rum presenterade av filosofen och sociologen Henri Lefebvre (1991, 2004), kulturgeografen Doreen Massey (2005) och antropologen Marc Augé (2008; 2002).

Den metodologiska utgångspunkten att låta metoder uppstå i direkta situationer har hämtat inspiration från en mängd konstnärliga plats-specifika praktiker. Dessa konstnärer har skapat metoder för att flytta ut konst från museum, gallerier och konst-studior och in i icke-institutionella platser (Kwon, 2004). De här konstnärliga plats-specifika metoderna använder platsens materiellt-diskursiva relationer för att *producera* platser för konst i det offentliga samhället. Plats-specifika konstnärliga praktiker har erbjudit mig metoder kring att *kuratera* en kontext genom utbyte och kollaboration mellan olika praktiker, olika människor och olika platser (Sand, 2008; Gabrielsson, 2006).

Den konstnärliga metodologi som ligger till grund för att utarbeta metoder direkt på plats, har grundats i plats-specifika praktiker som har använt metoder som metaforer, gående, kartläggande och plats-förskjutningar för att experimentera kring hur man kan ta plats på olika, multipla och själv-differentierande sätt i en och samma situation (Cardiff & Schaub, 2005; O'Rourke, 2014; Sand, 2008, 2011; Smithson, 1996). Det är de här metoderna som har jag har inspirerats av och förflyttat till forskningsfältet förskoledidaktik, där jag tillsammans med barnen, pedagogerna och platserna har producerat de specifika

förskoledidaktiska forskningsmetoder som jag benämner som *röstliga metaforer, vandringar, kartläggningar* och *plats-förskjutningar/förflyttningar*.¹⁶ Dessa metoder kom därmed att i en specifik mening *kuratera* platsens kontext, snarare än att utgöra metoder med syfte att *studera* och därmed generera kunskap om barnen i en kontext.

De tre publicerade artiklar som är inkluderade i denna avhandling beskriver hur metoderna *röstliga metaforer, vandringar, kartläggningar* och *plats-förskjutningar/förflyttningar* kom att utvecklas i de direkta situationerna som uppstod när förskolan, dess praktiker och barn flyttades ut till gator, bussar och tunnlar. Alla metoder utvecklades och pågick samtidigt, men presenteras här var och en för sig för att kunna urskilja de inbördes skillnaderna.

Artikel 1 (Eriksson & Sand, 2017) beskriver hur jag som forskare tillsammans med en förskolegrupp utarbetar metoden *röstliga vandringar* som ett sätt för barnen att ta plats på gator, i det offentliga transportsystemet och i Brunkebergstunneln. Vi flyttar metaforen 'att ge barnen röst' till fysiska och materiella situationer. På de sättet blir barnens vokala röster ett sätt för barnen att ta plats i det offentliga rummet.

Artikel 2 (Eriksson & Sand, 2018) beskriver hur vi utvecklar metoder för att kartlägga staden genom våra röster. Exempelvis ritas barnen med kriterior på papper när de sitter på golvet i tunnelbanetåget. De producerar kartor om tågets rörelser och vibrationer.

Artikel 3 (Eriksson, 2019) beskriver hur vi i det experimenterande arbetet kan diskutera i termer av vilka metoder som skulle göra det möjligt att förflytta förskolan ut i offentliga rum. Här skapar vi multipla och rörliga sätt att ta plats genom metoder som konceptualiseras som *lokaliseringar, dimensioner och positioner*. Dessa är spatiala begrepp som omvandlas till förskoledidaktiska forskningsmetoder för *förskolan* att *ta plats* i offentliga rum.

Avhandlingens kunskapsproduktion

Vad kan man då ge för svar på de frågor som jag har ställt, och på vilket sätt blir det relevant för forskningsfältet förskoledidaktik? För att föra ett resonemang kring avhandlingens kunskapsproduktion kommer jag att diskutera forskningsfrågorna som har operationaliserats från syftet.

Min första forskningsfråga rör vilka förskoledidaktiska forskningsmetoder som uppstår i de förflyttningar där förskoleverksamheten interagerar och skapar utbyten med offentliga platser som gator, bussar, tunnelbanetåg, gångtunnlar och de aktörer som vistas på dessa platser.

