EXPLORING PEDAGOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN A CULTURE OF CREATIVITY IN A REGGIO EMILIA-INSPIRED SCHOOL

by

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ABSTRACT

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The current study explores what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes within a school culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the Southeastern United States. The questions which frame the study are:

1. How is a culture of creativity fostered within a Reggio Emilia-inspired school?
2. Within a culture of creativity, what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment?

The research was designed as ethnography and incorporates multiple data sets which provide layers of rich and descriptive information that reveal how to foster a culture of creativity in a school for young children. These data sets were generated by the researcher and the study participants over 18 weeks of ethnographic fieldwork and participant observation. These data sets include class group observations, professional

development observations, interviews, focus groups, and audio-photo vignettes of the life of the Reggio Emilia-inspired school which served as the research site for the ethnography. Through ongoing, iterative, and eclectic processes of qualitative data analysis, the researcher identified four emergent themes in the combined data generated during fieldwork. These themes represent the four findings of the study and are presented in the work in terms of answers to research questions, as well as how they support study conclusions, implications, and suggestions for future research in early childhood education. The four thematic findings that emerged in the ethnographic data generated for this study are: The Protagonists, The Daily Life, Research and Analysis, and Languages of Expression.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The current ethnographic study is situated in the field of early childhood education. More specifically, the Reggio Emilia approach (REA) to early childhood education is the philosophical context for the study and the broader perspective through which the research questions are examined. Throughout the work, the Reggio Emilia approach will have various names. Most often, it will be termed the REA. At other times, it will be described as the Reggio philosophy. It may also be simply called Reggio. All of these labels describe the same way of organizing and working in schools with young children and families. The REA is a philosophy that has established its strong roots within a progressive and postmodern paradigm (Malaguzzi, 1998; Rinaldi, 2006). Within this paradigm in education, learning is viewed as being actively and collaboratively constructed by the learner and the teacher as they interact within the social and physical learning environment of the classroom and school; it is participatory and democratic (Apple, 2008; Berthelsen, Brownlee, and Johansson, 2009; Dewey, 1938; Hansen, Anderson, Frank, & Nieuwejaar, 2008).

The Reggio Emilia approach is not a static approach, nor a linear model of education. It is not meant to be understood and translated into practice as a formula. The work of Reggio Emilia schools has been named a long-term “educational project” by those teachers and educational philosophers who created, and who continue to create and

share it in the spirit of inquiry and dialogue. “Reggio-inspired pedagogy is a way of being in the world – a way of seeing, listening, speaking, a commitment to relationships that honor identity and culture, a commitment to dialogue and action” (Gandini, Etheridge, & Hill, 2008, p. 114). As the ethnographer and researcher in this work, I am asserting the idea that creativity is a value embedded within the REA which serves as an organizing mechanism of school culture. This way of working in schools with and for children and families has a long and well-documented history in early childhood education (Barazzonni, 1985; Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998; Rinaldi, 2006; Seidel, 2001). Guiding principles of this approach anchor practice to theory, and provide a framework for teachers, parents, and the early childhood education community to better understand the underpinning reasons for the ways in which Reggio Emilia-inspired schools are organized.

No schools can be truly named Reggio Emilia schools, unless they are located in this small region in northern Italy. The Reggio Emilia-inspired school is a term that will be used frequently in this work, and refers to an educational community that collectively and intentionally embraces the underlying shared ideals and values of the REA, but is not located in Reggio Emilia, Italy. The cultural heritage of the people of northern Italy led to the creation of the Reggio philosophy and is marked by a shared valuing of the arts as essential in life (Edwards, 2003). Through efforts to establish dialogue and international relations in the early childhood education profession, Reggio educators have been traveling, and continue to travel, between their own monoculture and the global “multiculture” of other places such as the United States. Reggio Emilia-inspired schools in the United States reflect the cultural heritages of the local school community members.

This ethnography explores the culture of one Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the southeastern United States. The cultural heritage and local diversity found in this school community is a strong influence on the school culture that was explored in the research.

The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education offers a practical example of how teachers work in dynamic and developmentally appropriate ways with young children toward the co-construction of knowledge. Critical thinking processes that inform how meaning is made from experience and collaborative relationships marked by dialogue and communication are highly valued in this philosophy (Edwards et al., 1998; Rinaldi, 2006). These skills are developed by students as they work in groups to solve problems, investigate questions, develop theories, and communicate what they have learned. Through extensive and ongoing documentation and a reflective process that is referred to as "revisiting" (Forman, 2005, p. 215), Reggio educators work to capture traces of what occurs during learning experiences. Pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment are uniquely defined in the Reggio Emilia approach. These pedagogical processes, how they are enacted, and the culture of creativity found in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school that supports their interaction, were the primary focal points of this ethnographic study.

Statement of Problem

For the past two decades our nation has explicitly focused on issues relating to early childhood education, especially in terms of school readiness (Good Start Grow Smart [GSGS], 2002; National Education Goals Panel [NEGP], 1991). Educational policymakers, politicians, and curriculum publishers are giving increased attention to issues relating to evidence-based curriculum and standardized assessment in early

childhood education settings. The most common approach to curriculum development and implementation, as seen in most classrooms from the early childhood level through the secondary levels of education in the United States, is one in which a pre-established curriculum (textbook) constitutes the curriculum being taught (Apple, 2008). A transmission model of teacher-centered practice is strongly favored by teachers in traditional school settings (Mitchell, Foulger, Wetzel, & Rathkey, 2009). In the case of early childhood education, skills that link to reading development, such as phonic knowledge and phonemic awareness, have become the central focus of instruction (National Early Literacy Panel [NELP], 2009). Increasingly, decontextualized academic skill and isolated knowledge acquisition has become the primary measuring stick by which our youngest students are assessed (Siedel, 2001). High-stakes standardized testing in Kindergarten in the United States is becoming more prevalent due to the need to collect school readiness data. These student achievement data are also important with regard to teacher quality rating systems, as states increasingly adopt teacher merit pay systems which are based on standardized test scores. Unfortunately, this high level of importance being placed on standardized assessment may result in an undervaluing of other critically important areas of development, including the development of creative and innovative strengths.

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), young children need opportunities in the classroom to develop socially, emotionally, and physically, as well as creatively and intellectually (Bredekamp & Copple, 2009). With a disproportionately high value being placed on the academic achievement of young learners on standardized assessment measures, curriculum

recommended for young children may not serve to educate in ways that are relevant and responsive to each child's strengths and learning approach. An even higher value placed on quantifiable outcomes of academic achievement in the early years (preschool) may negatively influence how curriculum is implemented in the early childhood classroom. High-stakes assessments are currently being administered in the early childhood classroom, and this drives curriculum in ways that are teacher-centered, didactic, and rigidly prescriptive. Within this climate and resulting culture of schooling, the relationship between curriculum and assessment is linear and static. The whole of the enacted curriculum can quickly become test preparation.

"The issues of testing and its effects on curriculum planning and enactment is crucial" (Apple, 2008, p. 28). Apple (2008) further asserts that an overemphasis on testing can have a negative effect and result in "reductive test-based curricula and teaching" (p. 28). This approach to teaching and learning does not take into consideration the child's rights to participation in the processes which drive learning. Nor is any value placed on the teacher's ability to be reflective and reflexive, therefore able to make curricular decisions based on emergent realities in the classroom, in the process of the development and enactment of a challenging and meaningful curriculum that reaches all of the learners in her class. Current test-driven curriculum packages are simply purchased and meant to be prescriptively followed by the teacher (Apple, 2008). Within this system of curricular decision making the teacher is viewed as an implementer rather than a skilled professional. This stance does not take into account the need for the teacher to respond and use informed judgment in the classroom about matters which relate to curriculum planning and enactment. It is an assumption of the researcher in this study

that teachers are competent as curriculum makers (Craig & Ross, 2008), and that children, even very young children, are capable of directing their learning in ways that make sense to them (Edwards et al., 1998).

The field of early childhood education has a strong tradition of formative assessment methods; anecdotal records, observation and documentation, and portfolios (Almy & Genishi, 1979; Cohen, Stern, & Balaban, 1997; Helm, Beneke, & Steinheimer, 2007; Helm & Katz, 2001; Kline, 2008). A deeper understanding of the child's interests, personalities, and "intelligences" (Gardner, 1983) can be developed when early childhood teachers embed these types of formative assessments in their work with young children. The descriptive data that are gathered through anecdotal and observational documentation practices in early childhood classrooms are key aspects of the implementation of a developmentally appropriate curriculum (Bredekamp & Copple, 2009). Challenges exist for early childhood teachers within educational systems of accountability that place value predominantly on summative tests which are developed to be aligned with state standards. The importance of state standards and high expectations for learners is not being argued against here. It is the linear and predetermined nature of curriculum and assessment, which has a narrowing effect on the educational experiences of young children that is being identified as a problem. Within the climate of accountability reform, the crucial value that formative assessment offers to early childhood educators is often being set aside in favor of letter knowledge checklists and standardized testing scores (Apple, 2008; Seidel, 2001). The scope of learning in early childhood classrooms should go well beyond these narrow academic aims.

Many standardized cumulative assessments provide a only a glimpse of the portrait of the learner that an early childhood teacher needs to have in order to teach with intentionality and in developmentally appropriate ways (Bredekamp & Copple, 2009). A much deeper and more detailed description of the child as a learner can be generated through observation and documentation of students in action in the classroom. The teacher's decisions are informed through this type of assessment, and curricular planning depends on the knowledge gained through observing and documenting. Narrowing definitions of appropriate curricular content and academic success for young children represent a growing problem in the field of early childhood that has been addressed by the study. By exploring how pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment are related within a school culture which fosters creativity, I hope to clearly articulate the value found in the unexpected, and yet to be determined, learning occasions which spring from teachers and children working together to create curriculum and document learning experiences. The ethnographic data generated will contribute to a thick and rich description (Geertz, 1973) of an emergent and complex relationship that exists between the pedagogical process of curriculum and assessment within a school culture in which creativity is a shared value. Observations in classrooms and staff meetings, interviews, audio-recordings, and photo images help the researcher to tell the story of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, and how teaching, learning, and creativity as organizing principles are experienced within a school community.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this ethnography was to develop a clearer and more in-depth understanding of what characterizes the culture of creativity that is found in a Reggio

Emilia-inspired school, and how that one specific Reggio-inspired school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment.

Research Questions

To better understand how the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment are interrelated within the culture of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the United States, the following research questions serve as a compass and anchor for the study:

1. How is a culture of creativity fostered within a Reggio Emilia-inspired school?

2. In a school culture of creativity, what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment?

Conceptual Definitions

A *culture of creativity* is a term that is used in the study to describe the emergent and collaborative way of teaching and learning that is evidenced in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the southeastern United States. Creativity is culturally relevant, and understood differently in various cultures around the world. It is no surprise that an approach to early childhood education which embraces art as an expression of knowledge, would come from Italy, a nation whose history is so strongly linked to the arts. Within this research, the idea of culture and creativity are framed in a way that relates to the shared values and beliefs of a school community, rather than a nation or group of nations. Vecchi (2010) echoes Malaguzzi (1998), the founding visionary of this inspirational educational project that is called the Reggio Emilia approach, when she writes about the idea of "the culture of childhood—and therefore, of schools—struggles to affirm itself in a way that is adequate to the intelligence and creativity of children" (p.

66). Within Reggio Emilia-inspired schools, a shared value and belief in the child as co-constructor and co-creator of educational experiences nurtures the existence of a school culture of creativity.

The "Reggio Emilia approach" to early childhood education is defined as a philosophy of education for young children that was born out of the pursuit of "'democratic transformation'" (Jones, 2011, p. 83) after the devastation of WWII. It is the collaborative grassroots effort of parents and educators in northern Italy in the years immediately following the war, encompassing the rich cultural tradition of the arts in Italy, and those continued collective efforts of Reggio scholars, teachers, atelieristi, and children and families from then until now. The REA envisions the child, the parents, and the teacher as "the three central protagonists" in the educational project of a school (Malaguzzi, 1998, p. 65). Guiding principles of this approach provide a framework for shared norms that shape and direct the life of the school (Fraser & Gestwicki, 2000). These guiding principles include: the image of the child as capable, the role of the teacher as researcher and listener, the role of the environment as a third teacher, the hundred languages of children, documentation, the value of relationships, and *progettazionne* (flexible curricular planning method in which collaboration, dialogue, and uncertainty are valued).

The "Reggio Emilia-inspired school" will be distinguished from the schools and infant-toddler centers in Reggio Emilia, Italy. For the purposes of the study, a "Reggio Emilia-inspired school" is defined as an educational setting, not located in Reggio Emilia, Italy, in which the philosophy of the Reggio Emilia approach is intentionally embraced by those who work within and attend the school.

The space of the “atelier” within the organizational and philosophical structure of the REA is relevant to this ethnography. The “atelier” has been described as a place for collaborative research (Malaguzzi, 1998). It is more than an art studio. The “atelier” is a space that exists within the school for children and adults to collectively explore divergent thinking and creative possibilities (Craft, Jeffrey, & Liebling, 2001). In many of the infant-toddler centers in Reggio Emilia, there is a specific room within a school building that is the “atelier.” At the Reggio Emilia-inspired school that served as the research site in this study, the “atelier” is defined as being inclusive of all physical spaces of the school. Rather than a physically bound space, the meaning of the “atelier” is understood by this school community as a stance toward research, collaboration, and exploration.

The role of the “Atelierista” is an important one to understand when thinking about the life of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school. The job of the “atelierista” is to support the development of an aesthetic quality within the learning experience. This person is usually an artist, rather than an early childhood educator, and works with small groups and individual students to represent poetically, through the use of visual and expressive media, what the learning experience means to the learners.

In Reggio Emilia, Italy, curriculum specialists, who are referred to as “pedagogisti,” provide another layer within the organizational structure of the philosophy in action. “Pedagogisti” provide on-site support to teachers around ideas of curriculum planning and documentation. Through dialoguing over projects, projected ideas for future experience, documentation pieces and panels, teachers and pedagogisti identify possible optimal paths for upcoming learning experiences. In the Reggio Emilia-inspired school

which was selected as the research site for this ethnography, a curriculum consultant from Reggio Emilia works annually with the school in ways that may mirror the more ongoing on-site support that pedagogisti provide in programs in Italy.

The "image of the child" is a guiding principle of the Reggio philosophy. It is a term that is prominent in literature relating to Reggio, which is not necessarily as self-explanatory as many of the other guiding principles of the REA. Therefore, it is defined here for the reader. The image of the child in Reggio philosophy is rich and strong. In this paradigm, the child has the right to determine and participate in the choices made about their path of learning. "What we believe about children thus becomes a determining factor in defining their social and ethical identity, their rights, and the educational contexts offered to them" (Rinaldi, 2006, p. 83). The image of the child as creative, resourceful, and competent is the driving force of the sense of trust that Reggio Emilia-inspired educators have when they work with the children as true partners in the construction of knowledge.

The "100 languages of children" is an example of another guiding principle which requires defining. It is a theory put forward by Malaguzzi (1998) and other early Reggio Emilia educators and scholars, including Amelia Gambetti, Lella Gandini, Carlina Rinaldi, and Vea Vecchi. The theory supports the recognition of the child's innate strength in expressing thoughts and ideas in multiple ways. There are not literally 100 languages. The "100 languages of children" is a poetic description (found within a poem written by Malaguzzi) of the strong assertion within this philosophy that there are innumerable ways that children naturally possess for representing ideas symbolically and expressively. It is also a challenge to adults to refrain from taking away the value of a

child's many expressive languages in favor of the currently popular (testable) academic conventions of print, narrative, and number.

The "pedagogical process of curriculum" is a complex idea, having multiple layers of thought and action embedded within it. These layers include: curriculum development, curriculum enactment, and *progettazionne*. For the purposes of the study, "curriculum development" is defined as a series of interrelated processes that are lived out in the school context, which lead to the co-construction of an emergent curriculum. These processes include "listening" (Rinaldi, 2006) to the children, valuing their perspectives and motivations, and projecting possibilities for future learning experiences based on the interests and theories of the children. "Curriculum enactment" is defined as the actual lived experience that is evidenced at the Reggio Emilia-inspired school that is the research site. The term *progettazionne* can be understood as the way in which curriculum development and curriculum enactment are related and occur flexibly, emergently, and collaboratively in the work of municipal infant-toddler centers in Reggio Emilia, Italy, and in many Reggio Emilia-inspired schools around the globe.

The "pedagogical process of assessment" is defined as a purposeful cycle of documentation and revisitation, with the aim of "making learning visible" (Giudici, Rinaldi, & Krechevsky, 2001) so that value can be found and new learning experiences can be projected and planned. These definitions are derived from the way in which curriculum and assessment are interpreted within the paradigm of Reggio Emilia Approach.

"Ethnography" is the study of, and "attempt to describe culture" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 30). The idea of "culture" plays a prominent and multi-faceted role in the

study. School culture will be defined in this ethnography as the collective values and purposes, and resulting lived experience, shared by a group of people that work and learn together in a school. The ways in which cultural heritage, international cross-cultural connections, and the idea of culture frames the work are addressed throughout the work. In this dissertation research, a school culture which is marked by cultivation of creativity is the focus of exploration.

During the fieldwork phase of the ethnography, I spent 4 ½ months as a "participant observer" in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school. Participant observation is a specific type of fieldwork and is the role of the ethnographer. As a participant observer, my work was to become a contributing member the school community. This membership was attained gradually, over time, through a process of relationship building and establishing mutual trust. "The correct amount of participation and how you should participate have to be calculated with the particulars of your study in mind" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 92). As the researcher, I attempted throughout the fieldwork to listen for and interpret cues from school community members (teachers, children, parents) about entering into learning spaces, meetings, conversations, and eventually membership and an active participatory role in the life and culture of the school.

An audio-visual method of data generation was introduced in this research. This multi-sensory, multi-media dataset was developed in an attempt to answer a question posed by members of the school community which served as the research site for the study. During a conversation leading up to the writing of the research proposal, the question was simply put by the school founder and director, Maeve, "If your research is about creativity, in what way will the final product be creative?" This led to a certain

amount of intellectual dissonance, as I had only planned for traditional data generation, and textual representation of findings in the form of a 5-chapter dissertation. Out of this dissonance, emerged a decision to move beyond the traditional methods of qualitative data generation toward more creative and innovative representations of lived experience. Therefore, in addition to traditional observations, interviews, and focus groups, while living together in the field with the study participants I worked to generate a unique type of data. These data took the form of audio-documents, or "audiofacts" (a term which is being created here to describe cultural artifacts of sound), and correlating photo images which honestly, richly, and creatively portray the culture of the school. Audio-recordings of certain school environments and events (Appendix J) offered raw data which were viewed analytically with the intent of answering the research questions. Photos of these same events and environments served to compliment the audiofacts, and tell a rich story of the lived experience. The final cleaned data vignettes combine audiofacts and photos which relate to the research questions, and are synthesized into Chapter 4 of the dissertation, as a companion compact disc of audio-visual information.

A Theoretical Context: Constructivism, Progressivism, the Reggio Emilia Approach, and Reggio and Creativity

A constructivist theory of teaching and learning is strongly evidenced in the Reggio Emilia approach (Forman, 2005). The continual exploration and interpretation of interdisciplinary ideas is common practice in the evolution of the work of Reggio (Rinaldi, 2006). The theoretical frame of this approach is built in part upon the work of Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and John Dewey (Edwards et al., 1998). Big ideas that are embedded in the theories of constructivism and progressivism in education create the

theoretical context in which this ethnography will take place. These ideas include knowledge as construction, participatory rights of the learner, and real-life learning and problem-solving opportunities.

Constructivism. According to constructivist theory, learning occurs when students interact with the environment and other people around them (i.e., teachers, parents, peers) to make sense of new ideas by connecting them to existing ones (Devries & Kohlberg, 1987; Glaserfeld, 2005; New, 1998). Learning is viewed as a highly social and collective phenomenon. Group learning and dialogue are highly valued in constructivist approaches to education such as the Reggio Emilia approach (Edwards et al., 1998; Giudici et al., 2001). Through social, dialogic, and intellectual interaction newly constructed knowledge is connected to prior knowledge systems (Fosnot, 2005), and learners build theories about the world based on their own experiences. In this building up process, people come to deeply understand their world, as well as their purpose in it. From this stance, the purpose of education is inquiry, collaboration, solving real-world problems, and ultimately, democratic participation (Beane, 1997).

Dewey (1938) asserted the view that teachers and students need to share in participatory ways the learning that goes on in the classroom. The image of the teacher as learner is strong in the Reggio Emilia philosophy (Christensen, Faith, Stubblefield, & Watson, 2006; Goldhaber, 2007). The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education is identified as being set within a democratic and participatory point of view (Edwards et al., 1998, Rinaldi, 2006). “The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood learning features collective and democratic relationships among all involved in the educative setting, children, fellow educators, and parents” (Christensen et al., 2006,

p.11). This is not surprising in light of the political and historical beginnings of the approach.

Progressivism. John Dewey is recognized as the father of progressive education (Kliebard, 2004). Dewey was more than a professor and scholar. He was an American philosopher of education, and his ideas for a progressive way of schooling can be seen in action in the REA (Katz, 1998). In his brief but resounding book, *Experience and Education* (1938), Dewey defends and succinctly outlines the major tenets of progressive education. Dewey begins with a chapter entitled "Traditional vs. Progressive Education". In this first chapter Dewey (1938) refers to traditionalists as "the opposition" (p. 17), while at the same time argues against dichotomies such as the one implied in the title of the chapter. In the current study, there is no intent to embrace or argue for a dichotomous stance against traditional models of early childhood curriculum. As the ethnographer, I am interested more in exploring the possibilities for nurturing a culture of creativity that are embedded within the REA and the nature of the pedagogical relationships that thrive within this progressive way of educating young children.

Progressivism is described by Dewey (1938) as a reactionary movement. It is an idea which was born from a negative reaction to the traditionalist expectation of learners to be passive and to obey. It is a negative reaction to the belief that all knowledge comes from the past, and should be transmitted from teacher to student without the benefit to the learner of active experience. Dewey warns that progressive philosophy in education must be more than a negative reaction. A negative reaction does not imply a better plan. Dewey's plan for progressive schools has within in it principles and values. One such principle is that "there is an intimate and necessary relation between the processes of

actual experience and education" (Dewey, 1938, p. 20). The value of learning in active ways is found within the culture of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, where another set of guiding principles brings strength to the work. The REA begins always with the child, with the experience, knowledge, and interests of the child.

The role of the teacher in Reggio is to be a listener to the child and an observer of the educational experience. In Dewey's progressive school, it is "the business of the educator to see in what direction an experience is heading" (Dewey, 1938, p. 38). By taking a stance of observer and listener, the progressive educator can make curricular decisions according to the value and future possibilities that are found in the moment. The work of Reggio builds on this progressive ideal of working in the educational moment, by valuing pedagogical documentation as a necessity in capturing the vital signs of future directions for meaningful learning.

The Reggio Emilia Approach. The roots of the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education sprung literally from the rubble of WWII. Bricks from buildings that were destroyed during the war were loaded on to abandoned military trucks by parents and teachers, and used to build the school for young children that would be the first in the "educational project" that continues today in Reggio Emilia, Italy (Barazzoni, 1985; Edwards et al., 1998). It was during this first experiment in the town of Villa Cella, that Loris Malaguzzi caught a glimpse of the possibilities for democracy and participation that a school could bring to a community of learners. The initial act of collaborative creation was a reaction to the destructiveness of war. It was important to the creators to build their school around the ideals of democracy and the rights of all people; the rights of the child

were a high priority in this project from its inception (Malaguzzi, 1998; Reggio Children, 1995).

In 1963, nearly 20 years after the opening of the school at Villa Cella, Malaguzzi (1998) along with a committed group of teachers founded the first municipal infant toddler centers in Reggio Emilia, Italy. These schools for young children thrive today and are renowned for their quality at a time when quality in early childhood is highly sought by families and municipalities around the world. The philosophy, which is embodied by the Reggio Emilia approach, grew strong over the course of the decades following its birth underpinned by progressive, democratic, and constructivist theories in education (Forman 2005; Katz, 1998; Rosen, 2010). Educators and families in Reggio Emilia schools collaborate according to several guiding principles that inform their work with young children. Decisions made by those who work and learn in Reggio Emilia schools depend upon their shared beliefs about the rights of children (Reggio Children, 1995). The guiding principles have been collectively developed by those who had the vision and determination to imagine a school as a shared and amiable place for children and families to live and learn together in co-constructive ways (Malaguzzi, 1998).

Guiding principles of Reggio. The narrative begins as a community of parents and teachers living in northern Italy make the decision to come together to build and run a small cooperative of schools for young children that promoted human rights, and educational inquiry as one of those rights (Malaguzzi, 1998). These schools were the seed of what has grown into an internationally acclaimed approach to early childhood education: The Reggio Emilia approach.

The Reggio Emilia Approach, named for the region in Italy in which the municipal schools for young children are located, is a progressive approach to educating young children that is framed by a series of guiding principles. Although the guiding principles are presented here in separate sections, within the lived experience of Reggio-inspired schooling, these big ideas often intertwine and overlap in ways that serve to strengthen the philosophy. No one definitive list of principles is published by Reggio Emilia scholars. The following list is derived from several Reggio-related publications (Edwards et al., 1998; Fraser & Gestwicki, 2000; Given et al., 2010; Maynard & Chicken, 2010):

1. the image of the child as capable
2. the 100 languages of children
3. the role of the teacher as researcher
4. the importance of relationships
5. the environment as the third teacher
6. documentation
7. progettazionne

These principles serve as points of reference to which educators and families can look when solving problems and making decisions about the life of a school. They anchor a belief system to the complexities of teaching and learning. These beliefs strengthen and nurture a culture of inquiry, active participation, and creativity that typifies the lived experience in the schools in Reggio Emilia, Italy, and Reggio Emilia-inspired schools in other parts of the world (Danko-McGee & Slutsky, 2007; Given et al., 2010). They are directly related to the current study because these principles frame and help to sustain a

school culture in which creativity is a value, and curriculum and assessment emerge from the real experiences of the classroom.

Reggio and creativity. As the researcher in this work, I am presenting the assertion that the REA is strongly linked to the idea of creativity. This assertion includes a further argument that the school culture of an authentic Reggio-inspired school can be described as a culture of creativity. There is evidence of this connection in the literature about the REA (Fawcett & Hay, 2005; Gandini, Hill, Cadwell, & Schwall, 2005; Rinaldi, 2006; Vecchi, 2010). “Loris Malaguzzi said that children are the best evaluators and most sensitive judges of the values and usefulness of creativity” (Gandini et al., 2005, p. 31). The image of the child as capable and strong with intrinsic motivation to invent, imagine, and find real solutions to real problems is one reason that the Reggio Emilia approach is representative of a culture of creativity. A shared belief in the strong capabilities and extraordinary potential that exists within in each child drives much of what happens in Reggio Emilia schools for young children.

Learning experiences are marked by collaboration and creative expression, and occur within a progressive paradigm of success and accomplishment. To view the child as resourceful and capable is to be open to new directions for learning that come from the questions and imaginations of the child. “What is needed, therefore, is to reflect from the child and the strategies that are most likely to allow his/her possibilities to really express themselves” (Rinaldi, 2006, p. 107). To learn about how creativity works, it is necessary to listen to the ideas and inventions of young children, trust in them, and respond in ways that nurture their creative selves. This is the stance taken by the philosophy of Reggio.

By embracing a theory of multiple languages, as in the 100 languages of children, the Reggio Emilia approach opens up the educational experience to the realm of creative thinking and expression. Through the assertion of the theory of 100 languages, visual art is legitimized as language. This opens up educational possibilities for children to be creative in expressing what they are learning. The close connection between creativity and the arts can clearly be seen in the work of the children of Reggio schools. Within the organization of the Reggio Emilia-inspired school, creativity and the arts are supported by the work of the atelierista in the classrooms and the studio space of the atelier. The atelier is the space found in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools that is used as a creative arts studio for small group work. The atelierista can be described as an 'artist-in-permanent-residence' who works with groups of children to help them use their 100 languages to express their imaginative interpretations of the world. Vecchi (2010), who worked for 30 years as the atelierista in the Diana school in Reggio Emilia, describes the role of the atelierista as "a studio worker, an artisan, a lender of tools, a partner in a quest or journey" (Fawcett & Hay, 2005, p. 237). The space of the atelier is for extended research of an idea or problem (Malaguzzi, 1998). Projects in the classroom often become visually represented and explored deeply within the space of the atelier (Gandini et al., 2005). In the Reggio Emilia-inspired school that served as the setting for this dissertation research, the definition of the space of the atelier has been extended to include the entire school. It was a decision made to intentionally blur spatial boundaries and expand the possibilities for collaboration and creative expression throughout the entire school.

By establishing a place within the everyday life of the school for an expert in the field of creative arts (atelierista) and physical space for creativity (atelier), Reggio

schools, and Reggio-inspired schools are making organizational decisions that allow for creativity to flourish through the arts (Vecchi, 2010). It is a shift in thinking, away from static and predetermined academic hierarchies, toward a culture of creativity. The research and work that occurs within the atelier space is an ever-expanding process which relies on the 100 languages and strong capacities of the children. The theory of the 100 languages of children is a challenge to adults to open up their thinking about the constructs of language and literacy, and to see the possibilities that various visual media and other arts integrated forms of expression offer for the creative learning experiences of young children. This challenge is taken up here in this research. It is not new. It is an idea revisited with renewed strength.

Rinaldi (2006) writes about creativity "as a quality of thought". Children generate interpretive theories about the world and ask questions in order to make sense of experience, in order to find meaning in life. This "intention to produce questions and search for answers….is one of the most extraordinary aspects of creativity" (Rinaldi, 2006, p. 113). The finding of answers to these questions is serious work in Reggio-inspired projects and schools. Educators do not simply present children with answers to their questions. That would presume that the children did not have a vital role to play in generating solutions to the problems posed in life. In schools for young children, where creativity is a value, the life-long skills of problem posing and problem solving are practiced every day. This ethnographic work may reveal insights into the life-long benefits for learners that a school culture of creativity can foster with respect to the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment.

Significance of the Study

Issues of curriculum and assessment within the field of early childhood education have been of great interest to curriculum developers and policy makers over the past three decades (Lewis, 2009; NEGP, 1991; Samuels, 2009). By examining the relationship between assessment of student learning and the development and enactment of curriculum in Reggio Emilia-inspired programs, possibilities can be explored in which early childhood educators can better understand how to make visible the complex process of learning that takes place in their own classrooms. In being able to do so, these teachers will be developing a deeper understanding of the complexities embedded within teaching and learning with and from young children. Furthermore, the findings of the current study may shed light on the way in which curriculum and assessment is framed within a school culture that fosters creativity.

The philosophy of early childhood education that is 'Reggio' has been evolving and growing for over 60 years (Barrazzoni, 1985). It began within the cultural experience of a region in Italy, and grew as a result of Reggio pioneers and scholars who reached out to the international community of early childhood professionals in order to enter into dialogue about progressive ideals and actions. Schools for young children from around the globe have been inspired by the REA to intentionally build their school culture around similar ideas and beliefs about young children, families, and the purposes of education. There are other curricular approaches in early childhood education that share core elements with Reggio such as active participation of children, emergent curricular planning, arts integration, and long-term project work, and connect the study to a larger context of national and international models of early childhood curriculum as a result.

These approaches include the Project Approach, the Waldorf School, and Bank Street School's Developmental-Interaction Approach, High-Scope, The Montessori Method, Tools of the Mind: The Vygotskian Approach, and the Pyramid Approach (Roopnarine & Johnson, 2009). Within the Reggio Emilia-inspired school, curriculum and assessment integrate naturally and "authentically" (Fraser & Gestwicki, 2000) as the child, the family, and the teacher share a purpose; to interpret meaning from the lived experience of school. To be able to make meaning from life; that is what every child deserves (Malaguzzi, 1998). The value of this research can be broadly seen as an opportunity to start a dialogue, to open doors in the educational community, and invite questions about unquestioned practices which may limit children rather than empower them to create meaning from life.

An ethnographic study exploring how curriculum and assessment work together within a school culture of creativity may reveal insights about creative methods for teaching, and newly developing ways of documenting young children's learning. This kind of knowledge has implications for early childhood teacher education programs and other forms of professional development experiences for early childhood teachers. Bringing the documented experience into the formal teacher education classroom and other settings of professional development may help new and experienced teachers better understand the benefits of documentation as a tool for reflection, as well as for planning curriculum. Possible organizational innovations are suggested by the way a Reggio Emilia-inspired school works, so that artists and schools can work together for young children and empower them to use their 100 languages to communicate and celebrate what they are learning.

