Respectful Relationships: How does the Montessori environment foster relationships with respect?

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Attestation of authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

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Ethics approval

Abstract

This study investigates the phenomenon of respect through examination of the literature and observation of lived experience in two Montessori environments in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Utilising a case study approach, the thesis seeks to reveal the nature of respectful relationships and how these are fostered in two Montessori early childhood centres. A qualitative approach is used to study the social setting in order to understand the meaning of participants' lives in their own terms. This design makes explicit the ways people come to understand and manage day-to-day situations.

A phenomenological method was employed to look beyond the details of everyday life in order to draw upon the lived experiences of the participants. The technique of bracketing observations required the researcher to suspend assumptions and common-sense explanations concerning the experience. This assisted the researcher to encounter the observations independently and reduced bias.

The findings reveal four aspects that work in conjunction with the child's natural development to foster respect: A prepared environment and the child's freedom within that environment serve to demonstrate how the respectful relationship can be supported and fostered in individuals. In addition, the development of a mutual relationship based on recognition of the child's capabilities; and freedom of movement within the environment work in conjunction to foster respect for self, others and the environment.

Information for the case studies was recorded by video camera. Relationship building prior to data collection alleviated fears associated with the video recording and provided more insight into participants' lived experiences. In conjunction, video data provided a record of moments in time for review and reflection.

Future research may seek to provide comparison of the outcomes of practice in differing situations but a key point in this research was an emphasis on non-

judgmental acceptance of each Montessori environment. The research sheds light on situations in which teachers, other adults and children develop respectful practice(s). The study indicates how Montessori philosophy and nature intertwines to achieve reciprocal and respectful relationships between all involved in this approach to education and life.

Chapter One: Introduction

The development of my interest in respect

The rationale for this study arises from my observations as a teacher in primary and secondary settings, both conventional and Montessori, and, more recently, in a Montessori early childhood centre. My background in teaching different age groups and environments has coloured my experience and findings in literature. Resulting from this, it is my contention that the experience of reciprocal and respectful relationships between teachers and children is of particular significance for successful learning and development.

My research relates to the question of how the development of respectful relationships between teacher and learner, impact on education both academically and morally. Additionally, I plan to shed light on how teachers achieve and maintain respectful relationships in the Montessori environment. This aligns with the principle expressed in the New Zealand early childhood curriculum, Te Whāriki, in which learning through responsive and reciprocal relationships is said to provide a rich social world for the child to discover and contemplate (Ministry of Education, 1996).

Significance of the study

Literature on the subject of respect provides a basis for interpreting the virtue of respect and how children view and acquire the concept. The contribution of this study lies in the provision of specific examples from lived experiences and philosophical discussion about how children learn to engage in reciprocal and respectful relationships.

This study aims to record similarities between two Montessori centers and focuses on respect as an integral aspect of effective teaching and learning. Two case studies, located in the Montessori context, were designed to provide a window into

environments that recognise respect as a fundamental part of the child's development.

A particular feature of this study is that it does not attempt to compare. Due to the nature of the study, I am seeking commonalities in two environments. Likewise, I am not seeking to compare philosophies of teaching and learning. Comparing philosophies or practices is not, in my view, respectful as comparison can lead to competition, and in competition, one is viewed as better than another. Finding similarities in two Montessori environments invites the reader to view how respect is perceived and achieved in the two cases.

Respect (Manāki) and kaupapa Māori

An indigenous view of a pedagogy that incorporates kaupapa Māori (Māori aspirations, preferences and practices) theory and practice is required in order to understand respect, particularly in Aotearoa, New Zealand. It is through this pedagogy that, according to Bishop and Glynn (2000) "the structural issues of power and control can be addressed…in ways that will benefit all students" (p.4).

In terms of respect in an Aotearoa, New Zealand experience, Pere (1994) has defined the Māori concept manāki as meaning "to show respect or kindness to; to give hospitality, or to bestow". This is completely unconnected to material wealth and regards "the finer qualities of people" (p. 72). Children in kura kaupapa Māori (schools where children are immersed in Te Reo Māori (language) and tikanga (culture)) learn about the concept of manākitanga as a system by which to maintain the interdependent nature of relationships. It is an expression of the quality of relationships amongst people; the raising up of others, and the mutual acknowledgment of each other (Tākao, Grennell, McKegg, & Wehipeihana, 2012).

Kaupapa Māori is an example of an indigenous educational setting where students participate on terms that are culturally determined by the students. Here 'culture counts' as the classrooms are places where learners can bring 'who they are' safely and know their knowledge is acceptable and legitimate (Bishop & Glynn, 2000). As this study will show, Montessori shared the same aspirations for children in her

centres and children's houses throughout the world. Because this study is set in an Aotearoa New Zealand context and because of my own affiliation to the indigenous people of Aotearoa, I believe it is important to respect and engage in a pedagogy that reflects the beliefs of and honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi). From time to time I will reflect on my findings using this perspective.

Hohepa, McNaughton, and Jenkins (1996) argue that this philosophy provides opportunities for a child and adult to engage in shared activity, maximising the chances they will attend to the same objects and events and interpret situations in similar ways. In the following chapter, I will explore literature on other perspectives on the concept of respect and define respect into different targets.

Phenomenology

The research is positioned as a study in interpretive phenomenology and the analysis draws from philosophical writings by Heidegger, Van Manen, Merleau-Ponty, and Husserl. Phenomenological research rests on the notion that the researcher attempts to return to the things themselves to capture the essence underlying the lived experience of participants (Giles, 2010).

Phenomenology requires the study of phenomena. Cerbone (2006) explains that the notion of phenomenon coincides with the notion of experience. To attend to the phenomena is to attend to the experience as opposed to the experienced.

More precisely, phenomenology is concerned with ways in which things become manifest to us, and with the shape and structure of that manifestation. One form of manifestation is that of perception (Cerbone, 2006). Montessori education is guided by the manifestations of children at different phases of growth (Montessori, 1971) and is linked to the child's progressive refinement in perception.

Phenomenological research also seeks to reveal the lived experience of a particular phenomenon. For the purpose of this project, observations were made, collated, and then endorsed in conversation style interviews with staff members where they were

asked about their experiences and philosophical understandings. Phenomenology seeks to find explanations and answers from the stories of the participants by looking beyond the details of everyday life to the essence underlying them. The theoretical point of view advocated in phenomenology is the study of direct experience taken at face value. Likewise it is one which sees behaviour as determined by the phenomena of experience rather than by external, objective and physically described reality (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000).

Montessori called for teachers to become observers in order to attend to simple but precious principles using both scientific pedagogy and phenomenological research. I shall endeavour to go beyond my own conscious and voluntary knowledge in order to focus on the lived experience of the participants in my study. I take my lead from Maria Montessori's son, Mario Montessori, cited in Gatewood (2007) describes her method:

> The phenomena she witnessed were not due to any educational theory of hers…She concentrated on the phenomena and facts…She always sought to catch the essence of the phenomena which were observed and, if it were possible, to elaborate from them an essential and existentialistic vision. (p. 4)

Gadamer (2004) adds to this and urges researchers to explore and study their own ideas before attempting to move beyond prior understandings. Sensitivity to others requires us to be aware of the likelihood that our own understandings will enhance what we hear in interactions. Gadamer (2004) offers guidance to researchers when learning about the experiences of others: "The important thing is to be aware of one's own bias, so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against its own fore-meanings" (p. 271).

Suspending questions and assumptions concerning the experience by 'bracketing' them marks the beginning of investigation for Husserl (2002). This involves an act of exclusion which Husserl (2002) calls the transcendental-phenomenological reduction. 'Transcendental' because it uncovers the ego for which everything has

meaning and existence. Schmitt (1959) further explains, 'phenomenological' because it transforms the world into mere phenomenon. Finally, the 'reduction' leads us back to the source of the meaning and existence of the experienced world, in so far as it is experienced, by uncovering intentionality.

This begins with questioning taken-for-granted assumptions and by bracketing the objective world to give it a different value. By performing the reduction, the researcher establishes him or herself as a disinterested spectator and in doing so changes their practical aims. The change of attitude results in a change of experience. Previously experienced reality becomes mere phenomenon (Schmitt, 1959).

This entails the phenomenological researcher to make explicit their pre-assumptions. This is achieved by the practice of bracketing. Merleau-Ponty, (n.d., cited in Gallagher, 2010), explains the radical phenomenological reduction as bracketing common-sense explanations and empirical science. Merleau-Ponty points out however, that even in the event of ''bracketing'' the phenomenological reduction is always incomplete (Gallagher, 2010).

The motivation for taking a phenomenological perspective of the reduction is justified by the fact that we are immersed in the world. The fact that we are, somewhere in time, being-in-the-world, is exactly what prevents the reduction from being complete, that is to say, we can never completely step back from any observation (Gallagher, 2010).

Husserl and Gibson (1962) also depict phenomenological reduction as bracketing away, suspending or disconnecting. The reduction aims to suspend the phenomenon at a moment in time by returning to the subject itself. It is essentially suspending judgment about the world, by removing layers one at a time, to get to the core, the meaning of the interaction. Only then, can the subjective perception of the observer, experience the phenomena as it was given originally to consciousness.

In phenomenology, the procedure of bracketing is therefore essential. Husserl and Gibson (1962) explain "the phenomenological reduction helps us to free ourselves from prejudices and secure the purity of our detachment as observers, so that we can

encounter things as they are in themselves independently of any presuppositions" (p. 3).

My own experiences bring forth an opportunity to reflect and it is this reflection that promotes questions about my understandings. As I move forward or away from my 'taken for granted assumptions' and focus on the experiences of others, I seek to understand the phenomenon of the interactions I have observed. Cerbone (2006) clarifies that once the standpoint of the reduction has been attained, questions can be investigated concerning the essential structures of experience.

The thesis topic presents an opportunity to observe two different environments and the interactions and experiences that contribute to Montessori philosophy. Relationships are of primary concern to educators and the focus of much educational research. While many authors provide theoretical understandings of how relationships exist (Baker, 2006; Gallagher & Mayer, 2006; Pianta, Steinberg, & Rollins, 1995; Tiedeman, 1942) investigations into the lived experiences of relationships with young children are not abundant; this phenomenological study is therefore aimed at providing a window into understanding how particular Montessori environments foster respect through relationships.

The methodology resonates with Montessori's call for social justice for the child and attentiveness by adults to children's needs (Chisnall, 2011). Montessori (1996) once said,

> Sciences that seek to probe the causes of the weaknesses and failures of
> the human soul must go beyond immediate causes and, passing beyond
> what is consciously known, arrive at the original sources. …the body and
> soul of the child. (p. 183)

Phenomenology seeks to discover how we process and experience day-to-day moments in order to uncover the hidden aspects of these routines. Moving beyond the realm of analytical adult thinking opens a portal to viewing interactions and experience in order to understand human experience (Cerbone, 2006).

Introducing the study

The purpose of this project is to explore what aspects of the Montessori environment, in the 3-6 year old class, establish relationships built on respect and how those relationships impact on teaching and learning. Observations were made from two case studies in Montessori environments to determine aspects of their practice that are congruent and lead to relationships built on the virtue of respect.

This research study attempts to correlate similarities of interactions in two Montessori environments. The aim is to observe and analyse interactions in and with the environment to determine how the virtue of respect is viewed and ingrained in Montessori practice. It also examines specific strategies and practices that are similar in the different environments that promote respect for the self, each other, and the environment.

Locating the study within an Aotearoa New Zealand context

Several Montessori centres in Aotearoa New Zealand have been the subjects of study in the recent past (Bone, Cullen, & Loveridge, 2007; Chisnall, 2011; Freeman, 2008) and I was mindful of the impact this can have on children and staff. I therefore selected two centres, with children aged between 3-6 years, in the greater Auckland area that had not previously been the focus of research.

Locating myself in the research

Tēnā koe

Ko tenei tōku pepeha

Ko Putangi tōku maunga,

Ko Mangapiko tōku awa,

Ko Tainui raua ko Te Arawa tōku waka,

Ko Ngati Raukawa tōku iwi

Ko Ngati Tangata tōku hapū,

Ko Ngati Tangata tōku marae

Ko Pāora Scanlan tōku ingoa

Greetings: The preceding pepeha is a traditional introduction in which I tell the story of how I arrived here. In Māori culture greeting others is very important. It is an opportunity for people to show respect, through the language used and it is here that the tone for the interaction is set. The story does not start with myself. It begins with a greeting to you, the listener (Tēnā koe) and then states the affiliation to my maunga (mountain) as it anchors me to my place in Aotearoa. Following that, I acknowledge how my ancestors followed the river (awa) to the final resting places of their canoes (waka). Departing the waka, my ancestors established the area that was sub divided into the tribe (iwi) then into the sub tribe (hapu). Each hapu is affiliated with a place, which has a marae. It is from here my ancestry begins. With this, it is made possible that I am Paul Scanlan.

My role as tuakana, an older or more expert person is to help and guide a younger or less expert (teina) person. In a learning environment that recognises the value of ako (a teaching and learning relationship, where the educator is also learning from the student) the tuakana–teina roles may be reversed at any time.

The journey undertaken by any teacher through their professional career is one of change (Fullan, 1993; Marshall, 1996). My thoughts, philosophy and practice has continually evolved over the past ten years as I have studied and worked across the spectrum of education sectors. This has fundamentally changed how I think about

both teaching and learning. I have a passion for Montessori education and in particular, the virtue of respect and how this is achieved.

Observations from these differing contexts have contributed to what I believe to be effective or in-effective practice for teaching and learning. The challenge is to leave behind current thoughts and knowledge in order to study the lived experiences of people and delve into experience and interactions of everyday people and places.

The transformation to become a different kind of teacher has captured my attention as my journey evolves and continues to do so. The recent birth of my first child drives me to complete this work and continue to think about my philosophy on teaching and life whilst reflecting on how nature determines growth.

This thesis adds to my journey as an educator and a person who strives to understand what respect really means and how it is achieved or fostered in children. Furthermore the implications of a specific teaching practice, such as the Montessori approach, could provide vital information for the wider teaching and parent communities. This could lead to a more peaceful, respectful, democratic way of teaching, learning and living.

Montessori view

The Montessori classroom promotes a community of learners and according to one well-known Montessorian, Aline Wolf (1996), "it is only in a community that man's [sic] potentialities can be realised" (p.126). To acquire or realise respect in the daily life of a community is an experience as opposed to a lesson. Wolf (1996) explains that Montessori, like Dewey, observed that morals are connected with actualities of existence, not with ideals. Morals depend on the connections and interactions that arise spontaneously in relationships as opposed to a certain time or place, pre-determined by a teacher.