Det korta svaret är att forskningens onto-epistemologiska hållning medför att forskning tar ansvar för (svarar an mot) hur den vetenskapligt producerade

¹⁶ Den använda engelska termen är displacement som rymmer en mycket mer spatial mening där de materiell-diskursiva definitionerna av plats-rum framträder som sammanflätande framträder.

kunskapen kan bli använd på olika sätt i olika situationer (jfr. Stengers, 2018). Forskarens roll fungerar som en *kurator* av kontext, genom att aktivt förflytta förskolans verksamhet till offentliga rum såsom exempelvis gator, bussar och gå-tunnlar. Forskaren fungerar också som en kollaboratör, som tillsammans med förskolebarnen experimenterar kring hur förskolan kan få utrymme i de offentliga platser vi besöker. Forskningsmetoderna *röstliga vandringar*, *kartläggande*, *plats-förflyttningar/förskjutningar* och *metaforer* har utvecklats genom det kollektiva experimenterandet i situerade sammanhang. Dessa forskningsmetoder anpassas och utvecklas ständigt genom att olika personer och olika platser använder dem och utbyter strategier och praktiker – *metoder* – med varandra.

Ett längre och något mer utvecklat svar på den första forskningsfrågan följer här. Experimenterandet har visat att forskningsmetoderna *röstliga metaforer*, *vandringar*, *kartläggande* och *plats-förflyttningar/förskjutningar* har utvecklats på specifika sätt tillsammans med barnen och de offentliga platserna. Det går inte att i förväg veta vad som ska hända i offentliga rum. På detta sätt utlöser platsen och situationen olika responser som fungerar som förkroppsligade och situerade förskoledidaktiska forskningsmetoder och genererar i stunden en direkt kunskapsproduktion. Det vill säga, kunskap om de forskningsmetoder som uppstår i detta experimenterande:

Vandringar är forskningsmetoder som kräver direkta relationer med platsen där stegen tas, men vars rörelser också påverkar platsens rytmer och rutiner (artikel 1,2 och 3). Med röstliga vandringar tar barnen plats genom sina rösters resonans i dessa offentliga platser.

Kartläggande är forskningsmetoder som lyfter fram hur plats inte bara upplevs visuellt utan produceras också av våra rösters resonans med platserna. Barnen kartlägger de offentliga platserna genom röster och resonanser (artikel 1 och 2).

Plats-förskjutningar är forskningsmetoder som för ihop förskolans rytmer och rutiner med de offentliga platser vi besöker och därmed skapar nya platser där barnen blir deltagare. Förskolans rytmer och rutiner såväl ändras som ändrar de vanligt förekommande rutinerna och rytmerna att röra sig i exempelvis en gå-tunnel (artikel 2 och 3).

Metaforer har fungerat som forskningsmetod för att föra samman den akademiska praktiken, *att skriva*, med den vardagliga praktiken, *att agera/handla*. Vi åter-placerar metaforer i nya fysiska situationer och därmed ändras meningsproduktionen såväl i texten som i den konkreta levda situation som uppstår (artikel 1, 2 och 3). På så sätt uppstår nya begrepp för att beskriva metoden.

En viktig lärdom från praktiserandet av konstnärliga plats-specifika metoder i förskoledidaktisk forskning är erfarenheten av att vara delaktig i ett *interaktivt metod-producerande* med barn och platser. Det handlar alltså om förskoledidaktisk forskning som manifesterats i mina artiklar i form av *beskrivningar av våra samproducerande erfarenheter av ett metod-producerande*.

- Tillsammans och in-situ – *på plats* – har forskaren, barnen, pedagogerna, platsen och människorna som rör sig där producerat kunskap om vilka nya möjliga forskningsmetoder som kan utvecklas där förskolebarn får möjlighet att ta plats i det offentliga rummet och hur detta rum, liksom vår förståelse av förskolan och förskolebarnen, därvidlag kommer att förändras.