Organization of the Study

This introductory chapter served to set the stage for this study. Therefore, a brief description of the purpose of the study, study significance, limitations and delimitations, and a definition of terms were provided. The research questions that served to frame the study were also presented in the first chapter. In Chapter 2, a synthesis of the literature relating to this study is offered to the reader. Chapter 3 focuses on the methodological aspects of the study. In this chapter, sampling procedures, data sources, methods of analysis, and timeline information are outlined and described. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 are dedicated to presenting the study findings. Chapter 4 focuses on the contribution of the people (The Protagonists) in this school community to answering research questions while Chapter 5 will present the ways of life revealed within the data and serve to suggest answers to the questions driving the study. In the sixth chapter of this dissertation study connections between the research findings and conclusions are highlighted, implications for the field of early childhood education are suggested, and future research is proposed as next steps in the work.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The Context of Early Childhood Education

In recent decades, our nation's politicians and educational policymakers have highlighted issues relating to early childhood education. There are several reasons for the heightened attention by policymakers and government agencies. Workforce trends have created the need for early care and education settings to grow in number quickly in order to accommodate the many young children who need care outside of the home (NAEYC, 2009). School readiness became a matter of importance in the policy arena over 20 years ago, and continues to be a point of discussion and debate among educators (NEGP, 1991; Snow, 2006). The standards-based reform movement in the United States has entered the domain of early childhood, and states have been tasked with imposing pre-primary learning standards on their youngest students (Brown, 2007; GSGS, 2002; NAEYC, 2009). Often, mandates such as these have been met with scorn by the schools and teachers who are expected to enact these standardized expectations in the early childhood classroom (Brown, 2007). A growing tension between policy and practice in early childhood education exists due to the barriers to responsive and individualized instruction that result from the standards reform movement (Maloney, 2010). As it stands today, early childhood education is still in the spotlight and on the agenda in the policy arena (Lewis, 2009; Samuels, 2009).

Along with the strong and lasting emphasis on early childhood education in the United States and in the global education community, debate over decisions about appropriate and optimal frameworks for curriculum and assessment for young children has also maintained momentum (Williams, 1999). It is within the complex and tumultuous context of early childhood education in the United States and around the globe that this research is broadly set. The following literature review will serve to connect this dissertation to a body of theoretical and empirical works that relate to problematic trends that currently exist in classrooms for young children, the value of the child and the importance of emergence and creativity in early education, the way that curriculum and assessment are interpreted and enacted within the philosophy of the REA, how creativity is being framed within the field of early childhood, and school culture and creativity.

Problematic Trends in Curriculum and Assessment in Early Childhood Education

In early childhood classrooms in America, skills that link most closely to accelerating reading development (alphabetic and phonic knowledge, phonological and phonemic awareness) have been recommended as the primary focus of instruction (NELP, 2009). Educational publishing companies (i.e., McGraw Hill and SRA) have responded to recent recommendations of the NELP by manufacturing and selling prepackaged early childhood curriculum that is aligned with state academic standards and focused on two content areas: reading and math. Recent preschool curriculum evaluation research has been published that supports the purchase and implementation of certain pre-packaged early childhood curricula which resulted in positive academic outcomes for preschool-aged students (Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research [PCER], 2008). It is

the assumption of those that advocate for pre-packaged curricula that the content is fully comprehensive and framed by the publisher in ways that are age-appropriate and culturally relevant for all students. Another assumption embedded within the market-based system of purchasing curriculum packages, is that teachers have limited ability in the area of curriculum development, as well as a limited role to play in building curriculum with and for their students. With the exception of those schools and programs that defend the value of emergence in early childhood education, "scripted curricula are the order of the day, no innovation or improvisation allowed" (Bracey, 2006, p. 166).

The decision to place strong emphasis on reading and math in curriculum packages is not an arbitrary one. In the United States and internationally, reading and mathematics are subjects that are often valued above other subject matter. Literacy and mathematics are two highly represented academic areas commonly compared on international assessments, such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Reading and math are also the most heavily weighted subjects on many high stakes standardized tests selected by state departments of education in the United States (i.e., FCAT). "In comparisons with students of other industrialized countries, America's students have not consistently fared well on tests of educational achievement" (NAEYC, 2009, p. 2). America's failure to consistently compete in international assessments has been an impetus for federal policy attention on the early years of schooling in this nation (GSGS, 2002; NEGP, 1991). To bring early childhood into the accountability reform movement, state early learning standards and standardized assessments have become commonplace in preschools. Thus, even in the area of early childhood education, what is

on the test becomes the legitimized knowledge that students must know to succeed (Apple, 2008; Seidel, 2001). This leaves little or no room for teachers to be innovative and build on the interests of the children, to develop and enact an emergent and relevant curriculum.

Seeing the interests and strengths of the child as central to planning what is enacted in the classroom has long been a shared belief among early childhood educators nationally and worldwide (Ashton-Warner, 1963; Feeney, Galper, & Seefeldt, 2009; Katz & Chard, 2000). This child-centric philosophy shared by so many early childhood educators over many decades, is in conflict with the linear and predetermined nature of the theme-based curriculum package that is commonly prescribed by educational publishing companies. “The logic of opting for theme-based or predetermined curricula ensures uniformity, but what is sometimes missing is an early learning experience that is highly motivating, has depth and breadth, and is locally relevant” (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006, p. 393). More and more, a narrowing, test-driven, academic focus has become the model for how our youngest students are assessed (Seidel, 2001). Unfortunately, this has resulted in an undervaluing of other critically important areas of development (Daniels & Bizar, 2005).

Valuing the Child in Curriculum Building: Emergence and Creativity

Valuing the whole child has typified the beliefs held by many early childhood educators in the United States, and around the world (Hendrick, 1980, 2001; Maloney, 2010; Williams, 1999) Promoting the rights of the child to initiation, as well as active participation, in the development of curriculum has also been supported at national and international levels of decision making (Berthelsen & Brownlee, 2005; Berthelson et al.,

2009; Convention on the Rights of the Child [CRC], 1990; Qvarsell, 2005; UNICEF, 2004). National education organizations publish position statements and guidelines for working with young children that support child-centered programs, in which the teacher is encouraged to listen closely and intentionally to the child, and come to know the child's approach to learning so that future educational experiences can be planned for by the teacher (NAEYC, 2009). Emergent curricular approaches and philosophies of education, such as the REA, provide a framework for educators who insist on valuing the child over the publishing company recommended script, the state standard, or the high-stakes standardized test.

Within an emergent philosophy of early education, the child is engaged (Katz & Chard, 2000) at all stages of the educational experience. Findings from a recent case study (Mitchell et al., 2009) suggest that, in order for project work to occur in ways that authentically engage young students at all stages of the work, teachers "must shift their ideas about planning to embrace co-creating and participating in the learning context *with* children" (p. 345). The strong image of the child in Reggio, along with the shared belief in a *pedagogy of listening* (Rinaldi, 2006) and a commitment to pedagogical documentation, support Reggio-inspired educators to cultivate such a disposition. In this ethnographic work, the researcher is suggesting that the culture of Reggio Emilia-inspired schools is one in which creativity is fostered and valued (Rinaldi, 2006; Vecchi, 2010).

Emergence is a key value in places where creativity can thrive. "Creativity in general is the ability to come up with new ideas that are surprising yet intelligible, and so valuable in some way" (Boden, 2001, p. 94). High value being placed on predetermined outcomes works against creativity, which is cultivated in an environment where mistakes

are valued and necessary. Finding the solution to real problems is a form of creativity which requires mistakes, and trial-and-error style work, for success. Teachers are learners in this work. They may hold some easy answers within their schema, but in allowing the child to make important and valuable mistakes, they refuse to send the message to their students that they themselves should not look for and find, co-construct, or create their own answers.

Creating Solutions to Real Problems: The "Shoe and Meter" Project

In a project documented in the 1997 Reggio Children publication *Shoe and Meter*, a small group of young children worked together to create a solution to a real problem that they were facing. The problem began with a broken table that needed to be replaced. This caused the need for the children to represent the dimensions of the previous, much loved, table to the school carpenter so that he could effectively build a new table that was just like the old one. The teachers did not present the children with the answers to this problem. The children explored the use of various materials in the environment (i.e., graph paper, drawing paper, meter sticks, shoes) to measure and draw a blueprint of the table. The children thought, talked, and experimented in ways that they determined to be best. The teachers listened, documented, and provoked through questioning. At one point in the project, the children tested the use of a meter stick in determining the proper measurements. At another stage of this project, they used their own shoes toward the same goal. Supported by the environment and the teacher to continue working the problem, the children arrived at some shared conclusions. Many questions were left unanswered, as is generally the case in life. And in the end, the sketches and diagrams of the children were shared with the carpenter, and the table was built. Along the way, the

concept of standard units of measure among other mathematical ideas emerged as a part of the experience. Interestingly, the teachers did not at any point intervene with a preference for measuring with a meter stick rather than a shoe. This project is a good example of how openness and trust in the capabilities of the child to generate and create solutions can be found in the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education. The *Shoe and Meter* project relates to the current study in that it illustrates the importance of emergence in early childhood education, and honors the value of the unexpected pathways toward answers that children take when they are given the creative space and time to do so.

Pedagogical Processes: Curriculum and Assessment in the Reggio Emilia approach

This research examined the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment as they are evidenced in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the United States. Curriculum and assessment are uniquely defined in the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education. In this philosophy of early childhood education, there exists a sort of symbiosis between curriculum and assessment that drives forward the educational experience in ways that make sense to the learner.

Curriculum: Emergent and alive. Curriculum, as it is enacted in the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education, can be described as a co-constructed and emergent (Edwards et al., 1998; Fraser & Gestwicki, 2000; Hewett, 2001; Rinaldi, 2006). Long-term curricular investigations, or projects, emerge through a series of interrelated processes that are lived out in the school context (Reggio Children, 1997). The “object of education is seen not as an object but as a “relational place”” (Rinaldi, 2001, p. 85). With this object in mind, curriculum is built by and with teachers, children, and families

through relationships. In the book, *In the Spirit of the Studio* the school is described as a living system (Gandini et al., 2005). The living component of schooling cannot be underestimated with regards to what is taught, and what is learned in school. Unpredictable and ever-changing in nature, knowledge is constructed collaboratively by those who have the courage to engage in this type of educational approach.

Children, parents, and teachers propel the living system of the Reggio-inspired school. In the Reggio Emilia philosophy, a shared value that the child brings to the experience vast potential, natural curiosity, and intrinsic motivation to learn and understand guides the ways in which curriculum is developed and enacted (Reggio Children, 1995; Rinaldi, 1998; Rinaldi, 2006; Scheinfeld, Haigh, & Scheinfeld, 2008). Parents share in the dialogue about curriculum because the educational philosophy values the parent as an essential player in the educational project of the school (Edwards & Rinaldi, 2009; Fraser & Gestwicki, 2000). The teacher is seen as a "curriculum maker" (Craig & Ross, 2008) within Reggio-inspired schools. Reggio teachers are afforded the right to make decisions about the curriculum (Reggio Children, 1995; Sisson, 2009). This strong image of the teacher as decision-maker is supported by the latest position statement on developmentally appropriate practice published by the NAEYC (2009).

Assessment: Redefining traditional constructs. Assessment in the Reggio-inspired classroom is done through intensive documentation and ongoing revisitation of student work, transcripts, photos, and group learning experiences. Assessment had, until more recently, been a term that was set aside and not chosen to be used very often by the Reggio educators from Italy. It seemed somehow not genuine, or even accurate, to use the term assessment for what was happening in Reggio classrooms as teachers

documented and researched their students, always looking for traces of meaning that could lead to future possibilities and projections for new learning experiences. The traditional understanding of assessment, especially as it is understood within the accountability reform movement in the United States, brings to mind performance tests resulting in hierarchical ranking and comparison of relative achievement. It has seemingly never been important with the culture of the Reggio Emilia approach to score, evaluate, or rank students hierarchically based on tests and summative lists of norm-referenced skills.

More recently however, the term assessment has found its way into the conversation about the Reggio Emilia approach (Rinaldi, 2001, 2004, 2006). As is usually the case, Reggio's interpretation of the pedagogical process of assessment is vastly different from the traditional definition which involves hierarchical ordering and summative evaluation of the learner. Rinaldi (2001) defines assessment within the Reggio Emilia context as the process of locating the value in the learning experience. From this perspective, success and accomplishment depends on documentation, collaboration, dialogue, and finding meaning from the evidence of a lived experience. It is, by necessity, a shared and collaborative event, which is greatly different from the competitive model currently accepted in traditional education settings. By re-defining the pedagogical concept of assessment in this way, Reggio scholars and researchers are shifting the conversation about teacher accountability and challenging the notion of teaching to the standards. In the context of the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education "children are the standard to which they teach" (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006, p. 393).

Rinaldi (2001) also describes assessment within the framework of the Reggio philosophy in terms of its relationship to documentation. Documentation "enables reading, revisiting, and assessment in time and space, and these actions become an integral part of the knowledge-building process" (Rinaldi, 2001, p.84). Seidel (2001) writes about the relationship between assessment and documentation as being one in the same thing. "In the preschools in Reggio Emilia, documentation is viewed as 'assessment'" (Seidel, 2001, p. 304). The purposes of assessment in the philosophy of the Reggio Emilia approach are not evaluative, as they are in many traditional schools. The purposes of assessment in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools are strongly tied to understanding the thinking of the learner in order to look forward to the next step in the overall learning experience that is taking place in the classroom (Rinaldi, 2001; Seidel, 2001).

Research on the REA

Although much has been written about the Reggio Emilia approach by way of books, interviews, and theory building articles, the research literature relating to the REA is much smaller in comparison to that of other topics in early childhood education such as school readiness and emergent literacy. A search of peer reviewed articles in the Education Full Text ERIC database, using the keywords "Reggio Emilia Approach" and "Early Childhood Education," resulted in the identification of 81 publications, 30 of which were empirical studies. Of those studies, 21 were selected to be included here for their connection to the topic of the study—the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment as they are defined in the work of Reggio. Another key word search in the same database, using the terms "documentation" and the "Reggio Emilia Approach"

resulted in 19 publications, 4 of which were not represented in the original broad search. All four were selected to be used in this section of the literature review. Finally, the terms "Reggio Emilia Approach" and "Creativity" were searched in Education Full Text ERIC, resulting in two publications which were repeated from the previous searches. The literature relating to curriculum and assessment, documentation, and creativity in the Reggio Emilia approach spanning from 1998–2012 suggested certain themes. These themes will be presented in this section of the literature review. They include: guiding principles, stories of professional development, pedagogical documentation as a catalyst for transformative experiences, and inclusive education as a special right of children.

Guiding principles in action. The guiding principles of the REA are strongly present in the current research relating to the topic of the study. These principles were listed, and several were defined conceptually, in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. The guiding principles of the REA will be discussed in this section of Chapter 2 in relation to how they are found in scholarly literature.

Image of the child. In the Reggio Emilia philosophy, the child is understood to be capable and strong, as well as intrinsically motivated toward curiosity and problem solving (Lyon & Donahue, 2009; Malaguzzi, 1998; Maynard & Chicken, 2010; Reggio Children, 1995; Rinaldi, 2001, 2006). This value informs the decisions that are made by the adults that work in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools. Knowledge building is believed to be a negotiated process equally shared by the three protagonists in the learning community: the child, the teacher, and the family (Edwards et al., 1998; Scheinfeld et al., 2008). The children in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools have the right to participate in the construction of the educational experience. According to Malaguzzi, "The equation was

simple; if the children had legitimate rights, then they should also have opportunities to develop their intelligence and to be made ready for the success that would not, and should not, escape them" (Malaguzzi, 1998, p. 58).

The image of the child as strong shapes the way that teachers develop and enact curriculum (Malaguzzi, 1993). The belief in a capable young child to negotiate and make decisions that drive curriculum largely determines the kinds of learning experiences that take place every day in Reggio Emilia infant-toddler centers in Italy, and in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools around the globe.

The 100 languages of children. The theory of the 100 languages of children was developed early in the life of the innovative educational project referred to as the Reggio Emilia approach. According to this theory, young children have at their disposal hundreds of ways of symbolically communicating their ideas and understandings (Gandini et al., 2005; Katz, 1998). It is a belief that children have many ways of representing the meaning they take from their experiences. "Observations of the children at work in Reggio Emilia reveal how a wide variety of visual media are used to explore understandings, to reconstruct previous ones, to construct and co-construct revisited understandings of the phenomena investigated" (Katz, 1998, p. 28). Visual media, such as clay, wire, paint, charcoal, and objects found in the natural world are carefully selected and introduced by the educators working in Reggio-inspired schools so that the children can express and share their own theories about experience (Danko-McGhee & Slutsky, 2007; Edwards & Willis, 2000).

In this approach, the 100 languages of representing and communicating are cultivated by the teacher and the child collaboratively. The number 100 is not meant to be

taken literally. It is an idea of multiplicity in expressive media, and a belief that children will find and create many ways of expressing. The theory is an invitation to a more open perception of the term language. It redefines language as much more than the spoken or written word. The theory of the 100 languages of children is a challenge to adults to look at the idea of language with new eyes (a child's eyes), and to see the possibilities that various visual media and other arts integrated forms of expression offer for the learning experiences of young children.

Importance of relationships. The school, in the Reggio Emilia philosophy, is a place for relationships that grow through reciprocal listening and living together within the educational experience (Malaguzzi, 1993; Rinaldi, 2006). It is an amiable space for people, so that they are invited to come together in search of shared meaning (Malaguzzi, 1998). In the daily life of a Reggio-inspired school, the relationships that are intentionally cultivated and develop between those who work and live there create a strongly interconnected framework for belonging and having a responsibility to the group. In this way, the Reggio Emilia approach is supportive of the enactment of democratic values.

An interdependence of human relationships is recognized by the scholars and educators who are inspired by the REA. "As we place more and more emphasis on the experiences that surround us, the ideas that grow among us, and the context that encompasses us, we become intimately aware of our need for each other and our interdependence" (Gandini et al., 2005, p. 147). A sense of reciprocity is fostered through this approach to early childhood education that can lead young children to understand their social responsibility to the community, their role in democratic society (Dewey, 1944; Kliebard, 2004).

The role of the teacher. A teacher's job, according to the Reggio Emilia philosophy, is to nurture and support the children to use their 100 languages with increasing complexity and sophistication so that they may express in personally meaningful ways what they are thinking and learning. The teacher is viewed as a researcher and observer in the REA (Edwards et al., 1998; Gandini et al, 2005; Fraser & Gestwicki, 2000). It is up to her to listen and know when to suggest certain lines of inquiry (Rinaldi, 2006). It is her job to document and honor the processes of learning as they occur in the classroom, so that she can interpret meaning and project the most fruitful types of continued learning experiences for the children to engage in. "It is simply learning: the job of teachers is to learn, because they are teachers" (Rinaldi, 2001, p. 43).

Young children are natural theory builders. Children's theories reveal much about their thinking, and are attended closely by the teacher in the Reggio Emilia approach. To get at what the child thinks about the content of the experience is the strong intent of the Reggio-inspired teacher. Making thinking visible through documentation is a primary goal for the Reggio-inspired teacher (Giudici et al., 2001). By taking a listening stance and carefully documenting the children's at work and play, Reggio teachers are developing a truly emergent curriculum that honors the strengths and capabilities of young children.

The role of the environment. Another key role of the teacher in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school is to prepare the learning environment in ways that provoke questioning, exploring, communicating and expressing. "Teachers construct the classroom environment to function as an ongoing partner in the teaching-learning process" (Scheinfeld et al., 2008, p. 71). The preparation of the environment for the children is

done with deliberate intention on the part of the teacher so that children are invited into the space, and offered possibilities and provocations. In Reggio, the learning environment is considered a third teacher. The metaphor of 'environment as teacher' is strong in the literature relating to the Reggio Emilia approach (Edwards et al., 1998; Fraser & Gestwicki, 2000; Gandini et al., 2005; Scheinfeld et al., 2008).

Documentation. The concept of documentation is ever-present in the life of Reggio schools, and has been written about extensively in the literature relating to this philosophy. Documentation, in the context of the Reggio Emilia philosophy, is redefined as an avenue of learning, not just a way to assess what has been learned (Gandini & Kaminsky, 2004; Rinaldi, 2001, 2004). Rinaldi (2004) calls attention to the multidimensional nature of documentation in the Reggio experience. Documentation is described as a way of caring about, and being with the child. It is "one of the ways we create and maintain relationships" (Rinaldi, 2004, p. 2).

In Reggio literature, the term "pedagogical documentation" has been used to distinguish it from the traditional definition of documentation that is widely accepted in the field of early childhood education (Grieshaber & Hatch, 2003; MacDonald, 2007; Rinaldi, 2006). Observing and documenting student interactions and project learning has a strong tradition in early childhood education the United States (Almy & Genishi, 1979, Cohen et al., 1997; Helm et al., 2007; Helm & Katz, 2001; Katz & Chard, 2000). However, documentation in the Reggio context is much more than an act of collecting learning artifacts that will be used as evidence of growth and development. It is not a summation of the learning experience. It is a way of living together and honoring that lived experience. It is for teachers, parents, and most importantly, for children.

Documentation captures traces of learning as it happens. It is as dynamic as the life of an early childhood classroom. The captured moment is revisited among teachers, children, and families so that multiple interpretations of the value and significance of the learning experience can be brought into the ongoing dialogue about meaning and the nature and purposes of learning. The pedagogical process of assessment enters the experience at this point, as value is located. It is a process of finding value and meaning in the documented experience for the purposes of furthering and deepening the learning that occurs. This richly interactive process can be described as "pedagogical documentation" (Rinaldi, 2006, 15).

This approach to educating young children affords the young learner a chance to reflect in critical ways on their own learning. Through pedagogical documentation, children may interact cognitively with the captured memory of shared experience. Dialogue and interpretation coming from the child's perspective is strongly valued in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools. By revisiting the traces of a shared experience at school, children may begin to think metacognitively about learning (Daniels & Bizar, 2005; Forman, 2005). Through pedagogical documentation, children are offered the opportunity to self-assess and actively participate in the directions of future learning. There exists a growing body of literature on the rights of the child to participation (Berthelsen & Brownlee, 2005; Berthelsen et al., 2009; CRC, 1990; UNICEF, 2004; Woodhead, 2005). The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education extends these rights to participation in the development of curriculum. Pedagogical documentation empowers young children with the evidence of their learning. It honors their experiences as worthy

of revisiting. Through the dialogue that occurs during revisiting the experience, children self-assess and reflect on their experiences in school.

Documentation can be understood as a place for reflective decision making for teachers, students, and parents. The value of that shared space for collaboration creates challenges for early childhood educators. It is not easy to integrate pedagogical documentation into the dynamic world of the early childhood classroom (Goldhaber & Smith, 1997). Kroeger and Cardy (2006) describe documentation in the Reggio Emilia approach as a "hard to reach place." It is time consuming and challenging for teachers to manage, especially within the traditional paradigm of teacher-centered education. Many teachers, especially inexperienced ones, have difficulty being fully present with young children as they take steps to document the learning that is experienced in the early childhood classroom. Establishing time to be with the children and colleagues for dialogue and sharing interpreted meanings is acknowledged as a necessity in the organizational structures of Reggio Emilia schools in Italy (Dahlberg & Moss, 2006; Gandini et al., 2005). In the context of the Reggio philosophy, documentation is a way of making meaning out of a lived experience. It is a "standard part of classroom practice" (Malaguzzi, 1998, p. 38).

Documentation is closely related to the enactment of the curriculum in Reggio schools. Preparation of the learning environment by the teacher, based upon her knowledge of the students, their current interests, and their capabilities, results in an invitation to the children to explore, question, and investigate. At the moment that the child has been invited into a learning space, and guided by the environment and the adult to think about the next step in the learning that is already taking place, the relationship

between the development and enactment of curriculum becomes dependent upon the child and her response to the initial invitation. This response must be documented and interpreted for its value. It is an emergent process that is catalyzed by the reactions and theories of the children. The teacher's work at this stage in the enactment of curriculum is to listen closely, and with genuine respect.

Rinaldi (2006) tells about how the Reggio Emilia philosophy has evolved toward being contextualized within a "pedagogy of listening" (p. 12). This idea of listening deeply to the child and being with the child can be found in the enactment of curriculum in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools. Teachers observe and document in an effort to make visible the learning of the children (Rinaldi, 2001; Seidel, 2001). It is the idea of being with the child through the acts of listening and documenting that further distinguishes and defines the concept of documentation in the Reggio Emilia approach. In Reggio, teachers value this 'live' documentation because it points the way toward the possibilities of a plan for future learning projects (Gandini et al., 2005). It is in this way that, supported by the pedagogical process of documentation, the teacher and the student work collaboratively toward the co-construction of curriculum.

Progettazionne. The term *progettazionne* is defined by Rinaldi (1998) as "projected curriculum constructed through documentation" (p. 113). It is an interactive and flexible method of curriculum development and enactment resulting in a curriculum that is co-constructed by the teacher, child, and the parents. Within the Reggio Emilia approach, curriculum is viewed as a dynamic interplay of human intentions and experiential events. Curriculum is understood as emergent because it is from the central

location of the experiences and interests of the children that the first steps toward project design and implementation are taken.

> Through its flexibility, new and sometimes unexpected curriculum directions emerge that often include changing roles, and responsibilities, evolving questions and ideas, and developing strategies for systematically reflecting on and responding to the changing needs, interests, and abilities of the children. (Moran, Desrochers, & Cavicchi, 2007, p. 82)

There is a growing body of literature that portrays the lived experience in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools in the United States (Fraser & Gestwicki, 2000; Gandini et al., 2008; Scheinfeld et al., 2008). This study may add to that body of literature with specific attention being given to the ways in which curriculum and assessment are enacted and related to one another within the context of the Reggio Emilia approach; the context of a culture of creativity.

Stories of professional development. The majority of articles that were found were qualitative case studies that explored how professional development is an ongoing and thoroughly necessary element of Reggio. These research reports provided detailed descriptions of the embedded nature of professional development within the Reggio Emilia approach, as it was experienced in teacher education programs and site-based staff development experiences (Cutler, Gilkerson, Bowne, & Stremmel, 2009; Danko-McGhee & Slutsky, 2007; Ede & Da Ros-Voseles; Goldhaber, 2007; Kroeger & Cardy, 2006; McNaughton & Krentz, 2007; Riley & Roach, 2006; Sisson, 2009). Often told through the voices of the teachers and teacher educators who were engaged in rethinking and re-navigating their understanding of classroom practice by using the Reggio Emilia philosophy as a compass, these works reveal the deep cache of offerings that the REA holds for ongoing and meaningful professional learning in early childhood education.

This self-reflective journey of professional development is not usually a comfortable or easy one. Many times, it is frustrating and unpredictable (Kroeger & Cardy, 2006). Thinking outside of traditional paradigms of teaching and learning in order to enact emergent curricula proved to be challenging for teachers. “Giving up power and control was much more difficult than we had imagined” (McNaughton & Krentz, p. 71). The emotional and dispositional aspects of professional development, which can serve to derail the processes of professional growth, are shown to be addressed through dialogue and shared interpretations in the REA (Maynard & Chicken, 2010). In a transformative way, pedagogical perspectives shift from a linear and predetermined viewpoint, to an organic and reflexive interpretation of developing curriculum. “Relearning” and “deconstructing” subject matter and curricular frameworks require a new perspective on the management of time, the importance of conversation, and the value of the “reflective processes” of teaching (Christensen et al., 2006. p. 16).

The current research builds on these stories of professional development by incorporating four (45–60 minute) observations of ongoing site-based professional development, which occurs one evening each week at the school. These observations serve to answer both research questions and link the ethnography to the current trends in research in the REA.

Pedagogical documentation: A catalyst for transformative experiences. Often the use of pedagogical documentation is shown in the research literature to be a catalyst of change (Elliot, 2005; Given et al., 2010; Goldhaber & Smith, 1997; Jaruszewicz, 2006; MacDonald, 2007). Transformative experiences in the early childhood classroom and

university setting result when pedagogical documentation becomes a value in the educational experience.

In one case, “educators adopted documentation as a tool to support professional development, evolve their local knowledge, and grow their local identities as learning communities” (Given et al., 2010, p. 37). The nature of documentation to become a public artifact was found to be an agent of change in the learning community. Moran et al. (2007) describe how the collective act of pedagogical documentation changed the culture of a school over nearly a decade of time. Working in Reggio Emilia-inspired ways cultivated a culture rich with questions and “the activities of documentation and flexible planning became intertwined, creating a communal fabric that revealed the complex nature of teaching learning that has been described and inspired by our colleagues in Reggio Emilia” (Moran et al., 2007, p. 88).

In a quantitative study examining perceptions of individuals within multiple teacher education programs while they are in the process of experimenting with adopting the ideals and frameworks of the Reggio Emilia approach (Elliot, 2005), descriptive statistical findings suggest no significant differences between participating university settings. What is suggested is that the construct of collaboration emerges commonly as both a challenge and a benefit. Participants in the study complained of the inability of quantitative scales to truly and accurately depict their perceptions of the transformative experience. This may suggest that qualitative methods are best suited for research on perceptions of and possible benefits of this approach. In the current study, data were generated in the form of field notes, interview and focus group transcripts, and audiofacts. Narrative descriptions and audio-recording sessions with visual images are

the qualitative ways in which I, as the ethnographer, attempted to be accurate and richly informative in my descriptions of the culture and lived experience of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school.

Inclusive education: The special rights of children. A small body of literature can be found that suggests that there are many benefits to children with "special rights" found in Reggio Emilia-inspired classrooms (Gilman, 2007; Morrison, 2000; Vakil, Freeman, & Swim, 2003). The term "special rights" is indicative of the strong image of the child that is embodied by Reggio. "As teachers provide opportunities for projects and recognize the multiple ways that children have of expressing themselves, they create an environment that is conducive for learning by children with special rights" (Morrison, 2000, p. 43).

The Reggio Emilia philosophy and approach is supportive of inclusion. Two elements that are found in Reggio programs that foster high quality experiences for exceptional children are:

1. The view of the child as competent and capable of many different ways of expressing, communicating, and learning leads to an individualized approach to early childhood education.

2. Strong family partnerships found in Reggio programs improve quality of service and educational experience for students with "special rights."

> Inclusion is embraced in the Reggio Emilia approach. Children with special needs are regarded as worthy. Although there may be waiting lists for the government-run infant–toddler centers in Italy, it is the child with special needs who receives preferred acceptance. Children are integrated mindfully, with the support of parents and careful observation of teachers. If additional assistance is required, aides are provided. (Gilman, 2007, p. 24)

The Reggio Emilia approach is well-suited to our nation's goal to provide educational experiences for our special needs students in Least Restrictive Environments (LREs). Moving away from a deficit-oriented view of students with disabilities, an optimistic view of students as having special "rights" to participation and inclusion sets the stage for all students to find and reach their fullest potential as a result of their educational experiences. Teachers working within the Reggio philosophy are free to adapt curriculum to be able to meet all learners where they are in their own development, and support them to move forward toward new ideas and collaborative learning opportunities. In a school culture where creativity and imaginative expression are highly valued, children with special rights can contribute to the learning experience in ways that stem from their strengths and interests.

Creativity in Early Childhood Education

The notion of creativity is a socially constructed one (Eckhoff & Urbach, 2008; Mindham, 2005). Each society defines and determines the value of creativity in daily life. How creativity is fostered, or not fostered, in educational systems reveals quite a bit about how it is understood within a society. Within individual schools, school culture and shared values determine whether creativity is of high value and priority. Multi-layered notions of culture are addressed by this ethnographic work. First of all, it is important to consider that there is the strong cultural heritage of Reggio Emilia, Italy, which includes a long history steeped in the arts that drives the philosophy there. The ways in which the REA is interpreted by educators in other nations and cultures influences how the approach is enacted, especially with regards to creativity and the arts. Lastly, the idea of

school culture is related also related to creativity. These layers of culture are all directly related to research questions which frame this research.

The results of a creative act are often unexpected. Being open to the unexpected is a prerequisite within a culture of creativity (Cremin, Burnard, & Craft, 2006). It is upon this point that educators and policymakers make decisions that reveal their own beliefs about the value of creativity in the classroom and in life. Should curriculum be pre-determined? Should educational outcomes be just as predictable and easily measured? Or, should the unexpected and creative be welcomed in education? The answers to these questions in the education policy arena have consequences for students and educators alike. Possibilities for creativity in education depend on these answers.

Ashton-Warner (1963) writes about the importance of creativity in early childhood classrooms. She describes how, when creativity is a mode of learning and expressing that which is learned, the teacher and the child are with each other moving together toward shared goals. “The teacher is at last with the stream and not against it: the stream of children’s inexorable creativeness” (Ashton-Warner, 1963, p. 93). She goes on to suggest a much more profound rationale for a culture of creativity in early childhood education.

> It is of more professional moment that all of the work of young children should be through the creative vent. It is more than a teaching matter…. It is an international matter…. It helps to set the creative pattern in a mind while it is yet malleable, and in this role is a humble contribution to peace. (Ashton-Warner, 1963, p. 93)

By identifying working in the “creative vent” as good teaching practice as well as a possible means to a more peaceful world, Ashton-Warner clearly recognized the value of

creativity in her work with young children in New Zealand many decades ago. Creativity in early education is an idea that cannot be taken for granted today.