All children wish to be treated as equals. They want to participate and be informed about decisions that influence their existence. The fact is children will eventually

have to find their place in society in which respect appears sporadic. Mario Montessori (1992) believes we do injustice to children by labeling them as a group as opposed to an individual human being.

Furthermore, according to Montessori (1992) and various indigenous cultures around the world (James, 1997; McCreanor, Moewaka Barnes, & Edwards, 2007; Sampson, 1988) individuals in a peer group should be considered in relation to all the other members of the communities in which they grow and live. Dodd (1992) declares that respect and responsibility are two fundamental values educational facilities should teach, along with other values such as honesty, fairness, tolerance, cooperation and self-discipline. She goes on to say that knowing the good, desiring the good and doing the good defines good character. In order to create a democratic environment Dodd (1992) argues the teacher, as a caregiver model, needs to be adopted in classrooms in order for students to learn values through relationships. This needs to be in conjunction with the teacher and other strategies such as stories, classroom meetings and the promotion of critical thinking.

Democracy

Rather than predetermining consequences with assertive discipline, Dodd (1992) recommends teachers advocate an approach to help children develop moral judgment. This approach aligns with Snow Gang (1989) who believes in democracy by example. He states:

> One cannot impart the democratic ideal through command, innuendo, suggestion or written exercises. The principles of a democratic society have to be lived in the classroom if the students are going to understand the full impact of their meaning. You cannot teach democracy through non-democratic methods. (p.50)

Democracy emphasises the importance of choice; children who attend a school or centre in which they are encouraged to make decisions and take responsibility about the curriculum are discovering democracy. This goes beyond a simple voting system,

according to Kohn (1993), it involves "talking and listening, looking for alternatives and trying to reach consensus, solving problems together and making meaningful choices" (p.249).

The ability to work, according to the contribution of Professor Walter S. Neff (cited in Montessori, 1992), comes from the development of the personality, which is dependant on different stages of development. With certain similarities to the Montessori concept of sensitive periods, the suggestion of conditions for becoming a worker may depend on experiences in early and middle childhood. Montessori (1996) refers to a sensitive period as a "special sensibility which a creature requires in its infantile state, while it is still in a process of evolution" (p. 38). An example of a sensitive period for children is that of language where children are continuously expanding vocabulary and comprehension with little conscious effort. Adults have no direct influence on these different states. But if a child has not been able to act according to the directives of this sensitive period, the opportunity of a natural conquest is lost for good (Montessori, 1996).

This would suggest that work could be both effortless and intensive for children of any particular age group. Fostering the natural conquest to work could be key to a different more democratic positive view of work.

In conclusion, a democratic relationship between the child and teacher with knowledge of the stages of development could lay the foundation for a reciprocal and respectful relationship. Respect is complicated and differentiated depending on a number of factors and influences. What is required is a pedagogy that incorporates respect that enables children of all ages to learn in safe, stimulating environments with others. Essential to this idea is the relationship between the student and teacher, as respect must involve another party in order to exist.

The role of the teacher is a vital part of this debate as they have the expertise and the appropriate knowledge in the relationship, which should be utilised for the common good of humankind in society. Therefore, the emphasis of this reciprocal relationship should be on the teacher as opposed to the learner.

The antithesis of respect

My observation of teachers, in a variety of teaching environments, is that many seek authority and power and tend to control their class with rewards and punishments. There is vast literature on the effects of rewards and punishments (Baucus & Beck-Dudley, 2005; Chance, 1992; Erwin, 2003; Hoffman, Hutchinson, & Reiss, 2009; Kohn, 1993) however; the reward is not usually viewed as disrespectful. The belief is that with punishments teachers can make students work and follow rules whether they want to or not. What the teachers in this scenario inevitably find out is that even with the power to threaten, at least half of the students still will not conform (Glasser, 1986).

Long-term effects

Glasser (1986) agrees that punishing motivates for short periods; but states that punishment is not a long-term motivator for anyone and it is long-term, not short term, motivation that is needed in education. If a student is punished we only teach what is not to be done, the punishment does not show what the student should do instead. Furthermore, Kohn (1993) suggests punishment does not teach what not to do; it simply teaches the desire to avoid punishment as the emphasis is on the consequence of the action as opposed to the action itself (Kohn, 1993).

In fact, according to Kohn (1993), research tells us that troublesome behaviour increases when children are punished and underlying problems are not solved. Furthermore, those very models of punishing others are modeled. In contrast an atmosphere of respect rather than coercion or force, together with a commitment to work with children is an approach that is likely to develop an educational system where children strive and want to learn (Kohn, 1993).

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed both Montessori's respectful approach to education and some of the literature surrounding and supporting her views. In the following literature review, I draw out particular interpretations of respect in relation to the child, teacher and authority, to support the research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

In the following chapter, I plan to define respect by distinguishing different aspects of the phenomenon. Following this I will discuss the stages of morality according to Kohlberg's (1981) view. This guide provides a broad understanding of children's moral responses through stages of their development. The accuracy of Kohlberg's stages is questioned as the child's independence is discussed in relation to acquiring morals.

Respect: A definition

Respect means being given the opportunity to be seen as a unique individual rather than as a stereotypical caricature of some larger group, because underneath all the cultural differences we are all just people (Miller, 2000). If you dissect the word respect into two parts you can derive a meaning; the first part of the word, the prefix, re, denotes, again, once more; renew or reactivate. The second part of the word 'spect' or spectare, in Latin, is the beginning of the word spectacles, as in a pair of glasses in which you can view or have the ability to see something, a sight from a particular position, an attitude or opinion, look at or inspect or regard in a particular way. With this breakdown of the word, you can perceive the word to mean to look at, view or perceive something again. This links to the phenomenological perspective of this study in which I seek to provide a renewed or re'viewed' understanding of relationships within particular Montessori early childhood education environments.

This is perhaps why there is debate over what respect really means and how different people in different contexts perceive respect. Shwalb and Shwalb (2006) have identified respect as the single most powerful ingredient in nourishing relationships and creating a just society. Yet, educators, researchers, children and adolescents in

many societies experience the effect of the growing problem of disrespect and a decline in respect for self and others. In my opinion, in our current world, a lack of respect is clearly apparent.

Respect

Snook (2003) believes students that are guided by teachers who respect them gradually learn to use their own reason and become autonomous thus decreasing reliance on the views of others. Enabling the learner to take full control may be a long process but if it is begun early, the student learns to think for him/herself.

Respect, according to philosophers Kant, Mill and Rawls, includes appreciation of universal human dignity, equality, and autonomy (Goodman, 2009). Respect in classrooms can create confusion depending on the individual's view of respect. Respect can emphasise dignity, autonomy, equality or submission to authority. There is also respect for non-human objects as well as respect for difference and protection. The inconsistency in meanings has the capability to produce conflict as another may view what one person claims to be respectful as disrespectful (Goodman, 2009).

Respect due

Goodman (2009) offers a distinction between two types of respect, respect due and respect earned. Respect due refers to the liberal value of universal dignity. To a degree, it circumscribes the authority of the adult. Respect due can be described in terms of teaching with this example; when the demands of a teacher are excessive, it may overwhelm the respect due to the child. A teacher does not have unlimited rights in what he or she can demand as a manifestation of respect, nor does a child in his or her resistance (Goodman, 2009).

Respect earned

Respect earned is concerned with the child and the teacher and how they have earned each other's respect based on who they are. Goodman (2009) states how this

"extends the boundaries to embrace elements of autonomy and equality along with dignity" (p.5). If the teacher, in this scenario, respects the students he or she would actually expect less respect, take into consideration the views and feelings of the children and allow freedom of action. On the other side, the students feeling they are on a more equal plane are more likely to follow the leadership of the teacher out of informed consent because they have developed more respect, as opposed to fearing consequences.

Respect in education

Respect is often controversial in the educational setting in regards to student and teacher behaviours. Lack of classroom discipline, according to Kehle (1981), is often the result of particular types of interactions between teachers and students. Kehle (1981) reported that in the early twentieth century, teachers were trained in techniques that established and promoted classroom discipline and effective discipline was defined as good teaching. Kehle (1981) also assumed that respect precedes discipline, which can be better defined as an appropriate and conducive atmosphere to enhance the teaching process.

The discussion of discipline in regards to teaching prompts the topic of will and obedience. To most, these are opposing ideas as the educational system has for so long depended on the submission of the child's will and substituted it with that of the teacher (Montessori, 1995). This requires the child's unquestionable obedience.

A basic error in education, according to Montessori (1995) is to assume that, to make people obedient, it is necessary to break the individual's will. In contrast, she suggests only when people have freely chosen to follow someone else's lead will we see a kind of obedience and recognition for authority.

The common and old-fashioned assumption that everything can be accomplished by talking is given less emphasis in the Montessori philosophy. This view of teaching considers the student to be a receptive being as opposed to an active being which denies the student the opportunity to use their will and obstructs expression (Montessori, 1995).

This view is currently recognised in the early childhood curriculum of Aotearoa New Zealand, Te Whāriki, in which the child's developmental needs and capacities are seen to be unique to their stage of development. Exploration is encouraged as children learn strategies for active exploration. Te Whāriki, recognises this need in children and subsequently values the child's ability and need to learn by doing and interacting with others (Ministry of Education, 1996).

Respect for authority

Attempts to outline specific teacher behaviours have been directed to establish an atmosphere of respect in the interactions between students and teachers. However, the assumption that teachers know more than students may grant them automatic authority (Kehle, 1981). Respect can be shown to have four 'targets' according to Li (2006) these are, teachers, community members, nonhuman lives or objects and authority figures (including parents, elders and teachers). The latter receive respect according to their roles, generational status, higher social position or power within the family or society as opposed to the former type of automatic respect.

Respect for teachers also seems to be linked to better school adjustment and higher achievement according to Li (2006). Respect developed at home can readily be transferred to authority at schools and centres that have a hierarchical nature. However, some cultures acknowledge obedience as an appropriate behaviour of respect for teachers while others exert greater effort to help children to learn to show their respect (Li, 2006). Respect can be directed toward authority in the family and educational institute and there seems to be a set of behavioural norms associated with respect towards people.

Although authority still seems to be a prerequisite for effective teaching the re-thinking of education in a democratic society is serving to erode the necessity of authority of teachers over students. However, the view of children as possessors of human dignity, but without perspective and reasoning ability, is causing children to be entitled to only minimal respect (Goodman, 2009). Children under this view are seemingly undeserving of mutual respect resulting in a one-sided concept of respect due.

Furthermore, many educators are interpreting laws of authority as moral, which means, according to Kehle (1981) "naïve educators interpret authority over students as inherently immoral and inconsistent with the spirit of equality and individual rights" (p. 7).

Kehle (1981) suggests effective discipline and consequently effective teaching rests in the assumption that there is a respect for authority and the teacher. If teachers are to be held responsible for the student's learning it is implied they therefore have authority over the learning process in their classrooms. Authority can be defined in many ways but not as control for the sake of control, rather, as Kehle (1981) states, "leadership which is a consequence of a set of values, behaviours, and competencies that are exhibited and modeled by the teacher" (p.8). In this view, leadership is concerned with the purpose of the curriculum goals. This opposing view is illegitimate authority for the sake of control but not for the sake of education or tact.

To assert authority over someone for the sake of establishing your authority is immoral, belittling and often confusing. Students may understand respect as equal consideration but the teacher may intend it to mean submission (Goodman, 2009). Kehle (1981) suggests that tact is an appropriate exercise of authority that does not demean or force others into submission. Tactful use of authority can be a tool for teaching when used with a genuine concern for the student's development and is often interpreted by students as legitimate if viewed as meaningful for their curriculum goals (Kehle, 1981).

Authority over children raises an important aspect of the child-to-adult relationship in regards to respect. Goodman (2009) points out that adults are often skeptical of children's abilities and capacity for full rationality and are unlikely to consider their judgments with equal standing. This has ramifications as adults expect children to follow dictates without considering that the voice of the child is as valid as that of the adult and is deserving of equal respect.

Glasser (1986) stated teachers should also be considered managers to the extent that they direct their students and use their power to reward and punish them in order to get them to follow their instructions. He goes on to say if teachers want students to work, they must see their role more as a modern manager and abandon the student as their worker stereotype. Glasser's (1986) solution sees the teacher/manager spending more time structuring and restructuring the workplace to make it more satisfying because satisfied workers are more productive.

In turn, this presents the problem of teachers relinquishing their ultimate authority. Perhaps the democratic principles of justice, freedom, equality, responsibility and self-direction could be employed into curriculum and learning. The early childhood curriculum of Aotearoa New Zealand, Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education 1996) acknowledges and promotes both empowerment and holistic development. The teacher plays an important role in the participation of activities for children. Learning and developing to potential requires the child to be respected and valued as individuals. The Ministry of Education (1996) acknowledges that the children have rights to personal dignity, equitable opportunities, protection from harm, abuse and opportunities for rest and leisure. This holistic view requires all adults working in early childhood education to have a knowledge and understanding of child development and a comprehensive understanding of the context in which they are working.

In addition, if teachers are to partake in this role a new teacher shall arise, one who is no longer the one that only teaches, but one who himself is taught together with the students, who will also teach as well as be taught (Snow-Gang, 1989).

Phillip Snow-Gang a long term Montessori teacher educator, has drawn from the writings of Paulo Freire to explain this problem. He believes the authoritarian teacher should function alongside the student with the view of authority as complete freedom (within limits) to act as one thinks best. Both Freire and Montessori endeavored to create an educational system that promotes enquiry. Democracy empowers the individual to effect that process in a system where liberty and responsibility are balanced (Snow-Gang, 1989).

Respect for children

Respect for children requires a change in the type of relationships between teachers and students as a result of the child's vulnerability (Hunt-Hagen, 1997). A cornerstone of the Montessori philosophy is respect for the individual child and an understanding of the developmental cycles for learning. Montessori believed that to

know enough about children so as to improve their education, you need to get down there with them and be part of their experience (Martin, 1992).

Being part of a child's experience acknowledges holistic development. Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 1996) states that the child's whole context and immediate needs "at any particular moment will affect and modify how a particular experience contributes to their development" (p. 41). It is my observation that in the search for uniformity, in particular instances, for example mat times or other programmed set times; teachers sometimes ignore children's individuality and treat them as if they are identical and use authority to enforce respect.

The goal of instilling respect in the child in a Montessori environment is not achieved by enforcing respect, it is achieved by the deliberate design of an environment that invites the child to act in respectful ways (Cossentino, 2003). This requires respecting the unique features of each individual in each stage of their life as opposed to dismissing them as a temporary phase that carries no significance. In order to achieve such respect we should acknowledge that there is a need to balance areas of dependence, independence and interdependence at differing stages in people's lives (Benporath, 2003).