Avhandlingsarbetets andra forskningsfråga ställer frågan om vad man kan lära sig om förskoleinstitutionens roll i samhället genom de metodologiska experiment som beskrivits ovan i svaret på den första frågan.

Det korta svaret är att förskolan inte nödvändigtvis enbart måste baseras på den modernistiska idén att organisera plats *för* barn. Förskolan kan även fungera som en institution som tar ansvar för att engagera barnen i och göra dem delaktiga i att skapa våra gemensamma offentliga platser. Detta kan ske genom utbyten med andra aktörer på offentliga platser och i utbyten med platsen självt. Risken är annars att de yngsta barnen i samhället blir exkluderade från att vara medskapare till det samhälle som de är del av.

Den historiska framväxten av att organisera förskolan som en plats som är lämplig *för* barn och barndom utgör dock en central del av hur vårt samhälle är organiserat. Utan denna logik kanske inte förskolor hade funnits. Vi behöver ändå fråga oss om den nu behöver utveckla även andra funktioner. Funktioner som kan bidra till att barnen mer aktivt ges plats att delta i att skapa och producera samhället. Genom att både upprätta en institutionell förskola som skapar plats för barn och sedan flytta ut denna förskola in i icke-institutionella platser, som gator och gångtunnlar, kan vi skapa skillnad, i termer av att skapa multipla platser för förskola att upprättas på.

Förskolans verksamhet blir på detta sätt själv-differentierad tillsammans med de olika offentliga rum den produceras med och i. I dessa offentliga rum blir det möjligt att upprepa aktiviteter, rytmer och rutiner som annars endast pågår inom förskolans väggar. Därmed skapas även nya själv-differentierade offentliga rum där barn deltar genom att *göra förskola*.

Förskolans uppdrag kan på detta sätt ses som att det även kan innefatta ett möjliggörande för barnen att *ta plats i det offentliga rummet/samhället*, snarare än att endast lära barnen *om* samhället. Ett möjliggörande för barn att ta plats på detta sätt, blir därmed en fråga om hur förskolan kan fylla en funktion; inte bara för barn och för familjers behov av barnomsorg och utbildning, utan som en institution som är med och upprättar möten där barn, pedagoger och andra människor i samhället (inklusive forskare) kan lära sig av varandra och varandras olikheter.

Att hämta inspiration från plats-specifika praktiker till mitt experimenterande forskningsarbete har lärt mig att det går att organisera en förskola som har andra förtecken än den vi organiserar idag. Det handlar om att jag genom

att förflytta och omkonstruera de metoder som jag inspirerats av från konstnärliga praktiker *in i* förskoledidaktisk forskning getts möjlighet till ett annat sätt att konkret *göra* förskolans innehåll och organisation. Detta skiljer sig från att jag som förskoleforskare placerar mig inne i förskolan och på dess villkor försöka delta i och beskriva den pågående verksamheten. Genom att som forskare istället aktivt *kurera* ett sammanhang för ett metodologiskt experimenterande, där nya förskoledidaktiska metoder kan uppstå som får barn att ta plats, skapar jag istället villkoren för forskningen *tillsammans* med de förskolepraktiker, pedagoger och barn jag förflyttar från förskolans institutionella plats till det offentliga rummet.

- Tillsammans och in-situ – *på plats* – har vi producerat kunskap om vad förskolan kan bli när förskolan och förskolans barn *tar plats* i ett annat sammanhang, tillsammans med andra aktörer på en annan plats utanför förskolans egen institutionella plats.

Vi tänker oss ofta inom förskoleforskningens fält att vi ska producera kunskap *om* barn, barndom och förskola. Men didaktik handlar också i hög grad om metoder som svarar an på frågan *hur*. Med stöd i Isabelle Stengers (2018) tankar om forskarens ansvarstagande handlar det här forskningsarbetet för mig egentligen inte om frågan 'hur göra en förskola', utan snarare om: hur kan jag som forskare vara delaktig i att producera möjligheter för barn att ta plats och vara delaktiga i att skapa vårt gemensamma offentliga rum?