Educational reform movements common to many countries of the world in recent decades have resulted in a test-driven system of accountability and outcome-based planning and evaluation (Robinson, 2011). Within this paradigm of education, high value is placed on meeting specific standardized outcomes, and there is decreasing time and space left for creative thinking and the arts in schools (Feldman & Benjamin, 2006; Wilde, 2007). Evaluating, or finding value in, creativity is not a simple measuring or counting up of performance points and correct answers to predetermined questions. Finding value in creativity requires a stance of openness and curiosity (Cremin et al., 2008). It also requires a trust in the innate strength of young children to think and act creatively (Jalongo, 2003). In listening to the interests and theories of young children, early childhood teachers can affirm the child's right to opportunities for creative thought and action (Isenberg & Jalongo, 2001; Jalongo, 2003). In light of the high stakes being placed on test scores and countable student outcomes, finding and assessing the value of creativity in education is a topic that continues to call for attention.

In a search of peer-reviewed publications within the Education Full Text ERIC database, key words "creativity" and "early childhood education" were used. The results of the search included a total of 79 articles that related to the general topic of Creativity in Early Childhood Education. The dates of these works ranged from 1994–2010. Certain research articles were selected for this literature review due to their explicit attention to creativity, as it is evidenced in early childhood educational experiences in the United States and other nations around the world. In addition to the advanced search of the ERIC

and Education Full Text database, I conducted a review of several related chapters in the recent publication of *The Routledge International Handbook of Creative Learning* (2011). This handbook provided a wealth of detailed overviews related to current themes in the research being conducted around the idea of creative learning. The result of these focused yet comprehensive searches of the research literature directly related to the topic of creativity in early childhood education revealed the following trends: an increase in policy support internationally for creativity in early childhood curriculum, frameworks for studying creativity, barriers to creativity in schools, assessment for creative learning, and a theory of 'possibility thinking' in early childhood education that positions creativity as a bridge to unexpected solutions.

Increased policy support internationally for creativity in early education. In three recent studies contextualized within early childhood education in China, the focus of the studies has been on the perceptions of and effects on students of the intentional use of strategies that foster creativity (Cheung, 2010; Chien & Hui, 2010; Hsiao, 2010). The authors built their rationale for their research on policy support for creativity in early childhood education explicitly outlined in newly published national curriculum guides and other education policy documents put forward by the country's Curriculum Development Council. "In the preschool curriculum guide, creativity is emphasized through play and a child-centered approach that encourages exploration and autonomous learning" (Chien & Hui, 2010, p. 51).

In the United Kingdom newly established policy support for creativity in early childhood education has led to exciting directions in creativity research that calls attention to the value of 'possibility thinking' in early childhood settings (Burnard et al.,

2006; Cremin et al., 2006). In a retrospective piece (2006), Feldman & Benjamin contrast the unilaterally strong support in the United Kingdom for creativity research with that of the United States. “In contrast to the American experience, British practitioners, policy-makers, and interested scholars have established a very different pattern of collaboration as they implement a coordinated movement to enhance creativity among school children” (Feldman & Benjamin, 2006, p.331). The American experience with creativity in education is made complicated and controversial due to the difficulty that exists in evaluating creative expression and intelligence in ways that suit the paradigm of accountability that now drives the nation’s educational pursuits.

Frameworks for studying creativity. In a brief overview of the research concerning creativity, Pagnani and Runco (2011) discuss several valuable frameworks for thinking about and studying creativity. The authors discuss the important work of Rhodes (1961) in developing the idea of the 4 Ps of creativity: personality, press, products, and processes. Building on Rhodes’s theory, Simonton (1995) introduced persuasion as an essential element of thinking about creativity. According to Simonton (1995), the creative idea is a persuasive one, and can be a strong catalyst for change in people’s beliefs and actions. Understood in this way, creativity is contagious and causes change in people and organizations (e.g., schools). The ways in which creativity can influence school organizations, and persuade the cultivation of school cultures is an idea that is closely related to this research.

Runco (2007) added yet another P to the framework, and argues that the idea of potential is important to the way we understand and study creativity. Potential is a valuable lens to use when studying creativity because it has been shown that a certain

person may possess all of the identified traits of an innovator and a divergent thinker, but never actually do anything creative (Pagnini & Runco, 2011). With this point, the distinction between performance and potential is clarified as important to the study of creativity. Runco (2007) also includes the value of interactions in creativity. Creative learning is socially situated (Craft, Cremin, & Burnard, 2008). Therefore the interactions that occur in those social environments need to be considered when studying creativity and learning. This is an idea that relates to the current study, which occurred within the naturalistic environment of a school, and included the generation of various observational data sets that allowed the researcher to see the connections between creativity and the interactive life of the school.

Taken together, the work of Rhodes (1961), Simonton (1995), and Runco (2007) serve as the beginning points for the development of a hierarchical framework for studying creativity that is presented by Pagnini and Runco (2011). In this hierarchical framework, creative performance and creative potential serve as higher level tiers, under which person, press, processes, products, persuasion, and interactions are categorized.

Barriers to creativity in schools. A rationale for the current study is presented which argues against the narrowing effects that testing and an "audit culture" of schooling (Banaji, 2011, p. 42) have on early childhood education in the United States. This test-driven climate of schooling presents a major barrier to creativity becoming a central value and shared belief in the culture of schooling. These barriers are by no means isolated within education systems in the United States. It is an international issue, and barriers to creativity in schools exist on a global scale. "Globally, in both dominant and emerging educational discourses, public policies that mandate performance criteria, tests,

targets, and tables of achievement often conflict with creativity policies in education rather than co-existing with them" (Burnard, 2011, p. 140). This quote illustrates obstacles, relating to a de-valuing of creativity policy agendas in education, that educational policymakers create in their efforts to reform education from the top down with mechanisms such as accountability formulas and high-stakes standardized tests.

In the case early childhood education, the problematic yet prevalent public and policy view of play as not real learning (Banaji, 2011), is exacerbated by the fact that young children's creative work (e.g., play and exploration) is often "manifest without a tangible product" (Pagnini & Runco, 2011, p. 66). The frequent lack of an end product to show for their creative endeavors leaves young children in a precarious position of not being able to be held accountable for what they learn when creativity is the vehicle for learning. This in turn leaves teachers who are striving toward creative teaching and learning at a disadvantage as well. Within the climate of accountability reform, "there are very real limits on the freedom of teachers and students to incorporate and interpret creativity in practical situations" (Banaji, 2011, p. 42).

A lack of an obvious and tangible product in creative learning presents a major barrier to creativity assuming a central place of importance in classrooms. This is largely due to the inability of the current most popular forms of assessment (e.g., standardized tests which measure discrete facts and not processes) to align with the nature of creative work, which for young children often takes the form of play and exploration. The next section of the literature review addresses issues of assessment in relationship to creative learning suggested in the current research on this topic.

Assessment for creative learning. Burnard (2011) presents an argument for rethinking assessment for creative learning. The purpose of this chapter in *The Routledge International Handbook of Creative Learning* is to consider various definitions and perspectives on creative learning, and to examine how assessment of and for creative learning is being presented in the research on this topic. The pedagogical process of assessment is an important element of the proposed research. It is a concept found in research question two which focuses attention on the relationship of processes of curriculum and assessment within a culture of creativity. Assessment is a key determining factor in what is learned in schools, and how (Burnard, 2011). Developing models and frameworks for assessment which align with creative teaching and learning is crucial if this paradigm of education is going to be sustained.

"What counts as creative learning needs to be evaluated within the classroom and its social and cultural context" (Burnard, 2011, p. 141). This idea goes beyond assessment of creative potential, such as the practice of testing for gifted qualities (Torrance, 1974). It is about assessment for creative learning, as well as measuring success through performance of acquired knowledge and skill. Formative assessment methods and procedures represent a type of assessment for learning. Pedagogical documentation methods found in the Reggio Emilia philosophy are aptly described as formative methods of data gathering, having the purpose of assessing value in the documented experience.

A first step in developing assessments for creative learning is to distinguish this type of learning from other types commonly found in schools (e.g.. academic skills development). There are many definitions of creative learning. It has been described in

the literature as a socially mediated activity (Craft et al., 2008), as well as being strongly tied to imaginative activity, problem posing, participation and autonomy, collaboration, and self-reflection (Burnard, 2011; Craft et al., 2001; Pagnini & Runco, 2011). The Reggio Emilia approach, which serves as a theoretical frame for this ethnography, is strongly aligned with this complex definition of creative learning. Studying the practical life of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school may bring theory and practice together for the purposes of better understanding how assessment of and for creative learning is best framed by early childhood educators. “Research in to the meeting of the worlds of theory and practice could result in a framework that will facilitate the fundamental changes required in the development of assessment practices for creative learning” (Burnard, 2011, p. 147).

“Possibility Thinking”: Creativity as a Bridge to Unexpected Solutions

Support for creativity in education shown through policy reports and national education guidelines in the United Kingdom have led to creativity research that seeks to identify and document a newly forming construct relating to creativity called “possibility thinking” (Burnard et al., 2006). Building on the work of Craft et al. (2001), two studies were conducted that sought to examine the characteristics of “possibility thinking” in the educational experience of the young child (Burnard et al., 2006; Cremin et al., 2007). Another aim of these studies was to better understand how the strategies and practices used by early childhood educators could foster ‘possibility thinking’, which is considered to be an important aspect of creativity.

Major tenets of creativity include thinking in unorthodox ways, breaking barriers, valuing non-traditional methods of problem solving, making connections, moving beyond

the information that is already given, and creating something original (Mindham, 2005). These elements of creativity, as they are evidenced in early childhood classrooms around the world should continue to be examined in terms of the possibilities they hold for the building of a new way of thinking about the educational organization as a culture of creativity. Approaches to education such as the Reggio Emilia approach should be the focus of future research relating to 'possibility thinking' and creativity in schools. These living examples will hopefully provoke questions and differences of perspective on matters of early childhood education. Conversations around those different interpretations will be valuable due to their focus on creating shared meanings from experience.

School Culture and Creativity

Ethnography is the study of culture (Creswell, 2007; Dobbert, 1982; Geertz, 1973). This dissertation ethnography was a study of school culture. More specifically, the researcher was attempting to study a culture of creativity as it is evidenced in the life of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the southeastern United States. Using the Education Full Text ERIC database, the terms "school culture" and "creativity" were used to refine a search of peer reviewed scholarly articles relating to school culture and creativity. The search resulted in 14 articles, 4 of which were selected for this section of the literature review. Only one out of the four articles selected was an example of an empirical study. This may be indicative of a gap in the research on the relationship between school culture and creativity in schools.

Beach and Dovemark (2009) report on an ethnography conducted over the course of a year and a half in Sweden at two distinctly different secondary school settings. The purpose of the study was to "examine how new policies for personalized learning develop

in practice, in the performative cultures of modern schools" (p. 689). More than 400 hours of participant observation and 39 interviews served as the ethnographic data in the study. Certain key concepts, which the researchers describe as currently relevant to global and local educational policy, provide a conceptual frame for the ethnography. These concepts are creativity, performativity, and personalized learning. The authors assert that these concepts are examples of explicit values within modern school culture. They compete for space within educational experience. The data from this study revealed that "space for creativity is squeezed by a 'need for standards and performance control in relation to the attainment targets in the curriculum'" (Beach & Dovemark, 2009, p. 693). This finding relates to this research because it recognizes the problems that traditional standardized assessments present for creative teaching and learning. The current study aims toward a deeper understanding of how assessment and curriculum are related when space for creativity is essential. The work of Beach and Dovemark (2009) also relates to this study because it suggests a necessary shift in the "root-metaphor of schooling from transmission to (co-) construction" occur in schools and school cultures (p. 693).

Stephen (2006) writes from the perspective of the school leader how school leaders can "infuse creativity and innovation into the cultural fabric of their organization" (Stephen, 2006, p. 9). He answers this question by listing and describing several guidelines for the cultivation of creativity within school culture. Catalysts for creativity include a shared vision and purpose, curiosity, and optimism. All of these characteristics are found to a degree within the REA. Strong connections to Reggio are found in the author's recommendations for nurturing positive interpersonal relationships, embracing mistakes, welcoming resistance, and sharing stories of school experience.

Sternberg (2009) and Luther (2004) offer brief commentaries on the need for a shift to a culture of creativity in schools. Sternberg (2009) ponders on the vast difference between the traditional passive culture of schooling, and the kinds of creative and collaborative skills that are beneficial to working innovatively in the 21st century. She calls for a shift to innovation and creativity for students of all ages. Luther (2004) focuses on early childhood education in her article "Inspiring a Culture of Creativity: One School's Journey." This article directly relates to the current study because it focuses on a culture of creativity in early childhood education. Luther (2004) entreats early childhood professionals to "open your eyes to ways you habitually and systematically shut down creativity while you learn to inspire it and invite ideas that help creativity flourish" (p. 28). She asserts that a conscious effort must be made by traditional teachers to be open to conversation, curiosity, playfulness, and tolerance for new ideas. By valuing the environment as teacher, Luther (2004) suggests that teachers nurture risk-taking in the creation of new ideas. In describing her school's story, the author explains "we have purposefully created a place that supports structure and freedom – safe spaces for risk-taking, where students can feel supported in their ideas and projects" (Luther, 2004, p. 30). Similarly, the learning environment is understood as an important teacher for the child in the REA.

By exploring the characteristics of a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, it is my intent that the current research contribute to what is known about how a culture of creativity is nurtured and sustained in the educational experiences of young children.

Pause & Possibility: Criticism and Contributions of the Reggio Emilia Approach

Johnson (1999) provides a highly provocative and critical review of the Reggio Emilia phenomenon in early childhood education. His criticism centers on what he describes as a fanatical enthusiasm demonstrated by early childhood teachers and teacher educators toward the Reggio Emilia approach. Johnson uses entries in a Reggio listserv to illustrate the expense and extreme to which teachers, program directors, and professors in the early childhood community would go to blindly adopt this philosophy as a model for practice.

Suggesting a mixed theory of cargo cultism, colonialism, and tourism as reason for the popularity of the approach, Johnson asserts that Reggio Emilia schools dazzle and shine with aesthetic appeal leading to overt acceptance with little "intellectual" debate. This acceptance is hollow, according to Johnson, due to an inability in the United States to successfully mediate such problems in early childhood education as high child-teacher ratios and lacking resources and materials. He also claims that the early childhood community has too quickly been convinced of other "progressivist educational cargo cults like child-centered practices, whole language, multiculturalism, and developmentally appropriate practice" (Johnson, 1999, p. 68).

Tobin (2005) also questions the highly "exportable" nature of the REA, as compared even with other high quality examples found in Italy and other countries. In his extensive work as an ethnographer, Tobin has studied early childhood education practices in Japan, China, France, and the United States. He questions the idea of a universal standard of quality. Tobin (2005) asserts that the theory of cultural relativism prevents any one set of locally adopted standards from being universally preferred over another.

The local culture determines what is valued, and what is determined to be high in quality. He writes critically of the tendency toward mass consumption of the philosophy of Reggio. He contends that in its travels to the United States, the REA "gets stripped of its politics, of its socialism, of the elements that are objectionable to many Americans, and what gets embraced are those parts of Reggio Emilia most attractive to American middle-class sensibilities" (Tobin, 2005, p. 428). This research will focus on the local culture that is found in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the United States. This is not an aim to export the philosophy in a wholesale manner. It is an attempt to glean insight into how creativity can be nurtured in the early childhood classroom, and to better articulate what characterizes the dynamic relationship between curriculum and assessment evidenced within this school culture.

Tobin warns against the arbitrary assignment of universal standards for quality in early childhood education. He calls for the development of "mechanisms and techniques for improved dialogue between early childhood educators and the diverse communities they serve" (Tobin, 2005, p. 433). A possible outcome of this research is the provocation of such dialogue taking place within the research site, and the local academic community.

The pessimism in Johnson's essay is nearly tangible, and worked against the author in his resulting message to the reader. His arguments, at times, having a tone of fanaticism all their own, nonetheless raise a good question. It is a question of the identity of the American teacher and the American school that surfaces. What is that identity? How do the ideas of the Reggio Emilia philosophy resound in the cultural sphere of American education for young children? The possibilities for finding answers to those and other questions through deep investigation of the lived experienced of a Reggio

Emilia-inspired school in the United States are offered within this ethnographic work. As the researcher in the present study, I have assumed a stance of optimism in the belief that valuable insights can be gained regarding how creativity works in schools for young children. One must be optimistic about those possibilities considering the longevity and success of Reggio Emilia infant-toddler centers.

> Sergio Spaggiari quoted these words on optimism and education by Loris Malaguzzi in his welcoming speech to the United States teachers' delegation: "Education must stand on the side of optimism or else it will melt like ice cream in the sun." (Gandini et al., 2005, p. 54)

An in-depth understanding of the complex and interactive nature of emergent pedagogy in Reggio-inspired schools may provide insight into how to foster creativity in school settings for young children. "Unfortunately, there is limited research demonstrating the dynamic, underlying processes of project work in early childhood classrooms" (Mitchell et al., 2009, p. 339). An ethnographic study focused on curriculum and assessment within a school paradigm which embraces innovation and creativity serves to fill a gap in the research about the complex and ever-shifting processes of teaching and learning with young children. In education, predictable outcomes are comforting to parents and political leaders alike. Relying too heavily on the predetermined, however, may not be what our future citizens need from their educational experiences. "As the uncertainties of life…at the start of the twenty-first century seem to increase, patterns of life which may have been more predictable in earlier times are now much less so" (Craft et al., 2001, p. 45). This study supports the value of creativity and the unpredictable in early childhood education.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This ethnography was set within a progressive paradigm of early childhood education. It is an exploration of school culture and the nature of pedagogical relationships in a school where creativity is a shared value and a high priority. Current reform movements in education in the United States and around the globe have equated standardized assessments to accountability for quality in education. Many accountability formulas, some of which are tied to teacher merit pay, necessitate the acceleration of academic achievement in heavily weighted test subjects such as reading and math.

Increased expectations for young children to read and perform numeracy tasks at earlier ages are defended by policymakers and proclaimed to be the act of raising standards of excellence in education. In this argument, faster is better no matter the cost. The cost for young children can be found in decreased time for play, reduced access to open-ended learning materials and experiences, and even test-related stress (Bracey, 2003, 2006). The influence on early childhood curriculum that these increased expectations of academic achievement, as measured by standardized tests is evidenced in a narrowing of curricular opportunities (Apple, 2008; Siedel, 2001). Opportunities for creativity in the early childhood classroom may be lost in top-down efforts to get children to read and count faster. Another problematic issue arises when the pedagogical process of curriculum is driven by predetermined (testable) outcomes which do not include

creative thinking and action. In this linear pedagogical relationship, curriculum is planned with the ultimate intent of test item coverage. This leaves precious little room for emergence or innovation in the early childhood classroom.

To approach the research in a way that is connected to the problematic context of early childhood education with regards to limited opportunities for creativity, and the narrowing definition of curriculum and assessment, the study addressed the following questions:

1. How is a culture of creativity fostered within a Reggio Emilia-inspired school?

2. In a school culture of creativity, what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment?

Research Design

The study of culture is an interpretive search for meaning, and a way toward deep understanding of interconnected processes that are embedded within lived experience (Geertz, 1973). An ethnographic design was selected for this study because it is an exploration of a school culture of creativity which may provide rich and authentic answers to the research questions. This design was chosen in order to better understand how the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment work together within the culture of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the United States. Ethnography is well suited to the research questions because they frame a study of culture. The questions will be used as points of reference for the researcher to iteratively return to with evidence found in the data that may reveal the dynamics of pedagogy that flourish within a culture of creativity.

Ethnographies are conducted over extended periods of time (Creswell, 2007), and involve the "attempt to describe culture or aspects of culture" (Bogdan & Biklin, 2007, p. 30). The shared beliefs that frame the work that is done in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school can aptly be described as evidence of school culture. During the fieldwork phase of this dissertation research, I spent three to four full days a week, over a period of 18 weeks, engaged in the daily life of the research site in order to become a legitimate member of the culture being studied, and understand that culture better for having done so. Understanding culture is the broad aim shared by all ethnographies (Wolcott, 2009). As the ethnographer and researcher-in-residence, through engagement in the "daily life" of the school, I sought to explore and characterize the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment, as they are defined by this Reggio Emilia-inspired school. To best locate and understand this important interplay between curricular experience and reflective assessment, I chose to live completely within the culture that is collectively built at one Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the United States. By placing the study within the context of the culture of creativity that is nurtured by the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education, the researcher hopes to highlight and articulate how curriculum and assessment interact when elements of the REA are held as a shared value.

Over the course of three decades, early childhood education researchers and scholars have advocated for the use of ethnographic design in research in the field of early childhood education (Adair, 2010; Buchbinder, Longhofer, Barrett, Lawson, & Floersch, 2006; Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989). This study adds to the research literature in early childhood education by examining the ways that the school culture that "children

participate in open up or limit what and how they learn" (Adair, 2010, p. 1). The explicit focus of the research is not what children learn. The focus is on how the most basic components of learning and teaching work within a school culture that fosters creativity. It is the culture of creativity, exemplified in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools, that opens up possibilities for a dynamic and reciprocal relationship between curriculum and assessment.

Sampling plan. A purposeful sample was selected for this study. By using the intentional process of purposeful sampling, I made the decision to "choose particular subjects to include because they are believed to facilitate the expansion of a theory" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 73). It was important, when designing the study, to ensure that participants came from a strongly Reggio Emilia-inspired school community so that the research questions could be addressed. The identification of a group, or sample, of Reggio Emilia-inspired schools in a southeastern region of the United States was the first step toward site selection. "Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (Merriam, 1998, p. 61). It took several years (2007-2011) to select an authentic, and true to the source of inspiration, Reggio Emilia-inspired school site for the ethnographic context of this dissertation.

Site. By choosing a highly authentic Reggio Emilia-inspired preschool as the research site, I was able to trust completely that the participants would be familiar with the study topic, would be able to provide an informed view during interviews and focus group discussions, and would represent the Reggio Emilia philosophy in action during times of observational note-taking. During the site selection process, I observed in and

met with the school directors from several Reggio-inspired schools, over a period of several years, to discuss possibilities for dissertation-related research. During these meetings, some site directors seemed amiable and open to the idea of research being done at their sites. It was after a long and reflective process that I selected one such school site for its explicit commitment to collaboration and inquiry, as well as its perceived genuineness as a Reggio Emilia-inspired school. My knowledge of the guiding principles of the Reggio Emilia approach was an invaluable tool to identify the school context as richly true example of the Reggio Emilia philosophy.

An informal pilot project, which will be described in further detail in a later section of this chapter, was conducted at this school that allowed for further strengthening of a decision to select it as the research site for the study. This fieldwork supported the development of a relationship between the researcher and the school community. A growing relationship continued through email exchanges and periodic school visits, during which I would sometimes present possibilities for research questions and methodologies for the current study. A teacher, who has been with the school from its beginnings, spoke at one such meeting with the researcher about how their professional "journeys" seemed to continue to overlap over time. These overlapping professional experiences are the result of mutual pedagogies and ideologies about young children, creativity, and the work of schools. Through ongoing and open communication with this school community, relationships of mutual trust developed over time, and this strengthened the overall success of the ethnographic fieldwork.

The school chosen for this ethnography has been serving young children and families from the local area for 18 years. For the purposes of the study, the setting was

collaboratively named Halamoni School. The school building itself was originally a family home and has been affectionately described by the owner, founder, and director as "the little yellow house." The fact that it was previously a house helps to create a familiar and welcoming atmosphere throughout the school. It is a welcoming space for children and families to come together and spend time talking, sharing, playing, working; living. This atmosphere lends to the authenticity of this research site as a Reggio Emilia-inspired school. The Reggio Emilia school as an "amiable" space (Malaguzzi, 1998) has been a strong intention from the beginnings of the philosophy.

This Reggio Emilia-inspired school community has shown an openness to change over time. During the times that I have been able to come in and "walk the school," as the teachers and directors will invite anyone to do whenever any visits occur, there have been drastic and intentional changes to the environment. I have observed that changes in spatial and organizational elements of the school often occur from year to year. One such change was to incorporate the idea of the entire school as an atelier. This is an example of a shift in not only the way the physical space is organized, but also in the way of thinking about the atelier as a space with limited physical boundaries. This shift is relevant to the research because it required that I watch closely for the rhythms of the school, and coordinate somehow with the atelierista and the teachers about where and when important curricular opportunities would be happening, and if observations would be welcomed. Changes in ways of thinking about the school environment are natural responses to professional growth, new curricular and staff development initiatives, and the many new interests that evolve out of the lived Reggio school experience. It is a reflection of the culture of the school as open to the idea that change is positive and

necessary for growth. An enthusiasm for professional growth and change, paired with a desire to never remain pedagogically static, is further evidence to support the idea that this school resonates with the Reggio philosophy in authentically local, and international, ways.

Shortly before the electronic submission of an application to propose this research to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Florida Atlantic University, I sent an official Recruitment Email (Appendix L), followed by an email attaching a Letter of Cooperation template (Appendix M) to the research site so that it could be signed and submitted to the IRB at Florida Atlantic University on the letterhead of the cooperating organization. The Recruitment Email and Letter of Cooperation described, in detail, all research procedures. Any changes to the observations, interviews, focus groups, and other data collection (audio-recordings and photographs), all of which were outlined in the Letter of Cooperation, were managed through a negotiated dialogic process between the researcher and the school professionals who work at the site. No changes that would require IRB approval were necessary during the course of the research.

Participants. Members of the following role groups within the school community were asked to participate in the study: children in attendance at the school, parents, school professionals (teachers, atelieristas, directors, and consultant). The school currently serves children from 12 months to 5 years of age. Presently, there are four age groupings or class groups at this Reggio Emilia-inspired school; the 1s and 2s class, the 2s and 3s class, the class of the 3s and 4s, and Jr K class group. The 1s and 2s class, or the “nido” which translates to “nest” and is an expression borrowed from the schools for the youngest children in the municipality of Reggio Emilia, included three teachers who

worked and learned with the youngest children in this school community. The teachers were women, each of whom has worked at the school for more than a decade. Each of the teachers is fluent in multiple languages, and together as a team they bring English, Spanish, and French to the living experience in the “nido.” The class group had seven girls and 12 boys. The class of the 2s and 3s also had three teachers working and living in collaboration with a group of seven boys and seven girls who ranged in age from 2 years and 5 months old to children who were nearly 4 years old. The class of the 3s and 4s had two teachers who worked with a group of nine boys and seven girls. The class of the Jr K had nine children; six boys and three girls. There was one teacher for the class of the Jr K.

Children. All children in attendance at this school were invited to participate. The number of children in attendance during the ethnography fluctuated, as did the number of children with consent to participate in some way in the study. Consent and assent forms were distributed personally by the researcher during the initial days, weeks, and months of fieldwork, to all children and families in attendance at the school. The risks to children as a result of participating in the study were no greater than they would encounter on an ordinary day in school. The type of documentation generated was common and represented a regular part of the daily life of the school, and the children were accustomed to the phenomenon of being observed, and having their words and actions documented in various ways (photo, video, audio, written notation). As the researcher, I worked in focused and ongoing ways to communicate with school professionals and parents during the initial weeks of fieldwork in order to recruit student participants for the study. At a certain point in the research, the focus shifted from gathering consent toward

generating data with children who already had consent to participate. Due to this process of gaining consent, the first day in the field was not the first day of data generation. Data generation began in the last week of January 2013, and ended in the first week of June. Over that span of time, I spent 18 weeks as a researcher (participant observer) in the school.

To gain optimal consent, I worked with school professionals to distribute and re-distribute the parent consent (Appendix O) and child assent (Appendix N) forms to families as necessary until all families had responded with a decision about their child's participation in the study. This process took months to complete. Consent for each parent and assent for each child at the school was determined before observations, recordings and photographs were generated as data. In addition to child participants being observed and recorded, children from the oldest group of students (the Jr K class) were asked to participate in the student focus group interview (Appendix G). All students were invited to be present for the focus group. Seven out of the nine children in the Jr K class who were present for the focus group, spoke during the discussion.

Parents. During the first months of fieldwork, I worked with school professionals (office administrator, director, teachers, atelierista) to decide when and how to distribute parent consent forms for interview participation. The parent interviewees were not the same person for each of the two interviews. Only one out of the two parents interviewed had been at the school for more than 2 years. An initial decision to restrict participation in parent interviews to only those parents who have been members of the school community for more than 2 years reflects the researcher's intent to have access to one-to-one conversation with parents who have been engaged in the life of the school for an

extended period of time, and as a result gain insight into the culture and life-world (Roulston, 2011). However it was only possible to interview one such parent who had been with the school for more than 2 years. No seniority requirement was set for participation in the parent focus group interview (Appendix F). The five-parent focus group interviewees were recruited over the course of 18 weeks of fieldwork, as the researcher developed relationships with parents and school professionals, gained trust, and negotiated a place for the research in the life of the school.

*School professionals***.** The people who work at this school (school professionals) do not remain the same from year to year, as is often true in early childhood educational settings. However, there seemed to be a core professional "family" that has not changed for the past several years. This core of senior staff is important for the continuity of school culture and the presence of Reggio in the work of the school. All school professionals were invited to participate in the study. Adult consent forms were distributed to all school professionals during the first few days of fieldwork. As a group, school professionals all quickly consented to participate in the research to some degree. In past visits to the school and meetings with school professionals the researcher discussed the idea of the research, and a general sense of agreement to participate was implied by most in attendance during those times. The process for recruiting school professionals for interviews and focus group discussions was negotiated between these individuals and the researcher throughout fieldwork. In the early days of fieldwork, 3 out of the 15 school professionals were initially reticent about being audio-recorded and indicated this on their consent forms. When it became clear in the life of the ethnographic fieldwork what limits this would present for the researcher being able to use audio-photo

data generating methods in shared spaces with them, all decided to amend their consent to include audio-recording. As the researcher, I gained trust over time and was able to reassure each of the participants that no data would be included in the dissertation against their wishes. Trust was built over the course of the study, and no protest was made about any data included in the final chapters of the dissertation.

A total of 15 school professionals, a group including teachers, the director, the atelierista, office administrator, and Reggio consultant, agreed to participate in this dissertation research. A total of 58 students participated in the ethnography. There were a total of five parents who consented to participate in a focus group discussion or an interview. The total participant number for the study is 78.

A documentation panel representing the countries of origin of all the school community families, displayed within an area in the school called the plaza, is one way to represent the demographics of the school community which collaborated and provided the context for this research. The plaza is a wide-open entrance space and community room where large and small groups can gather and linger over documentation panels to reflect on the work happening in the school. The southeastern U.S. city in which this school is located is represented by a diverse and multicultural population. This rich diversity influences the school culture which is a strong focus of the ethnography. In the documentation panel, the multicultural school's "internationality" was mapped out for visitors and observers to see (see image below).

Figure 1. Map of cultural heritages.

This map of the cultural heritages of the school community is an artifact that portrays the cultural demographics of this Reggio Emilia-inspired school. It is a shared symbol of the shared identity of the school community, and is prominently displayed in honor of this identity.

By reading this map of school demographics, I could interpret that the school professionals and families identified their cultural heritage as originating from Central America, South America, North America, various countries in Western Europe, and in Eastern Asia as well. The vast internationalities of the people who make up this school community directly relate to the culture of this place. Language is one aspect of school culture that is directly influenced by where community members locate their cultural heritage. Many of the people in this school community are multilingual, which offered a layered richness of linguistic diversity to the narrative of the research.

Instrumentation: Protocols and Tools for Data Generation

"The ultimate ethnographic instrument is a human being, not a tape recorder" (Ridington, 1988, p. 255). In this ethnography, the researcher served as the primary instrument of data generation. In order to design the study in a way that established strong and close ties between the fieldwork experience and the research questions, while remaining open-ended enough to allow for the inevitable chaos and "ethnographic rubbish" (Blommaert & Die, 2010, p. 58) that comes along with any ethnographic fieldwork, I developed various interview protocols and observational guides, a list of physical spaces and events to be documented via audio-recording and still photographic image, and a data summary form for analytic purposes. Each protocol and guide, along with its purpose, is described in this section of Chapter 3.

Observation protocols. In an effort to avoid the pitfall of observing everything (Blommaert & Jie, 2010), I developed two observational protocols to use as fieldwork guides. Throughout each week of fieldwork, I planned to conduct four to eight (45–60 minute) observations of class groups using Observation Protocol 1 (Appendix H). Due to the shifting complexities of the life of a school, this observation schedule was not always achievable. It remained an ever-present goal, but became less crucial as the number of observations began to matter less than the possible close relevance of the learning experience being documented to the research questions, codes, and categories. In the final tally of class group observations, the researcher was able to generate nearly 100 hours of experiences across all times of the day, and in all the many learning spaces and ateliers which are prepared throughout the school as treasure for the children to find and explore.

In addition to class group observations, I observed during four (45–60 minute) on-site professional development experiences throughout the months of fieldwork. In complete contrast to the challenge of generating the proposed amount of class group observations, there were many more opportunities for rich data generation during professional development experiences at this research school site.

Observing class groups. One way I decided to learn about the shared cultural values of this school community and how curriculum and assessment work within this school was to live beside and observe, in action, each class group and the adults who work with them every day. That is the broad scope of observational focus for the ethnography. In order to sharpen focus during observations of class groups in action, I developed Observation Protocol 1 (Appendix H). The protocol clearly identifies the areas of focus for the researcher considered when observing the complex and dynamic lived experience of the children, their teachers, other school professionals who work with them (atelierista), and their families. The areas of observational focus were: the physical and social environment, dialogue, interactions, events, and key concepts that emerge.