It is Montessori's (1996) view that the human being is formed in childhood. Montessori was one of the first educators to recognise that the activity of the very young child is of key importance in the formation of humanity. What makes a child a valued worker is their engagement in active work, which is provided by the external environment. Montessori believes that adults have a role in assisting the child; however, the child perfects his or her own being. Morality as a guide to that engagement is the subject of the next section.

Morality

In 1973, Lawrence Kohlberg used Piaget's developmental stages to discuss stages of moral development. To use this as a guide gives us a broad understanding of the moral responses of children through different stages of their development. Edwards

(1986) breaks Kohlberg's six levels into three broader stages that are summarised as follows:

Self-focused morality (up to age 9)

The child obeys rules to avoid negative consequences; avoids physical damage of people and property. Children see rules, set typically by parents at this stage, as defining moral law. That which satisfies the child's needs is seen as good and moral; recognition that other people have needs and interests and children begin to acting "fairly".

Other-focused morality (age 9 to adolescence)

Children begin to perceive expectations of parents, teachers, and so on. Morality is seen as achieving these expectations. Right action involves good motives and maintaining long-term relationships, social systems and conscience. Fulfilling obligations and expectations is seen as moral law. Right action involves contributing to the good of the whole, understood as a complex system.

Adulthood

As adults, we begin to understand that people have different opinions about morality and that rules and laws vary from culture to culture. Morality is seen as a simple set of rules that guide individuals into harmonious life (Montessori, 1938/2012) by upholding the values of a group or culture.

Montessori (2004b) identified periods of development in three phases:

1. Birth to six years old, where the child lives outside the moral expectations of the adult.

2. From six to twelve years, children become conscious of right and wrong in terms of their own and other's actions; a sense of moral consciousness is formed which has implications for social values.

3. From twelve to eighteen, adolescents develop a love of their country and a sense of national identity.

Independence

Independent thought plays an important role in morality as children will strive for independence. The relation between the adult and child changes once independence is acquired. The relation between the adult and child should be a mutual understanding and is dependant on the child's independence (Montessori, 1938/2012). The role of the adult in a Montessori environment is to facilitate the children to teach themselves by following their own internal urges that will lead them to take what they need from the things and people around them (Montessori, 2004a).

Whether these stages are accurately described is questionable as Chisnall (2011), Edwards (1986) and Krogh (1981) all suggest that children in Montessori early childhood settings are likely to function at higher levels than indicated in Kohlberg's model and Montessori's phases. Furthermore, moral behaviour has been observed in infants as young as three months old in research studies (Bloom, 2010; Kiley Hamlin, Wynn, & Bloom, 2010). These studies show behaviours associated with morality in infants suggesting that older children are capable of more advanced thought in this area.

These studies could support the theory that the unconscious impressions the child receives or absorbs from birth are ingrained in their mind forever. The mind of a child matures by means of knowledge of the external world, through real experiences in the environment (Dubovoy, 2005). This is why Montessorians do not expect much from listening to the preacher about morals (Montessori, 1964).

Culture has an enormous impact on moral life; it shapes individuals in its image. The current view of the larger culture according to Pekarsky (1998) is critiqued by those

who "view moral education, understood as formal lessons designed to promote moral growth, has the power to nurture moral attitudes, dispositions and sensibilities that improve on what day-to-day life in the culture encourages" (p. 316).

The famous words of Ignatius Loyola (cited in Beaty 2009) "Give me a child to the age of seven and I will show you the man" (p. 9) sums up the thought that the experiences of the child before the age of seven will be powerful enough to determine their future. Smidt (2006) acknowledges that the early experiences of the child are powerful and influential; however, the question of how long lasting they are not yet scientifically answerable.

Summary

This literature review has examined just some of the literature on respect from a broad perspective. A consistent theme emerging is the autonomy of others. How respect is received and perceived is fundamental to becoming autonomous. The teacher exhibits and models this with student interaction.

There is some terminology specific to Montessori education. Ideas such as sensitive periods, the prepared environment, freedom and discipline and movement are further explained in the glossary.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design and the positions that underpin it. Husserl's process, cited in Laverty (2006), of the phenomenological reduction or bracketing suggests that researchers can draw out their understandings and their individual biases in order to experience the essence of phenomena. In this study, I am striving to understand the lived experience of the Montessori community. The focus is on the interactions of the participants with each other and the environment and I am looking for revelations from the selected centres.

The phenomenon of interaction is characterised by the reciprocity of roles (e.g. speaker-addressee, giver-taker), and typically by an alternation of roles over time, yielding a turn-taking structure (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). Relationships unfold over time via situation selection, which may entail seeking interdependence and independence (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003). According to Gonzalez-Mena (2000) interdependence and independence are not opposites but instead they form part of a single spectrum. Independence in teaching terms focuses on the expectation that children relate well to others and form relationships. The focus on interdependence also expects children to focus on taking care of themselves as well as others. The goals for both groups assist children to grow to be independent individuals who also are connected to other people.

Research question

The research question I am addressing is, how does the Montessori environment foster relationships with respect? I have chosen to take a qualitative approach, using phenomenology to look beyond the commonsense assumptions and details of everyday life to the essences underlying them (Cohen et al., 2000).

Qualitative research

The primary concern for qualitative research is to seek insights into the individual's perceptions of the world. This method generally emphasises a socially constructed reality (Cohen et al., 2000; Mutch, 2005; Punch, 2009). Meaning is not discovered it is constructed. According to this meaning different people may construct meaning in different ways, this applies to constructing meaning to the same phenomenon (Crotty, 1998). A collaborative approach has been utilised to co-construct meanings in a specific context. This entails qualitative research is a meaning-making process.

The qualitative researcher studies a social setting to understand the meaning of participants' lives on the participants' own terms. This contrasts to the work of a quantitative researcher who may be comfortable with investigating large numbers of people without communicating with them face to face (Janesick, 2000). Qualitative research is used to understand social accomplishments and it is concerned with understanding them from within (Cohen et al., 2000).

Qualitative researchers cast their view over a range of social activity and seek to understand the ways in which people negotiate the social contexts in which they find themselves. They are concerned with understanding how people make sense of and order their environment. The focus is on the nature of interaction and the dynamic activities taking place between people (Cohen et al., 2000).

A qualitative research approach fits this study in order to explain how the Montessori environment fosters relationships between children and teachers. Respect is an underlying value of the philosophy. The research seeks to show how the Montessori environment fosters relationships in the community of learners.

A main task to this design is to explicate the ways people in particular settings come to understand, account for, take action, and otherwise manage their day-to-day situations.

The case studies

Case study one

The choice of two case studies was essentially one of convenience. Each centre has multiple points of difference although both are situated in a semi-rural area. Pseudonyms have been selected to protect the centers' identity. The pseudonym names were chosen according to which centre was visited first. Case study one consists of teachers committed to Association Montessori Internationale (AMI). This classic implementation has been defined as traditional (Lillard, 2012). AMI is the organisation Montessori founded to carry on her work. It includes 3-hour work periods in the morning a 3-year age grouping; and a specific set of Montessori materials (Lillard, 2012). The purpose built, homely environment, with small class numbers encourages intimate quality relationships. A special feature design of the building is a welcoming room where parents can drop off their children and use the facilities to make a hot drink and stop for a chat with other parents; this fosters a sense of belonging and builds strong relationships. The classroom environment is set up in such a way that children are given the space to direct their own learning with experimental interactions with the environment, the belief is that all meaningful learning takes place through analysis of error.

Case study two

Documentation associated with the centre in Case study two described themselves as a boutique Montessori pre-school. This is made possible by adding to the standard set of Montessori materials such as educational toys. This type of centre may adopt a shorter work period with special classes and additional teachers for extracurricular activities (Lillard, 2012). The age group in this case study varied from the traditional 3-6 model including two year olds and children departing for school at five years old. The curriculum is based on Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 1996) integrated with principles of the Montessori method.

The teachers consider themselves privileged to be responsible for the learning and development of the children in their care. They believe in ongoing professional development, the importance of careful planning, and the review of their practice. Teachers create an attractive and child orientated environment that reflects this belief as they act as positive role models. Case study two expressed their belief in the necessity to develop strong and positive relationships with parents and whanau, based on mutual respect, trust and open communication.

The building is tucked away down a quiet suburban street and hosts a large outdoor and deck area. The atmosphere was alive, fun and welcoming described by the centre as a place where laughter and learning collide.

Each case study was chosen with help from my supervisor's professional knowledge and my professional relationship with participants of the centres. They were chosen with relation to distance, budget, availability and willingness of participants. The data collection commenced late 2011 and was completed mid 2012.

The approach: Commonalities and similarities

Two case studies were selected in order to investigate the phenomenon of interaction. This is a collective case study. The individual cases may or may not be known in advance to manifest some common characteristic. They may be similar but are each important in their own way. The case studies were chosen because it is believed that understanding will lead the researcher to better understanding, perhaps better theorising, about a still larger collection of cases (Stake, 2000). This study was based on two case studies of Montessori early childhood centres. Each centre has a point of difference. This is important as diversity brings forth new ideas. Diversity is valuable and by recognising and promoting diversity, this may aid communication between people of different backgrounds and lifestyles, leading to greater knowledge and understanding.

The interpretation of the case study was intrinsic to the researcher because I desired a better understanding of the commonalities in each case. The case studies were

undertaken in order to understand how respect is viewed and applied into practice in each centre. This is in contrast to an instrumental approach that is examined mainly to provide an insight into an issue or redraw a generalisation (Janesick, 2000). The cases are of secondary importance to the interest they facilitate in an understanding of the philosophy. Here the choice of the case was made to advance an understanding of the Montessori philosophy.

Together with formulating a research question, I endeavoured to establish trust with the participants. Access and entry are sensitive components in qualitative research; I endeavoured to establish trust, rapport and authentic communication patterns with participants. By establishing trust and rapport at the beginning of the study, I planned to capture the nuances and meanings of each participant's life from the participant's point of view. This also ensures that participants were willing to share with the researcher (Janesick, 2000). As I am a Montessori teacher, I anticipated this would enable me to readily gain access to the Montessori community but I am also aware of the bias that this may generate. I planned, therefore, to frame questions carefully as I endeavoured to maintain objectivity.

The study draws on the underlying philosophy of Montessori. Shared qualities of the centres have been uncovered together with specific practices that foster the reciprocal and respectful relationship. In conjunction, I was equally aware of the absence of particular practices, as well as those observed and recorded.

I endeavoured to convince the audience of the study in the most effective way. This has been achieved by staying close to the data as it is the most powerful means of telling the story (Janesick, 2000). A narrative voice has been used to record observations, put them into context and discuss potential findings. Avramidis and Norwich (2002) suggest that research concerning teachers' attitudes would benefit from alternative methods as opposed to pre-defined categories or statements. This justified my decision to use narrative to examine the teachers' attitudes. I anticipated the focus on the participants' own narratives will lead to an improved understanding of personal experiences, attitudes and practices.

The narrative methodology was used to provide insights into how participants make sense of the world. I sought to find and construct meaning through narrative (Bruner, 2006). Narrative is fundamental to human understanding, communication and social interaction and according to Lawson, Parker and Sikes (2006) it makes sense to use it to investigate these very things. Asking the participants to tell their own stories has given access to personal understanding and provided a tool for critically examining the structures, which make up the lives of participants in these systems.

This study was anticipated to benefit first and foremost the Montessori community with the expectation of providing impetus for further research. This will in turn branch into the individual Montessori learning communities and furthermore into the wider society.

Participants

The two case studies were selected in conjunction with my supervisor. The Montessori community is relatively small and I was aware that several centres had been subject to prior research. The two centres subsequently selected had not been involved in recent research and were identified as possibly available. Connections with staff had been previously made through professional development and while engaging in postgraduate studies. The sample size was small in order manage time, workload and expenses, but not compromise data collection.

A formal letter invited participants with attached Participant Information Sheets (Appendix A) prior to the first visit. The letter outlined the purpose of the research, how each centre was identified, the benefits and what will happen in the research. After participant discussion, both consent (for adults) (Appendix B) and assent forms (for children) (Appendix C) and a summary of the planned research with the methodology were sent.

Children involved in the study were all aged between the ages of 3-6 in accordance with Montessori's first plane of development. Individuals' age has not been recorded

due to personal belief that the stage of development is more important than age. In certain observations, individuals are identified as younger or older.

Data analysis

Each thought expressed in this data is that of the researcher which is an interpretation of the experience and what is learnt through observation. Qualitative data is inescapably the interpretation of social encounters (Cohen et al., 2000). This study seeks to observe phenomenon based on Husserl's (2002) focused observation to describe the participants lived experiences considered by observations made in their environment.

Husserl's theme of other subjects being involved in one's knowledge supports this thesis as it is fundamentally concerned with interactions and relationships formed by interactions. Husserl's (2002) phenomenology is a method for gaining access to purified phenomena by means of reductions through which one can rid itself of presuppositions and thus become free to have genuine insights (Husserl, 2002).

Phenomenology's task is to uncover what is not immediately apparent. This according to Mueller-Vollmer (2002) means the "methodical uncovering of the concealed structures of human existence in the world…the methodological intent of phenomenological description is to interpret" (pp. 33-34). The collection of data was gathered with an open mind and the significance will no doubt gradually emerge (Gillham, 2000).

My task was to interpret the words and actions of the participants. Taking in all expressions of communication completes understanding as each facet was taken into consideration. Droysen (2002) suggests the expression and mood of the person will manifest itself, which makes available comprehension and compassion.

It is not however; the particular acts of those who acted that will determine analysis of observations. The purpose of this study is to gain an idea and understanding of the events and the conditions, which are being acted out by the participants.

Interviews

Cohen et al., (2000) defines an interview as " an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasises the social situatedness of research data" (p. 267). They have enabled the interviewer and participants to discuss their interpretations of the world they live in and express their point of view (Cohen et al., 2000).

The case studies relied both on interviewing and observing. Knowledge of what others are doing and saying always depends upon some background or context of other meanings, beliefs, values, practices, and so forth. Therefore understanding can be gained from interpretation (Schwant, 2000).

The semi-structured group interview also enabled time to be limited to one interview for each centre and for conversation to flow so as to draw out thoughts without being too prescriptive in questioning. This also provided flexibility to reframe the questions if participants needed further questioning to understand as questions were based on the observations.

This dual motive gave clarification of views and teaching philosophy. This enhanced the authentic voices of participants. The value of the face-to-face interview above all opened up rich opportunities for communication and discussion. This form of conversational interview facilitated collaborative storytelling of the participants' lived experiences (Gillham, 2000).