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Appendix 1: Informed consent pedagogues (in Swedish)

Informerat samtycke och förfrågan om medverkan till forskning vid Stockholms universitet

Till pedagoger på förskolan X

Jag heter Christine Eriksson och är doktorand vid Barn och Ungdomsvetenskapliga institutionen vid Stockholms Universitet. Jag vänder mig till er som pedagog på avdelningen på förskolan X då jag vill söka medgivande deltagande i aktiviteter som jag kommer att genomföra inom ramen för mitt forskningsprojekt ”*Barns språkutveckling och relationer till språk på olika platser och i olika rum*”.

Syftet med studien är att tillsammans med de yngsta barnen på förskolan, studera språkets kroppslighet och rumslighet i olika rum och på olika platser. Detta kommer att göras med hjälp av det jag kallar *röstliga vandringar* då ett experimenterande arbete som fokuserar barnens erfarenheter och upplevelser genomförs. Upplägget och genomförandet av dessa kommer att diskuteras noga med er innan så att ni är bekväma med det och kan ta ert pedagogiska ansvar för barnen under utflykten.

Under vårterminen 2016 vill jag tillsammans med er ta med en grupp barn med ut på dessa röstliga vandringar under ett antal tillfällen. Jag kommer även att vilja träffa barnen som deltagit i vandringarna inne på förskolan för att utforska det de varit med om på nya och andra sätt.

Du som pedagog har en central roll i att som vanligt ombesörja barnens trygghet och säkerhet under utflykterna, samt vara ett stöd för arbetet med barnen. Det är dock inte det pedagogiska arbetet som studeras i den här studien. Inga värderingar eller bedömningar av ditt pedagogiska arbete eller dina insatser kommer att göras. Däremot kommer jag att efterfråga din erfarenhet och kunskap om hur enskilda barns behov bäst ska tillgodoses för att kunna genomföra studien så bra som möjligt.

De forskningsdata som samlas in utgörs av dels mina egna anteckningar men också video- och ljudupptagningar samt fotografier. Dessa är tagna både av mig, pedagogerna och de deltagande förskolebarnen. Det innebär att ett urval av fotografier, fotografisekvenser och audioinspelningar kommer att

presenteras på forskarkonferenser samt i vetenskapliga forskarartiklar som senare knyts samman till en doktorsavhandling i *Förskoledidaktik*. Utvalda redigerade klippta sekvenser från videoupptagningar kommer att redigeras till manipulerade sketchade fotografisekvenser kan komma att redovisas samt utvalda fotografier kommer redovisas som manipulerade sketchade teckningar. Audioinspelningar kommer att redigeras så att inga verbala ord utan endast ljud-formationer redovisas. Allt datamaterial kommer att redigeras så att barnens riktiga namn samt detaljerad eller känslig information som kan röja barnens identitet inte förekommer.

Mitt avhandlingsarbete följer de etiska principerna som Vetenskapsrådet och Personuppgiftlagen (1998:204) kräver skydd för deltagarnas integritet genom konfidentialitet. Detta innebär att enskilda deltagare aidentifieras genom fingerade namn på personer och förskolan. Inga listor eller register över personuppgifter kommer att upprättas. Insamlat material kommer enbart att användas i forskningssyfte och förvaras på skyddade datamedia och i stöldsäkra skåp på institutionen. Om du inte längre vill delta i studien så går det när som helst att avbryta din medverkan, utan att ange anledning. Vid återtagande av medgivande kommer all datainsamling av dig att avslutas.

Vad innebär det att som pedagog vara med i studien?