There is a space on the observation guide that is designated for descriptive notes, and a separate space for reflective notes. The descriptive notes are an honest and unembellished record of what I saw, heard, and could describe in words about a 45–60 minute period of time in this school setting. The reflective notes section of the protocol served as a physical space set aside for documenting deeper, more analytic thinking about the recorded experience. Soon after the observation sessions ended, I would take time for reflection, journaling, and drafting analytic memos.

The protocol template was replicated and used for note-taking during observations of class groups, and framed the generation of valuable data related to both research questions. When attempting to be particularly unobtrusive, I often needed to record observations on smaller notepad paper. In these cases, I attached these notes to the descriptive section of the protocol, and then proceeded with recording reflective ideas using the protocol sheet.

Observing professional development. Creative organizations tend to value and engage in ongoing professional development experiences (Robinson, 2011). Each week, school professionals meet for several hours after school on Wednesdays. The meeting is called "PD." These informal meetings offered possibilities for discussing issues relevant to the classroom or the school as a whole. They were a time for proposing new ways of strategizing about documentation and projections. Many of the "PD meetings" were focused on a topic for exploration and discussion. Four (45–60 minute) observations of the informal professional development experiences were planned into the design of the study, using Observation Protocol 2 (Appendix I). These observations took place during the first, second, third, and fourth month of fieldwork. Due to the rich insight into the thinking of the faculty that these meetings provided, I decided to attend all professional development meetings, and recorded observations with Observation Protocol 2 (Appendix I) during times that I perceived to relate most closely to the research questions.

The key areas of focus that guided observations during professional development experiences included: physical and social environment, dialogue, interactions, key concepts that emerge. The descriptive notes section in the protocol was used to record

what happened chronologically at the meeting in terms of the key areas. The reflective notes section of the protocol was revisited immediately following the observation session as I sought to interpret meaning from the documented experience. Data generated according to this Observational Protocol related to both research questions.

The idea of professional development is deeply interwoven into the language and thinking of these professionals. It is a self-proclaimed commitment and responsibility to the group and the self to grow personally and professionally though dialogue and enquiry. “PD Meetings” offered a ready and predictable space and time for questions and ideas, as well as problems and struggles, to be shared and worked through collaboratively. The meetings came to be a cherished time in the work; a time to listen and talk with people who care so deeply about the work and the life that they build with young children.

Audio-recording and photography subjects list and summary form. In this ethnographic research, sound representations are combined with visual images in order to add another layer of meaning to the thick description (Geertz, 1973) of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school culture. These sound representations are referenced in this chapter as audiofacts, instead of artifacts, of culture. Each audiofact is paired with 5–15 photographs that serve to add further dimension to the piece of culture and experience that is being captured through this form of data generation and documentation. The criterion for taking these photo images depends on the sounds depicted in the audio-recordings. The images are intended to be complimentary to the purposes and value of the audio-recorded data. The original intention was to generate a range of two to four audio-recordings each week of certain school places and events (Appendix J). Due to limitations of non-consent for audio-recording and photo data generation, this data set was the most difficult to navigate

without breaking trust and violating consent agreements with parents. The places where open-ended environmental sound recordings were generated and photos taken included the “plaza,” the “park,” and select indoor small group experiences in which all children present had consent for photo and audio documentation. As the months of fieldwork went by, relationships of trust were developed, and I was more readily able to take photos and audio-recordings in ever-expanding spaces of the school. Over time, these data generating moments came whenever I could recognize that an experience fruitful for audiofact and photo data was about to begin. The events which were audio-recorded and photographed included student conversations, student invitations, student presentations, play, small group experiences, and transitions.

The Audio-Recording and Photograph Summary Form (Appendix K) was developed in order to guide in the analysis of the audiofact and photo image data. The summary form provides a space to name the audiofact and photo image. The “description of data” section of the summary form was used for the notation of concrete observations of the audio-visual data (e.g., time, place, participants, type of event). The “research connections” section of the protocol was reserved for when I iteratively re-visited the data with an eye toward the research questions as a guide for finding meaning embedded within the sounds and images of the school.

Interview protocols. There is a total of four interview protocols that were developed for the study (Appendices A–D). All interviews lasted approximately 45–60 minutes, and were conducted within the naturalistic setting of the school.

School Professionals. The School Professional Interview Protocol 1 (Appendix A) was conducted with three school professionals (e.g., teacher, director, atelierista)

during the second and fourth month of fieldwork. All three of these interviews were originally proposed to occur during the second month of fieldwork. Scheduling interviews with school professionals proved to be a challenge, and unexpected delays resulted in most of them taking place during the last weeks of fieldwork. The interview questions in this Protocol 1 focus on pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment, their relationships, the purpose of schooling and, each member's role in constructing the educational experience in this Reggio Emilia-inspired school. They were formulated with the intention of generating data which may suggest answers to Research Question 2.

The School Professionals Interview Protocol 2 (Appendix B) was conducted with three school professionals (not necessarily the same school professionals as those who participated in interview 1) during the fourth month of fieldwork. The questions in the school professionals' interview 2 are focused on these participants' interpretations of their own role to play in the development of school culture and in the possibilities for creativity that are made available for students every day. They include inquiries about daily interactions and shared rituals of the school community, and are closely tied to research question one. These are deep questions that could not be easily approached early on in the fieldwork phase of the study when relationships were new and fragile. Waiting until the final month of fieldwork to conduct these interviews allowed for a more open level of communication between the interviewer and the interviewee, as a result of relationships of trust that have had a chance to develop over the previous 4 months of participant observation.

Parents. The Parent Interview Protocol 1 (Appendix C) was used as a guide for an interview with a parent who has been a member of the school community for more than 2 years. This interview was conducted during the fourth month of fieldwork. The interview focused on parent perceptions of how pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment are enacted in the school, and the role of the parent in the overall educational experience as it is found in this Reggio-inspired school community. The questions are closely aligned with research question two, and were created to help gather insight from a parent's point of view that may lead to a deeper understanding of the dynamic interplay of curriculum and assessment in this school.

The Parent Interview Protocol 2 (Appendix D) was developed to address Research Question 1. The questions served to elicit responses that relate to parent's experiences with school as a child, school values, and the idea of a culture of creativity. It was conducted in the fourth month of fieldwork with a parent who has been a member of the school community for one year.

Focus group protocols. A total of three focus group interviews were planned into the design of the research (Appendices E–G). All focus group interviews took place in the naturalistic setting of the school.

***School professionals*.** The School Professionals Focus Group Interview Protocol (Appendix E) was developed in an open-ended style, suggesting possible questions rather than completely formulated ones. This group discussion served to introduce possible patterns and themes which were found within emergent codes and themes, and therefore identified as salient to the work. In this way, the school professionals' focus group discussion served as a form of member checking. The questions were formulated in

response to identified codes and emergent patterns evident in the data thus far in the study. Participants were asked to respond with regard to their perceptions of the accuracy of the researcher's initial interpretations of the data, and to confirm, negate, and/or elaborate on these identified patterns of meaning.

Focus group interviews with school professionals were conducted in fourth and final month of fieldwork. The focus included the voices of nine school professionals, and lasted approximately 60 minutes. The School Professionals focus group discussion was conducted during a weekly professional development meeting.

Parents. The Parent Focus Group Interview Protocol (Appendix F) was developed in order to support the facilitation of a discussion with parents which incorporated ideas that relate to both research questions. Ideas connected to curriculum enactment, definitions of assessment, along with notions school culture and shared values are included in the protocol. A group of five parents participated in this group discussion, which lasted approximately 45-60 minutes, and took place during the fourth month of fieldwork.

Students. In the Student Focus Group Interview Protocol (Appendix G), questions were written which supported the children to think and talk about how learning works, purposes of school, documentation in the classroom, and the special qualities of their own school. These children are 4 or 5 years old, and still developing the ability to participate in group discussions with an externally imposed question-and-answer format. It is the strong image of the child in Reggio philosophy which compelled me to trust in their theories about big ideas. By seeking out a deep conversation with a group of this Reggio Emilia-inspired school's oldest students, I attempted to bring in the child's-eye view on

the research questions about curriculum, assessment, and school culture. The student focus group interview lasted about 15 minutes, and took place during the final month of fieldwork. A talking stick was introduced as a conversational device and used throughout the student focus group discussion to heighten the children's attention toward the speaker in the group. I have had over 15 years of experience in classrooms with 4s and 5s, and have developed an aptitude for facilitating group discussion with young children. This professional skill supported the co-construction (Roulston, 2011) of a conversation with these young children that elicited ideas which related to other data generated over the course of the study and answers to the research questions.

Data Collection Procedures

Creswell (2007) describes data collection in qualitative research as "a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions" (p. 118). In his discussion of data collection in ethnographic research, Creswell (2007) states that "observing and interviewing appear to be the most popular forms of ethnographic data collection (p. 131). In their book *Ethnographic Fieldwork: A Beginner's Guide* (2010), Blommaert and Jie describe possible ethnographic data sources as more expansive and diverse. "Ethnographic fieldwork data are not uniform but widely diverse, ranging from material artifacts and subjective notes to recordings and interviews, and photographs" (Blommaert & Jie, 2010, p. 60). This ethnography included audio-recorded and still image photographs, along with observations and interviews.

Participant observation. Another point of view on ethnographic data collection methods is found in Dobbert's (1982) textbook *Ethnographic Research: Theory and Application for Modern Schools and Societies*. In this text, the author asserts that

"participant observation may be labeled the classical ethnographic method" (Dobbert, 1982, p. 102). Dewalt and Dewalt (2002) concur with the Dobbert text, and identify "participant observation as the foundation method for ethnographic research "(p. 2). Participant observation was the underlying method for all data generation in the study. Engaged in the role of the researcher, I approached ethnographic fieldwork and participant observation as a way of being engaged in the life of the naturalistic environment of the research setting. "The participant observer seeks out opportunities to spend time with and carry out activities with members of communities in which he or she is working"(Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002, p. 4). The hope was that, while gradually becoming more and more a member of the community and culture which serves as context and subject in this work, I would develop relationships of trust and open lines of communication with participants, and that rich and insightful data could be generated in the form of conversation and information sharing about interpretations of the lived experience at this Reggio Emilia-inspired school.

There is a continuum of participant observation from "complete observer" to "participant observer" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). "During the first few days of participant observation…the researcher often remains somewhat detached, waiting to be looked over and, hopefully, accepted" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, pp. 91–92). As the initial weeks and months of fieldwork went by, I grew less foreign to the children and the adults in the school community. This transition in identity is a key aspect of the ethnographer's job as participant observer.

In this study, the researcher reflected upon and documented the transition in identity from outsider toward insider through journaling. Journaling provided a time and

space for personal reflections, observational comments, and the beginnings of analytic memos written at various times throughout the day, as well as at the end of each day in the field. Keeping this researcher's journal close at all times allowed me to map my personal journey as a novice ethnographer, and the gradual shift toward "new frames, making connections between earlier and current events, finding our way in the local order of things" (Blommaert & Jie, 2010, p. 37).

Remaining in the field for extended periods of time supports a social and emotional transition toward trust and mutual respect between participants and the ethnographer. Spending 3 to 4 days per week over a 4 ½ month period in the field (455 hours total) supported my being able to belong to some degree to the school community and the culture of this educational setting.

Multiple sources of data. The ethnographer generated data in the form observational field notes, interview and focus group transcripts, and audio-recordings paired with photographs. The audio-recordings paired with photos are a form of documentation that offer an honest representation of the culture and experience of this Reggio Emilia-inspired school. The generation, gathering up, and revisiting of these cultural artifacts (sound and image) can be seen as a form of pedagogical documentation which may compliment the work that the teachers and children already do there. The totality of generated data, including observational field notes, transcribed interview and focus group dialogue, and audio-recordings with paired photo images, serves to capture and record "transient examples of shaped behavior" (Geertz, 1973, p. 10) from varying points of reference. From these multiple points of view, I was able to co-construct a detailed description of life in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, which may lead to

answers to the overarching research questions about pedagogical relationships and a culture of creativity in schools. Triangulation of the various data sets may be achieved when these multiple perspectives come together to corroborate and support findings and conclusions of the study (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999).

Observations. The study was designed to use observations as the primary method of collecting data. Several months of observation supported the development of a deeper understanding of the relationship between emergent curriculum and pedagogical documentation as they are evidenced in this school community, and how a culture of creativity shapes and nurtures that relationship. “Ethnographers commonly draw their data from direct observations in fieldwork” (Thomas, 1993, p.10). Each week in the field, I worked toward a goal of observing two times with each of the four class groups for a period of 45–60 minutes. As a result of this rigorous observation schedule, I was able to generate a total of 91 hours of class group observational data during 4 ½ months of fieldwork. Class group observations consist of detailed descriptions of school experiences which address issues of pedagogical relationships, as well as school culture and creativity. Therefore, this data can be described as relating to both research questions. In order to plan for a systematic way of commencing and proceeding with observational data generation across all of the four class groups evenly, I implemented a flexible rotating schedule of class observations. To get started, the children’s chronological age grouping determined the order of observations. In the earliest days of fieldwork, I began observations in the JrK classroom, allowing younger students within the broader school community to observe her for a brief time before entering into their classroom learning spaces to generate data. After a short span of weeks, I was be better able to know the

rhythms of the school, and had begun to form relationships which allowed for negotiation with school professionals about optimal places and times for weekly observations. At this point in the fieldwork, the order of the observational rotation changed. Although it was important to maintain a balance of amount with regard to observations per class group, the decision making eye of the researcher moved quickly toward richness and relevance of learning experience when selecting which class group to observe and when.

There are four classrooms in the school. These rooms are not the only places where curricular construction and pedagogical documentation occur. The professionals at this school have a more fluid way of thinking about learning spaces. The entire school is considered an atelier space, which is different from many Reggio Emilia-inspired schools. Many curricular projects spill out into the plaza or the park. Unexpected gems of the lived curriculum can occur in places outside of the classroom walls. Keeping this in mind, I made certain ongoing projections for where and when observations would occur. It is in the learning spaces throughout the school that the interactions of teachers and children could reveal important clues about the relationship between curriculum and assessment as these processes are enacted. Being in the right place at the right time, and ready to record and document, was an important goal when planning for observations generation.

In addition to observations of teachers and children at work, I observed for 45–60 minute during four staff development meetings; PD meeting. These meetings served as informal, ongoing, site-based professional development. Topics for dialogue at weekly PD meetings ranged widely, and included struggles and victories with generating and making public pedagogical documentation, projected thinking about future time spans of

the school year, and family collaboration. The data generated at these meetings related to both research questions because it offered the possibility of deep understanding to the researcher about such issues as how curriculum is planned away from the experiences with children, how documentation works as a curricular tool for assessment, and how ideas connected with creativity fits in.

Audio-recording sessions with visual images. Moving beyond the traditional textual representations of observation fieldnotes and interview and focus group transcripts, this study includes a data set that is comprised of audio-recordings of school life. Building on the work of Makagon and Neumann (2009), I recorded "soundscapes" (p. 27) of physical spaces and events which frequently occurred at the school, and counted these recordings as raw ethnographic data. Within the current study these recordings will be defined as cultural audiofacts. These audio traces of culture are coupled with still photograph images that are meant to compliment and balance the sounds of school culture in a way that welcomes multiple interpretations, represents layers of meaning, and provokes pedagogical dialogue. "The audio document is both a mnemonic of our experience and the source of a new and different experience when we textualize it within the context of a different reading" (Ridington, 1988, p. 255).

"Listening more closely to the sounds in public and private spaces can produce richer and more complex engagements with, and representation of, the people and places studied" (Makagon & Neumann, 2009, p. 28). Ridington (1988) writes about listening to audio-recordings of the Dunne-za tribe of people, indigenous to northeastern British Columbia, as a means of understanding culture that has value beyond that of traditional methods of textual data generation.

> Listening to audio documents generates an experience that is different from the experience created by reading words written on a page. The audio piece carries information in its timbre and ambience. It is meaningful beyond the words it may contain. (Ridington, 1988, p. 256)

This study of culture offers depictions of the lived experience of the school honestly and emergently by presenting sound recordings, and revisiting them with an eye to the research questions for interpretation.

Photo images were generated that related to the aural representations of school life. Fasoli (2003) writes about the benefits and possible pitfalls of using photographic images as data sources. “Photographs are capable of recording a range of non-verbal dimensions of a situation” (Fasoli, 2003, p. 37). Fasoli (2003) and Prosser (1998) warn about the subjective nature of the photograph, and the decisions made by the researcher to take capture certain images and not others. Researchers using photographs as data sources need to realize that these images are “reflections of the photographer’s point of view, biases, and knowledge, or lack of knowledge” (Prosser, 1998, p. 29). By pairing images with related audio-recordings, the researcher in this study attempted to avoid a partial telling of the story of the life of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the southeastern United States.

During each week in the field, I set out to generate two to four audio-recordings of places and/or events in the school (Appendix J). Initially, I rotated the places and events for generating this data systematically, one after another as they appear on the list (Appendix J). After the first weeks of fieldwork, the order of the places and events for this rotation of data generation changed as I became more in-tune with the regular rhythms, and important sounds and sights of the school culture. By the end of the 4 ½

months of fieldwork, 56 audio-recordings (audiofacts) were generated, and each of these audio documents were complimented by 15 photo images. As a result, 840 photo images were generated throughout the fieldwork stage of the current study. By incorporating textual, audio-recorded, and visual data into the research design, multiple types of ethnographic observational methods were used to examine the ways that the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment are enacted within a culture of a school.

There were many reasons for the exclusion of certain examples of this type of raw data. The participants' rights to confidentiality emerged as an ongoing issue which caused certain audio-clips to be excluded. Even though participants had given consent to be audio-recorded, some audio-documents clearly and repeatedly identified the child by their true names (and not their pseudonyms). In these cases where a child's true name was unmistakably present, the data were excluded from the study, but included in the presentation to the families and the school in the afterward of the dissertation. The next layer of winnowing out the dross for this type of data occurred in the final stages of analysis, when a strong connection to the research questions was absolutely essential for being selected to be presented in the final chapters of the study. By the end of the study, out of the dozens of audio clips and the hundreds of photos generated over the course of 4 ½ months, the documentation funneled down to the five vignettes which were selected as being highly related to the research questions and, therefore, relevant to the dissertation. Future mining of the "audiofact" and photo data, when time is more of "a friend" (PD Observation at Professional Conference), will undoubtedly reveal more pertinent data. Within the time-frame of the study, I chose to include these five vignettes due to their thick and rich descriptive quality (Geertz, 1973), as well as their close relatedness to

research questions and findings. They are the sounds and sights of a school culture, being offered as an open window to an audience who may never have been there. It is an attempt to represent and communicate a culture of creativity through pedagogical documentation.

There were shifts in decision making about the selection of editing software explored for the synthesis of sound and image during the study. The original software proposed for this aspect of the work was ProTools, as it was suggested by Makagon and Neumann in *Recording Culture: Audio Documentary and the Ethnographic Experience* (2009). This software became cumbersome to the work almost immediately, due to its many technical requirement details and an overall high demand for prior knowledge from the user. More months of exploration with the benefit of multiple perspectives and approaches to editing this data is necessary for the further development of this type of documentation. The technical goals in the editing process were to synthesize the sound with the image in "real time" ways, so that the images and the sounds matched as closely as possible (if not perfectly in sync). This proved to be extremely challenging, and further exploration of movie-making software (e.g., Windows Live Movie Maker and iMovie) was necessary for the creation of the vignettes, which rarely reach a perfect synchronicity. Thus, the technical goals remain while the study results must be presented as they exist at this time.

Interviews. "The research interview has long been an important method of data generation used by researchers to elicit descriptions from participants concerning their experiences, perspectives, beliefs, and opinions" (Roulston, 2011, p. 77). A total of 8 interviews were conducted in order to "gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words

so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 103). The "piece" that the current research aims to explore, and interpret meaning from, is the cross-section between early childhood curriculum and assessment as it is lived within a culture of creativity. Interviews constitute a "major method of gathering ethnographic data" (Prus, 1996, p.20). Roulston (2010, 2011) uses a constructionist conceptualization of qualitative interviews. As the researcher in this study, I adopted this stance toward interview data, and approached each interview as a collaborative construction of genuine dialogue. "From this perspective, interview data generated within the social setting of the research interview exemplifies but one cultural event within the life world of the participant" (Roulston, 2011, p. 80).

There are two sets of three school professionals interviews in the study, each set with a different focus toward the research questions. An initial series of three interviews with school professionals (Appendix A) were conducted in the second and fourth month of fieldwork. This interview protocol focused on issues of curriculum and assessment, and was related to Research Question 2. Another round of three school professional interviews (Appendix B) was conducted in the fourth month of fieldwork. The ideas addressed in this interview pertained to school culture and creativity, and are related to research question one.

There were two interviews conducted with parents, one of whom had been with the school community for more than 2 years. Having at least this amount of experience with the culture and philosophy supported the parent interviewee to speak with a certain depth of knowledge of the Reggio Emilia approach. The initial parent interview (Appendix C) relates to curriculum and assessment (Research Question 1). The second

parent interview focused on school culture and creativity (Appendix D), and relates closely to research question two. The final parent interview was conducted in the fourth month of the study.

All interviews, each lasting approximately 45–60 minutes, were conducted in order to better understand the participant's perspectives and interpretations of the characteristics of their own school culture, and how curriculum and assessment occur each day. They were conducted in the naturalistic setting of the school.

Focus groups. A total of three focus group interviews were planned into the design of the research. All took place in the naturalistic setting of the school, at times and in places that were been negotiated between the researcher and school professionals. "Focus group interviews permit ethnographers to interview more than one person at a time" (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999, p. xv). The benefits of these group discussions for the research include an active approach to valuing multiple perspectives, and the genuine co-construction of dialogue around ideas directly relating to the research questions that frame this study.

A single focus group discussion (Appendix G) was facilitated with children from the JrK class that were recruited as a result of conversations and agreements between the the ethnographer, the children, school professionals, and parents. It is important within any study of Reggio Emilia-inspired practice to include the voices and theories of the children about issues which relate to the research questions that frame the work. The strong image of the child in Reggio, along with the declaration of the child as a central protagonist in the work of the school (Malaguzzi, 1998), demands the representation of the child's perspectives. The student focus group was conducted late in the study (the last

week of school) which allowed the children to have time to get to know and trust the researcher. The discussion made visible how learning and creativity work according to the young learner. The student focus group interview lasted approximately 15 minutes.

A parent focus group interview (Appendix F) was conducted in the fourth month of fieldwork with five parent participants that have been recruited with the advice and input of school professionals. Parent focus group discussions can inform the research about how parents perceive their role in their child's school experience, and how the culture of the school is transmitted outward from the school site, to parents and the local community. This focus group interview lasted 45 minutes.

A school professional's focus group interview (Appendix E) was conducted during the fourth month of fieldwork with 10 school professionals. This group discussion was intended to be used as a means of member checking with participants about interpretations of data generated thus far in the study. Open-ended questions and responses to initial interpretations of the data served as a guide for this discussion. Beyond member checking, this school professional focus group discussion helped to generate data which revealed the way the school professionals frame and understand their own experience. It offered validation of the integration of authentic language when describing the life of the school. This interview lasted one full hour.

All focus group interviews relate to both research questions. Through these focus group conversations, I was able to inquire directly and deeply into how the shared culture of the school is defined, as well as how curriculum and assessment processes are experienced.

A scheduled sequence of participant observation and data generation, as it was lived by the researcher during fieldwork can be found in Appendix U.

Study Time Line

This ethnographic study was conducted over the course of approximately 7 months. The first 4 ½ months were spent in participant observation, data generation, and ongoing data analysis (Table 1). The remaining time was spent in continued inductive analysis, writing up, and presenting and defending the research to a dissertation committee at Florida Atlantic University.

Data Analysis Procedures

Through an ongoing process of iterative examination and analysis of the data generated in the current ethnography, I attempted to locate units of meaning within the data that were be sorted, clustered, and revisited for the purposes of answering the research questions. Raw data was revisited analytically soon after it was generated in an attempt to keep the observed experience fresh in my mind (Miles & Huberman, 1994). All data sets including observational fieldnotes, transcripts, and audiofacts with photos, were closely scrutinized and lived with, and interpreted meanings were identified using an open-ended and iterative process of qualitative data analysis (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). This analysis took place throughout the fieldwork and post-fieldwork phases of the study.

Codes and themes. "Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56). Data generated in the field was analyzed without an *a priori* list of codes to steer the coding process. This system of open coding was used during the initial analysis

of data as a way to remain open to all possible meanings embedded in the data. It is the first layer of an "eclectic coding" (Saldana, 2013, p. 59) approach that was selected as I began to live with the data in ways open to unforeseen meaning. The creation of codes was a process of re-visitation and analysis which is closely parallel and naturally connected to the shared way of thinking in Reggio philosophy. "In creating codes, the fieldworker is engaged in an analytic process; she seeks to move beyond the particular event or situation in the fieldnotes to capture some more general theoretical dimension or issue" (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 150).

As the ethnographer and primary instrument of analysis, I engaged in the work of manual coding and began to underscore words, phrases, elements of the environment and the experience that were recognizable in the data as having a possible connection to a more general issue or theoretical notion. These underscored pieces of the data were assigned to a label or code. Codes were written in the margins of the fieldnotes, memos, transcripts, and document summary forms during continual review and analysis. "In such line-by-line coding, the ethnographer entertains all analytic possibilities; he attempts to capture as many ideas and themes as time allows but always stays close to what has been written down in the fieldnote" (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 151).

A growing list of codes was created and mapped in ""iterations" of analysis" (Saldana, 2013, p. 194) during this ongoing data analysis (Appendices Q–T). An example of a code that commonly emerged within the raw data generated during a classroom observation in the study was "watchful child," which would be marked in the margins as "WC." A code for "Playful Teacher" (PT) is also found in the field notes and other generated data. These slight nuances and coded bits of meaning had resulting influence

on curricular projections and the culture of the school, therefore needed to be mined for possible connections and articulations of study findings and answers to two research questions. My own perceptions of the meaning embedded in the lived curriculum and shared culture are relevant to the understanding of how people foster a culture of creativity in this setting, and so these phrases were deemed to be salient to the work, and were categorized with the phrases "dispositions and actions of adults" (D&A-A) and "dispositions and actions of children" (D&A-C). These larger categories of meaning in the data were then lumped together to create a theme in the study and became the first study finding: *"The Protagonists."* Linking the themes with the research questions is an effort to offer up answers which may further thinking and working toward the cultivation of a school culture where creativity is a way of life.

By relating what is observed and suggested (by way of codes, categories, and themes) in the fieldnotes, observational comments, transcripts, audiofacts, and photographs to the research questions, I will attempt to identify a myriad of salient patterns or clusters of meaning found in the data which may relate closely to the framing questions of this ethnography. This "constant comparative" method (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) of repeatedly relating what is found in the data to the research questions was used to analyze the data as initial code lists were developed, and afterward during secondary phases of analysis. Even though this method of ongoing analysis is generally associated with grounded theory research designs, the process of revisiting the data and looking at it through the lens of comparison throughout data analysis supported me in my ability to understand more clearly what patterns of meaning were embedded within the data, and identify connections to the questions asked by the researcher in the ethnography.

Interpretations of these patterns and how they related to the research questions led to the development of study findings, and conclusions.

Memoing "Ongoing reflection and analysis, even as the fieldworker continues to observe in the field and to actively write fieldnotes, is crucial for ethnographic research" (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 105). Analytic memos served to document my own interpretations of fieldnotes, observational comments, and lessons learned about the lived experience and culture of the Reggio Emilia-inspired school. At the end of each day in the field, reflective memo writing allowed me to create a trail of thinking about the work that was being done. These subjective reflections about the meaning of the data being generated served to "provide breakthroughs to new ways of thinking about prior assumptions" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 123). Writing memos while keeping in rhythm with the generation of data supported me in my efforts to identify biases and assumptions within my own perspective as the research progressed.

Member checking and peer review. Voluntary member checking of transcripts and field note data was conducted throughout various times during the study in an attempt to honor multiple perspectives of interpretation, and strengthen the validity of this qualitative research (Creswell, 2007). During negotiated times of convenience to the faculty, these study participants (i.e., teachers, atelierista, school director, parents) were invited to review transcripts, field notes, observations, and audiofact and photo image data to which they had contributed personally. To address issues of the multiple languages spoken at the research site, translation sessions occurred at the end of the fieldwork phase of the study with a colleague from Florida Atlantic University. In addition to member checking with study participants, peer review and debriefing was

incorporated periodically with select dissertation committee members, professors at Florida Atlantic University, and/or doctoral colleagues in order to provide an "external check of the research process" (Creswell, 2007, p. 208).

Pilot Project

An informal pilot project, using research questions that focused on better understanding the broad pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment as they are defined and experienced within a Reggio Emilia-inspired approach to early childhood education, was planned and conducted by the researcher in the current study as part of an advanced qualitative research course at Florida Atlantic University. Tentative results from this field project suggested two ideas which were considered in the design and implementation of this ethnography:

1. The ways that curriculum and assessment are enacted within this Reggio Emilia-inspired school are determined by a set of shared values and beliefs, or a school culture

2. More time would be needed to better understand the culture of a Reggio-inspired school, and how that culture fosters the rich and complex relationship between curriculum and assessment that is evidenced in this philosophy of early childhood education.

The need for a long-term study of how the shared values and beliefs determine the ways in which curriculum and assessment are lived out in the Reggio Emilia-inspired school would suggest that future research be framed as a study of school culture. It was my assertion that the culture of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school could authentically be described as a "culture of creativity," The above findings which resulted from the

informal pilot project conducted at the Reggio Emilia-inspired school which was selected for this study, led to a decision to conduct this ethnographic study.

Study Limitations

A common primary language spoken by children, parents, and educators at the Reggio Emilia-inspired school which served as the research site for this study is Spanish. English is spoken and taught throughout the school day at the research site. And, all of the school professionals at the school speak fluent English. However, the fact that the researcher is not fluent in Spanish is a limitation of this study.

An in-depth understanding of a lived experience depends greatly on the observer's ability to comprehend what is being communicated by study participants in their daily interactions. Study participants were asked to speak English during interviews and while directly communicating with the researcher. Not being able to understand some of the informal conversation going on in this school setting resulted in a limitation of my ability to analyze and interpret a portion of spoken interactions at the research site. In an attempt to address this limitation, I engaged in a method of data generation that incorporated sound recordings of the school events and environments. These "soundscape" (Makagon & Neuman, 2009, p. 27) audio-recordings will serve to capture audiofacts (rather than artifacts) which can authentically and honestly represent evidence of the culture and life of the school. To manage the problems arising from any spoken language barrier, I hired a fluent Spanish-speaking colleague for translation sessions of the interview and focus group transcripts which contained the Spanish language.

Ideally, the study would have been set in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school which has a veteran staff of professionals who have long-standing relationships, and a strong

understanding of the philosophies and methods of this approach. However, there exists a high rate of teacher and teacher assistant turnover in private early childhood settings in general. This trend may have resulted in a limitation to the study. Fortunately for this study, there were no new faculty members entering this same school year. This resulted in a faculty who knew each other and knew about the Reggio Emilia approach to a level of some sophistication. Several of the teachers had been there for 10+ years, and knew the both the philosophy and each other very well.

Geographic accessibility was a deciding factor in which Reggio Emilia-inspired school site was selected for the current ethnography, resulting in a study limitation. There were a limited number of Reggio-inspired schools that were within a reasonable driving distance to the researcher for fieldwork, which occurred 3 to 4 days a week during the months of January through June of the 2012–2013 school year. Despite these study limitations, as the researcher, I remain strongly confident that the high level of authenticity of the research site as a Reggio Emilia-inspired school offered the possibility for the generation of data that supported the articulation of meaningful answers to the research questions.

In ethnography, there are problems that arise from subjectivity and the multiple layers of interpretation that exist in any retelling of experience (Geertz, 1973; Prus, 1996). Due to the ever-presence of subjectivity in the current research, there is always a danger of the ethnographer paying too little attention to “members’ meanings” (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 109). To deal with this limitation, member checking was done with school professionals and other participants periodically throughout the study in order to strengthen the validity of the data. In addition to individual participant member checking

of transcripts of interviews and focus group transcripts, a researcher's notebook with approved Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocols, copies of field notes and interview transcripts was readily accessible and available for participants to review. Participants were invited to respond with their own interpretations of the raw data generated during the observations, interviews, and focus groups in which they participated. Multiple perspectives are strongly valued. The findings of this ethnographic study will not be generalized to other settings.

Delimitations

As the researcher, I was the primary data generation and analytic instrument in this ethnography. Data collection and generation were done with the awareness of the subjectivity and bias that the researcher brings to the work. The resulting ideas and lessons to be learned from this ethnography will be found within the complex situation of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school setting, in which I sought membership in order to gain trust and true representation of a way of life.

Chapter 4

Ethnographic Findings: The Protagonists

Navigating the Findings Chapters

It is necessary at this point to provide a roadmap to the reader of how to navigate through the next two important chapters in the dissertation. The purpose of these chapters is to synthesize and articulate what emerged in the data as relevant to the research questions:

1. How is a culture of creativity is fostered within a Reggio Emilia-inspired school?
2. In a culture of creativity, what characterizes the relationship between curriculum and assessment?