Through analysis of the interviews, I sought to discover how the Montessori environment together with participants' knowledge supported respect and the child's potential. Since the purpose of the interview is to understand the themes of the lived daily world from the subjects' own perspectives, the interviews were structured as conversations. The interviews involved a specific approach and technique of questioning (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). An interview schedule was thus prepared with a range of open-ended questions to guide the conversation.

Ethical considerations

A rigid prescribed system of ethics simply cannot encompass all research projects. As each research project is unique researchers are obliged to meet moral obligations with respect to those involved (Cohen et al., 2000). Whilst this project has a special emphasis on respect, it is essential that the ethical guidelines issued by Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee are not only adhered to but also upheld to the highest degree.

This research involved and affirmed young children as capable and aware of what is going on around them. Children are social beings and by participating are making sense of their world (Aubrey, David, Godfrey, & Thompson, 2000). Each individual, as suggested by Bone et al., (2007), was invited to be a participant in the research and received their own assent form for children and consent forms for adults.

Observation

As a Montessori teacher I have desired to observe natural phenomena. The Montessori teacher must understand and feel their position of observer as the activity lies in the phenomenon (Montessori, 1991). Observations were made discreetly from a point in the environment which was negotiated with all participants. Some Montessori centres have a designated observation place so as not to disrupt the natural environment. Where possible this was used.

Observations were made throughout the three hour work cycle of the Montessori centre, in particular on arrival and departure, during lessons (both group and individual) and any spontaneous teachable moments. Whenever another adult enters an environment they change the observable behaviour, this is unavoidable. The purpose of the prior visits before data collection was to situate myself as part of the environment so as to minimise change.

Observations in the environments of the case studies revealed that freedom and movement are both related and promoted. The following chapter looks deeper into these phenomena to understand why, in Montessori education, children are empowered to move, choose from a range of activities and experience freedom in their environment. Following this, the subsequent effects of this model are examined.

When observing others there should always be an awareness of our own assumptions, beliefs and constructs arising from prior knowledge and experience. These constructs affect how the observed are perceived and this in turn affects relationships. It would be almost impossible to eliminate the personal side of observing and also fruitless to do so (Jablon, Dombro, & Dichtelmiller, 2007). The intention however, was to enter the observations with a neutral stance by eliminating as many aspects as possible that may influence the researchers interpretations and thoughts.

An observation can sometimes be likened to a photograph as it captures a moment in time. The observer can then be likened to the photographer as they focus on some things and ignore others. The photographer and the observer also bring their ideas, preferences and perceptions to the act of observing (Jablon et al., 2007). The phenomenological reduction may be likened to this. Merleau-Ponty underlines this essence by bracketing not only common-sense explanations and empirical science; but also brackets any return to transcendental idealism. Zahavi (2008) sees transcendental idealism as an attempt to overcome global scepticism. "It entails a rejection of the strong realist claim that reality as it is for us and as it is in itself are distinguishable" (p. 364). Merleau-Ponty, cited in (Gallagher, 2010) also reminds us that 'bracketing' as a phenomenological reduction is never complete.

Furthermore, according to Cerbone (2006) Husserl claims that "time is the most fundamental structure of conscious experience: the moments of experience are most fundamentally temporal moments" (p.28). The multiple moments in time are standing in an unchangeable order that is irreversible and unstoppable. Even a moment frozen in time is followed by a moment, then another and another and so on.

Observations were picked from the video camera to illustrate bracketed moments in time. Each serves to signify freedom of choice and movement in both environments.

A particular focus for relationships in Montessori relates to the interaction between child and teacher during 'lessons'. Such lessons are generally referred to a 'presentations'. A present is a special gift given from one to another. The presentation is a sacred time between the teacher and students hence the name [present]ation. The presentation is a special time that ultimately should go uninterrupted and I frequently choose presentations as examples of bracketed time.

Video recording

The observations were conducted with two methods: observation and video recording. Levinson (2006) suggests that the advent of the videotape provides the opportunity to repeatedly inspect samples of human interaction. The device recorded interactions in specific areas of the centre in order to capture multiple interactions at one time. Secondly, notes from observations were recorded. Observation is to watch carefully with attention to detail. There is nothing in the definition of observation that involves action, only watching and taking note. It was not my intention be a participant observer.

My decision to video interactions enabled me to revisit the moment and analyse it in depth. This ensured, together with note taking, the observation is thorough and analysed critically with relevant theories. Video has been used extensively in early childhood education to unobtrusively record and capture spontaneous moments (Blake, Winsor, & Allen, 2011). Video can capture practice that is in the best interest of the child. Later the researcher and the teachers can reflect on what they see in the videotape. Reflection can be on how the child reacts to certain situations.

In this research, the video recordings represent a narration of the everyday lived experience and provide documentation of that point in time and interaction. Each piece of data collected shaped the research and this represented a point in time. By

recording this point in time it became frozen and created a distance between the participants and the researcher so that critical reflection can take place (Grey, 2010). For that reason I have decided to use a variety of data sources - observation, videos and interviews.

The researcher visited each centre twice before data collection. This was to form a relationship between the researcher and participants in order to observe interactions in the most natural state possible. A stationary video camera recorded observations from a neutral position. The view of this camera took in all nuances that effected the interactions or behaviour present. In addition this camera was able to freeze a point in time to observe and delve deeper into the aspects of the environment that affected interactions and behaviours.

A second, hand held camera was used to capture specific observations and interactions. The intention was to observe how the interactions with both other humans and the environment contributed to forming a relationship based on and nurtured with respect.

Issues

I understand that there are a variety of issues when recording. Each issue has the ability to subtly alter the data collected. It was my intention however to ensure the observation and data collected was as natural yet ethical as possible.

An issue considered was the comfort levels of both the children and adults involved. In particular, the adult comfort levels were addressed, as they were more likely to be aware of recording. To overcome any fears of participants I visited each centre prior to the commencement of the research to build a relationship with all involved parties. The reason for this relationship building time was to relay my intention to not take the position of expert and judge the practice of others, be it teachers or parents or to impose my views and values on them. In phenomenological research researchers engage in what is known as 'bracketing'. As previously explained this is where the researcher sets aside their priori, knowledge and assumptions with the goal in mind

to perceive the participants' accounts with an open mind (Gearing, 2004). It was my intention to observe the positive moments that make up reciprocal and respectful relationships in the Montessori community.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the research design and the positions that underpin it. The case studies bring difference and diversity brings forth new ideas as commonalities bring understanding. This study seeks an understanding of the lived experience of the participants. The use of a phenomenological approach was intended to enable access to phenomena by the technique of the reduction. This freed the researcher from any presuppositions and opened up the possibility of further insight. This enabled the observations to capture the nuances and meanings from the participant's point of view. Staying close to the data was a means of telling the story.

The next chapter discusses the findings that stem from the data analysis and observations. The observations are followed with discussion explaining the significance of the observation in relation to the study.

Chapter Four: Observations with discussion

Introduction

This study seeks to draw out commonalities from two Montessori early childhood centres. In keeping with the concept of respect, a comparison of the philosophical approach of either centre is void. Each bracketed example stands alone as a significant aspect of practice. Therefore, no contrast will be made; rather experiences that are familiar to both environments will provide data that showcase respectful practice and relationships. The observations themselves are physically bracketed on the page to remind the reader, signify the perspective, and highlight the observations. All participants have been assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity. Teachers have been identified in observations, all other participants are children, their ages remain anonymous or identified as younger or older, if necessary for discussion, as both centres have children in the age group of 3-6 years old.

Employing a phenomenological perspective relies on the very theme it is intending to reveal. Respect for others, respect for the environment and respect for self are an overarching philosophy in both Montessori philosophy and for myself. As such, in order to respect all participants, including whānau (family) within the participating centres, the research deliberately sought positive interactions.

This chapter sets out to provide a window through which the environments can be viewed. Each sub-chapter includes observations that provide a context and an understanding into the importance and focus of the phenomenon. Comments, conversations and answers from the interviews are added to give weight and understanding from the teachers' perspective and experience.

Observations that depict freedom and movement

Young people must have enough freedom to allow them to act on individual initiative. Nevertheless, in order that individual action should

be free and useful at the same time it must be restricted with certain limits and rules that give the necessary guidance. (Montessori & Montessori, 1994, p. 73)

The first observation captures a very typical time of the day and illustrates the freedom of movement and choice available to the children. The children have the choice to work (play), eat, observe or rest. In each of the case studies, children are free to choose what to do, where to do it and can continue to work and repeat for as long as time and interest allows.

The following observation headings employ the use of a set of brackets that signify the practice of bracketing (see p. 4).

[Observation: The presentation]

The following observation depicts two aspects, one of practice and one of philosophy. The teacher involved demonstrates a democratic and peaceful way of solving a problem while the remaining class members make obvious their freedom to work or rest.

Trina (the teacher) sits with three children who have decided to participate in a presentation of some phonemes. As the second part to the lesson, Trina is asking individual children to make the sound shown on the card chosen. One other child, named Carl, sits opposite, not participating in the lesson but observing.

In the background, another three children sit at the snack table eating fruit. During this observation period (23 minutes), four other children take the opportunity to eat.

Another child sits on the floor with some materials spread on a mat defining his workspace.

Both teachers and children enter and exit the room freely and none of these three groups are disturbed for the period of 23 minutes.

At one point Carl squeals, with no reaction from other children, the teacher looks at him with a surprised expression and quietly says "Oh, please don't do that" and goes back to her task. A moment later, Carl asks questions and starts to tell a story. The teacher and three students carry on with their lesson saying the presented sounds. The teacher turns to him and gently says,

"I can't listen to you at the moment because I am doing a lesson with these girls".

They continue to finish their lesson and then the students depart to get other materials to make a booklet of the sounds they want to practice.

Carl adds, "I'm going to go to sleep"
Trina says "Okay do you want me to get a mattress?"

At this point, the teacher leaves, attends to Carl and others before returning to the girls a few moments later to briefly explain their choices of how to finish the activity and again withdraws. The girls continue to work uninterrupted as others move about around them. It is only when they are in their own words 'stuck' that they approach the teacher for advice. The advice was to put one sound on each page and they begin to work together again in another area off camera.

As they work, another child selects and sets up some materials on a table opposite. She sits down and begins to work without interruption for 9 minutes before she finishes her activity and packs it away.

According to Heidegger and Sadler (2002) freedom primarily refers to autonomy and in Montessori the freedom of children is fundamental to the philosophy. The essence of freedom can be defined as independence; the absence of dependence and this involves the denial of dependence on something or someone else (Heidegger & Sadler, 2002).

As mentioned, freedom does however require a set of limits, just a few simple rules for what is and is not acceptable behaviour. This is best introduced by explaining to the child in a way that makes sense. In the interview teachers from both case studies replied to the question: What are your thoughts about freedom and freedom of movement?

Tara answered: We have freedom of movement in the classroom with boundaries, for example, you can't swing the Red Rods around your head and do a stick dance with them…
…The movement has to be respectful of people and the environment around them…

Rhonda replied: I like freedom in a structured environment. I like that the kids are allowed to choose their own activities but that they need to use them respectfully so that they are not disrespecting the environment by being silly with it.

[Observation: Numeracy]

The following observation illustrates a presentation that deliberately encourages movement with the material called the Number Rods.

A student (Oliver) has a set of Number Rods placed on his mat. These rods vary in length from 10 cm to 100 cm and are divided into alternate 10 cm colours of red and blue.

Oliver has set up another mat with numeral cards approximately 12 metres away, just outside the door leading to the deck. He carries each rod, one at a time, with two hands, very carefully to the other mat in order to match the numeral with quantity. Noticeably, he places each rod carefully and silently on the second mat as to not make a sound or to mark the rods. This is how he has been shown. His movements are purposeful and respectful as he concentrates on placing his feet quietly on the ground with each step. He makes all ten trips across the room and outside without disturbing a soul before he completes matching the Number Rods with the numerals.

Montessori's thought that movement and thought are closely intertwined is evident in more recent studies. Engelkamp, Zimmer, Mohr and Sellen (1994) highlight the impact of movement on memory. Students in their study enacted the content of action-describing sentences and remembered those sentences better than learning the sentences without acting them out (Engelkamp et al., 1994).

In two experiments, Noice and Noice (2001) investigated actors learning scripts. It was found that participants who attempted to memorise a script by reading the text aloud while simultaneously moving retained more material than those who used verbal communication only. Furthermore, when the recall of the participants in the moving condition was analysed on a speech-by-speech basis, the results showed significantly greater memory for speeches that had been accompanied by movement than for speeches during which the participant had remained stationary.

Pertinent to this investigation are the effects on memory. The findings of the Noice and Noice (2001) study showed that non-actors also benefit from movement and subsequently such a result would appear to confirm an embodied cognition account of human memory. The conclusion gained in this study is that there is a connection between meaning and action and this is responsible for the memory advantage.

In addition an interesting finding comes from previous research by Noice and Noice (1997). It showed that students who were told not to memorise but to actively experience, using all channels of communication (physical, emotive, and cognitive), retained more material than those who were told to deliberately memorise the same material (Noice & Noice, 1997).

Montessori (2004b) observed that children love to touch things and the muscular sense is prominent in children when requiring memory. She noted from her observations that children may not recognise a figure by solely looking at it but could by touching it. Movement is an essential part of presentations with children in the Montessori environment. The previous observations showcase how movement is utilised however, crucial to this is the freedom the children experience.

[Observation: Movement]

"Even scientists and educators have failed to notice the great importance of movement in human development." (Montessori, 1996, p. 100).

The following two observations highlight how movement is deliberately used in presentations with children in the Montessori environments. This is followed with discussion and reference to research as to the deliberate use of movement.

Trina (the teacher) sits beside Max at a table with John on her knee. They have a box of written laminated verbs in front of them (called Command Cards) and Trina is helping Max to sound out each word. As Max discovers each word, he is encouraged to perform the action.

Max sounds out each phoneme "/s/t/a/n/d/" and gradually blends the letters together before announcing the word "stand".

"Oh! Stand!" Trina says as she motions for John (on her lap) to do so and all three stand together and say the word.

Together they sit back down and Trina asks, "what does this one say?" pointing to the next verb.

Max starts to sound it out "/g/r/e/e/t/".

Trina gently interrupts to say, "when there are two 'e' together we say 'ee' lets try again. He sounds it out again and laughs. Trina adds, "lets say it a bit faster and we will know what it says".

"/g/r/[ee]/t/, /g/r/[ee]/t/" Max says with an elongated sound in attempt to blend and finally pronounces "greet".

"Can you greet me"? Asks Trina "Like this" as she holds out her hand to greet Max. They shake hands and Trina models "Hello Trina, hello Max. Let's greet John. Can you greet John"?