- Det innebär att du deltar i utflykter till olika platser i staden, såsom t.ex. tunnlar, trappor museum eller parker, och bidrar med din kompetens kring vilka behov kring omsorg, vård och trygghet barnen har. Det blir viktigt att du som pedagog hjälper mig som forskare att noga notera huruvida barnen samtycker till att delta eller inte.
- Det innebär också att du, i t ex. personalmöten, informeras av mig kring om de röstliga vandringarna och kan bidra med råd och resonemang kring organisation, utförande och genomförande.
- Det innebär att du är villig att anpassa den dagliga verksamheten på förskolan så att röstliga vandringar kan genomföras, samt tid för aktiviteter på förskolan där barnen och forskaren gemensamt kan reflektera och analysera dessa.
- Det innebär att du bistår barnen med att göra audio- och/eller videoupptagningar av de röstliga vandringarna eller filmar en aktivitet som genomförs.
- Det innebär att analyser av insamlat datamaterial kan förekomma i vetenskapliga artiklar och konferenser och där du förekommer på manipulerade fotografier i form av sketchade teckningar samt i ljudupptagningar av vokala röstljud. Dessa fotografier och ljudupptagningar kommer att vara aidentifierade så att inga egennamn nämns eller detaljerad information röjs.
- Det innebär att du kan avbryta de röstliga vandringarna och/eller aktiviteterna om du ser att hela barngruppens omsorgsbehov, trygghet

eller säkerhet riskeras, samt råda mig till hur hanteringen då enskilda barns behov skiljer sig från resterande gruppens behov.

Med detta brev vill jag be om ditt medgivande till medverkan i studien. Om du samtycker till deltagande så skriver du under bifogad blankett och returnerar till mig.

Om du vill veta mer om forskningsprojektet eller har frågor så kontakta mig gärna. Personuppgiftsansvarig samt ansvarig handledare är professor Hillevi Lenz Taguchi.

Med vänlig hälsning

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Professor Hillevi Lenz Taguchi

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Sid. 1 och 2 kan behållas som information.

Genom att skriva under nedan intygar jag att jag tagit del av information om vad mitt samtycke till deltagande i studien innebär och fått tillfälle att ställa frågor om det jag undrar över. Jag vet också att jag när som helst kan återkalla mitt samtycke utan att anledning behöver uppges. Detta görs muntligt eller skriftligt till Christine Eriksson och från och med den tidpunkten utesluts jag ur datamaterialet.



Ja, Jag samtycker till medverkan i studien

Undertecknat _____ i _____ Stockholm
den.....2016 av

.....
.....

Namnförtydligande:

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.....

Kontaktuppgifter (gärna telefonnummer och email):

Appendix 2: informed consent parents (in Swedish)

Informerat samtycke och förfrågan om medverkan till forskning vid Stockholms universitet

Till vårdnadshavare på förskolan X

Jag heter Christine Eriksson och är doktorand vid Barn och Ungdomsvetenskapliga institutionen vid Stockholms Universitet. Jag vänder mig till er som är vårdnadshavare till barn på förskolan X då jag vill söka medgivande till att era barn deltar i aktiviteter som jag kommer att genomföra inom ramen för mitt forskningsprojekt ” *Barns språkutveckling och relationer till språk på olika platser och i olika rum* ”.

Syftet med studien är att tillsammans med de yngsta barnen på förskolan, studera språkets kroppslighet och rumslighet i olika rum och på olika platser. Detta kommer att göras med hjälp av det jag kallar *röstliga vandringar* då ett experimenterande arbete som fokuserar barnens erfarenheter och upplevelser genomförs. Upplägget och genomförandet av dessa kommer att diskuteras noga med pedagogerna på ert barns avdelning innan för att säkerställa att barnens trygghet, behov och lust att delta ombesörjs och uppmärksammas av såväl pedagoger som mig som forskare

Under vårterminen 2016 vill jag ta med en grupp barn med ut på dessa röstliga vandringar under ett antal tillfällen. Jag kommer även att vilja träffa barnen som deltagit i vandringarna inne på förskolan för att utforska det de varit med om på nya och andra sätt.

Informerat samtycke har hämtats från personalen på er förskoleavdelning. Efter ert samtycke kommer jag dagligen att lyssna efter huruvida barnen vill vara med eller inte och alltid se till att ha alternativ till deltagande till hands. Jag kommer lära känna barnen, personalen och verksamheten innan vi börjar med några röstliga vandringar och personal kommer alltid att närvara vid de röstliga vandringarna.