This ethnography yielded massive quantities of qualitative data in the form of observational notes from class group experiences as well as observations of professional development, individual interviews and focus group transcripts, and audio-photo documentation of the life of the school. Only those data relating to the research questions were selected to be included here in these findings chapters of this ethnographic dissertation. The majority of dissertations contain five chapters. This dissertation is different in the amount and type of qualitative data generated, and will contain six chapters.

This chapter begins with a general description of my work, as an ethnographer, to live within a school culture of creativity, and find evidence there of answers to the research questions. The sections which follow this introduction to the ethnographic perspective of the study, and make up the remainder of the next two chapters, are organized according to the four themes that were found to be supported by emergent codes and categories in the data. The themes are: *The "Protagonists," The "Daily Life," Research and Analysis,* and *Languages of Expression*. Embedded within those themes are the actual codes and categories that were grouped together manually through several iterations of the analysis phase of the study (Appendices Q–T). Chapter 4 will focus on the theme of *The Protagonists,* whereas Chapter 5 will contain ideas relating to The *"Daily Life," Research and Analysis,* and *Languages of Expression*.

Within both findings chapters, I have articulated how the codes and categories are related to one another, how they relate to the overarching theme in which they are embedded, and how they serve to offer up answers to the questions framing the ethnography. Throughout, I have highlighted the study questions, re-stated them, and provided a clear connection for the reader between the data that I am including as relevant and what I assert those data suggest in terms of answers to the driving questions of the work. Having only two questions created an opportunity to address both in somewhat adjacent (rather than absolutely separate) ways throughout the findings chapters. Along with this opportunity came the challenge of writing concisely organized dissertation findings chapters which clearly outline and answer the study questions thoroughly. Chapter 5 ends with a summary section, which is an attempt to consolidate the most salient findings and plausible answers to the research questions.

Living Within a Culture of Creativity

Setting out to find answers about how creativity is found and fostered within a school culture was the task at hand for the ethnographer in this research. Being that ethnographer, a strong intention and desire to have a more deep understanding of how pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment co-relate within this school culture accompanied me on my journey. Years leading up to the study had given me the opportunity to choose the place, and over that time a strong sense of trust grew. From the first day of fieldwork, I truly believed in this unique place as being the perfect context for the work ahead. The work ahead was filled with days, weeks, and months of living within the culture of a Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the United States.

The name of the school, for the purposes of this ethnography, is Halamoni School. The word “halamoni” can be translated from the Hawaiian language to mean “harmony.” For reasons which will hopefully become vividly clear to the reader in these final chapters, it is a keenly appropriate name for the school which serves as the site of research in this study. The specific school culture that is fostered at Halamoni is one that is marked by creativity, and is a self-proclaimed “culture of creativity”. It was my job in this study to become a member of that presumed culture of creativity, and to delve into its’ depths to find possible treasure there. It was a cache of “new knowledge” (Interview with Maeve, director and atelierista) that I hoped to discover, which would offer answers to driving questions in the work that I needed to find.

To understand how a culture of creativity is fostered within this Reggio Emilia-inspired school, nearly 100 hours of written observations were generated about the collective and ongoing work of the class groups, teachers, and atelieristas there. Another

form of observational data, which was developed in the style of pedagogical documentation, incorporates the sounds and images of the live moments of this school culture. Individual interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with children, school professionals, and parents to give the ethnographer a chance to ask directly about ideas relevant to the study purpose which may not be found as readily in the observational data.

An eclectic approach to multiple phases of open coding was used by the ethnographer (Saldana, 2013). As the months of fieldwork grew, I lived within the data in increasing layers of complexity as it was generated each day. All five of the levels of headings in the *Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.) were used in select sections of the dissertation findings. This, in and of itself, implies a strong sense of depth to the explorations of this ethnography (and these participants). These people are deep thinkers, children and adults alike. The researcher would often comment to herself and others throughout the fieldwork phase of the study that this place was like "the deep end of the pool." The necessity for all five APA heading levels to tell the story of the protagonists' shared character traits is evidence of the depth that she was describing.

As the ethnographer in this research, I worked intentionally within a reflective stance of openness to what meaning could be found in the words on the page, as well as the sounds and images on the screen, which related to the study questions. The questions which I kept with me throughout the generation and analysis of data were:

1. How is a culture of creativity fostered within a Reggio Emilia-inspired school?

2. In a culture of creativity, what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment?

Through a repeated returning to the data with iterations of code lists in hand, I grouped the codes into categories, sub-categories, and then lastly into themes. The progression of analytic thinking about the codes and categories is documented in Appendices Q–T. The overall coding-to-theming process began with a long unordered list of codes found in Appendix Q, and evolving through clusters of categorization in Appendices R and S; the final resulting themes that were formulated appear in Appendix T. There were many hours of cognitive dissonance during the grouping and re-grouping of the codes and categories. This creative confusion often served as a catalyst for me to develop a change in perspective and thinking about the data as a whole, and what they might reveal about answers to research questions. Throughout the analysis of all data (observations, interviews, focus groups, and audio-photo documentation), relationships between and among codes and categories were drawn out and considered within the broader frame of the research questions of the study. This analytic process culminated in a final synthesis of ideas articulated as findings in this and the next chapter of the dissertation.

A total of four themes were identified in this study which can serve as structural pillars in the work and represent four major findings of the study. These pillars offer support to the researcher and the reader by way of suggesting answers to the two driving questions of the study which are

1. How is a culture of creativity fostered within a Reggio Emilia-inspired school?

2. In a culture of creativity, what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment?

The themes include: *The "Protagonists", The "Daily Life," Research and Analysis*, and *Languages of Expression*. The themes that are presented to the reader in quotes are those that were identified in the data as *in vivo* codes; the actual and commonly spoken words that the participants use to name the phenomenon or idea being described.

The first theme, *The Protagonists*, focuses on the special contribution of all of the people who belong to this Reggio Emilia-inspired school community and culture of creativity. It represents a study finding because it is within the common character traits of these people that a way to foster a culture of creativity can most readily be found.

The "Protagonists". The way that culture is nurtured and built is always related to the people who live within it. The culture of creativity which is found at Halamoni School is fostered by the unique beliefs and efforts of all of *the protagonists* within the shared experience. Therefore, answers to the first research question are offered by the commonly found character traits of *the protagonists*, which are identified by the researcher by the categories, sub-categories, and codes that are included within this theme of the study. The term protagonist, used in connection with educational experience, is one that was born in the dialogue of Reggio philosophy. The members of this school community understand that the child has the right to be the decider, the choice-maker, and the initiator; *the protagonist*. They also understand that teachers and artists, as well as researchers, have the right to be protagonists in their own learning as well. Within the Reggio Emilia-inspired outlook, parents are equally valuable to the co-constructive process of building a creative school (Cochrane & Cockett, 2007). In this study, I

recognized that many of the *dispositions and acts of the child and adult* are overlapping. For example, almost all of the codes which are found within the stance of *creating* are exactly the same for the child as the teacher. This striking similarity may lend strength to the assertion that there exists a common stance toward creativity in schools, as well as the suggested answers to the first research question of how a culture of creativity is fostered with a Reggio Emilia-inspired school.

It is within *the dispositions and actions* of the *protagonists* who create the way of life here that the answers to the first research question about how it is fostered can be found. The category *dispositions and actions of children* is supported by a deep foundation of three sub-categories with varying numbers of codes embedded within each sub-category.

***Dispositions and actions of children*.** The ways of approaching and thinking about learning, as well as common trends in the behaviors and acts of the children who attend Halamoni School emerged immediately in the codes frequently identified within the observations of class group experiences. Children make up the majority of the people in a school, so it follows that their character traits have a strong influence on the school culture. In Reggio, the child always comes first, and the image of the child is strong and creatively intuitive. It was with the intention to follow along this way of thinking that I decided to write about the *dispositions and actions of the children* at Halamoni as the first way to answer questions about how to foster a culture of creativity in school.

The following sub-categories are *watchful child*, *playful child*, and *creating child*. They relate directly to the first research question of how to foster a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school. It is largely within the commonalities and solidarities of

the children (and adults) who live within the culture that answers to how to develop and sustain such a school culture are found. These sub-categories also serve as a common bridge to the category *dispositions and actions of adults*, which contain mirrored descriptors; *watchful teacher*, *playful teacher*, and *creating teacher*. Together the shared attitudes and behaviors of *the protagonists* form a core stance toward the educational experience; a stance of openness.

The sub-categories presented in the following paragraphs pertain to the open stance that is taken by the children at Halamoni; they are open to *watch* (and see), open to *play*, and open to *create*. Within these shared stances of openness there can be found the key to understanding how the children and adults at this Reggio Emilia-inspired school foster a culture of creativity together, and the answers to the first research question.

Watchful child. There is a myth that is pervasive in matters of early childhood education that that the young child has a limited capability to be attentive and watchful in a focused way for more than a short length of time. This is evidenced in the way that many educational experiences are framed as 15-minute activities to match adult expectations of the limited ability of the child to be engaged in a focused, or *watchful*, manner. At Halamoni School, the strong image of the child that is the core value of the Reggio Emilia philosophy of early childhood education enables the adults to have more trust in the child's innate richness and strength. Open-ended educational experiences and long-term projects that happen regularly at Halamoni are a result of this pedagogical belief in the young child as capable, and not lacking in the ability to focus attention for more than 15 minutes. This belief fosters the culture of creativity that is found at Halamoni School.

Observations of the children who attend Halamoni School revealed that they took on a *watchful* stance toward the learning environment and the many explorations that were actively and immediately ongoing, as well as toward the new possibilities that lay ahead in the learning of the group. The sub-category *watchful child* is supported by four codes which emerged in the data repeatedly throughout the ethnography. These codes are: *noticing, hearing messages, "ready" or not?* and *keeping it going*. The watchfulness that is an example of the category *dispositions and actions of the child*, is being suggested as an attitude which fosters a culture of creativity in this school and, therefore, provides an answer to the first research question.

Noticing. The result of being *watchful*, is to notice what is happening in the learning environment. Children at Halamoni were observed to notice the behaviors of the adults, and join in the experience in response. This is illustrated in the following observation of the class of the 1s and 2s.

> Talia (teacher) pretends to be sleeping. This has a calming effect on the children.
> Grace notices and exclaims to Evangeline, another teacher in this class, "Evangeline! Talia is here (pointing to her). She is quiet."
> John sees Talia and says, "She is sleeping"
> Several children encourage Talia to "wake up"
>
> Talia responds and wakes gradually and dramatically, crawling slowly toward the children, who have spread out from the carpet area once they noticed Talia was awake.
>
> Grace notices Talia's attitude of play and screams happily. It is a high-pitched scream of pretend alarm to the other children, warning them that Talia's character is coming to get them. There is pointing and screaming from other children, responding to Grace. Stefan notices that Grace is starting a favorite game of theirs and begins to pretend to run away, joining in the happy squeals of exhilaration from the chase.

Noticing that Talia was arising from her slumber and beginning to engage in a chase game, the children quickly are engaged in decisions about what should happen next. This example of *noticing* illustrates a stance of openness to engage and co-construct what will happen next. It illustrates a *disposition and action of a child* who can foster a culture of creativity in school through a *watchful*, noticing approach. In this way it helps the researcher to portray how *the protagonists* themselves are who to look toward for answers for the first research question of how to foster a school culture of creativity.

This class group observation also addresses research question two and reveals what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment. In this moment of the life of the school, the reader can see how the interplay of the *watchful child* and the *playful teacher* is a driving force in the co-construction of curriculum. In this way, the child notices and assesses the value of what the teacher is offering to the class and then decides to move the experience (the curriculum) in different directions. Many times, it begins with a *watchful* act of *noticing*.

Hearing messages. Another way that the children at Halamoni School are *watchful* can be observed when they are *hearing messages* sent by adults and other children in the learning environment. *Hearing messages* is a code that emerged in the class group data throughout the fieldwork phase of the research. It is a way that the child shows that he is deeply connected to the experience. It is a way that the child shows that he is listening to the *alive*-ness of the culture of creativity which exists at Halamoni School, and is therefore connected to the first research question of how that school culture is fostered. In the same way as *noticing*, it leads the child to engage in decisions of next steps in the curricular path of the group. For this reason, it is also relevant to the

second research question of what characterizes the relationship between curriculum and assessment. *Hearing messages* is a way that children at Halamoni can assess the value of the message and decide what their next action will be (curriculum).

"Ready" or not? The curricular decisions that the children at Halamoni make as a result of being *watchful* are often a signal of their readiness to engage in an idea or exploration, or respond to the invitations and messages that they *notice* and *hear*. The code *"ready"or not?* that is embedded within the sub-category of the *watchful child* exemplifies the way that the child thinks meta-cognitively within the act of self-assessment. Class group observations would suggest that children at Halamoni applied no negative connotation to not knowing the answer to a question. It was a common thing for a child to respond to an adult by saying, "I don't know." Teachers do not react with praise for correct answers, but simply listen, document, and ask further questions of the group. The self-reflective decision about how to answer questions (about knowing) is a meta-cognitive decision made by the child in response to a process of self-assessment.

The child's interpretation of what they are *ready* to say and do is an example of this code. It was observed in the way that children at Halamoni do not answer all teacher questions, or respond to all adult invitations by deciding to become engaged. Often in brief moments found within the class group observations generated for this study, the children at Halamoni would simply not respond to an adult question. The children also decided when they were *ready* to engage with me, the researcher. Some children were very interested in my work and presence at the school, while others were less open to my being a part of the community. Many took months to interact with me, and some few decided not to engage her at all. One child named Nathaniel, or Nate would prove to be a

challenging gatekeeper to the school community for my presence as the researcher. The following observation documents the traces of experience that serve to illustrate the code *"ready" or not* that is found emergent in the data. Clearly, at this stage in the ethnography, Nate was not ready to accept me as a member of the school culture of creativity at Halamoni.

> Valentina is in the classroom doorway, ready to welcome everyone inside for assembly. The children all gather on the porch and stand together with their backs against the glass doors.
>
> As I enter the classroom after all of the rest of the children, Nate sees me through the plexi-glass wall that allows people in the loft room of the class of the 2s and the 3s to see people in the other atelier classroom space. When he sees me, he says, "You not coming!" He has a same serious growly face that he showed to me earlier that day. I reply, "esta bien" and move to go out of the room, not wanting to upset him. Ruth encourages me to stay, waving me on into the classroom. I stay. Nate says nothing. I sit down at the mirror-top table, away from the carpet where the children are sitting for assembly.
>
> As the children sit together, and begin to sing, Nate does not appear to be happy about my presence, and continues to look growlingly at me. Victoria invites me to sit in the circle and join the group. She introduces me as a "friend of the school and a "teacher". I talk to the class group about why I am here. I tell them that I want to learn more about their school and what they do here. I sing along with them as they choose which songs to pick for this day's assembly. Nate watches me cautiously, making sure that I sing along correctly.
>
> Observer Comment: He still seems unsure about his feelings about my presence in his classroom and school. Trusting relationships take time to develop.

The code *"ready" or not?,* as it is situated within this category (*dispositions and actions of the child*), represents how the child is a "*protagonist*" in his own story, with the power to self-assess his own readiness to engage in relationships as curricular experiences. When the act of engaging in relationships is defined as a curricular act, as it is in a culture of creativity that exists at Halamoni School, these decisions are what characterize the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and

assessment, and offer an answer the second research question of the ethnography. The researcher asserts that the self-directedness in decision making of the child also offers an answer to the first research question about how to foster a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school. In order to be creative, one must think for oneself. By doing so, Nate and the other children at Halamoni are fostering a culture of creativity within their own school.

Keeping it going, The last supporting code that is located within the sub-category of *watchful child* is *keeping it going*. It is a way of describing the persistence that results when a child is open to *watch, notice,* and then decide that the experience in front of them is interesting enough to *keep it going*. The following observation allows the reader to glimpse many examples of the child *keeping it going*. It was a special experience for me in my work as an ethnographer. It was the first time I recognized how strong the presence of creativity was within the culture of this school. It was the first time I felt the culture deeply.

> Maeve (director/atelierista) shared with me about the experience that was "projected" for today in the park area with each of the class groups. The focus points include: the tree as a presence, sound without words, & awareness of the body and sound. The person who was to come to facilitate the experience with the teachers is not here today. The experiences will take place without him.
>
> At the park, under the big mango tree that is in the center of the front outdoor play space…. Natalia and Elisa begin to act out a silent meeting (near the fountain area). It is silent, and with no announcement of starting. Not all children notice that the experience has officially started at first. Elisa communicates with Natalia by pointing to the tree. Both teachers walk over looking up at the branches of the tree. Natalia moves around the tree, examining up close. Elisa opens up her arms to the sky. She holds her arms at similar angles as the tree trunk and branches. Jacob watches, smiling wide as she puts her arms and body against the tree, creating similar lines with her arms against the tree (facing the tree, then with her back to the tree).

Observer Comment: Elisa is like a modern dance artist - Martha Graham style.

JrK students call to their teacher, "Natalia?"

Natalia and Elisa hug the tree, touching hands from each side. Then they begin to act out trying to move the tree.

A small group of children join in, trying to push the tree. Theo says as he pushes with all of his strength and body against the tree, "So hard to push!". Robert runs up and tries to push the tree. Albert joins. Arya joins. Almost all children join in the effort to move the tree. Jacob stays and observes for a moment more, slowly getting up and approaching the tree, he finds a place for himself and joins the tree pushing and pulling experience with the other children.

Maeve moves around documenting with video/photo.

Robert kicks the tree, "Look guys, I got it. It's working! Kick it more!". Albert and Frederico use large blue foam “kaboom” blocks to bang on the tree. Robert exclaims to them, "No, the tree doesn't like that." (being hit with the kaboom blocks). Stephen is running fast with a kaboom block. He falls, tells me that he is ok, and continues.

Observer Comment: Children do not seem to cry here very often when they fall.

Evidence of the code *keeping it going* as a *disposition and action of the child* can be seen throughout the observation of the interactive and collaborative experience with the mango tree in the park. The experience became highly collaborative when the children decided to *keep it going* and attempt to move an immovable object. In this example of life at Halamoni, the openness that the child brings to believe in moving an immovable object is what fosters a culture of creativity in school. In this way it offers an answer to the first research question in the study.

Playful child. The child brings a powerful playfulness to the energy of the school. It is a natural gift that children give to the world. Unfortunately, playfulness is not a value that people often associate with school. Educators working within a creative school

culture recognize the value of the child who brings a *playful* energy to the learning. In this aspect the child is a leader in the experience, and an advocate for the *joyful engagement* that comes from being within a stance of openness toward the importance of being *playful* when approaching creativity and creative learning. Within the sub-category *playful child*, there are four supporting codes: *joyful engagement*, *playing games*, *non-compliance*, and *love*.

Joyful engagement. The *playful child* is open to the joy that lies within learning opportunities. “The first and foremost belief is in the child and the enjoyment with languages of expression” (Interview with Maeve). This quote is illustrative of the way that *joyful engagement* is included within the core values of a culture of creativity in this Reggio Emilia-inspired school. The code *joyful engagement* informs the first research question by articulating the the way that the children at Halamoni School actively nurture a creative culture of school by infusing the incentive of joy as a reason to explore, take risks, and create new ideas. Learning at Halamoni is a joyful act. This idea was observed regularly across all class group observations, and evidenced by the sound of children laughing that can often be heard throughout the school.

Playing games. Engaging in the emergent code *playing games* is a way that *joyful engagement* is demonstrated in this school. In the following class group observation, children from the class of the 1s and 2s are *playing* a favorite *game* of chase, and fill the room with the sounds of squealing laughter.

> 1s2s—On the porch
>
> 11:00–11:45
>
> Raoul, Grace, Chloe, Stefan, Paul, and Zoe are running from side to side of the redwood porch adjacent to their classroom door. It’s a favorite game of this

particular group. Grace is a common leader of the "running back-and-forth while squealing with excitement" game. Grace squeals the loudest, and is usually first. However, Stefan is another strong enthusiast of the game, and will keep things going if the group begins to tire and lose energy.

Stefan and Grace initiate an exciting mood by creating a sense of urgency high pitched squeals. The children seem to be pretending to be afraid, and running away. Each time a foot drops on the deck, there are undulating quick changes in sound. Each step slightly jarring their vocalizations.

The child's way of approaching interactions with friends at Halamoni School is commonly demonstrated through the act of *playing games*. It is way in which the child serves as *the "protagonist"* who is the one who fosters, with his undying playfulness, the culture of creativity which is embodied at this school.

Non-compliance. The *playful child* is often non-compliant in certain ways. Children at Halamoni School are so accustomed to making decisions about next steps in the curriculum within this school culture of creativity, that is was commonly observed that children engaged in playful non-compliance. When the child decides to play a game or "fool around" during an assembly or an exploration of languages of expression it is an example of how children are always assessing the value of what is being offered in the learning experience, and interpreting whether or not to focus and be *watchful*, or engage in *non-compliance* and playfully pursue more interesting avenues of expression.

The following excerpt from the JrK focus group illustrates a playful way that children decide whether or not they wish to go along and comply, and engage meaningfully within the current direction of the curricular experience.

Barbara hands the wand to Samuel: Why do teachers take pictures of you and write down the words that you say?

Samuel: Um. I don't know.

Barbara: No? Do you have…

Alexander: Because Samuel wants to…FEE FEE FOO FOO

Barbara to Alexander: Wait. Hold on.

Barbara to Samuel: Why do you come to school?

Alexander: FEE FEE FOO FOO face.

Barbara to Samuel: Do you have an idea about that one?

Theo: FEE FOO FOO Samuel.

Samuel laughs a little.

Barbara to Samuel: Hmm?

Samuel: No.

Barbara: Ok. How about how do your teachers help you at school? Do you have an idea about that one?

The "FEE FEE FOO FOO word play" continues in the background. Barbara continues to ask interview questions.

The word play illustrated in this example was much more interesting to these boys from the class of the JrK than the proposal extended to the group by the facilitator; a self-reflective group sharing of ideas about a scripted focus group interview.

Love. The children at Halamoni School foster a culture of creativity directly by bringing a powerful feeling of *playfulness* to the overall energy and mood of the shared experience. T*he disposition and action of the child described in terms of playfulness* cannot easily be measured, nor can its capacity to foster creative school culture be underestimated. It is an act of *love* for life itself that the child brings to the shared culture of Halamoni School. Many times in class group observations, children could be seen and heard enjoying the experiences being built together with the adult. An example of this love for being playful is found in the following excerpt from a class group observation in the class of the 1s and 2s.

> All of the children begin to follow Max (atelierista-gymnast), then the game turns to a running back and forth while squealing game. Stefan is holding his hands close to his body like Max.
>
> Paulo (atelierista –musician) begins a snake charmer sound that leads Max to lay flat on his stomach in the middle of the long room, and slither towards the group of children with this hands in a praying position in front of him as he slithers. The children run away excitedly screaming and smiling at the same time.
>
> Maeve (atelierista-director) is carefully videotaping low to Max's body, moving with him and children. She looks at me for a moment and says in less than a whisper, smiling, "I love this"

Maeve's self-reflective comment indicates that the feeling of *love* for being *playful* is mutually felt.

Creating child. The *creating child* is a sub-category found within the data. It is the third *disposition and action of the child* recognized in this work as being a force that the child brings to the experience which fosters a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school. It is the largest section within this category, and is supported by eight codes that were identified by the researcher as being emergent in the data. These codes are *invitations*, *asking questions*, *taking the initiative*, *sending messages*, *telling stories*, *answers and theories*, *creating games*, *transforming*, and *publication*. It is a way to describe the energy of creativity as well as the act of *creating* that is innate within the child.

Invitations. The children at Halamoni School create opportunities for relationship building and through the acts of sending *invitations* to others to join in the explorations and adventure of the day. These invitations often signify the beginning of a new moment in the learning of the children and adults. On one memorable day at

Halamoni School, a magician was visiting in honor of a child who was moving away the next day. That evening, I wrote in my journal:

> At the Park: The Magician is Coming Today
> The anticipation of this important occasion was strongly present in the excited energies and *invitations* of the children to each other to predict what the magician will do, and when he will arrive.
> Michael approached me today, for the first time, and invited me to join in watching the "magic show" with the rest of the children.

Asking questions. The youngest "*protagonists*" at Halamoni School create openings to new curricular paths by *asking questions*. Michael's invitation to me came in the form of a question, "Do you want to see the magic show with us?" This common phenomenon of child enquiry is a contributing factor to the *alive* nature of the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment, and an answer to the second research question. During the audio-photo vignette *Alexander's Story,* Alexander assesses his own understanding of the vocabulary in the story he is reading, and asks "What's a stone well?" In the vignette, as the researcher and documenter, I respond by asking him to think about where in the story he could find the answer to his question. Together we find the answer to his question in the illustrations of the book. This act of questioning can be understood as a way that the child connects self-assessment to future curriculum. It therefore, provides insight into what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment, and is one of the only connections to answers to the second research question found in this theme (*the Protagonists*).

The atmosphere is marked by quiet as the viewer enters the vignette and meets Alexander the stotyteller, who has been sitting on the carpet in the JrK classroom with a

favorite piece of literature, and reading it aloud to himself. Alexander quickly notices the *presence of audio-documentation* as the researcher approaches him to record and photograph the moment. “What is that thing?” he asks with a tone of genuine curiosity. She can be heard telling him, “It’s a recorder,” and he quickly gives his *theory* of the purpose of this documenting device. “A recorder is a thing which you do to make music. Dee doo da doo… doo da doo,” he says and sings. Then, without a word further on the definition of a recorder, Alexander begins to read *Tikki Tikki Tembo* by Arlene Mosel with great fluency and style, as if he has read it many times before and he knows how the words can flow just right (play vignette entitled Alexander’s Story).

Taking the initiative. Children at Halamoni are being *creating* in *disposition and action* when they are actively *taking the initiative* in the shared construction of a learning experience. Examples of this emerged repeatedly in the class group observations for all groups. (See Audio-Photo Vignette: *Madison’s Game*). Madison is a young girl who is in the class of the 3s and 4s this year at Halamoni. She and I became friends quickly in the study, and as I would enter the park each day to document the culture of the school, Madison would find the time to approach me with a question or a suggestion to play hide and seek or some other new game that she had just created. On this day, Madison noticed that I had my audio-recorder with me and she approached me immediately to ask about the purpose of the device. She took the initiative to let me know that she wanted to be recorded while telling a story about an idea she was considering that day. (Play Audio-Photo Vignette *Madison’s Game*). This data illustrates the way that the *creating* child at Halamoni is commonly found *taking the initiative* in the learning experiences that occur during *ordinary moments* of the day.

Although it is located in this section of the dissertation findings chapters, it provides an example of the way that codes, categories, and themes are overlapping and integrated in nature. The interwoven-ness of meaning found to be embedded in these data highlight the necessity for a school culture of creativity to be marked by a curriculum that is integrated rather than compartmentalized in nature and organization.

Telling stories. During many hours of class group observations children were regularly observed to create curricular moments of shared focus by *telling stories*. (Revisit Audio-Photo Vignette: *Alexander's Story).* Clearly, this vignette is connected to the code *telling stories*, which is a form of *creating*. This is not a live narrative though, like many other examples of live narrations of impromptu ideas that children are eager to share with each other and adults at Halamoni School. Alexander's story is constructed from words on a page, which he brings to life with his intonations and vocal dramatizations.

Answers and theories. The children at Halamoni are a rich source of *answers and theories* which make up the curricular ideas being considered in group discussions and intimate conversations. The *answers and theories* the children create are highly sought after by *creating teachers asking questions* in a mirrored stance which will be discussed in future sections of this theme; *the "protagonists."*

Creating games. The most common act of the creating child at Halamoni is the act of *creating games.* It is supported in an audio-vignette which appears in a later section of the findings chapter (Revisit Audio-Photo Vignette *Madison's Game.*)

Transforming. Children at Halamoni School engage in the act of creating when they are observed to be *transforming* their own persona in order to become a

different character that they have imagined. The act of *transforming* is a daily event within the culture of creativity in this Reggio Emilia-inspired school, and it offers an answer to how children foster that school culture. (Revisit Audio-Photo Vignette *Alexander's Story*.)

Public-ation. The *creating* act of *public-ation*, a term being introduced here as being born from this ethnographic work, is demonstrated by the children at Halamoni School as a regular way of speaking and thinking out loud about the work that they are doing (curriculum) and the questions they have been considering in their lives. It is a way of making public important ideas, traces of experience, and finished work. It is distinctively different from the process of publication, which only takes place at the end of a creative process, when the work is finished. At Halamoni, *the protagonists* make public their work at all stages of the process. In this way, they foster ever widening circles of creative culture as their ideas are shared, interpreted, and re-told from many points of view.

Children generate discussion about their ongoing explorations of the languages of expression in connection with the "fields of knowledge" (Interview with Maeve). It is an idea that relates closely to the both research questions because it is being interpreted as an act of self-assessment through sharing publicly what their experiences mean to them and why.

Dispositions and actions of adults. All of the adults present in the experiences at Halamoni School are considered to be teachers, whether they are parents, artists and atelieristas, or classroom teachers. After the fourth iteration of coding (Appendix T) the researcher made the decision to refer to all adults in the data as "teacher." This is not to

detract in any way from the teaching nature of the child. The researcher selected the term *teacher* to describe all participating adults (parents, teachers, and atelieristas) with the intention of paying specific attention to the professionals that the implications of this dissertation may likely reach; teachers and teacher educators. Data and documentation relating directly to what a creative adult does and believes are strongly intended for consideration by teachers, as well as teachers-in-training, who seek to work in creative and democratically transformative ways (Jones, 2011). To become a creative teacher is the way to best nurture a culture of creativity in school. The following frequently shared *dispositions and actions of adults* may shed light on the path to becoming a more creative adult, and teacher.

Three categories, or iconic stances, of the teacher were identified in the data; *watchful teacher*, *playful teacher*, and *creating teacher*. These stances are shared among children and adults alike; all *protagonists* in the school culture. These *adult dispositions and actions* are illustrated in the following sections of the findings chapter with examples from observational and interview data. They relate strongly to the first research question in this dissertation ethnography because they provide insight into how people foster a culture of creativity in schools.

Watchful teacher. The sub-category *watchful teacher* emerged in the data related to many codes that captured the nuanced meaning beneath the observable behaviors, attitudes, gestures, and actions of the adults that belong to, and build this creative school culture. These codes include: *being with the child*, *noticing*, *hearing messages*, *"ready" or not?*, and *keeping it going.*

Being with the child. One attitude stands above all others in the category of *dispositions and actions of adults*. It is represented by the code *being with the child*. It is a code that is common across all stances of the adult (*watchful, playful,* and *creating*), and represents a core value which fosters the school culture at Halamoni. It is also an idea described in the work of Carlina Rinaldi (2006) in a chapter of the book *In Dialogue with Reggio: Listening, Researching and Learning* which is entitled *Staying by the children's side: The knowledge of educators.* In Reggio Emilia philosophy it is crucial for the thinking of the educator to stay close to the way the child envisions the world, and approaches learning.

In Halamoni School, children are considered by the adult to have the right and the innate intellectual resources to partner with teachers to co-construct a continuum of meaningful learning experiences. *Being with the child* is the primary way of being a *watchful teacher*. It is in this watchful stance that relationships of knowing the child deeply and understanding the thinking of the child can develop. An example of this can be found within the following experience in the atelier of sound with a group of children from the class of the 1s and 2s.

> All of the children are looking outside the small window that Zachary discovered as an interesting place to be this morning. They are observing the work being done and enjoying the water spray as it beats against the glass window pane. Evangeline (teacher) stands with the group, holding Stefan in her arms so that he can see out of the crowded window.
> Andrew: That's funny. (the water spray comes so close, but nobody is getting wet)
> Zachary, Andrew, and John stand on the speaker.
> Andrew feels crowded. Evangeline tries to lift him so that he can see out of the window.
> Evangeline walks over with Andrew to look outside of the French door windowpanes. Andrew protests. Evangeline holds him and quietly encourages him to be calm. She tells him that he is ok….everything is ok.

> Evangeline to Andrew: Listen (softly)…speaking to him in Spanish. He visibly calms down.
> Evangeline tries to gather the group and go back to the classroom…But, the pressure washer heavy spray of water hits the window pane, and splashes against the glass near Zachary's face.
> Andrew: Again!
> John: Again!
> Stefan: Otra vez
> Zachary rests his face against the window. He seems to anticipate the splash with a quiet ready smiling facial expression. When the splash comes..he laughs and waves his arms in front of the window.
> Stefan: No agua (noticing the pressure wash has stopped)
> Evangeline: No mas agua.
> Evangeline to the group: Are you wet? He put water in your face…

This observation illustrates the way that the adult (Evangeline) values *being with the child*, and is *watchful* to *notice* when the experience is interesting and worthwhile from the point of view of the children and the group that is working together.

The *watchful teacher* looks and listens (Rinaldi, 2006) with all of the senses. This full-sensory watchfulness is the meaning of *being with the child* as it relates to the sub-category of *watchful teacher*. It is with a strong belief in the central importance of the child in the construction of the learning experience that the Reggio Emilia-inspired teacher knows she will always *be with the child* in the learning that is to come. The following excerpt from an interview with Valentina illustrates this idea for the reader.