They look each other in the eye and shake hands. Trina says, "That's a good greeting. You could say 'hello John'. You have to use your words when you're greeting someone. "

"Let's have a look at this next word. How many more words would you like to do?" Max motions two with his fingers. "Two more? Okay".

Trina helps Max to sound out the next word (jump) in a similar fashion and he performs the task with a joyous facial expression.

Trina closes the activity by saying "Max anytime you want to you can take this out and read some words…"

The student's movements embody the verb and its intention. Such embodiment provides purpose for learning (language and reading), which enhances both conceptualisation and memory (Noice & Noice, 2001).

Through this lesson with the Command Cards the children are learning what a verb is. Acting out what is being read on the card focuses the learners' attention on the words and the precise meaning. This activity works on the premise that one is more apt to notice the exact meaning of a word when performing the action it says as opposed to simply reading it (Lillard, 2007).

[Observation: Sweeping 1]

The next observation involves movement, however, it also serves to highlight the child's ability to concentrate and the desire to repeat.

Rhonda (the teacher) is sitting on the floor with Jessica. Jessica has got a tray from the shelf, containing a bowl of small sponges, a child sized brush and shovel and some chalk. She indicates to Rhonda to start the lesson.

Rhonda takes the chalk and draws a circle on the hard floor just big enough for all the sponges to fit inside. Following that Rhonda sprinkles the sponges in and around the circle. Jessica uses the brush to push the sponges into the circle taking great care to move each one with just enough force as to go inside the circle. Once in the circle, Jessica uses the brush and shovel to collect the sponges and deposit them back into the basket.

Once this is completed, Rhonda politely says she is going to help another child. Jessica remains, sprinkles the sponges on the floor, and starts the process once again. Jessica repeats this process over a period of 23 minutes each time seemingly oblivious to her surroundings.

Observations from the first children's house in 1907 led Montessori to notice that children have an innate desire to work according to a particular work cycle that follows a particular pattern.

This observation depicts how Jessica follows Montessori's observations for that innate desire to work. Crucial to this is Jessica's freedom, ability and desire to choose a specific activity and subsequently repeat with deep concentration.

Montessori observed that the phenomenon of concentration develops in three stages, each building from the previous. Firstly, the phase of preparation involves finding work spontaneously. Secondly, serious work, this is a long duration phase. Finally, the period of rest or completion of the work cycle (Montessori, 1995).

The activity is a mere tool the child uses in order to satisfy an inner need. This inner need is only satisfied by concentration and repetition. Nature provides, especially in the early years, that the child is intent on the process as opposed to the result (Ramani, 2012). Furthermore, Montessori (1995) realised that this cycle of work,

with an emphasis on completion, was of great importance for the child's mental development.

Concentration

Concerning concentration Montessori emphasised intrinsic motivation as crucial and her views are consistent with modern theories of motivation (Rathunde & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005). The preceding observation demonstrates spontaneous concentration, in an environment that promotes freedom. With freedom present, the child has a natural urge to concentrate and with that, their character changes. Montessori (1989b) stated emphatically the child's energy urges them to do exercises which are necessary for their development by saying "it is nature that brings the children to the point of concentration, not you" (p. 17). Concentration in the Montessori environment shares a likeness to the concept of 'flow'.

Flow

Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (2002) define flow as being characterised by "complete absorption in what one does" (p. 89). They investigated people who emphasised enjoyment as the main reason for pursuing an activity. The results revealed that flow included intense and focused concentration in the present moment, experiencing the activity as intrinsically rewarding. In fact, the end goal was just an excuse for the process, which revealed a person could, in principle; deal with a situation because they know how to respond to what follows (Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). The subjects therefore performed the exercise for the sheer experience of it.

Furthermore, when in flow the individual operates in full capacity. Entering flow is fragile and dependent on the child's sensitive period. During this time children are capable of internalising a certain skill or subject area thereby maximising learning outcomes (Vettiveloo, 2008). Vygotsky and Kozulin (1986) referred to these same sensitive periods as an element essential to the zone of proximal development (ZPD).

To obtain flow, the level of skill must increase to match the challenge. That is, the level of learning occurring is just one step beyond the skills one has already mastered (Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009).

Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (2002) undertook research to clarify the subjective phenomenology of intrinsically motivated activity. Their investigation studied the nature and conditions of enjoyment when this was the main reason for pursuing an activity. Among other findings, they found the reported phenomenon was similar across the settings of both work and play. Those conditions included challenges that stretch existing skills at an appropriate level to an individual's capacities and clear proximal goals.

Additionally, Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (2002) identified the phenomenological characteristics of the most meaningful and satisfying moments in life. They came to the conclusion that if the challenge exceeds skills in the ZPD the child becomes vigilant and anxious, conversely if the skills exceed the challenge the child relaxes and becomes bored (Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009).

The question of match therefore becomes significant. Is work in the Montessori sense the same as play if the match of challenge and skill is conditional to optimal learning? Moreover, is the skill of the teacher required to respectfully intervene with the child when she/he thinks that a new challenge is required?

The great philosopher Plato believed that education does not consist of putting knowledge into the soul; it should turn the eyes of the soul towards the right objects. The young must be taught in play for no free man [sic] learns anything worthwhile under compulsion (Grube, 1974).

Innate desire to work

> The aim of the children who persevere in their work with an object is certainly not to "learn"; they are drawn to it by the needs of their inner life, which must be organized and developed by its means. (Montessori, 1991, p. 181)

The succeeding two observations illustrate the child's desire to work and repeat. This thesis reports all aspects of children's activities as work. This is congruent with Montessori's view of the child's innate desire to work (Montessori, 1996). In a Montessori environment the word play is substituted with work so as to give it dignity. The value of work is aligned with the issues of social liberation. From a child's perspective it is liberating that even the adult does not have a right to interrupt their work (Lloyd, 2008).

[Observation: Sweeping 2]

A child called Tui is putting her materials away after finishing her work when she notices something sticking to the soles of her (bare) feet. As she looks down, she realises that the rice from the pouring activity is scattered on the floor around the table and chair she is working on.

Tui gathers a brush and shovel, brings it back to the table and then gets a broom. She sweeps the rice towards the shovel as it rests on the floor before sweeping around the table and chair. Tui approaches the shovel with the rice resting inside, bends down and brushes the rice out of the shovel with her hands. Next Tui repositions the shovel and sweeps the rice around the floor again, sometimes closer to the shovel, sometimes further away.

After some time of practicing this, Trina (teacher), who had been observing Tui's difficulty with the rice scattering, approaches, kneels down by the table and says "Would you like some help Tui?" to which Tui nods in approval.

"It's quite a big job picking up all this rice", adds Trina "How about you use this brush (handing her the brush that goes with the shovel) and I will use the broom to sweep it in a little pile and you can sweep it into the dust pan."

Together they sweep the discarded rice; Trina with the broom and Tui using the brush and shovel.

[Observation: Sweeping 3]

Tommy goes to a shelf and selects a tray, which holds a brush and shovel, some small cubes of dishcloth and a piece of chalk. He sits on the floor draws a large circle on the floor and empties the contents of the tray (the cut dishcloth) onto the floor. Next, he uses the brush to carefully sweep the pieces into the circle where he sweeps them onto the shovel before putting then back onto the tray. Tommy does this a total of eight times before he wipes the chalk circle off the floor and returns the complete tray to the shelf.

The work of a child

Montessori did not use the word 'work' in the ordinary sense, she saw it as a universal tendency that unites us to the cosmos. Observations of children showed Montessori that work was more than a virtue; more than something we are forced to do in contrast with play, more than a job or the means to earn a livelihood. Humanity's fundamental instincts, when allowed to develop naturally, show us children love to work (Haines, 2003).

The work that attracts a young child, three-to-six-year-olds, which is not the product of mental effort has been termed reconstructive work by Montessori. This type of work tends to the co-ordination of the psycho-muscular organism (Montessori & Simmonds, 1965). The child is working on mastery of the activity and practicing to perfect their abilities (Stephenson, 1998). This is evident in all three observations involving sweeping. In addition, the work of the child cannot be equated to that of

an adult as the adult is the completed form and the child is constructing itself (Haines, 2003).

To the adult observer, the work of a child may seem superfluous if their work is judged by adult standards. However, for the child it can be a serious matter. [Observation Sweeping 3] exemplifies this. Mario Montessori (1992) reminds us that the purpose of the activity "must be sought within the child and not in the action itself or its objective aim" (p. 23). Nature urges the child to do exercises through which their development can be accomplished (Montessori, 1946).

Repetition

Montessori recognised the human tendency toward perfection and subsequently emphasised repetition (Culverwell, 1918). [Observation Sweeping 2] demonstrates this sort of repetition in which children carried out the activity without the need for reinforcement or feedback from the teacher (Montessori, 1989b). Children adjust their movements and increase their skill level as they observe their own mistakes (Montessori, 1995). Notice in [Observation Sweeping 3] teacher intervention or correction was not necessary. Tommy is driven to repeat the exercise until perfection is achieved with mastery. In [Observation: Sweeping 2], teacher intervention was necessary, however only after repetition was observed. In this example, Tui was unable to complete the process without intervention, nevertheless, she was granted the dignity of repeating.

[Observation: Pirates]

[Observation Pirates] highlights the mutual connection between teacher and child when that relationship is built on respect. Children are capable yet at the same time vulnerable. The elder, more capable partner in a relationship usually determines the level of independence required for each individual. This judgment is based on their knowledge of the individual and their relationship.

Trina (teacher) and Raymond are sitting on the floor by Raymond's work discussing the trip on which some of the older students are going that day. Raymond had already talked about his reluctance to go. The dialogue began slightly earlier as Raymond and the two teachers (Tara and Trina) were discussing his reluctance to go and had agreed it was his decision. Trina continued the conversation to make sure Raymond knew what it entailed and to establish why he did not want to go.

Raymond - But what about the pirates though?

Trina - I don't think there will be any pirates there. Captain Cook wasn't a pirate though was he?

Raymond - But he is.

Trina - Why do you think that?

Raymond - That's because Tara (teacher) said he is.

There is a pause here.

Trina - It's not Captain Hook eh? It's Captain Cook. There is a bit of difference…Captain Hook is a pretend pirate on T.V.

Raymond – On DVD too.

Trina - Captain Cook is a real person…

Raymond - …Are you sure?

Trina - Well he was a real person a long time ago, he travelled all around the world and went to a lot of different countries.

Raymond – Even Asia?

Trina – Mmmmm well I don't know a lot about him but if you went to the Maritime Museum you could find out more about him.

Raymond – Maritime Museum?

Trina – Which is where Tara is going, Maritime means boats.

Raymond – Are you sure?

Trina – Yes 'cos maritime means everything to do with the sea and the boats and all about Captain Cook and other boats as well. So you're really really sure you don't want to go?

Raymond – Well, Tara says yes and Tara says if I don't want to that's ok.

Trina – And that is ok. I'm just checking that you don't want to go. I wasn't sure if you knew what it was really about. Now that I have told you a little bit about it do you think you might want to go and see? Or would you rather stay here?

Raymond – Is there something else about it?

Trina – Well there are lots of things about it but because I haven't been there for a long time I can't remember them all that's why Tara is going to take the older children so they can have a look.

Raymond – Are there pirates?

Trina – No, there are no pirates.

Raymond – Oh, I [don't] like pirates.

Trina – You like pirates?

Raymond – No, I don't like pirates!

Trina – You don't? There aren't any pirates!

Raymond – Well um…

Trina – You are very welcome to go if you want to go.

Raymond - Is there lots of seats.

Trina – Yes plenty.

Raymond – Plenty?

Raymond – So all the five year olds are going?

Trina – Yes all of the five year olds are going.

Trina – Lets go and look at all the children that are going and we can talk to Tara about if she said something about Captain Cook being a pirate because she might know something about that.

Together they walk holding hands to where Tara is to confirm the dialogue.

Raymond ultimately decided not to go on the trip after further discussions with both teachers. Maria Montessori insisted that the child should be given a level of independence appropriate to their age, fostered by the sympathetic personal relationship between the teacher and child, and the lovingly prepared physical environment of the centre (Montessori, 1989b).

The process of formation, the building of the self through choices of interest results in the focus of concentrated work. The emergence of responsibility, empathy and

independence come from the prepared environment. This formation occurs in direct relationship to the adult who facilitates it. In fact, Schaefer (2006) states boldly it will not occur without the calling of the adult. In the process of the relationship, the child is freed to pursue inspiration.

In the observation above, Raymond was given complete respect when it was found that his fear of pirates overwhelmed any inspiration he might gain from a trip outside the prepared environment.

The following observation builds on the previous to illustrate the special relationship the teachers have with individual children. Their knowledge and respect for those individuals helps to gauge the amount of interference or non-interference needed.

[Observation: Scaffolding]

Trina (the teacher) and Joseph (student) are sitting on the carpet with a material called the Decanomial Square. Trina gently and quietly explains to Joseph how to start the activity. Trina gives him enough information for him to carry on independently; she stays with him as he makes a few mistakes, persuading him to put the pieces correctly and showing him the next step. This takes 1:33 then Trina stands up and leaves. Joseph carries on working for another minute as Trina helps another student but keeps observing Joseph as he progresses with the next step. He looks at the door then notices someone working next to him. Joseph touches his peer's materials just before Trina steps in noticing he had finished what he had been shown and was ready for more direction. Trina gives him some assistance with explanation and says she will come back to help him if needed. This happens four more times over the next 15 minutes.

This may contradict previous writings about the teacher not interfering with the child in the moment of concentration. However, this interaction provides an example where the teacher's common sense prevails. Here the teacher has interfered but only after the child's concentration has lapsed.

Timing, that is staying too long or leaving too soon, is presented as a balance of knowing when to be present or active and is dependent on a level of independence. That is judging whether to be giving presentation after presentation, switching to active observations or withdrawing to a more passive role (Bettmman, 2003).

[Observation Scaffolding]: gives the child the right amount of independence, implying a level of faith in the child to do some by himself, returning only after observing the child slip away from his concentration. Intervention was needed to recapture Joseph's attention and inspire him to do more by scaffolding.

Observation was a tool Montessori used to develop her method of education. This tool has many benefits for teachers including slowing down, listening to children more carefully and pausing to reflect before intervening. Observations help to find answers about children's knowledge and behaviours in a familiar environment. The collection of observations over time build a picture of children's performance and progress without unnecessarily interfering with their natural behaviour (Jablon et al., 2007).

The observation gives information that influences teacher's decisions about when and how to intervene. To strengthen relationships with children the teacher's actions need to help children to see themselves as successful learners. Jablon, et al., (2007) report that too often the intervention is orientated toward the rights and wrongs of the activity as opposed to the child and their learning.