De forskningsdata som samlas in utgörs av dels mina egna anteckningar från de röstliga vandringarna, dels av video- och ljudupptagningar samt fotografier. Dessa är tagna både av mig, pedagogerna och de deltagande förskolebarnen. Forskningsstudien kommer att redovisas i form av forskningsartiklar som knyts samman till en doktorsavhandling i *Förskoledidaktik*. Det innebär

att ett urval av fotografier, fotografisekvenser och audioinspelningar kommer att presenteras på forskarkonferenser samt i vetenskapliga forskarartiklar. Utvalda redigerade klippta sekvenser från videoupptagningar kommer att redigeras till manipulerade sketchade fotografisekvenser och utvalda fotografier kommer redovisas som manipulerade sketchade teckningar. Audioinspelningar kommer att redigeras så att inga verbala ord utan endast röstljud redovisas. Allt datamaterial kommer att redigeras så att barnens riktiga namn samt detaljerad och/eller känslig information som kan röja barnens identitet inte förekommer.

Mitt avhandlingsarbete följer de etiska principerna som Vetenskapsrådet och Personuppgiftlagen (1998:204) kräver skydd för deltagarnas integritet genom konfidentialitet. Detta innebär att enskilda deltagare avidentifieras genom fingerade namn på personer och förskolan. Inga listor eller register över personuppgifter kommer att upprättas. Insamlat material kommer enbart att användas i forskningssyfte och förvaras på skyddade datamedia och i stödsäkra skåp på institutionen. Om du inte längre vill att ditt barn ska delta i studien så går det när som helst att avbryta medverkan, utan att ange anledning. Vid återtagande av medgivande kommer all datainsamling av ditt barn att avslutas.

Vad innebär det att ert barn med i studien?

- Att ditt/ert barn möter mig i den dagliga verksamheten på förskolan.
- För ditt/ert barn innebär detta att de deltar i utflykter till olika platser i staden, såsom t.ex. tunnlar, trappor, museum eller parker. Där kommer vi att utforska platsen genom våra röster för att pröva olika uttryckssätt. Barnen kommer ibland själva att spela in aktiviteterna genom bärbara video- och/eller bandspelare samt fotografera det de själva tycker är relevant men också deltagande forskare kommer att dokumentera.
- Att ditt/ert barn deltar i aktiviteter på förskolan där vi tillsammans analyserar och reflekterar över vad vi gjorde på de röstliga vandringarna genom att titta och lyssna på ett urval av video- och audioupptagningar samt titta på fotografier vi tagit.
- Att jag som forskare samt pedagogerna på ditt/ert barns avdelning i varje situation med barnen är lyhörd för att barnet känner sig bekväm med att delta i aktiviteten och har möjlighet att avböja deltagande.
- Även om barnen är för unga att ge skriftligt samtycke till deltagande i stunden kommer jag att lyssna dagligen efter indikationer på huruvida barnen vill vara med eller inte och alltid ha alternativ till hands. Om de blir rädda, känner sig otrygga, eller helt enkelt inte vill vara med kommer det att finnas personal från förskolan tillhands för att se till att barnens behov och önskemål blir tillgodosedda.

- Det innebär att analyser av insamlad datamaterial kan förekomma i vetenskapliga artiklar och konferenser och där ditt/ert barn förekommer på manipulerade fotografier i form av sketchede teckningar samt i ljudupptagningar av vokala röstljud. Dessa fotografier och ljudupptagningar kommer att vara avidentifierade så att inga egenamn nämns eller detaljerad information röjs.

Med detta brev vill jag be om ditt medgivande till medverkan i studien. Om du samtycker till att ditt/ert barn deltar så skriver du under bifogad blankett och returnerar till mig.

Om du vill veta mer om forskningsprojektet eller har frågor så kontakta mig gärna. Personuppgiftsansvarig samt ansvarig handledare är professor Hillevi Lenz Taguchi.

Med vänlig hälsning,

Christine Eriksson

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Professor Hillevi Lenz Taguchi

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Ja, Jag/Vi samtycker till att mitt/vårt barn medverkar i studien

Undertecknat i Stockholm
den.....2016 av

Namnförtydligande Vårdnadshavare 1:

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Namnförtydligande vårdnadshavare 2:

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Kontaktuppgifter (gärna telefonnummer och email):

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