> I do believe that a child is… if I can say… the main protagonist. You know, number one to say. Because their way of living life, living education, and approaching life is what is going to drive an experience, not because we are doing whatever they want to do, but because when we are, for example, using a specific experience that we are having right now about the body…it is not about what we think, or what we do, or what we hypothesize. It's more about what children are doing, and how they approach that body. So that's where I see that the child… without the child we cannot do it.

Valentina goes on to describe the impossibility of framing pedagogy in a linear and compartmentalized fashion within a school culture of creativity. It is the unpredictable

and non-linear nature of life and *being with the child* that demands a non-linear approach to framing pedagogy.

> Or, I cannot either say "ok, we are going to approach, we are going to understand the body, and then these are projections, and these are intentions, and then, okay let's welcome the children, and then we already have a set of something to do", it doesn't work either. Because I might have an idea, I might have an intention what to observe and how to approach it but I need the child to live next to me so while living together we can understand how that is going to be developed.

The importance of *being with the child* is internalized by this teacher because she strongly believes that the child is a necessary partner in the building up of experience; the co-construction of knowledge. This co-constructed knowledge is what is understood as the most valuable learning which takes place within a school culture of creativity. One important way in which the *watchful teacher* is *being with the child* always is through the act of *noticing*.

Noticing. From the start of coding and analysis, the ethnographer recognized the act of noticing as a common and frequently observed *disposition and act* of the teacher. At Halamoni, the *watchful teacher notices* and makes decisions about "what to do" (Reggio Children, 1995) next in the curricular project. In this way it is a code that addresses the second research question, as reflexive and ongoing decision making is a characterizing trait of the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school.

Hearing messages. A close partner to the code noticing is the code *hearing messages*. This was a commonly observed act of the teacher within this school community, and supports the emergence of the *watchful teacher* sub-category in the data generated for this ethnography. This code is related to the pedagogy of listening (Rinaldi,

2006) which can be found in this authentically Reggio Emilia-inspired school culture of creativity.

"Ready" or not? Within nearly every class group observation, the teacher demonstrated a keen watchfulness for the signs that informed about whether a child, or the whole group, was *"ready" or not*. It was a constant phrase in the beginning stages of assemblies, group formations, and *ordinary moments* such as transitions moments of *the "daily life"* of the school. It is a code which addresses the second research question in this study which asks for the identification of the characterizing traits of the relationship between curriculum and assessment in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school culture. Ongoing decisions about the *ready* state of the child or the group are a way that the teacher assesses whether or not to suggest a next step in the experience, or to change proposals for the curricular experiences of the day.

Playful teacher. A way that the adults at Halamoni School commonly approach learning experiences with children is with an attitude of being *playful*. In the case of the child, playfulness comes very naturally, and it is difficult to find a child in any school setting who is not *playful* in their approach to life and to learning. In the case of the teacher, a *playful* disposition is not generally a pre-requisite for the job, and it shows. It is possible that a contributing factor in teacher attrition is the lack of joy that is experienced by the adult within the traditional framework of schools. For me, the researcher and former teacher of record, this was certainly a reason for leaving the early childhood classroom. So, it was an especially enlightening for her to discover in the data the idea that the adult in a school culture of creativity brings the valuable attitude and act of play to the learning which takes place. The sub-category *playful teacher* contains within it the

following five supporting codes: *joyful engagement, playing games, transforming, love,* and *being with the child*.

Joyful engagement. Maeve explains the connection between the concept *joyful engagement*, creativity, and the reason for the existence of the school.

> This is how Halamoni was born… the adult with the enjoyment of the languages of expression. That is the strongest belief, that when an adult offers himself or herself in group or alone in a moment of creativity, he's happy. This is to me happiness. Fullness, you know a sense of fullness, what I call round, it makes me feel round, circular, me siento redonda…and this is how Halamoni was born, for sure.
> (Interview 2 with Maeve.)

Taking risks and being open to creativity in this Reggio Emilia-inspired school is rewarded by joy and happiness, and it is for this reason that the code *joyful engagement* was commonly observed by the ethnographer throughout fieldwork for this study.

Playing games. The act of *playing games* was one way that adults at Halamoni demonstrated the *disposition and act* of the *playful teacher*. A favorite game that was played regularly in the class of the 1s and 2s was one in which the teachers (Talia, Sophia, and Evangeline) *invited* all of the children to be *together* and pretend to be sleeping. The valuable point of the game was the *joyful* climactic ending when everyone wakes in synchronicity and *welcomes* the sight of each other again in a renewed way.

Transforming. The *playful teacher* engages in the open stance of imagining and *transforming* herself into a cat, a dolphin, or an eagle in order to provoke the children to act in *creating* ways in reciprocity and collaborative response.

Love. The adults who live and work within the culture of creativity at Halamoni School are generously expressing her *love* for the child when she approaches pedagogy within a stance of openness to play. In the audio-photo vignette *Revisiting*

Ourselves in Documentation, Maeve shows the playful way in which the adult approaches the child in the experience in order to construct educational experiences with the children (see Audio-Photo Vignette Revisiting Ourselves in Documentation).

Being with the child. By being *playful* the adults at Halamoni are demonstrating the disposition and act of *being with the child*. It is not a matter of physical proximity as much as it is a type of solidarity with the child in the development of learning experiences together. It is a way of following the innate strength of curiosity that every child brings to the learning experience that connects this repeated coded to the sub-category of *playful teacher*.

*Creating teacher***.** The adults at Halamoni share the child's strong *creating* abilities. This teacher attitude may be the most valuable asset to the culture of creativity which thrives here. It is evidenced in the following five codes: *being with the child, invitations, asking questions, taking initiative,* and *public-ation*.

Being with the child. The adult is creating close bonds of friendship and building long lasting relationships (Parent Focus Group Interview) when she is being with the child in a school culture of creativity. These bonds help *the "protagonists"* stay *together*, which is a category embedded within the theme *the "daily life"* which will be addressed in detail in future sections of this chapter.

Invitations. By continually sending invitations to the children, the teachers at Halamoni are creating possibilities for future directions in the learning experience. They are offering choices, and many ways to explore many *languages of expression* in connection with the fields of knowledge (content areas and subject matter). In doing this they are driving the living cycle curriculum and assessment.

Asking questions. By asking questions, the creating teacher is taking first steps in the co-construction of intellectual dialogue with children. The most frequent creator of questions at Halamoni is Maeve, the director. She is a question generating force in the d=overall dialogue of the school. Her questions guide PD meetings, provoke reflection from children, teachers, artists, parents, and researchers.

Taking the initiative. It is often the teacher who creates opportunities for children to explore and construct their own experiences. The researcher identifies this creating of opportunities to learn *taking the initiative*. It is a code which was identified in the observational data very early in the analytic stages of the study.

There are several ways of *taking the initiative* that were commonly observed in this ethnography. These ways that the teacher working within a *creating* stance has of *taking the initiative* include *sending messages, telling stories, answers and theories, creating games.*

Public-ation. The *creating* act of *public-ation,* as understood in terms of *a disposition and act of adults,* is the final code situated within the sub-category and professional stance of *creating teacher*. It includes all acts of "making visible" the thinking, exploring, creating, questioning, researching, growing, and learning that happen as a natural way of life within a culture of creativity at Halamoni School.

The "Protagonists" working and living within a school culture of creativity share most of the qualities that were found in this section of the chapter. The commonality of the traits of the child and the adult lend strength to the argument that there exists a portrait of the person (child and adult) who will contribute to the development and sustaining of a school culture which is undeniably marked by creativity in action.

Answers to the first research question in the study about how to foster a culture of creativity lie hidden within the shared stance of openness of the people from Halamoni School—open to watch, open to play, and open to create. Coming to the experience from vastly "different points of view" (Interview with Maeve), all *"protagonists"* bring with them the same affinity for surprises and enjoying spontaneous moments of wonder together which can breathe life into the creative potential that lies within all of us. Being open to the unknown and the unexpected in the educational experience is a commonality among all of the members of the culture of creativity that is clearly evident at Halamoni. A shared ability to believe what can be imagined, to believe in the child as intuitive and insightful, and to believe that in *togetherness* anything is possible is the transformative "magic" (Parent Focus Group Interview) of this place. This complete openness is what is common among *the protagonists* who foster the culture of creativity in this Reggio Emilia-inspired school.

Answers to the second research question, about what characterizes the relationship between curriculum and assessment within a culture of creativity, have been more elusive than the possible suggested theories regarding the much broader first question. It seems as if the way to understanding the nature of the relationship between curriculum and assessment within a culture of creativity is hidden more deeply in the life of the school, within the nuances of the learning experiences and how they are proposed, shaped, lived, and re-visited co-constructively by children and adults. Deep into the *"daily life"* of the school is where I needed to look for answers to questions about how curriculum and assessment inter-relate and interact with each other at Halamoni School.

It is in Chapter 5 that the last three themes, identified as findings, in the research are described in terms of how they address the research questions of the study.

Chapter 5

Ethnographic Findings: Context

The next three themes in the research (the *"daily life", research and analysis,* and *languages of expression*) are connected to each other in that they serve to convey the essence of, or the feeling one gets when she enters the physical, socio-emotional, and aesthetic environment of a culture of creativity that is nurtured and sustained by *the "protagonists"* at Halamoni School. The first theme and finding gave the reader a sense of the people who foster the culture of creativity. While the next three themes and findings include the people, it is a sense of place that now comes into view for the audience. It is within these thematic findings, and that sense of rich context, that further clues to the answers to both research questions can be found.

The "Daily Life"

The second theme and research finding is an example of an *in vivo code* (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Saldana, 2013) represented in the form of a phrase that is heard often in conversations and descriptions of the comprehensively complex practical day-to-day lived experience at Halamoni. The verbal expression *"daily life"* is a way to convey the ordinariness of education when it is framed as experience (Dewey, 1938). The *"daily life"* represents a study finding because it is in the way that an *alive* approach to the *flow of the day* at Halamoni School that a culture of creativity is fostered. It is also a way to understand what characterizes the relationship between curriculum and assessment; an

organic interactive relationship. This idea is illustrated in the way that Valentina (teacher), when considering a question about the emergent nature of pedagogy within the Reggio philosophy, describes the closely connected meaning between life and education as it is experienced at Halamoni School.

> You know… it's life. And what I have been living and learning here, being at Halamoni, is this concept of how children approach life as it comes. You know…with the good, with the bad, with the ups, with the downs, and with challenges, with achievements. And I see that's life in general, and how competent they are to approach it. And I see…and I *live* [emphasis added] education as life as well. It's something that is active… something that is ongoing.

Valentina goes on to emphasize the value of *the "daily life"* of the school in children's educational experience. "So…it's impossible to limit education to a list of something that they need to learn. Instead, those things are learned through many, many different experiences that they live at school." It is within the context of *the "daily life"* of Halamoni where the path of "breadcrumbs" (PD observation, comment by Maeve) will lead next for a deeper understanding of the nature of the relationship between curriculum and assessment in a culture of creativity.

Embedded within the theme are two categories; *togetherness* and *flow of the day.* Combined, the two categories represent the overall emotional and moral attitude as well as the logistic approach to living *the "daily life"* of the school. The categories are related to how creativity is cultivated as a way of life here, as well as how the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment relate to one another at Halamoni.

Togetherness. The shared value of *togetherness* is strongly evident in the commonly spoken words and actions of the teachers and atelieristas, as well as the children and parents who are members of this school community. It is the first category

embedded within the theme *the "Daily Life,"* and it is supported with data from three sub-categories: *importance of the group*, *multi-lenguality*, and *public-ation*. Embedded within the first sub-category (*importance of the group*), there are two codes: *collaboration with the other* and *commitment to the other*. These codes clustered and, in the interpretive viewpoint of the ethnographer, emerged as a salient idea in the data which indicates a strong shared belief in the importance of being together in the work and life of school.

Importance of the group. The construct of *togetherness*, understood as a shared cultural value, connects to the research question about ways of nurturing and fostering a culture of creativity. The *importance of the group* is a shared belief at Halamoni, and this supports each individual to bring their own unique perspective and strength to the emergent educational experience as a resource and a gift to the other. According to Margaret, Reggio Children liason and consultant to Halamoni, during a presentation at a seminar for the professional community hosted by the school faculty (or "the conference" as it was called by everyone at Halamoni), "Sometimes you need to have very strong arms to stay together. But what is important is that you stay together" (PD Observation at Professional Conference).

Creative acts are often marked by collaboration. Collaborative partnerships among school professionals and artists are recognized in the research on creativity in education as a "mechanism for transforming schools into creative spaces for learning" (Aprill, Burnaford, & Cochrane, 2011, p. 364). Halamoni School is a place where one can witness and engage frequently in the ongoing act of *collaboration with the other* among children, educators, artists, and families.

*Collaboration with the other***.** The act of *collaboration with the other* characterized everything that was proposed for the projected learning experiences at Halamoni School. It is the way that adults at this school turn when they seek new learning and knowledge. It is the main ingredient in the *"daily life"* of the school, found in every act of co-constructed experience toward gaining new knowledge. One way that this pervasive value shared at Halamoni is manifested is within the clear *commitment to the other* that is felt by each member of this culture of creativity.

Commitment to the other.

> Well I believe that here, within this particular school, the people, all the teachers, but in general everyone here, I think when we have a… call it state of emergence, or… call it an event that is happening… and it must take place, and often we try always to have quality in what we do. All the individuals that are here will somehow play an important role in the development of that event. I think that is one of the qualities, one of the strong aspects that we have within the school. There aren't questions asked, we just really act upon our responsibilities without no one really telling anyone what to do in this case. Also I would say we have worked for years on the concept of community, I believe this is something that we're still working on, and I think it will never end, but that leads us to the concept of really being open to… say…basically be very vulnerable in front of others, be very transparent, clear in front of others of what you think, how you feel, and I think that makes a value within the school.
> (excerpt from an Interview with Victoria)

Veteran Halamoni teacher Victoria's description of how all of the "protagonists" feel a sense of responsibility and act upon that feeling as a natural matter of course, no questions asked, is a rich example of the sub-category *commitment to the other*.

Multi-lenguality. Multi-lenguality is a term used by the researcher in response to the pervasive internationality of spoken languages that are found within the "daily life" of Halamoni School, as well as the multiple ways of framing language that is expressed by

the Reggio Emilia-inspired theory and belief in the 100 languages of children. Many of the children at Halamoni are more than bilingual, and all school professionals are fluent to varying degrees in more languages than English. The right of the child to speak their first language is one which is valued and protected. The right of the child to be offered opportunities to explore many *languages of expression* lends strength to the idea of *multi-lenguality* that is found in the data. The idea of multiple languages is strong aligned with Reggio philosophy and highly observable in the way in which a culture of creativity and multiple perspectives is held in high esteem.

Public-ation. The act of public-ation of the thinking and learning of the children at Halamoni drives the continual generation and *public-ation* of pedagogical documentation throughout the environment of the school. *Keeping it going* with documentation was struggle this year for the faculty at Halamoni, and much more was generated than was made visible during the first few months of fieldwork. This struggle was discussed during PD meetings and remained a focus point in dialogue throughout the study. Taking a collaborative approach was what was necessary to meet these ingoing challenges. The shared act of *public-ation* was found to be an important one for the development of a school-wide effort to strategize ways of *keeping it going* with making quality documentation visible in the environments of the school. The culmination of this effort would be a professional conference that was developed and conducted during the last month of the school year.

The "Flow of the day." The phrase that that the school professionals at Halamoni school use to describe their daily schedule is the *in vivo* code which emerged as the second category in the theme *The "Daily Life."* It is a phrase to describe the schedule that

each class group will generally follow. In classrooms, a chart labeled *"flow of the day"* was made visible in the environment as a communication, or *public-ation*, of the general way time will be organized during a typical day at school. Common to all four class groups is the general flow from outside at the park to inside the school building, and out again. While at the park, where each day begins, people (child and adult alike) gather, socialize, eat, and have opportunities for outdoor play. When inside the school building (in classrooms, at mini-ateliers or large ateliers, or in the community-oriented entrance called the plaza) *the "protagonists"* come together to sing and share *answers and theories* at assembly, gather in groups for explorations of languages and representations of ideas, and engage in the possibilities that a school culture of creativity has to offer. No matter what the day brings at Halamoni, each one starts with a welcome. This way of being "amiable" (Malaguzzi, 1998, p. 63) is true to the Reggio Emilia philosophy, and addresses the first research question by presenting one way to foster a school culture of creativity.

There are three sub-categories which serve to illustrate common elements of the *"flow of the day"* which are relevant to the questions of the study. They are: *welcoming*, *ordinary moments*, and *alive*.

Welcoming. A spirit of welcoming can be felt in the way each day begins at Halamoni School. The start of the day does not take place at the doorways of single and separate classrooms. It begins with a spirit of welcome to everyone; children, parents, researchers, and visitors, as well as to teachers and atelieristas who create the mood of welcome with music and smiling conversations; "the ritual of welcoming with a smile" (Interview with Maeve).

In another interview with Victoria, a teacher of the class of the 2s and 3s, the concept of welcome framed as an energy (a feeling) that is created within the school which works against routinized schedules, is eloquently illustrated.

> Victoria: If you welcome a person every week at your house, how does that person feel welcome every week? Because it's often every day that children come to school. So then it becomes a routine. But in order for it not to be a routine, you must feel welcome. We speak about the concept of being very welcome in the morning. You know? So, it has to be reborn.
>
> Barbara: Are you creating energy, sort of, you're creating a feeling?
>
> Victoria: Exactly, a feeling… exactly. In the mornings, for example, like I said and throughout the day, if it happens to follow on a specific schedule every single day that will kill completely the whole aspect of feeling welcomed, of feeling renewed, of feeling enthusiastic about coming to school, about learning, about being with the other, and welcoming unexpected and sad situations as normal life of a human being, of a school.

This interview transcript illustrates the connectedness between the code *welcoming*, the category it is embedded within (*"flow of the day"*), and the category *togetherness.* All of which are situated within the theme *the "daily life,"* and provide answers to the first research question about how to support the development of a culture of creativity by illustrating to the reader specific strategies of how this school culture is actively pursued in "organic" (Interview with Victoria) and *ordinary* ways.

Ordinary moments. Within the *ordinary moments* of *the "daily life"* of Halamoni School, curricular experiences rich with possibilities for spontaneity and creative energy are valued by all of *the "protagonists"* in the shared culture of the school. Valuing the ordinary moments within the *"flow of the day"* fosters a culture of creativity, and serves as an answer to research question one. They are often brief, yet important curricular moments at Halamoni School which provide insight and practical answers to the second

framing question in the research about what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment.

An example of this is found within the audio-photo vignette entitled *Noticing Invitations in the Environment*. This piece of audio-photo documentation begins as Nate invites the researcher into an idea that he has just come upon while getting ready to eat his lunch with the rest of the children in the class of the 2s and 3s. As I walk nearby, ready to generate audio-photo data, he is being *watchful*, and *notices* my recording equipment and invites me in with a *"bodyness"* transformation, one he has performed for me many times before. Nate is being the cat. He is being scary. Being the *playful child*, he is grabbing my attention in order to send a message. But, I am not the only one who has heard his playful invitation. Katalina is sitting beside him in his original place at the picnic tables. She is looking very closely at Nate's face to see what his cat character will do and say. She has been invited in as well (play vignette entitled *Noticing Invitations in the Environment*).

Victoria, who has been a teacher at Halamoni for 13 years, speaks about the importance of the *ordinary moment* in terms of its relatedness to a pedagogy of listening (Rinaldi, 2006) which is found in this Reggio Emilia-inspired school.

> Victoria: I think when we say "daily life" and "ordinary moments", I think we're talking about the concept of listening. Often children have reactions. Often children tell you stories or express themselves in a way, in the most ordinary, natural moments, but I think it is up to us the adult, to really listen, understand, and giving an interpretation to what the child is saying, because the child is giving meaning to what he's saying. It is up to the adult how much meaning do we give to what he or she is saying.
>
> Barbara: And think on your feet…
>
> Victoria: Yes. So I think… so natural, so many things happen daily while they're having snack, while they're washing hands and someone is talking to the other

> child or sometimes it's just in the morning at the drop off when something is happening, I attribute that absolutely to the concept of just really listening.

Victoria's comments relating to the importance of the ordinary moments of the day reveal that one of the things which characterize the relationship between curriculum and assessment within a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school is the deep act of listening to understand the point of view of the child. By listening deeply during these little pieces of time that are scattered throughout *the "daily life"* of the school, the adults are able to interpret what the child is thinking (curriculum) and assess how much meaning can be attached to it (assessment).

Alive. The *alive* nature of pedogogy within a culture of creativity is described by veteran Halamoni teacher, Valentina, in an interview with the researcher. "Education is life. It's alive. And, not only that we learn from life…because we do learn from life, but what I mean is more like education meaning a live concept…and a live experience." This *alive*-ness is an idea which resonates in the words of Maeve, the school founder and director (who works primarily as an atelierista), as a connecting thread to the category and shared value of *togetherness*. In an interview, Maeve explains to the researcher the connection between *alive*-ness and *togetherness* in the context of parent involvement in *the "daily life"* of the school. She elaborates, "because I think that for an experience to take place, definitely to be alive you need the other. Alone? Creating alone, writing, drawing, painting is fantastic but that becomes alive only when you share with others". In another interview the school founder also connects the idea of the *importance of the group* to this *alive*-ness in a way that *sends the message* of why this type of open-ended

collaboration in the "creative vent" (Ashton-Warner, 1963, p. 93) is worthwhile for people to struggle toward.

> There's no limit for anybody. It depends on the person, and it depends on the group, because the group is an *alive* entity as well, and the group influences…certain kinds of situations and people in different ways, but another strong belief is that [pause] I'm not talking about the American Dream, I'm talking about the dream of your life.
> (Interview 2 with Maeve)

Each class has an organic rhythm which is created and driven by the children and the adults *together in collaboration* as they shape the *flow of their days* at school. The *alive*-ness of pedagogy is eloquently described as a characteristic of the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment in the following lengthy excerpt from an interview with Valentina. When thinking about the relationship between curriculum and assessment, as it is lived here at Halamoni, Valentina asserts,

> They are connected one hundred percent, not to say five hundred percent. And we go back to the definition of curriculum, and how it cannot be something limited… because we're talking about education being something alive and something ongoing …ongoing in terms of continuing, but in terms of… *alive* [emphasis added], is the word…active, probably better than ongoing. Then the curriculum cannot be limited to a set of questions or a set of actions that he [the teacher] needs to give to learn…. The curriculum develops as the experience develops. So based on what happens and how children are living that experience, then the curriculum builds up and the assessment takes place throughout experience as well. But then it changes, because I am not assessing that list: they are jumping, they are enjoying, they are talking… I'm not assessing that list only.

At this point, it becomes clear in her description, that the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment is a dynamic and interactive one, one that requires *the "protagonists"* within the experience to be the catalysts in decisions about the value of, and the next steps in, the learning that is ongoing in the school. Valentina continues, and clarifies for the reader what the focal point and the depth of

purpose of assessment is in this school. She ends with her own theory about the question of what characterizes the relationship between curriculum and assessment.

> What we are assessing then is… it goes beyond. It's more about how the child thinks and how the child, and the adult as well, approaches learning and approaches conflict and everything that education brings… learning brings with it. So the curriculum changes with experience, the assessment changes, as well, with experience. So, what I see the connection between the two of them is that one needs the other… and it's something that we have learned through time…or I, I am going to speak for myself, that I have learned through time and I am still understanding.…So the connection is just… one doesn't exist without the other.

Valentina postulates a homespun theory that the relationship between curriculum and assessment within this school culture of creativity is one characterized by symbiosis. Each pedagogical process, according to her, needs the other to exist in this *alive* way of approaching the educational experience *together*.

Research and Analysis

The work that is done by children and adults in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools is best described as *research and analysis*. The categories upon which this theme is built are: *presence of documentation, the presence of the atelier,* and *revisitations*. This theme provides answers to the second research question of what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment. The interaction between curriculum and assessment can be characterized as an iterative cycle which involves the generation of documentation focused on the *alive* learning experience (*research*), and the interpretation (*analysis*) of the value of that documented experience as well as the thinking and meaning-making of the children. Pedagogical documentation is the cornerstone of Reggio philosophy, and is the singular most valuable gift that the field of early childhood education has received from the innovators and educational

philosophers of Reggio Emilia. In the truest spirit of the work of Reggio schools, the *presence of documentation* is ubiquitous at Halamoni School.

Presence of documentation. Within almost every class group observation, the research noted the *presence of documentation* in the work of the adults with children. Being *ready* and *watchful* about the moments which reveal the thinking of the child, as well as the best way to document these moments is the shared work of the adults at Halamoni. Often, their ways of documenting were multi-faceted in nature.

Multiple ways documenting. Through *multiple ways of documenting* the thinking and learning of the child, as well as the varied richness of the proposed learning experiences, the adults working within this school culture of creativity approach the work of *research and analysis* from many "points of view".

Video documentation. The most honest and accurate way to record the experiences in school is with *video documentation*. The sounds and sights of a video document are what actually happened; the true meaning of accountability in the "point of view" of the researcher. *Video documentation* was observed to be a primary method of pedagogical documentation at Halamoni School. An example of how video documentation was used as assessment can be found in the following excerpt from a class group observation of the JrK class group working in the atelier with Maeve.

> Maeve: Can I video you?
> Matthew agrees to be videotaped.
> Maeve: So depending on the position his tongue is in…that changes the sound you make.
> Samuel: Look what I can do.
> Maeve videotapes what Samuel can do inside of his mouth.
> Silence
> Maeve and Matthew (who is sitting next to her) watch closely.

Within these moments of the life of the school could be found reasons to continue further with an idea or, to propose a new curricular path to explore. Decisions about curriculum could be based on interpretations of what the *video documentation* (a form of assessment) is telling the educator and the child. In this way, the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment is one that is characterized by a process of ongoing, context-based decision making by the adults and the children in this school.

Audio documentation. Paulo, a musician and atelierista in the school organization of Halamoni, was a driving force in the act of *audio documentation* within the lived experience. He is the resident expert in all things relating to sound. The atelier of sound is his home-base from which to work at the school. Paulo's deep personal "sensitivity" to the importance of sound in the environment was observed regularly by the researcher during the months she spent within the life of Halamoni School. The digital audio-recorder was always in his hand, or within an arms-length, during the active engagement and collaborative work of the children and adults at the school. *Audio documentation* is a form of capturing sound traces of the learning experience so that these traces can be used during the decision making moments that characterize the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment. An example of audio documentation as assessment is found in the following observation of Paulo and two children from the class of the 2s and 3s as they explore the language of sound.

In the Atelier of Sound/Sound Room:

> Alexandria explores what happens when she shakes the small wooden disc in the Tupperware. She rolls it around and appears happy when it flies out of the container.

Paulo holds the digital recorder to document Alexandria's 'disc in tupperware' sound creations. He plays the clacker while he documents.

Malcolm plays with the sounds of the cymbals.

They group is playing altogether for a moment of collaborative, improvisational sound-making.

Written documentation. The teachers and atelieristas at Halamoni School have a system of documenting that includes many ways of approaching the recording of experience. One way which was commonly observed by the researcher was that of *written documentation*. This way of documenting requires the educator to sketch stages of work in process or record statements that the children make in the conversations during assembly and while they are exploring the materials and languages of expression that are plentiful in the environments of the school. Understood as an act of *research*, *written documentation* is shared with the children in conversations that follow the learning experience. It is connected closely to the second research question about what characterizes the relationship between curriculum and assessment because it is the interpretation (*analysis*) of the *written documentation* with children that allows the children to reflect upon and assess their own curricular thinking in action. An example of this can be found in the following excerpt from an observation of the JrK class group.

JrK classroom - 9:35-10:20
Assembly in the classroom/carpet
The whole group has gathered on the carpet. Natalia says, “Let me read this to you…We put this together with our friends.”

She is reading a piece of documentation to Alexander, who was absent when the conversation recorded in the written piece of documentation took place. Natalia reads directly from the paper she has in her hand, and quotes the children’s words, in a way of giving their words back to them…
Matthew: I am the ocean. Fish jumping… and the big, blue sky.

Matilda: I see cars and buildings… (She is the wind)"

Natalia continues "Samuel is a building. He sees….and the stars". Alexander (remembers) and speaks out, "I'm a car. Vroom…vroom…"
Natalia reads, "Mari is a wave…Matilda is the wind…Alexander, you said you wanted to be a bird, right?
Alexander: I did not.
Angie: Before last week, that is what you chose. It is fine if you want to change.

This example from the life of a classroom illustrates the way that *written documentation* is used as a tool for research into what ideas the children had generated when thinking forward to a graduation celebration and performance. The *written documentation* supported the children to look back at what they said, and then think forward to what their words mean to them in the present moment. This active reflecting and planning process is much like the ongoing building up and cycling back that characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment within a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school.

Presence of the atelier. It was the original intention of Reggio Emilia schools for young children to offer a distinct space within the school for research. This place within Reggio schools in Italy, and Reggio Emilia-inspired schools such as Halamoni, has been named the *atelier*. An atelier, out of the context of Reggio Emilia philosophy, is generally considered to be an art studio. Within the context of Reggio Emilia-inspired pedagogy, the atelier is understood as a laboratory for *research and analysis* by children and adults working in *collaboration with the other* to explore many materials (*languages of expression*) as vehicles for representing the meaning that is made from life. The *presence of the atelier* at Halamoni is especially strong due to the way that the entire school is envisioned as a "big atelier."

The category *presence of the atelier* will be further described in this section through examples found in the following emergent codes: *artist and child, value of technique,* and *fluid creative spaces*. The *presence of the atelier* is an example of a category found in the data that addresses both research questions. It is an aspect of the physical environment which fosters a culture of creativity by offering multiple perspectives and a divergence of materials to explore new ideas and original creations. The *presence of the atelier* is also connected to the second research question because it is a place for the ongoing work of *research and analysis* which characterize the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment within a culture of creativity.

Artist and child. A close relationship between the *artist and child* is a sub-category found in the study. It is observable every day in the life of Halamoni School. The value of the atelierista with in the school organization that is informed by Reggio philosophy teaches the world about how to foster a culture of creativity in schools for young children. It is the influence of the relationship between the *artist and the child* which was detected as an important idea in the research which offers answers to how to organize schools around principles of creativity embodied by the artist (atelierista).

Value of technique. The value of technique is modeled by the teachers and atelieristas at Halamoni School. This is interpreted as a way of offering choices to the child about how to approach the exploration of each distinct *language of expression*. It depends upon the media as to how it is best used to transform ideas into expressions of meaning. As adults and children work together, the adult offers opportunities to explore materials and media (languages) such as water, texture, color, and light. The adult also

provides guidance about the techniques which bring out the essence of the language being explored. This kind of collaborative work takes place in classrooms, multiple ateliers, and outdoor spaces at Halamoni School. The fluidity of the spaces for exploration and learning is a quality that is strongly present at this school.

Fluid creative spaces. Halamoni envisions itself as "big atelier", and school professionals work in *collaboration with the other* to prepare an overall aesthetically inviting environment containing many *fluid creative spaces*. These flowing spaces are for a shared purpose; research into the unique language of each material that is offered as a possibility in the learning experiences of the children and adults together. Embracing all areas and spaces of the school environment for this work of research and analysis is an indication of openness toward where learning takes place, and in doing so, fosters a culture of creativity.

Revisitations. The idea of revisitations is present in the history of the REA, and it lives within the creative school culture found at Halamoni. It is an idea which closely relates to the second research question about what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment. The concept of revisitation is located at the moment which exists between assessment and curriculum. It is the time for re-looking and assessing the value of the experience. In the audio-photo vignette *Revisiting Ourselves in Documentation: "That is me in the black sweater,"* a spontaneous and richly illustrative example of the act of revisitation is provided for the reader.

Ordinary moments that are embedded in the flow of the day can be the ones that are most full with possibilities for being spontaneous, re-living experiences, and recognizing ourselves together. Creating joyful moments is natural work for young

children, and throughout the main focus in the forefront of this piece of documentation, there is the happy noise of children in the background, the code *sound and body* is illustrated by the echoing foot stomps on the wooden floor of the Plaza as children run and play an impromptu game or two (play vignette entitled *Revisiting Ourselves in Documentation: "That's me in the black sweater*").

Fiona's *spoken invitation* is the spark which sets off this piece of audio-photo data. She tells the researcher in strong *self-recognition*, "That is me in the black sweater." As she points to the documentation panel, which was prepared the evening before in the plaza of the school, Fiona repeats, "The black sweater!...That is me…that is me..(her voice trailing off)." The children from the class of the 3s and 4s, including Fiona, are transitioning into the building from the park, where they had been having lunch. Jessica is drawn to this space to engage in a bit of *creating games* on the balance beam, she crosses the balance beam and enters the photo frame.