The developing relationship between the adult and child deepens the respect and appreciation toward both parties, and the decisions about how and when to intervene, if any, will more likely be based on the child's interest and needs. This is the essence of individualised learning. To step back and let the child experience or discover something is sometimes the best way to support learning (Jablon et al., 2007).

Conflict

All living systems experience conflict. It is the conscious intention to resolve conflict with integrity that enables one to continue social education (Brownlee & Crisp, 2012). Conflict has the possibility to arise at any place where people come together. Conflict arose at both the centres involved in this study however the decision was made to focus and document it's resolution. In fact, conflict provides the perfect moment, the teachable moment to learn new communication techniques. The children in the following observation try out a couple of strategies but seek adult help when they do not work.

[Observation: Disturber]

Carter is new to the environment; he sits in his chair, mouth wide open, releasing a high pitched, very loud, laughing sound. Disturbed by this, Campbell (a peer) moves swiftly towards him saying…

"Carter, I am trying to concentrate" to no avail.
Carter continues as Campbell ushers his hand towards Carter's face as if to cover his mouth. By now, another child, Addison, has joined the table edge watching. Campbell says in a disgruntled voice, Keep your mouth shut Carter", before walking away, saying, "He won't listen."

Addison mimics Campbell's attempts at trying to muffle the noise from Carter's mouth by putting her hand close to his mouth, again to no avail. All the while, the noise carries on.

Addison joins Campbell a few meters away and they have a brief interaction that could not be heard by the observer as Carter continues with his piercing noise.

Campbell notices a nearby teacher, approaches her, places his hand on her shoulder and waits patiently for her to finish talking to another child. When she acknowledges him, he repeats "He won't listen." Together they approach Carter, Campbell

standing at the end of the table, Rachael, the teacher, bends down and addresses the
problem. Slowly the noise fades as Rachael calmly talks to Carter. Campbell
observes until the dispute is over and goes back to his work.

The observing teacher gave the children the opportunity to solve the conflict and only stepped in when asked. Before this happened the observation informed her it was clear that they felt the impact of the disturbance.

In the interview, I asked: *What aspects of your everyday interactions with children do you think promote respect?*

Sarah replied: The being listened to. I would hate for somebody to cut me off half way through a sentence and say 'just do this'' and not let me have a chance to explain. I would hate it! So one of my philosophies in life is do unto others as you would have done to yourself. It's just really simple to me, it just goes back to that.

It is widely known that all impressions from adults are absorbed in the child's mind for its self-construction. Hence the importance of the child being nourished with the 'right' attitudes, vocabulary and images as to not hinder the natural development of the child (Dubovoy, 2005). [Observation Disturber] and the following [Observation Standby] illustrate how conflict can be resolved with this in mind. The calmness of the teacher contributes to and helps to build the way children address conflict in the environment

Whilst children are concentrating on work, it is imperative that adults do not disturb them. However, when children are misbehaving or acting in a manner that disturbs others their behaviour must be addressed.

Montessori (1989b) explains in the language of her day:

> Do not apply the rule of non-interference when the children are still the
> prey of all their naughtiness. Don't let them climb on the windows, the
> furniture, etc. You must interfere at this stage. At this stage the teacher

must be a policeman. The policeman has to defend the honest citizens against the disturbers. (p. 16)

Furthermore, children in Montessori environments are empowered to intervene in conflict with peers if necessary. This is illustrated below.

[Observation: Standby]

As I pass through the class, I observe two children are involved in a heated discussion. Raewyn (a teacher) stands by, also observing.

Corey: It goes in there and vvrrrr (turning around with arm out).
Campbell: The fire truck goes around and it stops down over there (pointing).
Corey: ...and then it goes down over there vvvrrrrr...
Campbell:...but then it...
Corey: No Campbell!...
Campbell:...I'm telling you something!...(stands with a frown and arms crossed)
The watching teacher withdraws.
Corey: It goes over that side and that side (pointing) and goes around (pointing and spinning) all the day um...
Campbell: (shakes his head in disapproval).
Corey: It does, you're wrong (at this point he lunges forward with a stern look on his face and quietly grumbles something that is not comprehendible).
Campbell: (slides his arm sideways to maneuver Corey away) ...DON'T DO THAT TO ME.
Corey: You're actually wrong.
Campbell: Well don't!
The boys look each other in the eye for a second and then both go their separate ways.

[Observation Standby] presented an opportunity for the teacher to trust and have faith in the boys' abilities and showed this by leaving the debate just as it started to

heat up. Intervention in this case was unnecessary. Moreover, her move gave the boys space to vent their anger and frustration in a non-violent way.

At the heart of this experience is the freedom of the children. Without it, the discipline of solving problems socially would be void. The interview drew out a response to this need when I asked: *What are your thoughts about freedom and freedom of movement?*

Rhonda replied…I think the freedom also gives them the responsibility to do that and its sort of a self-discipline and a self motivation rather than you being a teacher and telling them what to do and that sort of standing over them. I don't think we give them enough credit sometimes if you just stand back and leave it they can resolve their own problems where as some teachers are too quick to intervene and sort it out for them.

Montessori (1992) best sums this up by saying,

> When the independent life of the child is not recognized with its own characteristics and its own ends, when the adult man interprets these characteristics and ends, which are different from his, as being errors in the child which he must make speed to correct, there arises between the strong and the weak a struggle which is fatal to mankind [sic].(1992)

Enculturation

The words of Pearce (2002) are particularly helpful in explaining the negative concept of enculturation. Pearce provides us with a view of some habitual responses from adults, which can be seen as negative from the child's perspective and provides reasoning to his hypothesis.

When children imitate what they have seen in their environment, their role model may reprimand them. Thus, the double directive is released and when the modeler reinforces the word 'no', with physical restraint or punishment, or indicates with an

angry face that the relationship might end, the child only understands abandonment. In a split moment, the source of all good things turns into the source of threat. The frightful word 'no' automatically transforms the person who cares into a giver of pain and even threatens to break the bond on which life depends (Pearce, 2002).

Sooner or later, the child learns to conform out of fear, this overwhelms the most rebellious will, and the exploration ceases. The child is caught in a serious contradiction of terms, experiences ongoing confusion, ambiguity and uncertainty. Using negatives to correct behaviour is at the very heart of enculturation (Pearce, 2002).

Furthermore, Pearce (2002) asserts that enculturation is the result of conditioning, enforced learning and the adopting of ideas about survival, including techniques believed necessary in our particular cultural environment. We are convinced that to pass on our survival knowledge we must pound what we know into our offspring for their own good as it was pounded into us for our own good. Education is treated in a similar fashion.

Montessori (1995) questioned what the child really absorbs from the customs, morals and religion of people as she strived to implement a different way. The implications of enculturation are the enforced threats of a loss of spontaneous sociability and desire for relationship. The loss of sociability translates as loss of even the chance to love and be loved, which amounts to a living death (Pearce, 2002).

The following observation exemplifies how the teacher refrained from using a negative command, understood the child's stage of development, protected his vulnerability and furthermore showed him how to avoid making such an error.

[Observation: Learning from error]

Addison sits on the floor. In front of her lays a large mat with a moveable alphabet and some carefully laid out words she has built up with each individual letter,

spelling out some of the words she knows and others she is trying. All of her work sits nicely inside the space defined by the mat.

An unsuspecting child Reid (new to the environment) walks obliviously over the mat and through her work, disturbing some of the letters. Addison's protest alerts Tara the teacher, who shows Reid how he and others can walk around the mat. Together they walk back to the mat this time followed by a group of onlookers and Tara models how to walk around the mat. As she does, Reid and the group of onlookers join in walking around the mat on which Addison's work rests without disruption.

As they practice Tara says, "We walk around the mat, around the mat. We are going to go around the mat again without touching the mat". Reid accomplishes this as does the group of onlookers. Tara notices his success and says "See you can do it, you can walk around the mat, now you can practice anytime you see a mat on the floor". The group disperses to their own individual activities.

Each scenario in the environment provides an opportunity to teach. This observation provides three differing perspectives. For Addison, who had her work interrupted, the value of her work is reinforced by intervention. Like the others in the class who participated, or subconsciously absorbed the lesson, the rule of walking around the work of others is both modelled and reinforced without damaging confidence and self-esteem. Reid takes the opportunity to practice walking around others' work and, as he does, he recognises what has happened and attempts to remedy his mistake. This way the mistake is celebrated as learning and Reid becomes more conscious in his movements and abilities.

Discipline in the Montessori method is obtained through liberty. Discipline can never be obtained by commands and it would be fruitless to rely on reprimands or persuasions. Although these means may appear to be initially effective, if such negative discipline appears, it inevitably fails. It is the Montessori view that the realisation of self-discipline arises in the child through the medium of work. When the child becomes intrinsically interested in a piece of work the journey to discipline begins. The interest itself is one of the many tools used in the journey.

Montessori (2004b) herself wrote, "In our effort to establish discipline, we must rigorously apply the principles of the method. It is not to be obtained by words; no man learns self-discipline through hearing another man speak (p. 229)".

Furthermore, Montessori (1995) reiterates this view by saying,

> Education is not something a teacher does, but…a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being. It is not acquired by listening to words, but in virtue of experiences in which the child acts on his environment. The teacher's task is not to talk but to prepare and arrange…(p. 8)

[Observation: Silence game]

The Silence Game perfectly depicts Montessori's view of self control and discipline. This observation provides an example of how the class as a group achieves silence.

A child walked confidently toward me, stood right next to me and turned over a card on the wall with a picture of a peaceful landscape to reveal the word 'silence'. She stood there perfectly still with her finger to her lips gazing into the class.

Very quickly, the noise level in the room lowered and within 15 seconds, there was indeed silence. This included the noise coming from outside where children were working.

As I panned the camera across the room children of all ages remained perfectly still, some with their finger to their lips, indicating silence. The silence filled the room as the message was passed without a sound, without any movement.

After one minute, Tara (the teacher) waved at the girl with a quick nod to indicate completion however, the class remained silent. After an additional 15 seconds the

girl gently returned the sign and movement and voices once again filled the void of silence.

I must note here that the noise level in the room before the exercise could be described as a quiet hum as it was on completion too.

The Silence Game arose from Montessori's experience and theory of obedience and illustrates a collective experience. Perfect silence can be obtained if all participants are willing and able. This activity requires a whole group of children to co-operate and only one to break it. The success therefore depends on in the words of Montessori (1995) "conscious and united action" (p. 261).

Montessori (1995) sums up the levels or stages of obedience, briefly discussed in the glossary (see p. 97), by saying "the power to obey is the last phase in development of the will, which in its turn has made obedience possible" (p. 262). As teachers, there is a need to be aware that this arises in children because of the qualities of the person in charge, the person responsible for building the reciprocal and respectful relationship.

Children will, no doubt, acquire the most unquestioning obedience to those who require it on worthy grounds. Not merely as a tribute to their greater age, power or importance (Culverwell, 1918).

In conclusion learning to make responsible decisions is discovered through practice, each individual learns by trial and error, it is not a skill that can be taught. Therefore it is through freedom that the child learns inner or self-discipline, which includes how to think through options when making decisions; how to be a responsible person who is respectful of themselves and others. An inner compass is developed for what is right and wrong, without needing external rewards or threats of punishment to do the right thing.

Morality

[Observation: Thinking of others]

"When a child helps someone who needs help, he is combining moral and social life by living his experiences" (Montessori, 1938/2012, pp. 15).

Kohlberg (see p. 22) theorised that children achieved moral expectations in the second plane of development at around nine years of age. Both Krogh (1981) and Chisnall (2011) recorded the moral actions of 3-6 year olds in the Montessori environment. The following observation exemplifies this.

Cameron, a younger member of the community, is sitting at the eating table with Pablo (a slightly older child). Together they are picking pieces of fruit to eat. A teacher (Sarah) squats beside them discussing the properties of individual fruit. Pablo has a cushion behind his back to make his chair more comfortable. He leaves his chair, walks to the library area and picks another identical cushion, walks around the eating table and rests the cushion behind Cameron's back as he stands to retrieve another piece of fruit. He continues to straighten it on the chair as Cameron sits back.

Sarah notices this and says, "Thanks Pablo. Look what Pablo did, you can say thanks Pablo."

"Thanks Pablo" Cameron replies as Pablo returns to his seat to eat some more fruit.

This observation demonstrates how Pablo has the ability to think of his peer. Montessori (1995) felt that the child could assist adults in understanding the question of morality. She regarded children as socially integrated when they identified with those in their peer group whose welfare they considered more important than their own. It is within the age bracket of three to six that children begin to show interest in being with others in a group.

The task of becoming moral is relational: it has to do with the self, interactions with others and the environment. The development of moral sense and understanding belongs ultimately to the child. It is Montessori's view that morality is not something that is directly taught rather it is an inner formation and development dependant on social experience. Moral education begins at birth as the baby is introduced to social experience. The young child will absorb experiences and their psychic life will use these experiences to develop a morality (Edwards, 1986; Loew, 2006).

Adult's support and guidance is necessary, because children admire adults. It is however, ultimately the children themselves who are responsible for what children know, feel, believe and value. In the moral realm, teachers can facilitate the children's natural development toward a state of mature autonomy to think for themselves and adopt an inquiring stance. Children are developing an appreciation of the values of justice and concern for others and with support they will evolve into a mature morality. In order to best support and guide children's moral development, it is essential that teachers be as aware of the developmental steps by which children acquire moral sense and understanding (Edwards, 1986).

Culverwell (1918) reminds us that in regards to moral development, the organism is not a satisfactory guide. Here we must rely on some authority for the standards of right and wrong, of what is desirable. This standard depends on the general attitude of the community toward social problems.

Emile Durkheim (2002) determined that education plays an essential role in moral socialisation as the "intermediary between the affective morality of the family and the more rigorous morality of civic life" (149). This is echoed by Mario Montessori (1992) who differentiated the environment of the modern man to that of the child. Inevitably, from birth, the child must learn to adjust to this world. He suggests that adults must construct a bridge between the worlds of the adult and child which is now known in Montessori terms as the prepared environment (Mario Montessori, 1992).

In regards to mental development and the sensory motor system it is important, particularly in the early years, to let the organism develop itself by means of responses to the environment. The environment must be selected with care to get the best results because the inner impulses toward mental efficiency are less vigorous than the physical well being (Culverwell, 1918).

The prepared environment contributes effectively to the moral development of the child. It is an active society and therefore a workplace for each child's moral code. In fact, MacDonald (2006) states emphatically, "wherever there is a group of people together morality comes into play, because morality guides our choices as we interact with other people" (p. 140).

Morality should be considered in relation to social life because the meaning of morality is our relation with others and adaptation to life with others. Therefore in the view of Montessori morality and social life are united (Montessori, 1938/2012).