Maeve *keeps it going* and begins *asking questions* to Fiona in an enthusiastic manner about the photo in which she has recognized herself, "Really?!...You? So …jumping?!" Fiona's jumping is the subject of the documentation, and Maeve is re-living it together with Fiona in as creatively energetic a way as it happened then. Revisiting ourselves in documentation is contagious, and Jessica is soon drawn into the conversation with Maeve and they begin to laugh and enjoy together the idea of twisting tongues; the subject of another photo series in this documentation panel. Jessica and Maeve look at photos of Jessica in various stages of a tongue-twist. They re-live the experience and *remember together*. They twist their tongues and try to talk, which leads to more *joyful engagement* and laughing. During this lively conversation without words,

Jessica is standing back up on the balance beam. Robert is on the beam standing sideways next to her, *creating* sound provocations and enjoying the game.

Remembering together. The most common way that *revisitation* is approached at Halamoni with the *ordinary* goal of *remembering together*. This phenomenon of trying to recall what happened in the past in order to make sense of the future is done with the intention of *remembering specifics* that can be identified as true interpretations of what the child and adult can remember together in order to decide *together* what to do next. It represents the way that the relationship between curriculum and assessment is characterized by co-constructed experiences that occur as a part of *ordinary moments* of daily experiences like *remembering together*.

Remembering specifics. There are many examples from the "daily life" of the school that illustrate the idea of *remembering specifics*. In remembering the specific details of a past learning experience strengthens continuity with future co-constructed learning. Being able to revisit documentation allows the protagonists to recall with accuracy what has taken place, so that thinking about what comes next in the learning can be based on data (pedagogical documentation) that has been generated for the purposes of making visible the thinking and learning of the children and adults at Halamoni.

Self-recognition and self-assessment. The value of the *revisitation* process lies within its ability to offer up to the child opportunities for *self-recognition* and *self-assessment*. These interrelated ideas occur naturally during moments of *revisitation* within a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school. They inform the reader of the role of the child within the relationship between the pedagogical process of

curriculum and assessment, and serve as an answer to the second research question about what characterizers that relationship.

Languages of Expression

The fourth theme, *Languages of Expression*, represents the final major theme and finding in the research. The finding connects to the first research question of how to foster a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school. The *presence of many languages of expression* fosters a culture of creativity by expanding the possibilities for expressing multiple perspectives and exploring new ideas.

There is a distinct lack of commercial products which traditionally adorn and fill the spaces of the early childhood classroom. At Halamoni School the materials are approached with reverence and care, as these materials are considered have inner rhythms and hidden offerings which children and adults can discover. Each material is considered a kind of language, and if they enter into a stance of openness toward exploration and believe that within each material there is the power to communicate meaning, each member of the school community and culture can find a way to connect with that language and express their own unique meaning through that particular medium.

Presence of many languages of expression. The materials that are offered up to the child and the adult working *together* within the *fluid creative spaces* of Halamoni school are evidence of the strong *presence of many languages of expression*. These are the languages that are described by the theory of the 100 languages of children which was born in Reggio Emilia philosophy.

Pencils, markers, crayons, charcoal, pastels, and pens: "la mano va." There is an expression that is used at Halamoni; "la mano va." It means, "the hand goes" in

Spanish. This phrase embodies a way that the adults at this school understand the child's strong competence and his innate strength and capability from the very beginning of life. The languages that relate most closely to this idea of "la mano va," from the point of view of the researcher are these: pencils, markers, crayons, pastels, and pens. These are the languages that the child holds within one hand, and uses to express his ideas and ways of thinking.

Light, color, and sound: intangible languages. *Light, color, and sound* have a central importance in the life of the school. They are languages of expression which spark the child's "wonder" and "awe" (Interview with Maeve) about the natural world. The child is drawn to explore these languages of expression with full attention and enthusiasm. Each one of these intangible languages has a room which has been built specifically for *researching* these *languages of expression*. There are specific atelier spaces in the environment of Halamoni which focus on certain languages of expression. Two of these are the light room and the sound room. The *light* room and the sound room at Halamoni are places within the school where children interact with the beauty of light and sound, as well as engage in the co-constructions of knowledge about their properties to better understand the creative possibilities they offer.

Clay, sand, natural and found objects: Elemental languages. Nature's *elemental languages of expression*, which are commonly found within the learning experiences at Halamoni School include clay, sand, and natural and found objects. Examples of natural objects are plants, seeds, stones, gems, coral, and wood. They are explored by the children and used to represent their thinking about projects and curricular proposals within the life of the school.

There is nothing new about the *languages of expression* that have been described thus far in this final theme in the research. As the ethnographer, I chose to briefly describe them here because they are relevant to how a culture of creativity is fostered within a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, and help to answer the first question in the research; by encouraging a broader and more inclusive definition of language. Although this idea is not new, this study did highlight something that is new and is connected to the theme *languages of expression*. It is the final sub-category in the theme, and the words of the faculty at Halamoni, "we call it bodyness."

"We call it bodyness." A "school-wide analysis" of the body as a language of expression was being developed when the researcher began generating data in January 2013. A collaborative partnership with Max, gymnast, physical fitness expert, and resident "gym teacher" was a catalyst for the idea of "bodyness." It was an intentional movement away from the traditions and routines of the mainstream educational image of "gym class" that led to the birth of this unique way of describing how the child and body are inseparable in the creative explorations that commonly occur at Halamoni School. "Bodyness" was identified as a language of expression, and the children deserved the right to be co-constructors in the learning experience, not required to follow routinized and predictable physical fitness activities selected by the gym teacher. Max was no ordinary gym teacher, and he worked in collaboration with atelierista, the teachers, and the children in open-ended ways to bring the child and the adult into the "bodyness" experience so that creativity was present as a value of the school, and a right of the child.

"Bodyness": Choices. The right of *the "protagonists"* to choose in what ways they would express themselves through this corporal language of expression is fiercely

protected within a culture of creativity in this Reggio Emilia-inspired school. It is one way to foster that culture, and offers an answer to the first research question about how that school culture is built and nurtured. The *"bodyness": choices* themselves are illustrated in the life of the school and in the observational data (class groups and audio-photo data alike) as expressions of open exploration, style, provocation of the other in "bodyness" and, in the many examples of big body play that was common to the self-directed *"bodyness": choices* that were made throughout *the "flow of the day"* at Halamoni.

Sound and body. Due to the strong *presence of the atelier* and the powerfully creative nature of the relationship between the *artist and the child*, the idea of *sound and body* became salient in the data. Paulo, a musician and atelierista at Halamoni School for 3 years, introduced the ideas in connection with one another many times in his work with the children at the school. It is an example of the organic way that languages of expression can be introduced and explored by *the "protagonists"* in their search for new ways to understand themselves and their unique creative potentialities more intimately.

Together in "bodyness." Considering the shared belief in the *importance of togetherness* that shapes the school culture of creativity at Halamoni it is not surprising that the researcher would recognize a connection between the idea of togetherness and the school-wide analysis "bodyness" as a *language of expression*. This curricular connection was named *together in "bodyness"* by the ethnographer during the iterative process of coding and categorizing the interpreted meanings.

Talking without words. A code that was found in observational data (class groups' observations and audio-photo data) to be closely related to the sub-category of together in

"bodyness" is *talking without words.* Opportunities to *talk without words* were often proposed to the children by their teachers. An example in the data of how the code *talking without words* is related to the idea of being *together in bodyness* is illustrated by the audio-photo vignette entitles *Exploring "Bodyness" and Fabric: Class of the 3s-4s' Assembly with Parents*.

This piece of documentation draws the audience in immediately with a romantic mood created by the strings of a violin being plucked and coaxed with a bow simultaneously in a subtly hypnotizing way. The piece of music creates a mood with a slow melancholy sound of a sleepy gypsy-tango. The music is played through the school's sound system, and it rings out from the park into the inner spaces of the plaza and ateliers. It is an invitation in the environment that has been carefully prepared by Elisa and Iona as they projected ideas for this "bodyness" experience. This is an assembly with parents, so it is in the mood of a celebration, and the sound of laughter is present from the beginning in the backdrop of this exploration of "*bodyness*" and fabrics as languages of expression. (Play Audio-Photo Vignette *Exploring "Bodyness" and Fabric: Class of the 3s-4s' Assembly with Parents.*)

Evidence of identified code and category connections to the data, as well as a clear embeddedness of the experience within all of the themes found in the study is recognizable (if not tangible) in the documentation of this shared interactive and inherently creative experience. In this example of life, a culture of creativity is being fostered by the act of creativity itself. By going deep into the languages of body and fabric, the children work to be creator of their own experiences through *"bodyness": explorations, "bodyness": freedom, and "bodyness": choices*. The vignette illustrates the

idea of completely open possibilities for the exploration of *languages of expression* within *the "daily life"* of the school. The presence of many languages of expression can be easily seen in the documented moment. Aspects of the daily life found in the vignette, which incorporate the theme of *research and analysis*, include the *presence of documentation* and the pervasiveness (or *presence) of the atelier* throughout the entirety of this Reggio Emilia-inspired school. These data strongly portray the integrated nature of the learning experiences here at Halamoni, as well as the integrated nature of the codes and categories across themes within the audio-photo data set.

During a visual highlight of the vignette, the notion of *joyful engagement* is defined within Madison's expression as she sits wrapped in an elongated boat-like stretch of fuchsia fabric and reaches her arms out toward Elisa, who is doing the stretching. The expression on Elisa's face illustrates the essence of the code *talking without words*. There is also a strong sense of *being with the child* in this conversation that Elisa and Madison are having. This is one of many examples in this data which illustrates the idea *together in bodyness*.

Throughout the vignette, always the watchful teacher, Elisa can be seen waiting for the opportunity to welcome *togetherness* in the exploration of *sound and body*, with the added element (or language) of fabric. Iona documents with camera always in hand in an effort to capture the traces of experience for future *public-ation* and *revisitation*. Together in collaboration, these teachers work as protagonists in the moment, and in doing so they act as a balance of the processes of curriculum and assessment; Elisa watching, inviting, and *keeping it going*, while Iona also watches in parallel ways, open to emergence, and brings the presence of documentation with her. This vignette touches

upon insights which connect to both research questions in ways that show the live nature of a creative culture of learning with young children. To sustain that live quality, the children and adults must be open to emergence, open to explore, and open to believe that something valuable will result from being present within this freeing creative stance.

Revisiting Research Questions: A Final Encompassing Glance at Findings

Two questions served to shape and balance this ethnography. They were:

1. How is a culture of creativity fostered within a Reggio Emilia- inspired school?

2. Within a culture of creativity, what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment?

What fosters a culture of creativity in schools can be gleaned from every moment of life in Halamoni. The dispositions and actions of the protagonists continually serve to feed the fire of creative energy that flows through the days here, as do shared beliefs in the importance of being together and the value of research and analysis as active components in the work of early childhood education. The theory of the 100 languages of children is alive and well in Halamoni. Here, many languages of expression are easy to touch and explore. Unknown “new knowledge” (Interview with Maeve) is the alluring treasure that can be found if these many languages are approached in complex, synchronous, and collaborative ways. All of these inter-tangled (Rinaldi, 2006) new meanings create a strong culture of creativity at Halamoni, one that is sustainable and generous with *public-ations*. Newcomers are always welcome, but they are asked upon entrance to “be present” (PD Observation 1) and “to believe” (Interview with Maeve).

In a school culture of creativity, the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment is characterized by being in a continual state of "live"-ness. It is an organic and symbiotic relationship, dependent on an openness to emergence, exploration, and belief in "possibility thinking" (Cremin et al., 2006), all character traits that develop as a result of the dispositions and actions of the protagonists of the experience at this Reggio Emilia-inspired school. It is at this point that possible answers to both research questions overlap in the findings of this study. What characterizes the relationship between curriculum and assessment is the questioning, theorizing, collaborative, and curious nature of the people who live and learn at this school. It is persistence (*keeping it going*) and *commitment to the other*, as well as a constant *watchful* eye for further personal and professional development which the adult brings to the experiences at this school that sustains the cycle of enquiry between documentation and future projections and proposals for continuity and *public-ation*. It is a complete openness to emergence and an immediate urgency to "dive in at the deep end" (Cochrane & Cockett, 2007, p. 84) which the children at this creative school bring to the experience that energizes the living tangle that is the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment.

If the point of education is life, the nature of curriculum and assessment is similar to that of life as well. *Ordinary moments* matter as opportunities for children and adults to be *watchful*, notice invitations, and enter into the experience deeply with questions, *answers, and theories* abounding. Pedagogical documentation, understood as collaborative way of assessing what the child is thinking and doing, rather than what he is or is not doing in a typical pattern and pace, drives the emergent process of curricular

projection-making and returns continually within the learning experiences at Halamoni which are always marked by the presence of documentation. Pedagogical documentation is the hinge that the relationship between curriculum and assessment swings upon—a pivot point in curricular decision making within a school culture of creativity.

Chapter 6

Conclusions, Implications, and "Projections"

The final chapter of this dissertation ethnography offers up insights gleaned from 18 weeks of in-depth exploration of how to foster a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, as well as what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment within that school culture. In this chapter, I present conclusions from the meaning which can be drawn from themes and findings, highlighted in the study. The themes found to be emergent in the combined data sets of this ethnography are: *The "Protagonists," The "Daily Life," Research and Analysis*, and *Languages of Expression*. I then present certain implications of the work for the field of early childhood education. A self-reflective look at the transformative power of this research, as a creative act of personal and professional development for me as the ethnographer, is also be included in this final chapter of the study. Lastly, suggestions for future research and further questions raised by this study are discussed as a way of *keeping it going*.

Conclusions

A stance of openness: The key to creativity. The uncovering of a shared stance of openness among all participants, and *"protagonists,"* to be *watchful*, *playful*, and *creating* may be the most compelling finding of the study. Its overlap among "*protagonist*" groups (children and adults) is evidence of

a triangulated strength found in the data that would support the idea of having an open stance in *disposition and act* toward pedagogy as a salient one in the research. When considered in reference to the first research question of how to foster a culture of creativity within a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, the beginnings of a portrait of a creative teacher, and cultivator of school culture, emerges. This portrait of a teacher who fosters creativity in education emerges always with a smiling stance of openness.

At Halamoni School, the community comes together in this idea of being open to believe in the possibilities that have not yet been experienced and known. In an interview, Maeve discusses the discovery of an unknown space of new knowledge as being a possibility only if the adult is open to learn from the way the child expresses himself within the context of school.

> That new space of knowledge, that specific new discovery about theories, for example, how the moon works and turns. The theories that supposedly for adults are wrong because they do not follow an already proven, correct logical way of thinking; which is what the curriculum is… That new space… that new knowledge is the one we gain only when we allow the child to express himself in the way that he wants and in the way that he connects with different points of view. (Interview with Maeve)

A person must be open to the unknown to be creative, and in a climate of top-down reform in education (including early childhood education) being open to the unknown is often a task which requires courage. However the researcher argues that it is a risk worth taking because the stakes are very high. Dialogue about essential *dispositions and actions of children and adults* in creative school settings may be a powerful way to work toward a culture of creativity in schools. It is a conclusion of the research that this stance of openness is the key to fostering and sustaining a school culture of creativity. Educators interested in the possible benefits of developing pathways to building creative

schools are obliged to understand what these types of pedagogical attitudes and acts are in order to recognize and further develop them within their practice.

Fortunately, the courage that is required to dive into "the deep end of the pool," and to "be present" in the efforts to bring the value of creativity to educational experience, is not to be gathered up in isolation. The value of *togetherness* that strengthens the culture of creativity at Halamoni School safeguards against that. Educators working in *collaboration with the other* support one another to remain open to "allowing" for the discovery of the unknown. This is how it is done; with the other, and not in isolation. Being together in this open stance is what fosters a culture of creativity in this Reggio Emilia-inspired school.

The value of togetherness: "Re-volution" of a school toward collaboration. The second conclusion suggested by the research is connected to the idea of collaboration. The value of collaboration is strongly evident within the theme the "daily life,' and it is understood as organizational progress toward creativity in education. In *collaboration with the other*, new ideas and unexpected possibilities emerge continually within the educational experience. During the time I spent as a researcher in the field, the school professionals at Halamoni School strategized and began to look and go "beyond" the typical meaning of *togetherness* toward a deeper understanding of themselves as an interconnected whole. In the organization of schools, it is easy to become isolated in your classroom as a teacher. Even though there is a whole school community gathered in one place, it is challenging to reach outward from your individual class group identity toward a connectedness among all class groups and school community members.

This transition to thinking always of the whole existed in the dialogue generated during PD meetings. A consistently strong voice, which provoked the faculty to consider taking a holistic view of the work of the school, was Maeve's.

> Maeve: The goal is to make visible and clear on a big piece of paper…in order to get a glance today…to get a map from each class from September on…what is going on in connection to the body in each class group. You write down in your way, what the group has done so far. Create a community map to assist the group to *project* [verb form] documentation.
>
> Maeve talks about the concept of leaving breadcrumbs in the story of *Hansel and Gretel*…a comparison to the traces left of the experience when documentation can capture the moment. "Unless you leave traces of your process you get lost." (Excerpt from PD Observation 2)

Documentation was the strategy that was being used to reveal the connections and commonalities of the work of each separate class group. The "breadcrumbs" of the learning experiences would reveal to the teachers and atelieristas what they had in common in their explorations of "*Bodyness*" as a language of expression. The value of documentation is an idea which is never far away in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school such as this one.

A professional conference entitled *The Relationship Between Analysis and Documentation: Our Journey with the Reggio Emilia Approach* was organized and held at the end of the school-year and timed to coincide with a visit from the school's Reggio Emilia consultant and dear friend, Margaret. It became clear during the preparation for the conference that the answer to problems, concerning how to organize the documentation for presentation to the local professional community, had to come from a unified vision of a school.

The "*Bodyness*" exploration was entitled a "school-wide analysis," and that was the starting point. Certain framing questions were composed by the teachers and

atelierista, as well as the researcher, in the weeks leading up to the conference. In these weeks, all of the teachers and atelieristas were in a highly productive phase of *public-ation* about the "*Bodyness*" project. Traces of experience were visible throughout the classroom and school environments. Iris, Halamoni's administrative director, went about the work of getting the word out to the professional community (*public-ation*) and made preparations for the venue making sure not to forget all the many details that go into planning a conference. Everyone worked together to bring quality to the conference.

Margaret was to be the keynote speaker at the conference, and was present during the week leading up to it. She was instrumental in the dialogic process of re-visiting documentation (photographs and video in this case) and selecting quality images and pieces for the presentation, which would be given collectively by the faculty at the conference. The following excerpt from a Professional Development Meeting Observation (PD Observation 3) captures traces of the moments when the faculty at Halamoni needed to come together in a more holistic view toward the way that the idea of *The Relationship Between Analysis and Documentation* (title of the conference) connected with "*Bodyness*" as a language of expression.

> When thinking ahead to the end of the presentation, Margaret says, "At the end, it can be about the wholeness. We will end with the most complex one."
>
> Margaret talks about the process of "coming together", and asks the faculty to think about "in which way the different classrooms organize their projection to encounter the same objectives, goals, intentionalities of their work…Feeling that holistic part of our work strengthens it because the other supports you."
>
> The idea of an "evolution of understanding as a school community" is discussed. The school is in flux….in search of a renewed identity. (PD Meeting Observation 3)

Later, possibly out of this sense of "re-newal," the phrase used to describe the ongoing process of coming together in difference that Halmoni was engaged in, became "re-volution" of a school (not evolution). The word evolution may have been too tame for the explosion of coming together that was absolutely necessary for the community event to be a success. This "re-volutionary" change in the school was guided by the power of documentation to preserve traces of experience so that it may be analyzed in re-visitation.

The underlying meaning that can be drawn from this "re-volution" of a school is related to the idea of school change. If a culture of creativity is to be fostered in schools for young children, change on a large scale is necessary. Change is elusive in educational systems in the United States, and large-scale change is more than simply a challenge to be overcome. It is nearly undone.

In the sentinel book about the Reggio Emilia approach, *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach—Advanced Reflections* (Edwards et al., 1998), there is a chapter which describes an American moviemaking event which will frame and deliver to the American public an example of how creativity works in Reggio Emilia schools—the *Poppy Project.* During this chapter, the author describes a sense of reluctance on the part of Loris Malaguzzi and the educators and artists in Reggio at that time to rush through the filming process in 5 days. In this chapter of the book, there is a description of Malaguzzi's spirit rising up from the table, where the film crew and the Reggio professionals were enjoying a meal together, and telling it like it is to the American film makers. In this chapter by Paul Kaufman entitled *Poppies and the Dance of Worldmaking*, Malaguzzi's imagined apparition tells the unforgiving truth about the groups of American educators and educational documentarians who come to Reggio

Emilia in droves. The truth is, “Nothing changes back there. You come. You look. You go back. You come, you look…” (Kaufman, 1998, p. 286).

So, why is it that so many early childhood educators in the United States are inspired by Reggio philosophy in action (and other emergent philosophies which foster creativity and progressive ideals in education) but no apparent change results from our inspiration? This is a question which drives the research, and continues to drive me as the researcher. Considering the challenges inherent in change within the current context of education, it is fortuitous that the same phenomenon (*togetherness*) which was found to drive transformative change in the faculty at Halamoni School, was also recognized as a way to foster a culture of creativity.

Moving away from evaluation: Toward a pedagogy of creativity in assessment. The value that a transformative shift toward defining assessment as deep understanding, and away from hierarchical evaluation is the third conclusion of this study. Within a school culture and pedagogy of creativity, it is of great importance to try to understand and “make visible” what the child is thinking during all stages of the pedagogical process of assessment.

> I believe that the strength, that an adult can gain by just opening possibilities when he lives a life with children and he shares experiences at school, comes from the fact that what can be discovered and what can be understood about the way of thinking, the functioning of the brain, the way in which ideas are put together, the connections that are made what can be discovered can only happen if and when the adult is not set in a curriculum. And the discovery of the opportunities that are, let's say, new happen because there is a desire and an allowance, in terms of allowing, a permission, to understand and… and a desire to want to understand how the child constructs, combines, and defines the different aspects that he is talking about in terms of any theory that he is making. (Interview with Maeve)

Maeve also speaks about the meaning and nature of pedagogical documentation within a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school.

> I think that the pedagogical documentation is an active process, or stage… an active stage of research of the educator where, by documenting… from the moment of gathering of information with the children, which by my point of view there is definitely, at the beginning of the experience a whole organization about intentions and tools and documentation and then there is the moment of the experience when the children are taking action with the adults, where there is the gathering of information, and a lot of thinking from the point of view of the adult is taking place….I think that pedagogical documentation in terms of meaning, to my point of view, is really the continuous research and the possibility that the adults have to re-look again at what we said before, the strong image of the child that we are trying to develop which is in process, and to reach that awareness of that new space of knowledge that the child offers when we are not confined by curriculum. That is the meaning.

The school founder, director, and atelierista continues along this line of thinking and discusses a shift in attitude toward and understanding of assessment (and curriculum as well, for there is not one without the other). The result is a turning away from the notion of evaluation of the child, and a re-orientation toward the understanding of pedagogical documentation as an approach to offering the value of assessment to the educational experience.

> The value of pedagogical documentation to me is assessment because when the adult documents the many different ways in which children express their theories…when the teachers and educators in general can get closer to the way in which children express, think, and explain then we can see much more clearly how children think, and how that we assess and they assess themselves in terms of becoming aware of their own thinking…. I think that it is only through the conscious decision [to define] pedagogical documentation as assessment and research…. Once this conscious decision has been made, that this is why I want to do this, and it's a long-term project because I'm trying to reach a stronger image of the child, and it is by documenting the experience that I can assess what children, not what children are doing in terms of how well or how wrong according to another point of view, but the assessment of what children are capable [of]… the visibility, it's not the evaluation.

If educators and policymakers choose to learn from the thriving school culture of creativity at Halamoni School, and open up to a shift in thinking about documentation as assessment, it will soon become clear, seen in the unpredictable complexities of the educational experiences that are captured within the documentation, that the organic and integrated nature of pedagogy defies standardization. Without the impetus of evaluation as a driving force in assessment, the standardized assessment tool loses its appeal. In light of this reasoning, the recent decades of strong emphasis on quantitative standardized assessment measures as the key to educational reform may begin to wane and become replaced with a more authentic and qualitative research-oriented attitude toward our educational systems woes.

The work of Reggio educators, artists, and scholars to develop the idea and the act of pedagogical documentation has resulted in a shift in perspective about the purposes of assessment in the field of early childhood education. Inspired by these scholars, artists, and educators, and "provoked" as well as supported by my colleagues at Halamoni, I began to work within beginning stages in the development of a possible innovation in pedagogical documentation. The audio-photo vignettes are unique in terms of data found within published dissertations. However, they are only a compliment to the vast work being collaboratively done for decades in connection with the concept of pedagogical documentation in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

The audio-photo pedagogical documentation that is made public through this research, may lead to future interest in, as well as a deeper understanding of, the value of this topic of study in the field of early childhood education. This, in turn, may lead to localized public consensus about the idea of documentation as assessment, understood as

the act of *research and analysis* within the mainstream of policy and practice in the United States. The practical implications of this possible shift in culture of mainstream school policy point directly at the need for educators to be envisioned as documenters and researchers. And, it is within the understanding of professional development as a part of the *"daily life"* that educators push themselves to grow and gain professional skills such as documenting learning and analyzing what that documentation may mean in terms of what the child is thinking and theorizing.

The essential contribution of the atelier to a culture of creativity. It is the final conclusion of this research that the atelier, understood as a space for research of adults and children which is filled with the presence of the *many languages of expression*, is an essential contribution to the culture creativity which is clearly found at Halamoni School. The entire school is described as a "Big Atelier," and the *presence of the atelier* brings with it the freedom of the artist, the rich offerings of the 100 languages of children, and the visibility of the work that has come before. With this work, I am suggesting that it is a space which can exist in any school setting as a way to foster a culture of creativity. It is an idea which costs little. It is about organizing spaces within schools that are dedicated to the explorations and research of children and adults together in collaboration as they connect the *languages of expression* to the "fields of knowledge."

The atelier is an idea first, and then a place. It is the idea of *artist and child*, *collaboration with the other*, the *value of technique*, and *research and analysis* through exploration of the *languages of expression*, their connection with the "fields of knowledge" (Interview with Maeve), and the creative possibilities that are yet unknown. It is a place where children and adults work beside each other to construct meaningful

educational experiences together. The atelier is an undulating thread which ties all spaces of Halamoni School together within a shared school culture of creativity.

Implications

Implications of professional development as a part of "daily life." The value of professional development in the lives of the teachers and atelieristas that make up the faculty of Halamoni is clearly evident, even in the name that they have given to their weekly meetings; PD Meetings. Victoria recognizes professional development as a shared value in the school, and how it is an idea that can be extended outward into the community and beyond.

> I think for sure the concept of professional development is for sure a very strong aspect, and the concept of growth, that's one of the aspects that I think since I started Halamoni for sure I appreciated, because I know that the school offered a lot of professional development throughout different places within the school, of course, within the community, and outside the country, or… the state. (Interview with Victoria)

The discussions and debates that take place during weekly PD meetings at Halamoni School are ongoing and documented carefully by each faculty member in a journal that they bring with them each time. Often building on a previous idea or line of dialogue, Maeve is a visionary leader who has unending questions for everyone to consider during PD meetings, and in *the "daily life"* of the school.

The seriousness with which these educators approach their own professional development is connected to the fact that they all consider personal and professional development to go walk hand-in-hand, and an absolute necessity if they are to get to where they are moving toward together as a group.

> Professional development…it's a ritual…investing in professional development and in personal development is something that we will not negotiate. That we

> must evolve every time and in what kind of professional development, you know to provoke…. It's something that's the responsibility of everybody in the school, and if we are thinking because of a group, because of how we see the group moving, how we move to another place, we do it. (Interview with Maeve)

This message about the deeply rooted inter-relatedness of personal growth and professional development became an unexpected and profound lesson learned by the researcher in this study.

Personal and professional change: The value of remaining within the problems. Many times throughout the dissertation process, which took place over the course of 6 years, the researcher would find herself with nearly too many problems to navigate through successfully. Margaret shared, while speaking at the professional conference with the faculty at Halamoni, and spoke about the ongoing collaborative work in Reggio, "In our context, problems have never stopped" (PD Observation of Professional Conference). And this was certainly the case for me as I approached a new way of looking at my chosen profession, and how I would need to change myself and the image that I have of myself, in order to remain an early childhood educator. A willingness to remain within the problem and to persist at *keeping it going*, turned out to be the most invaluable tool in my professional problem-solving repertoire. Through a transformative process, which could be described as personal and professional development on a deep level, I was able to find my most articulate and creative self and my own unique potentiality, without even being aware that I was searching for it all along.

When entering the doctoral degree program, I brought with me burning questions from my profession, which I had just officially "burned out" of twice. Teaching was my

calling though. So, there was no giving up. With tremendous unbending emotional support from family and friends, I left the classroom (and my job) and dove deep into doctoral studies as a first means of finding my voice as an experienced and dedicated early childhood educator with rights. Becoming knowledgeable about the current and past research, as well as the policy implications of the reform movements of the current era in American education was only the first step in my journey. After the doctoral studies were completed was when the real exploration and self-reflective change would begin.

"The journey is the destination," Maeve said in a PD meeting at Halamoni School. This poetic declaration rings true for my personal and professional journey. Through valuing process (the journey itself), I could see the necessity of every pitfall and prolonging obstacle of the final culmination of the work. By staying within the problems and challenges of my studies and my proposals for research, I was able to find Halamoni, the perfect place for a study of a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, and remain *together* with them through the entirety of the work and "beyond."

Through being able to become a member of a culture of creativity, I became a more creative and open person and professional. As Geertz (1973) would put it, the ethnographer had gone native within a culture of creativity. And, the freedom and openness which that culture brings with it allowed me to see myself in a renewed and empowered light. This is evident in my new found willingness to explore many languages of expression in my work as a researcher and educator, as well as in my increased confidence and ability to take risks in the acts of *public-ation* which have come from the research, and those which are hopefully to come in the afterward of the dissertation. More importantly, the transformative power of this research on the researcher is indicative of

the long-lasting benefit of open-ended exploration of one's own self-image as an educator. Teachers engaging in qualitative, descriptive, and open-ended study of their own practice may find more of themselves than they had imagined they would, especially if they are willing to remain within the problems of their own personal and professional development and let the "journey be the destination".

Implications for teacher education. Value can be located within implications that the study findings and conclusions suggest for teacher education programs. The notion of a shared stance of openness as the key to the development and sustaining of a school culture of creativity imply that somehow, teachers-in-training may be required to learn to develop dispositions as well as skills when they are enrolled in teacher education programs. Being open, not only to watch, play, and create, but to *being with the child* requires that early childhood educators gain a firsthand understanding of the strong image of the child as a true partner in the co-construction of knowledge. This would mean that teacher education programs need to offer multiple and long-term opportunities for fieldwork in progressive settings which highlight the strengths of young children in the educational experience, such as those found in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools. Schools such as Halamoni could partner with a university setting, and welcome student teachers who would be able to understand better how pedagogy works within a school culture of creativity.

It is within early childhood teacher education programs that standards' frameworks can be applied to practical experience in ways that value the emergent and *alive* nature of the relationship between curriculum and assessment within a culture of creativity. Through the *revisitation* of documented experience, student teachers can

identify standards that were embedded within the lived moment (after it has taken place in revisitation, as well as before in planning). Progressive ideals of the Reggio Emilia approach do not deny the value of standards in education. It is only that caution is necessary when these standards' frameworks too often serve to narrowly predetermine and "control" (Interview with Paulo) the educational experience to the detriment of the quality of the learning, and the denial of the possibility for creative acts to occur in education.

The strong voice of leadership found within this study of the culture of creativity found at Halamoni school leads me as a researcher to question the necessity for attention to the voice of leadership each teacher has within herself. Maeve is a school leader who works with the children every day as an artist and atelierista. She wears many professional hats, and "brings vision" (Interview with Maeve) to the overall creative energy that is felt at Halamoni. Teacher education programs may address the vital role that the voice and vision of leadership plays when cultivating a culture of creativity in school. Early childhood teachers can be supported in their formal training to understand the importance as well as the strategies to use to bring these leadership qualities to their own work with children and families.

"Projections": "Keeping it Going" with Further Research

The end of this dissertation ethnography does not mark the end of these questions for me as an early childhood educator, teacher educator, and researcher. For me, this is part of a longer "journey" which began more than 20 years ago with a strong personal desire to be a progressive teacher, and will continue forward with ongoing pedagogical explorations, as well as future collaborations within an open stance of *creating*.

Generating multiple answers to the same questions about pedagogical relationships. One question which demands continual vigilance in education is the one which brings attention to the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment. If educators and policymakers move too far from this central issue in pedagogy, we will most certainly become "lost" (Interview with Maeve).

This study was originally imagined and proposed with the purpose of developing a more in-depth understanding of the nature of the relationship between curriculum and assessment within a school culture of creativity. According to the data which was generated during four and a half months of ethnographic fieldwork, the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment is to be understood as a symbiotic one. These processes are so completely intertwined within the *alive* educational experience at Halamoni School, that each continually requires the presence of the other; as if they are integral parts of a living whole.