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an insight into the participants lived experiences with some discussion. Specific examples and observations are useful to provide lived experiences that have the possibility to link to other experiences. The discussion provides the reader with an insight into reasons behind both the teacher's and student's actions and re-actions. This chapter has simply highlighted the relationship between the child, teacher and the environment. Themes have arisen from these lived experiences, which are discussed deeper in the following chapter.

In the following chapter, further discussion brings forth implications arising from the observations.

Chapter Five: Findings

Introduction

It is the contention of this thesis that respect is fundamental to relationships in education. In the previous chapter, I used a phenomenological approach to present findings from observations made at two Montessori early childhood education centres. In discussing the meaning of these observations, four broad themes are highlighted to create a view of the respectful relationship. They are: reciprocal relationships, freedom, movement and the prepared environment.

It should be noted that respect is a theme that underpins all of these aspects and its importance is once again highlighted and linked to the findings from the observations in the following discussion. The following themes indicate the fundamental factors to establishing a relationship based on respect. Further research could indentify additional aspects, however for the purpose of this study the following themes lay a foundation for the practitioner. The position held in this thesis is that these themes provide a basis for respectful interactions and relationships.

Respect

Respect as social power is the fundamental belief that respect is related to power and people with authority and that a perceived higher social status deserves respect. Piaget (1932) theorised that young children felt obligated to yield to authority figures. In opposition, Miller and Pedro (2006) feel there is a need to teach children how they can protect themselves from adults in positions of authority whose intentions are misguided.

[Observation: Pirates] highlights the need for adults, in particular teachers, to build a mutual relationship based on respect and the child's capabilities as opposed to an authority figure.

Sorin (2005) suggests that the authoritarian model reduces the student's role to a passive learner under the teacher's control. In this model, children are viewed as incapable, powerless and in need of adult protection. Opposing this model, [Observation: Scaffolding] showcases the young child's ability to act independently in accordance with the respectful relationship by giving the child just the right amount of independence, and a level of faith after observation.

Montessori (1995) believed that children can decide on their own actions under the prompting of natural laws and the child's strongest instinct is to free him or herself from adult control. Therefore, natural development of the child relies on a special relationship between the child and adult based on their needs and level of development.

Inevitably, disagreements between adults and children occur, often because adults are skeptical of children's capacity for full rationality; unlikely to consider their judgments of equality; and simply expect children to follow adult rules (Goodman, 2009). Piaget suggested mature minds have the ability to develop the morality of goodness. Both Lightfoot (2000) and Piaget (1932) believe that it is the feeling of mutual respect that creates this morality and it is acquired through development between individuals who recognise each other as equals. However, the limited observations of this thesis suggest that the act of morality can also be seen in the very young developing child.

[Absence of] rewards and punishments

In my experience of being both a student and a teacher, student conformity is a common aspiration for teachers, but what are the effects? This appears to be largely ignored by teachers. Often the authority of knowledge is confused with professional authority, which is set in opposition to the freedom of the students (Friere, 1974).

[Observation: Disturber] serves to illustrate the reality of relationships in social education. It highlights problem solving but stems deeper to consider how

relationships affect longer-term development in children. In particular, the absence of rewards and punishments must be noted as children learn intrinsically the skill of solving social problems.

Benporath (2003) claims a child who expresses themselves in a socially objectionable way should be disciplined. However, I view such discipline as a form of belittling, which is not necessary. Montessori, according to Standing (1988) observed that a child, once the master of their own actions, is one who voluntarily obeys the wishes of a teacher.

Generally, the non compliant child is only so when forced to do something against their will. In contrast, the absence of external rewards (and punishments) in the Montessori method reinforces the desire for the learner to derive satisfaction from the work itself as opposed to an external reward (Cossentino, 2003). This is evident in [Observation: Sweeping 2] as Tui notices rice on the floor and acts to remedy the problem without prompting.

In some conventional practice, knowledge and grades are reinforced by a system of rewards and punishments based on behavioural theory (Eissler, 2009). This practice leads to the belief that failing or disruptive students want to avoid pain or failure so badly that if they are threatened or punished enough, the adult can guide them to do what they want. In contrast, Montessori asserts that if a child has been commanded by a teacher to work on a particular topic or piece of material they are not free. If, however, the child has the freedom to choose, they are independent, as they depend on their own will, not that of another (Ramachandran, 1998).

Kohn (1993) reminds us that rewards and punishments are equally destructive, that is, they are not opposites, one is not better nor worse than the other. The critical fact to consider is that both the punishment and the reward proceed from the same psychological model, one that conceives of motivation as nothing more than manipulation of behaviour or will.

Reciprocal relationships

It is possible that children will not progress to working independently until they meet someone whom they believe is a caring person. Relationships, according to Glasser (1986) precede effective learning. Dewey (1966) who opposed this idea identified that teachers should look for some stimulus to keep the student engaged. However, even he proceeds to say that affection for the teacher is an inadequate motive as it presents an extrinsic motivation. The extrinsic motivation provided by the teacher is liable to change due to external conditions. In addition, he believed that the child should outgrow the attachment to the teacher.

The Montessori (1991) method encourages teachers to acquire the skills of silence, observation, and humility, in order to remove the common obstacles that teachers place in the way of their pupils. [Observation: Standby] serves to exemplify how the adult must be able to realise and identify that part of themselves that can be an obstacle in the relationship with the child. Without this realisation the adult may be unaware that they are the cause of the difficulties which the child battles (Montessori, 1989a, 2004b).

Maria Montessori believed the deeper the child's knowledge of an object: the greater his respect for the object grows. If we can apply this principle to adults, the saying would announce; the deeper the teacher's knowledge of a student, the greater the respect for the student grows. [Observation: Learning from error] exemplifies the teacher's view that it is necessary to present to the child the means of their development and to respect their liberty.

The prepared environment

It is through the children's relationship with the prepared environment and the teacher that respect for others can be developed. Neuroscientists have now discovered that the human brain is constantly being modified by experience (Pouzar-Kozak, 2008) and this plasticity is greatest through early childhood (Bruer, 2003).

This ability to adapt exemplifies the child's desire for independence in the prepared environment.

[Observation: Standby] illustrates the teacher's ability to determine when and how to assist the child and when to step back. Montessori (1996) reminds us that,

> Growth and development depend upon a continued narrowing of the relationships between a child and his environment. The reason for this is that the development of his personality, or what is called his "freedom", cannot take place unless he becomes progressively independent of adults (p. 185).

Key to this process is free interaction within the environment (Grebennikov, 2005) as seen in [Observation: Sweeping 1] and [Observation: Sweeping 2].

The child in the 3-6 plane of development has needs and tendencies that are continuously evolving and developing. The preparation of the environment is fundamental to free movement, exploration, making choices and concentration. When I asked via the interview: *What do you consider the environmental factors essential for promoting free movement?* Rhonda replied: *I think having the different areas for example, Practical Life, Language and Maths etc so everything kind of has its own area and it has order and the kids really respond to that order and then having things put back in the right place. So when children have favourite activities they know exactly where they are so when they come in and that's their settling activity say I think that's really respectful.*

Montessori (1991) advocated an educational environment where the holistic needs of the child for development could be met, not solely the spiritual liberty of internal growth …"but the entire organism of the child" (p. 111).

The environment is therefore adjusted to suit the child's innate desire for order and furthermore supports a need for independence. Its design purposefully awakens the

child's interest while appealing to their desire for inner self-orientation (Montessori, 1996).

Relationship with the environment

All young mammalians are genetically driven to interact with and in their environment; this is how they form neural imprints in order to build such a structure of knowledge (Pearce, 2002). Montessori (1955) viewed the postnatal work of the human as a constructive activity. The child adapts as it constructs itself according to the conditions of the environment.

Young children learn through a complete sensory experience in order to build a structure of knowledge. This way Pearce (2002) declares the child constructs knowledge that is shared with another. The sensory experience is heightened with the feel and look of real objects because of the power of the hand-to-mind connection. The hand provides inputs to the brain and executes the brain's creative outputs (Eissler, 2009).

Dewey (1944) desired the bringing about of a culture in which work is organised so that workers experience work as an arena in which to grow and to contribute to the life of the community. Education can be the path towards this ideal. But in doing so, we must dismiss the suggestion that education can accomplish this mission via direct instruction (Pekarsky, 1998). Montessori (1995) wrote "the skill of a man's hand is bound up with the development of his mind" (p. 150) and cautioned, "Never give more to the eye than the hand" (p. 237).

The choice of materials in the prepared environment enable children to self-regulate their psychological development. Montessori believed that children who have choices will spontaneously engage in activities which will further their development (Lillard, 2007). Evidence of this can also be seen in nature and young children, as they appear to regulate their caloric intake. In a study by Johnson and Birch (1994) children's ability to regulate energy intake was through parental control in the

feeding situation. That is mothers who were more controlling of their children's food intake had children who showed less ability to self-regulate energy intake.

This would suggest that the optimal environment for children's development of self-control of energy intake can be enhanced by parents who provide healthy food choices but at the same time allow children to assume control of how much they consume (Johnson & Birch, 1994).

When given choices regarding children's physiological development Montessori believed these same principles apply. Within the prepared environment, one that provides positive choices, children will take what they need from those choices available and use them for psychological development (Lillard, 2007).

Freedom

The more authoritative power a teacher has inevitably the less freedom the student experiences. For example, teachers who perceive they have power, and use threats of failure cause students' imminent frustration. Montessori (1995) emphasises that education should not be a series of adult impositions on the child but a conquest of freedom secured by the learner. Equally as important to a child's education is a more positive view of failure and success.

Empowering children however is valued by the early childhood curriculum, Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 1996) the development of independence can be achieved by empowering children to access resources necessary to direct their own lives. [Observation: Pirates] portrays the essence of freedom; a basic need that is in direct conflict with the power of authority. Raymond was given a rich amount of information through discussion but the teachers' respect for him gave him the freedom to decide. Likewise, in [Observation: Disturber] and [Observation: Standby] the teachers stood back to enable and empower children to work out their differences.

Observations however, make the teacher ever ready to step in when required. For example, in [Observation: Learning from Error] and [Observation: Disturber] teacher intervention was necessary after observation and was based on the teacher's knowledge of the individual.

[Observation: Presentation] also exemplifies freedom in the environment. The implication of this is responsibility. To be free, individuals need to develop and exercise their freedom in order to recognise their responsibilities as freedom, with boundaries (Snow-Gang, 1989). This is also evident in [Observation: Numeracy] as Oliver carries the long rods with care and purpose. Montessori (1995) suggests freedom with responsibility needs to happen every hour of every day for years for it to become habitual and mature with growth. Respectful environments, according to Snow-Gang (1989) should encourage personal choice in an atmosphere that holds children accountable for their activities respective to the stage of development of the individual.

The use of child sized furniture was first utilised by Maria Montessori and allows for both education of movement and choice (where to sit, who with and so on) it allows the children to have a sense of control and enables them to make good decisions and choices in the environment (Lillard, 2007). It also allows maximum freedom for the students; the furniture is also light in weight, so the children themselves can move it around.

This very idea is present in the environment of case study 1. Available for use is a table on wheels. The moveable table can be easily moved by one child in order to clean other tables as it provides a place on which to set water in a container.

I asked the teachers about this specific piece of furniture. *What do you consider to be the environmental factors essential for promoting free movement? For example I noticed the children can move the scrubbing table as it is on wheels…*

Trina-So they can take the materials outside and work with them outside or inside, they can move the tables around…

Tara explains further the different ways they have met the child's needs for movement.

Tara-Yeah, we set up table scrubbing activity for Bobby purely because you can move around and it is a physical movement with big movements and we do the Red Rods one at a time from one mat to another in different rooms if you have those children who need to do those things.

Montessori (1964) certainly believed that such actions had further implications than simply being able to move furniture and decide where to sit when she wrote, "this freedom is not only an external sign of liberty, but a means of education" (p 84).

Movement

Observations from both case studies; [Observation: Movement] and [Observation: Sweeping 1] demonstrate that freedom of movement is not only permitted, on the contrary, it is encouraged. Furthermore, the liberty of the child is evident in these environments as the children were free to move.

Montessori (1995) emphasised an integrated approach to movement and said: "Mental development must be connected with movement and be dependent on it. It is vital that educational theory and practice should become informed by this idea" (pp. 141-142).

Montessori's holistic approach arose from the negative effect she observed in children who were confined to the fixed desks of the time. She saw the stationary child as particularly problematic. More recent insights into learning concur with Montessori's view. Thelon (2001) recognises that the idea that movement is integral to learning is now known as 'embodied cognition' and it encompasses that organisms are dynamic systems that develop in adaptation to their environment and labels the learning arising from movement as 'embodied cognition'.

Embodied cognition

According to the view of embodied cognition, as illustrated in the verb game in [Observation: Movement] where, memory is viewed as having the purpose of enabling us to function in the physical world. The theory of embodied cognition finds an intimate connection between action, meaning, and language (Noice & Noice, 2001).

The belief in Montessori education is that purposeful movement aligns one's body with thought as thought guides the action. Montessori developed a respect for movement when she saw how society and civilization was founded on the movements of the hand. Montessori (1995) wrote, "The skill of man's hand is bound up with the development of his mind, and in the light of history we see it connected with civilization … the development of manual skill keeps pace with mental development" (p. 150).

Summary

The natural development of a child, both in growth of the body and mind, needs to be at the forefront of any educator's philosophy in order to assist the child in a reciprocal and respectful relationship through their education. If we consider that children learn the majority of their social abilities and morals from adult role modelling, does it not make sense to firstly change the way we are behaving? Perhaps we should observe children in their natural state and learn more from them.

If children are to be observed naturally then the prepared environment needs to be at the forefront of the approach. Once again, the adult facilitates this based on the natural developmental needs of the individuals present. The combination of the themes' respect, freedom, movement and the prepared environment, provide a basis for an educational philosophy that is inclusive of the whole child. In this, Montessori education represents a philosophy that comes to life through relationships built on respect.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

Introduction

My passion and interest in the subject and phenomenon of respect will always evolve in thought and practice. The concept of manāki, outlined in chapter one, that binds the relationship of the adult and child together, provides opportunities to engage and share in activity. For now, this part of my journey into researching respect and relationships has concluded. This last chapter outlines the significant findings, implications of the research and recommendations for further research and professional practice.

The purpose of this thesis is to identify and record what aspects of Montessori practice create a reciprocal and respectful relationship. The experiences of the two case studies have identified practices in line with the Montessori philosophy that developed and model respect. The themes identified in this thesis are a beginning to draw and extend upon. There is no doubt that there are other factors to consider when considering respect as an integral part of practice in all teaching and learning.