The need for future studies to maintain focus on this important matter in education would be beneficial to those currently working in policy toward building a national framework for education. Understanding how curriculum and assessment fit together within the larger context of the educational experience is a task which exists within shifting contexts. The field of early childhood education is marked by trends of constantly shifting changes in policy and reform. This study can serve as an attempt to impress upon the reader the unceasing importance to continue to understand more clearly the nature of the relationship between curriculum and assessment within a school culture of creativity. These continued efforts may lead to further progress toward a national policy which supports creativity as a value in school.

Re-visiting rights of the "protagonists" in schools. When considering the point and worth of the research questions which have shaped this dissertation, I feel passionately that they are vital to the time in which we live as educators and families in the United States and internationally. It is a difficult time for progressive educators, and we must seize on the common goal of policymakers and progressives in education; the aim toward creativity in schools (Robinson, 2011). In order to approach the conversation of a paradigm shift toward education as "life," and the possibility of a mainstream culture of creativity in schools, the first talking point must be the rights of children and adults working in education to be *the "protagonist"* of their own individual and shared experiences.

It is not only the child that is being denied the power to choose and decide in our current systems of early childhood education. The rights of the early childhood educator are also being undermined in a market-driven process of "buying and selling" of curriculum and assessment products, which are developed and published in standardized ways within publishing houses situated far away from any contextualization of the school setting. This is the way it is done in mainstream education in America (Apple, 2008). Curriculum is developed and created by "experts in the field" who are hired by publishing companies to create a "one-size-fits-all" curriculum package for each grade level. When curriculum and assessment are systematically defined in this way, as static, dead, purchasable materials, and not "live" processes embedded within the educational experience, the rights of the educators to be curriculum makers (Craig & Ross, 2008) are being denied.

This ethnography serves a profound purpose if it can be a catalyst for strength in the argument in favor of true consideration for the rights of children and educators to be *the "protagonists"* in their own story. A shift in paradigm toward a mainstream culture of creativity in schools is the direction in which the argument leads. The specific path toward that progressive change is unknown, which causes trepidation for me as an educator and researcher. However, the lessons learned from this study have shown that with an open stance to be *watchful*, *playful*, and *creating*, combined with a commitment to *togetherness,* that many imagined ideas can be realized.

The Longitudinal Reggio Emilia-inspired Study

A common question asked in relation to any study set within a context of the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education focuses on how the children fare after they move onto more mainstream and traditional approaches to education and life. The book, *The Diary of Laura* (Edwards & Rinaldi, 2009) revisits the life of the child who was the subject of a very famous piece of Reggio pedagogical documentation after she has grown to adulthood. The book is not a study, however, and does not seek to measure any benefit or challenge to Laura that the Reggio Emilia philosophy of early childhood education has presented to her. It is a book of history; a trace of experience long past.

There is not a single longitudinal study about how children transition to more traditional settings after experiencing education as it is defined within the Reggio Emilia approach. Measuring the possible challenges or long-term benefits of this way of framing education may provide insight into how a culture of creativity in school may influence the lives of students for many years to come.

Appendix A

School Professionals Interview Protocol 1

School Professional Interview Protocol 1

Working Title: Exploring a Culture of Creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired School
Name of Interviewer: Barbara Becraft
Title of Interviewee: ___Director/Co-Director ___Teacher ___Atelierista
Date:
Starting Time:
Ending Time:

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Pseudonyms will be used as a way to protect your rights to confidentiality. The purpose of the study is to have a more clear and in-depth understanding of what characterizes the 'culture of creativity' that is found in Reggio-inspired schools, and how that school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment. This interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes. Do I have your permission to audio record this interview?

Interview Questions:
1. The idea of emergence in pedagogy and curricular thinking is strongly represented in the Reggio Emilia philosophy. Describe the importance of the idea of emergence in the work that you do.

2. "Pedagogical documentation" is a method that has been developed over time through the work of Reggio Emilia schools in Italy and Reggio-inspired schools around the globe. How do you interpret the meaning and value of this type of documentation?

3. What is the connection between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment as they are defined and lived out in your school community?

4. What role does the parent play in shaping the relationship between emergent curriculum and "pedagogical documentation"? What is the role of the child? What is your role?

5. What is the purpose of schooling in this Reggio Emilia-inspired school?

6. Is there anything that I have failed to ask you that you feel to be important to this discussion?

Conclusion: Thank you very much again for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your contribution is greatly valued and appreciated. I assure you that all information will be kept confidential, and that pseudonyms will be used in any written work relating to this study. You will receive a transcription of this interview so that you may review it and comment on your interpretation of the data.

Appendix B

School Professionals Interview Protocol 2

School Professionals Interview Protocol 2

Working Title: Exploring a Culture of Creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired School
Name of Interviewer: Barbara Becraft
Title of Interviewee: ___Director/Co-Director ___Teacher ___Atelierista
Date:
Starting Time:
Ending Time:

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Pseudonyms will be used as a way to protect your rights to confidentiality. The purpose of the study is to have a more clear and in-depth understanding of what characterizes the 'culture of creativity' that is found in Reggio-inspired schools, and how that school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment. This interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes. Do I have your permission to audio record this interview?

Interview Questions:
1. Please describe the most valued rituals and shared beliefs found in this school?

2. How do the "three protagonists" in Reggio schools collectively create a culture of school?

3. How can the physical environment of the school influence creativity?

4. How do the ordinary daily interactions of teachers and children here foster creative thinking and action in schools?

5. What is the role of the adults in your school community in relation to the creative thinking and actions of the children?

6. Is creativity a cultural choice for school organizations? Please elaborate.

Conclusion: Thank you very much again for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your contribution is greatly valued and appreciated. I assure you that all information will be kept confidential, and that pseudonyms will be used in any written work relating to this study. You will receive a transcription of this interview so that you may review it and comment on your interpretation of the data.

Appendix C

Parent Interview Protocol 1

Parent Interview Protocol 1

Working Title: Exploring a Culture of Creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired School

Name of Interviewer: Barbara Becraft
Date:
Starting Time:
Ending Time:

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Pseudonyms will be used as a way to protect your rights to confidentiality. The purpose of the study is to have a more clear and in-depth understanding of what characterizes the 'culture of creativity' that is found in Reggio-inspired schools, and how that school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment. This interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes. Do I have your permission to audio record this interview?

Interview Questions:
1. Can you describe how collaboration with parents and families is fostered in the Reggio Emilia approach?

2. How are you as a parent involved in decisions about moving forward with new ideas relating to the curriculum?

3. What is the role of your child in his or her own learning in this philosophy?

4. Describe your impressions of a typical day in the life of the classroom.

5. How is your child's learning that takes place in the classroom documented?

6. How is the idea of assessment understood in the context of the Reggio Emilia approach?

Conclusion: Thank you very much again for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your contribution is greatly valued and appreciated. I assure you that all information will be kept confidential, and that pseudonyms will be used in any written work relating to this study. You will receive a transcription of this interview so that you may review it and comment on your interpretation of the data.

Appendix D

Parent Interview Protocol 2

Parent Interview Protocol 2

Working Title: Exploring a Culture of Creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired School

Name of Interviewer: Barbara Becraft
Date:
Starting Time:
Ending Time:

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Pseudonyms will be used as a way to protect your rights to confidentiality. The purpose of the study is to have a more clear and in-depth understanding of what characterizes the 'culture of creativity' that is found in Reggio-inspired schools, and how that school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment. This interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes. Do I have your permission to audio record this interview?

Interview Questions:
1. How would you describe the culture of this school community?

2. What are some of the values that people in this community share about education?

3. How will your child benefit from being a student in a school culture that has these types of shared beliefs?

4. Is this school different from what you experienced as a young student? If yes, how?

5. Would you describe the culture of this school as a "culture of creativity? Why, or Why not?

6. Is there anything that I have failed to ask you that you feel to be important to this discussion?

Conclusion: Thank you very much again for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your contribution is greatly valued and appreciated. I assure you that all information will be kept confidential, and that pseudonyms will be used in any written work relating to this study. You will receive a transcription of this interview so that you may review it and comment on your interpretation of the data.

Appendix E

School Professionals Focus Group Interview Protocol

School Professionals Focus Group Interview Protocol

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group interview. Pseudonyms will be used as a way to protect your rights to confidentiality. The purpose of the study is to have a more clear and in-depth understanding of what characterizes the 'culture of creativity' that is found in Reggio-inspired schools, and how that school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment. The purpose of this focus group interview is to follow up on some ideas that have emerged this far in the research data. This focus group discussion will last approximately 45-60 minutes. Do I have your permission to audio record this discussion?

Interview Questions:

1. Curricular ideas and projected learning experiences are emergent in the philosophy of Reggio. Connections between emergent curriculum and pedagogical documentation have been highlighted throughout the study. They include_____. Please comment on the perceived accuracy of these identified connections. What do they connections tell us about the relationship between curriculum and assessment in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school?

2. Pedagogical documentation has been observed and discussed throughout this research. It has been described as _____ by school community members. Please comment on the accuracy of this description, and/or describe further the role of pedagogical documentation in the teaching and learning that occurs here.

3. Some of the values and beliefs that you share as professionals, and that may be described as defining characteristics of your school community are _____. Please comment on the accuracy of these characteristics as representative of your school community, and/or describe how creativity fits into this belief system.

4. _____ is a recurring theme in this research. Please discuss further the idea of _____ in the life of this school, especially as it relates to creativity and pedagogical relationships between curriculum and assessment.

Conclusion: Thank you very much again for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your contribution is greatly valued and appreciated. I assure you that all information will be kept confidential, and that pseudonyms will be used in any written work relating to this study. You will receive a transcription of this interview so that you may review it and comment on your interpretation of the data.

Appendix F

Parent Focus Group Interview Protocol

Parent Focus Group Interview Protocol

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group interview. Pseudonyms will be used as a way to protect your rights to confidentiality. The purpose of the study is to have a more clear and in-depth understanding of what characterizes the 'culture of creativity' that is found in Reggio-inspired schools, and how that school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment. This focus group discussion will last approximately 45-60 minutes. Do I have your permission to audio record this discussion?

Interview Questions:

1. Describe your child's experience here at school.

2. In what ways are you as a parent invited to be involved in the overall experience at this school?

3. What role do parents and families have in the curriculum that is enacted in the classroom?

4. In your opinion, how is assessment defined at this school?

5. What are some of the reasons that you have chosen this approach to education for your child?

6. How would you describe the culture of the school? What are some values that you share with other members of this school community?

Conclusion: Thank you very much again for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your contribution is greatly valued and appreciated. I assure you that all information will be kept confidential, and that pseudonyms will be used in any written work relating to this study. You will receive a transcription of this interview so that you may review it and comment on your interpretation of the data.

Appendix G

Student Focus Group Interview Protocol

Student Focus Group Interview Protocol

For the purposes of this focus group interview, there will be 5-8 children present. The focus group interview will last 15 minutes. The children will be between the ages of 4 and 5 years old.

Introduction: Hello boys and girls. Thank you for agreeing to talk with me today about your school. What you have to say about your school and your learning is very important to me. So, I want us to take turns in sharing ideas about some questions that I have for you to think about. I have brought a "talking stick" to use in our discussion (researcher shows the children the 'talking stick' she has brought). Whoever is holding the stick will be main "talker" for that time. I will help you pass the stick around, and everyone will get a chance to speak. I would like to record your words so that I will be able to write down exactly what you say later on. Is it alright with everyone if I turn on the recording machine?

1. Why do you come to school?

2. How do you learn?

3. How do your teachers help you to learn at school?

4. Why do your teachers take pictures of you and write your words down when you are learning?

5. What do you think is special or important about your school?

Conclusion: Thank you for talking with me today. I have learned so much from you!

Appendix H

Observation Protocol 1

Observation Protocol 1

Class Groups/Learning Spaces Observation Protocol

The purpose of the study is to have a more clear and in-depth understanding of what characterizes the 'culture of creativity' that is found in Reggio-inspired schools, and how that school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment. The table below will be used to guide classroom observations. The observer will focus on the following aspects of classroom life:

1) Environment (Physical and Social)
2) Dialogue
3) Interactions (adult-adult, adult-child, child-child)
4) Events (Group and Individual)
5) Key Concepts that Emerge

Date:

Length of observation:

Descriptive Notes	Reflective Notes

Appendix I

Observation Protocol 2

Observation Protocol 2

Professional Development Experiences Observation Protocol

The purpose of the study is to have a more clear and in-depth understanding of what characterizes the 'culture of creativity' that is found in Reggio-inspired schools, and how that school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment.
The table below will be used to guide observations of a professional development experience. The observer will focus on the following aspects of the experience:
1) Environment (Physical & Social)
2) Dialogue
3) Interactions
4) Key Concepts that Emerge
Date:
Length of observation:

Descriptive Notes	Reflective Notes

Appendix J

List of Audio-Recorded and Photography Subjects

List of Audio-Recorded & Photography Subjects

Places

The “nido”

The “plaza”

The “park”

Events

Assemblies

Storytelling

Student Conversations

Staff Meetings

Project Work with Groups of Students and Adults working together

Play

Transitions

Appendix K

Audio-Recording and Photograph Summary Form

Audio-Recording and Photograph Summary Form

Name of Audio-Recording and Photograph /Date Reviewed

_____

Description of Data

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Research Connections: How does this data relate to the research questions?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix L

Recruiting Email

Recruiting Email

Dear Director,

I am sending this email as a formal request to you that I may conduct an ethnographic study at your school. The purpose of the study is to have a more clear and in-depth understanding of what characterizes the 'culture of creativity' that is found in Reggio-inspired schools, and how that school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment. The aim of this research is to better understand how curriculum and assessment occur in your school, as well as how these processes are related. Pseudonyms will be used in any written work relating to this study.

The timeline proposed for this ethnographic study is as follows:

1. 5 months of fieldwork (participant observation and data generation) will begin at the start of the coming school year. During this time period, the researcher will spend 3-4 days/week at the school observing class groups, observing professional development meetings, making audio-recordings and taking photographs of school life, journaling, conducting interviews, and facilitating focus group discussions. Analysis will occur as the data is collected.
2. Immediately following fieldwork, 5 months will be spent in continuing analysis of data. This will also be a time spent writing up any findings or conclusions that can be inferred from the data.

Multiple sources of data will be gathered. Multiple perspectives will be valued.

Weekly classroom observations will be conducted according to a pre-approved observation guide. The guide will serve to focus the observations in an effort to answer the research questions that have been developed for this study. The questions are:

1) How is a culture of creativity fostered within a Reggio Emilia-inspired school?

2) In a culture of creativity, what characterizes the relationship between the pedagogical processes of curriculum and assessment?

Scheduling decisions for observing in classrooms, interviews and focus group discussions will be subject to the approval of you and your staff and families. The purpose of the interviews and focus group discussions is to generate dialogue that will help to answer the research questions. The purpose of the audio-recordings and photographs is to capture audio and visual traces of the culture of the school. I sincerely hope that you will agree to allow me to learn more about the complex processes of curriculum and assessment as they are evidenced in the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education through an in-depth look at how they are lived within the culture of your school.

Sincerely,
Barbara Becraft

Appendix M

Letter of Cooperation

Letter of Cooperation

June 11, 2012

To the Florida Atlantic University (IRB):

I am familiar with Barbara Becraft's research project entitled Exploring Pedagogical Relationships within a Culture of Creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired School. I understand L'Atelier's involvement as being the participating research site for 5 months of fieldwork and data generation. I understand that, over the course of these 5 months, the researcher will generate the following data: 160 class groups observations, 4 professional development observations, 6 interviews with school professionals, 2 interviews with parents, a focus group discussion with each of the following groups, 1) school professionals, 2) parents, and 3) students, and 40-80 audio-recording sessions with 5-15 corresponding photo images to compliment each audio-recording.

I understand that this research will be carried out following sound ethical principles and that participant involvement in this study is strictly voluntary and provides confidentiality of research data, as described in the research proposal and protocols.

Therefore, as the institutional authority of L'Atelier, I agree that Barbara Becraft's dissertation research may be conducted at and in collaboration with our school.

Sincerely,

Appendix N

Child Assent Script Form

Child Assent Script Form

Exploring Pedagogical Relationships in a Culture of Creativity
in a Reggio Emilia-inspired School

I have been a visitor at your school almost every day so far this year because I am trying to learn more about your school and how children learn here. I would like to sit and talk with you and some of your friends about that. I want to talk with you because you know what it is like learn at your school better than anyone. If you decide to talk with me and some of your friends, I will ask questions that we can think about together. I will ask you and your friends to sit with me for a short meeting in your classroom. At our meeting, we will talk about what you do at school, and how you learn. If you feel shy, you may pass your turn to talk. If you want to leave the meeting, you can do that too.

You do not have to be there at all if you don't want to. No one will be sad if you decide you don't want to come to the meeting. If you do come to the meeting, you will be helping me to learn more about how special your school is, and how people learn here.

This research study has been explained to me and I agree to be in this study.

_____ _____

First Name **Last Name**

_____ _____

Subject's Signature for Assent **Date**

Check which applies (to be completed by person conducting assent discussion):

☐ The subject is capable of reading and understanding the assent form and has signed above as documentation of assent to take part in this study.

☐ The subject is not capable of reading the assent form, however, the information was explained verbally to the subject who signed above to acknowledge the verbal explanation and his/her assent to take part in this study.

_____

Name of Person Obtaining Assent (Print)

_____ _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Assent **Date**

Appendix O

Parent Consent Form

Parent Consent Form

1) Title of Research Study:
Exploring Pedagogical Relationships in a Culture of Creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired School

2) Investigators: Dr. Gail Burnaford and Mrs. Barbara Becraft

3) Purpose: The purpose of this proposed ethnography is to develop a clearer and more in-depth understanding of what characterizes the culture of creativity that is found in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, and how that one specific Reggio-inspired school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment.

4) Procedures:
As a part of the study, your child may be asked to participate in 1 focus group discussion during the 5th month of the research. Only children from the 4's and 5's class will be asked to participate in this focus group discussion. The focus group will last 15 minutes, and will occur in the natural setting of the school. The specific date and time of the focus group discussion will be arranged according to school schedules. These discussions will be audio-taped and transcribed in an effort to document your child's words and ideas accurately. Your child may participate in other aspects of the research while declining participation in the student group.

In addition to possible participation in a focus group discussion, 2 weekly observations will be conducted with your child's class group (regardless of child age) over the course of the 5 months that this study will occur at your child's school. An approved observational protocol will be used by the researcher in an effort to connect what is happening in the learning space to the research questions. These observations will not be audio-taped.

Finally, 2-4 audio-recording and photo sessions will occur each week in various learning spaces throughout the school. Your child may or may not be present during these recording and photo sessions. They will be planned in an emergent way to capture the sounds and sights of the school as they occur.

5) Risks:
The risks involved with participating in this study are no more than your child would experience in regular school activities. It is unlikely that your child will experience any harm or discomfort.

Initials _____

6) Benefits:
The potential benefits to your child are: an increased understanding of 1) how they learn at their school, 2) why their teachers document their learning in the ways that they do,

and 3) what the sounds and sights of their school are. The potential benefits to the field of early childhood education include: increased awareness of ways of embedding creativity as a value in early childhood educational programs, how curriculum and assessment work within a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the southeastern U.S.

7) Data Collection and Storage:
Any information collected about your child will be kept confidential and secure and only the people working with the study will see your child's data, unless required by law. The data will be kept for 3 years in a password protected computer as well as a locked file cabinet in the investigators office. After 3 years, paper copies will be destroyed by shredding and electronic data will be deleted. We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not let anyone know your child's name/identity unless you give us permission.

8) Contact Information:
For questions or problems regarding your child's rights as a research participant, you can contact the Florida Atlantic University Division of Research at (561) 297-0777. For other questions about the study, you should call the principle investigators, Dr. Gail Burnaford at (561) 297-6598, and Barbara Becraft at (727) 643-0080.

9) Consent Statement:
I have read or had read to me the preceding information describing this study. All of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I allow my child_____
_____ (first/last name) to take part in this study.

My child can refuse to participate ar stop participating at any time without giving any reason and without penalty. I can ask to have the information related to my child returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed. I have received a copy of this consent form.

My child may ____ may not ____ be audiotaped.
My child may ____ may not ____ be photographed.
My child may ____ may not ____ participate in a focus group discussion*
*(only for children 4-5 years old)

Signature of Parent or Guardian:_____ Date:_____

Printed name of Parent: First Name_____ Last Name_____

Signature of Investigator:_____ Date:_____

Appendix P

Adult Consent Form

Adult Consent Form

1) Title of Research Study:
Exploring Pedagogical Relationships in a Culture of Creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired School

2) Investigators: Dr. Gail Burnaford and Mrs. Barbara Becraft

3) Purpose:
The purpose of this proposed ethnography is to develop a clearer and more in-depth understanding of what characterizes the culture of creativity that is found in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, and how that one specific Reggio-inspired school culture fosters a complex and dynamic interplay between curriculum and assessment.

4) Procedures:
During the study, you may be asked to participate in 1-2 interviews that will last between 45-60 minutes each. The initial interview will occur during the 2nd month of the research, and the last round of interviews will occur during the 3rd or 5th month of research (depending on whether you are a school professional or a parent). You will also be asked to participate in 1 focus group discussion, which will last between 45-60 minutes. The focus group will occur during the 4th or 5th month of the study (depending on whether you are a school professional of a parent). Interviews and focus group discussions will take place at the school site. Specific times and dates for interviews and focus group discussions will be arranged according to school schedules, and your convenience. Interviews and focus group discussions will be audio-taped and transcribed in an effort to document your perspective accurately. You will have the opportunity to check your own transcripts within a month of data generation, and inform the researcher of any discrepancies that you may recognize in the data.

If you are a teacher, you will allow for 2 observations to occur each week with your class group. Observations will last between 45-60 minutes. An approved observational protocol will be used by the researcher in an effort to connect what is happening in the learning space to the research questions. These observations will not be audio-taped. Observational data will be available for you to review and discuss in terms of accuracy and interpretation.

If you are a school professional, you will agree to be observed during 4 (45-60 minute) professional development meetings at your school. These observations will occur one time during the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 5th months of fieldwork. These observations will not be audio-taped. In addition to allowing for the class group and professional development observations, you will agree to allow for 2-4 audio-recording and photo sessions in your school environment during each week of the study.

Initials _____

Specific schedules for this type of data generation will be decided upon systematically and prescriptively at first (following the order of a list of places and events to be recorded

and photographed), and then emergently by the researcher in response to the rhythms of school life. You will have the opportunity to hear and view this data at the end of each month during a staff meeting. Your interpretations of what the audio-recordings and paired photo images mean with regards to the research questions will be welcomed by the researcher.

5) Risks:
The risks involved with participating in this study are no more than your child would experience in regular school activities. It is unlikely that your child will experience any harm or discomfort.

6) Benefits:
The potential benefits to the field of early childhood education include: increased awareness of ways of embedding creativity as a value in early childhood educational programs, how curriculum and assessment work within a culture of creativity in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school in the southeastern U.S.

7) Data Collection and Storage:
Any information collected about your child will be kept confidential and secure and only the people working with the study will see your child's data, unless required by law. The data will be kept for 3 years in a password protected computer as well as a locked file cabinet in the investigators office. After 3 years, paper copies will be destroyed by shredding and electronic data will be deleted. We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not let anyone know your child's name/identity unless you give us permission.

8) Contact Information:
For questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact the Florida Atlantic University Division of Research at (561) 297-0777. For other questions about the study, you should call the principle investigators, Dr. Gail Burnaford at (561) 297-6598, or Barbara Becraft at (727) 643-0080.

9) Consent Statement:
I have read or had read to me the preceding information describing this study. All of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I am 18 years of age or older and freely consent to participate. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. I have received a copy of this consent form.

I agree ____ I do not agree ____ to be audiotaped.
I agree ____ I do not agree _____ to be photographed.

Signature of Participant:_____ Date:_____
Printed name of Participant: First _____ Last _____
Signature of Investigator:_____

Appendix Q

First Iteration of Open Coding: A List of 65 Codes

First iteration of open coding: A list of 65 codes

being with the child
playing games
teacher decisions
being away from the child
modeling
safety decisions
playful teacher
offering choices
rules
teacher noticings
ready or not?
transforming
knowing the child
playful child
sending messages
hearing messages
teacher's questions
child's questions
child's protest
telling stories
sharing materials
keeping it going
child's rememberings
group formation
building relationships
celebrating
multi-lenguality
multiple documenting forms
photo
audio
video
singing together
group initiatve
child initiative
bodyness
working together in the zone
spoken invitations
environmental invitations
physical invitations
materials exploration
self-assessment
self-recognition
changing spaces
remembering specifics
transition talk
unexpected changes
open to emergence
parent involvement
parent voice
ordinary moments
appreciation
love
creating sound provocations
creating musical moods
respect for the voice of the child
affectionate solutions
offering choices
parent questions
voice of the child
joyful engagement
child's engagement
close bonds
participant-observer continuum
importance of being together
written/sketched documentation

Appendix R

Second Iteration of Open Coding: Initial Categorization of Codes

Second iteration of open coding: Initial categorization of codes

Category 1: Role of the Adult
Related Codes:
being with the child
playing games
teacher questions
playful teacher
offering choices
affectionate solutions
safety decisions
being away from the child
rules
teacher noticings
ready or not?
transforming
knowing the child
sending messages/hearing messages
parent involvement
voice of the parent
parent questions
appreciation
love
creating musical moods
creating sound provocations
open to emergence

Category 2: Role of the Child
Related Codes:
playful child
watchful child
child initiative
telling stories
asking questions
transforming
protest
non-compliance
joyful engagement
sharing materials
sending messages/hearing messages
child's rememberings
keeping it going

Category 3: Togetherness
Related Codes:
importance of being together
group formation
group initiative
building relationships
close bonds
participant-observer continuum
singing together
multi-lenguality
celebrating
collaboration with the other

Category 4: Presence of Documentation
Related Codes:
photo documentation
video documenatation
written documentation
audio documentation

Category 5: Presence of the Atelier
Related Codes:
small group experiences
small group formation
materials exploration
changing spaces

Category 6: Invitations
Related Codes:
spoken invitations
physical invitations
environmental invitations

Category 7: Revisiting and Remembering
Related Codes:
self-assessment
self-recognition
remembering specifics
remembering together
child's rememberings

Category 8: Flow of the Day
Related Codes:
transition talk
transition moments
unexpected changes
changing spaces
open to emergence
ordinary moments

Category 9: Bodyness
Related Codes:
Bodyness: expression
bodyness: exploration
bodyness: choices/freedom
bodyness: self-assessment
bodyness: big body play
bodyness: style
bodyness: ready or not?
bodyness: telling stories
bodyness: sound explorations
bodyness transformations

Appendix S

Third Iteration of Coding: Recategorizing the 9 Initial Categories Into 10

Third iteration of coding: Re-categorizing the 9 initial categories into 10

Category 1: Dispositions and Actions of the Adult:

Related Codes:
Being with the Child
Being away from the Child
Knowing the Child
Keeping it Going
Transition Talk
Appreciation
Love
Affectionate Support/Solutions
Image of the Child
Respect for the Child
Creating Musical Moods
Creating Sound Provocations
Open to Emergence
Open to Explore
Open to Believe
Playing Games
Playful Teacher
Transforming
Teacher "Noticings"
Safety Decisions
Working Together in the Zone
'Ready or Not?'
Deciding "What to Do"
Voice of the Teacher
Teacher "Noticings"- shared
Spoken Invitations
Environmental Invitations
Physical Invitations
Sending Messages
Hearing Messages
Asking Questions
Offering Choices
Revisiting Rules
Non-Compliance
Parent Participation
Parent Questions
Voice of the Parent
Image of the Parent
Joyful Engagement
"Public-ation"
Welcoming

Category 2: Dispositions and Actions of the Child

- Watchful Child
- Playful Child
- Creating Games
- Taking the Initiative
- Voice of the Child
- Telling Stories
- Asking Questions
- Answers and Theories
- Ready or Not?
- Non-Compliance
- Protest
- Joyful Engagement
- Sending Messages
- Hearing Messages
- Children Remembering
- Keeping it Going
- Deciding "What to Do"
- Working Together in the Zone
- Children Noticing
- Love
- Open to Emergence
- Open to Explore
- Open to Believe

Category 3: Togetherness:

- Related Codes:
- Importance of Being Together
- Commitment to the Other
- Collaboration with the Other
- Deciding "What to Do"
- Group Initiative
- Group Formation
- Building Relationships
- Close Bonds
- Working Together in the Zone
- Participant/Observer Continuum (welcoming the new)
- Celebrating
- Singing Together
- Exploring Together
- Creating Together
- Multi-Lenguality
- "Public-ation"

Category 5: Flow of the Day:
- Related Codes:
- Welcoming
- The Importance of Being Together
- Transition Moments
- Transition Talk
- Unexpected Changes/Events
- Changing Spaces
- Open to Emergence
- Ordinary Moments
- Alive

Category 6: Revisitations:
- Related Codes:
- Remembering Specifics
- Self-Recognition
- Self-Assessment
- Deciding “What to Do”
- Being Together
- Research and Analysis

Category 7: Presence of Documentation:
- Related Codes:
- Photo doc
- Video doc
- Written doc
- Audio doc
- Listening
- Watchful Teacher
- Respect for the Child
- Image of the Child
- Technology
- Research and Analysis

Category 8: Presence of the Atelier:
- Related Codes:
- Small Group Formation
- Small Group Experiences
- Open to Explore
- Many Languages of Expression
- Changing Spaces
- Analysis and Research

Category 9: Presence of Languages of Expression:

Related Codes:
Pencils
Markers
Paints
Clay
Paper
Charcoal
Pastels
Chalk
Sand
Found Objects
Natural Objects
Construction Materials
Mixed Media
Fabrics
Ribbons
Light
Sound and Body

Category 10: “We call it Bodyness”:

Related Codes:
Sound and Body
Bodyness: Explorations
Bodyness: Choices
Bodyness: Big Body Play
Bodyness: Provocation
Bodyness: Style
Bodyness: Freedom
Bodyness: Non-compliance
Bodyness: Ready or Not?
Bodyness: Transformations
Together in Bodyness
Talking without Words

Appendix T

Fourth Iteration of Coding and Categorizing:

Four Themes Emergent in the Data

Fourth iteration of coding and categorizing: Four themes emergent in the data

Theme 1: The Protagonists foster a culture of creativity in a RE-inspired school.
Related Categories:
Dispositions and Actions of Children
Dispositions and Actions of Adults

Theme 2: The "Daily Life" represents and embodies the organic nature of a pedagogical culture of creativity.
Related Categories:
Togetherness
Flow of the Day

Theme 3: Research and Analysis is the shared intention of adults in a school culture of creativity and a way to describe the character of the relationship between curriculum and assessment.
Related Categories:
Presence of Documentation
Presence of Atelier
Revisitations

Theme 4: Languages of Expression open up the possibilities for exploration and expression in education and life.
Related Categories:
Presence of Languages of Expression
"We call it Bodyness"

Appendix U

Data Generation Schedule

Data Generation Schedule

Month	Observations	Interviews	Focus Groups	Audiofacts
January 2013 (last week)	***1- 2 (45-60 minute) observations with each of the 4 class groups per week, using Observation Protocol 1. *1 (45-60 minute) observation of a professional development experience.			
February 2013	***1-2 (45-60 minute) observations with each of the 4 class groups per week, using Observation Protocol 1. *1 (45-60 minute) observation of a professional development experience, using Observation Protocol 2.	**1 individual (45-60 minute) school professionals interviews, using School Professionals Interview Protocol 1		***8-16 Audio-recording sessions, each paired with 5-15 photos
March 2013	***1-2 (45-60 minute) observations with each of the 4 class groups per week, using Observation Protocol 1. ***1 (45-60 minute) observation of a professional development experience, using			***8-16 Audio-recording sessions, each paired with 5-15 photos

	Observation Protocol 2.			
April 2013	***1-2 (45-60 minute) observations with each of the 4 class groups per week, using Observation Protocol 1.			***8-16 Audio-recording sessions, each paired with 5-15 photos
May 2013	***0-2 (45-60 minute) observations with each of the 4 class groups per week, using Observation Protocol 1. ***2 (45-60 minute) observations of a professional development experience, using Observation Protocol 2.	**1 individual (45-60 minute) interview with a school professional, using School Professionals Interview Protocol 1. *2 individual (45-60 minute) interviews with school professionals, using School Professionals Interview Protocol 2	***1 (15 minute) focus group discussion with 8 children, using Student Focus Group Interview Protocol **1 (45-60 minute) focus group discussion with 10 school professionals, using School Professionals Focus Group Interview Protocol ***1 (45-60 minute) focus group discussion with 5 parents, using Parent Focus Group Interview Protocol.	***8-16 Audio-recording sessions, each paired with 5-15 photos
June 2013		**1 (45-60 minute) interview with a parent who has been with the school for 2+ years, using the Parent Interview Protocol 1.		

June 2013		*1 (45-60 minute) interview 1 parent who has been with the school for 1 year, using Parent Interview Protocol 2. **2 (45-60 minute) interviews with school professionals, using the School Professionals Interview Protocol 1.		

Note. * = relating to Research Question 1 only. ** = relating to Research Question 2 only. *** = relating to Research Questions 1 and 2.

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