Significant findings

Respect is certainly more than simply a question of how you treat others. The findings suggest that in the Montessori environment there are contributing factors that act as themes that support the creation of a reciprocal and respectful relationship. Furthermore, these themes suggest this practice fosters respect as a learnt behaviour in children that develops in conjunction with nature. This makes a model for educators that in practice could enhance effective teaching and learning whilst engaging in reciprocal and respectful relationships.
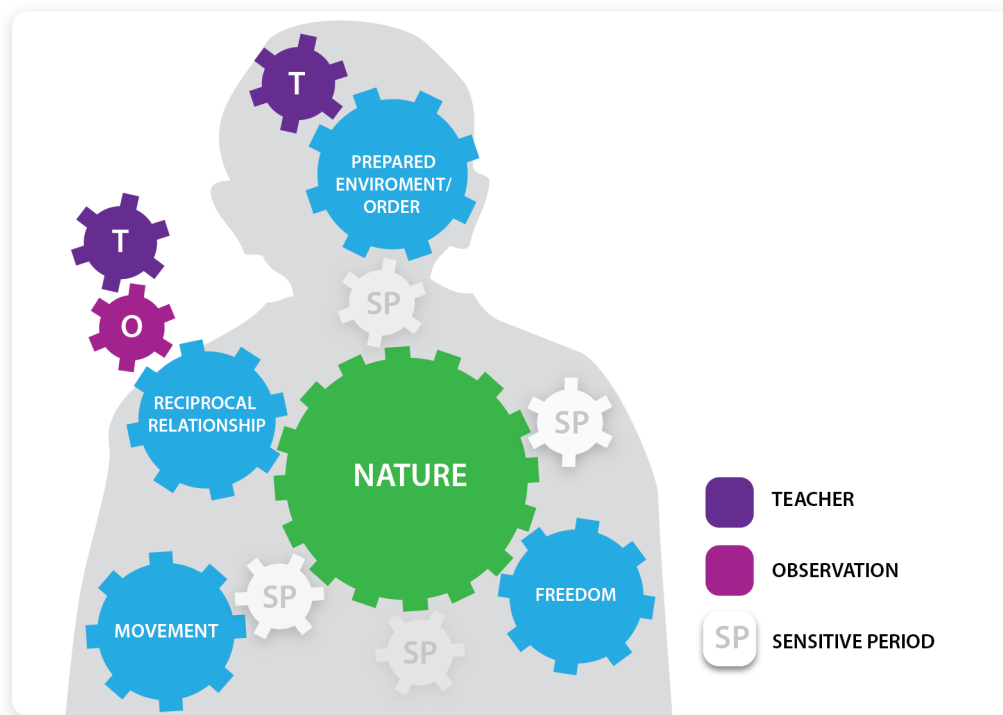
Figure 1. The child in relation to the themes

The above and following diagrams are not designed to be static in thought. There are certainly more aspects to a respectful reciprocal relationship. For the purpose of this thesis, the themes identified are interconnected with cogs, which symbolise how they work in conjunction with nature. This diagram depicts the child in relation to the four themes, nature, sensitive periods and the teacher.

On the outside of the image is the teacher linked by observation to the reciprocal relationship. At the heart of the image is a cog that represents nature as it is at the heart of the child's being. The four themes all spontaneously work in conjunction with nature, sensitive periods and the teacher. The prepared environment is situated near the brain with assistance from the teacher as it directly influences the ordering and categorising of knowledge and thought. Freedom and movement sit solidly grounding the themes, working together with nature and sensitive periods as they appear and disappear.

Nature

Montessori observed that children within our learning environments are beings of nature just as plants growing within our gardens (Montessori 1996). Nature, in this plane of development, is the true guide for the child. Adults and specifically teachers must be very aware of this factor.

Nature in this sense relates to the child's emerging sense of self or being (Montessori 1995). The role of the teacher in a Montessori classroom is to influence the child's interest by timing the child's lessons based on observations. In order to achieve maximum interest the lesson must be given at an opportune moment in the child's development. Given too early, it will be too difficult; given too late, the child will be bored. Therefore, interest in the lesson is key.

Today we might look at the nature nurture dichotomy in a different way, especially as brain research reveals more to us of child development. Modern research shows that through interaction with the environment the human brain is physiologically changed. In recent years neuroscientists discovered that the human brain is "plastic", meaning it is modified by experience. In early childhood, there is an overabundance of synapses in the brain which are organised and 'pruned' according to the child's experience (Bruer, 2002).

Closely linked to the term nature that Montessori used as a guide for the child are the sensitive periods of the child that change delicately in the brain's plasticity. These changes occur because of the brain's ability to be shaped and changed by experience that occur over a lifetime according to nature (Bruer, 1997)

However, Montessori also had in mind a spiritual link. She believed the human is born with a vital force called the horme (Montessori 1995). The horme belongs to life in general and is a vital force for growth, which stimulates the child to grow. Freud compared the horme to the integration of three parts of the personality - namely the id, ego and superego that become integrated during five stages of

development (Freud & Bonaparte, 1954). This can also be compared to the Māori concept of Mauri as the life force, the intrinsic essence of a person or object. According to Greensill (1999), everything possesses Mauri and is to be respected.

In Montessori's (1995) opinion, the child constructs themselves from their environment because of this inner developmental force. This is active from birth and helps the infant to develop according to his time and civilization.

This is in accordance with Montessori's (1964) fundamental principle of her pedagogy, the liberty of the child, "such liberty as shall permit a development of individual, spontaneous manifestations of the child's nature" (p.28). This recognises that each child approaches activities differently, and each individual can continue at their own pace.

When reciprocal relationships, freedom, movement and the prepared environment come together, in accordance with nature, to assist teaching and learning the individual child is considered.
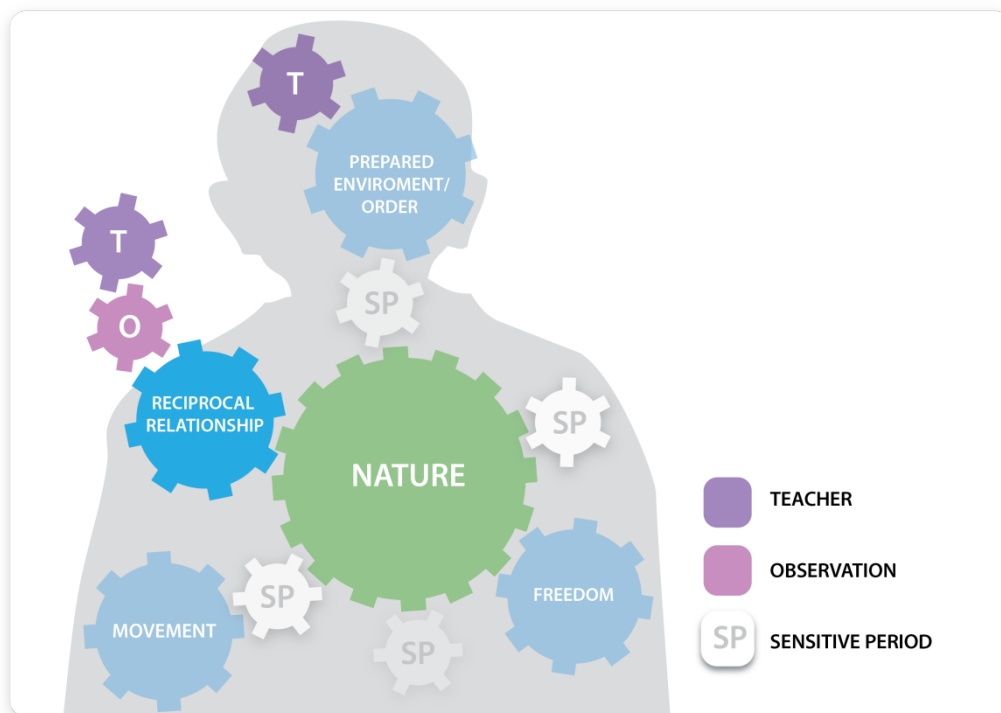
Reciprocal relationships

Figure 2. Reciprocal Relationships

To educate by means of the Montessori method the individual child needs to be considered. To respect the child's individual development and preserve the relationship, the teacher's knowledge of nature's impact must be considered. This presents a need for teachers to build a mutual relationship based on respect and the child's capabilities.

This requires a dedication to knowledge of child development as the child continuously builds upon their prior development. An understanding of child development is one aspect that enables adults' to respect childhood and ultimately understand children. It is necessary to present to the child the means of their development and to respect their liberty. This in turn fosters the child's ability to act independently by providing the right amount of independence, after observation.

Relationships precede effective learning and the feeling of mutual respect highlights morality. A mutual relationship is acquired through development between individuals who recognise each other as equals. Crucial to this, the adult must be able

to realise and identify that part of them self that can be an obstacle in the relationship.
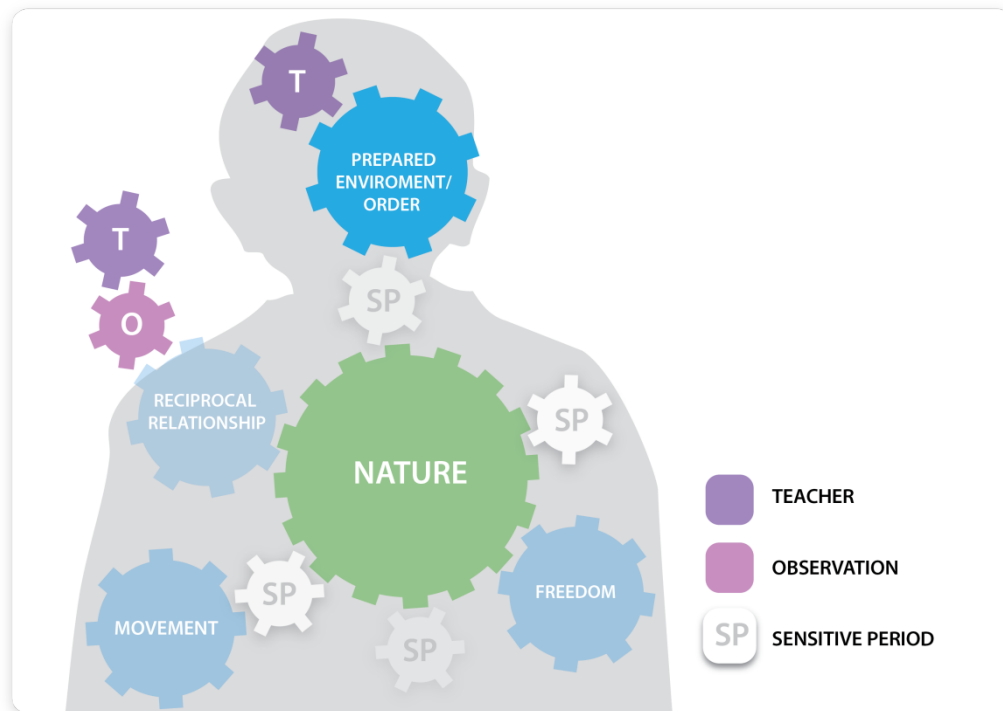
The prepared environment

Figure 3. The Prepared environment

The Montessori teacher aims to cultivate the child's will by fostering a relationship with the prepared environment. It is through the children's relationship with the prepared environment, which includes the teacher, that respect for others is fostered.

The purpose of the prepared environment is to reveal the natural development of the child through observations. In conjunction, it provides the child ultimately with freedom. The teacher is required to recognise and provide opportunities for optimal development as well as determine when to step back and observe.

The prepared environment tends to the child's natural innate desire for inner order and supports a need for independence. It is fundamental to freedom and movement, and crucial in order to achieve independence.

Freedom and movement
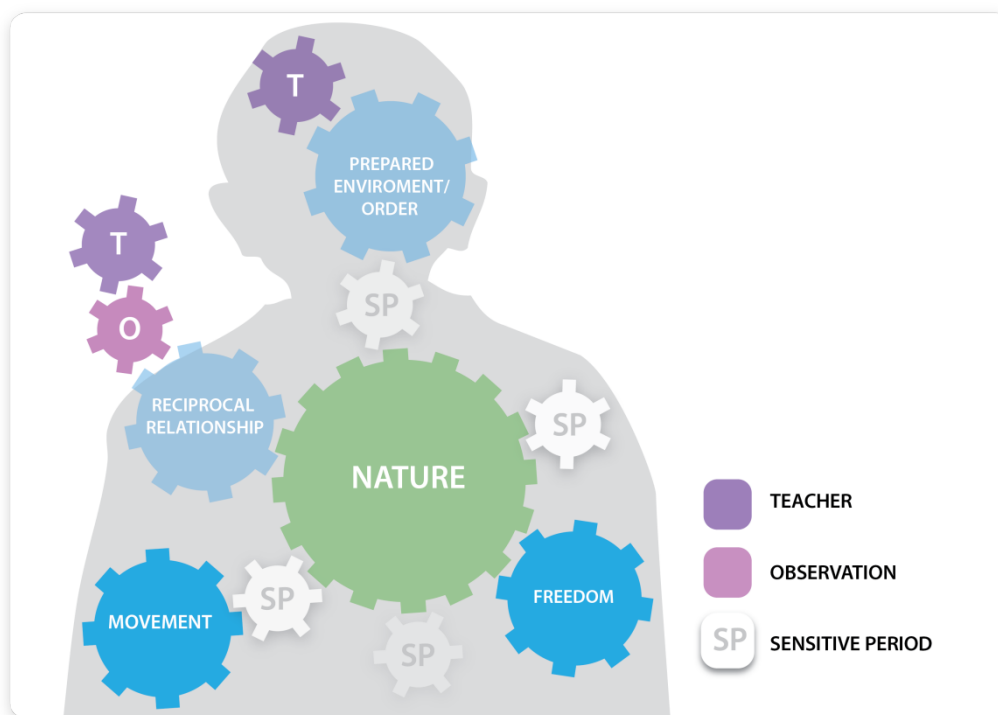
Figure 4. Freedom and movement

For the phenomenon of respect to occur the right conditions, freedom and movement in the prepared environment are crucial. Respectful environments encourage independence in an atmosphere that is responsive to the stage of development of the individual.

The child's relationship with both the prepared environment and the teacher need to be developed with respect in mind. Freedom, which is independence, is in direct conflict with the power of authority. Adults can guide the child's individual liberty, with freedom, in order to gain independence. The liberty of the children can only be evident in environments where they are free.

Recommendations for further research

This section details recommendations for further research that have emerged from the findings. This study shows four themes that act in accordance with nature. If the adult acknowledges and considers these themes, the respectful reciprocal relationship is supported. However, disrespect also lies in the hand of the adult. What is and is not respectful is subjective and is often only taken into account from an adult perspective.

The child's narrative provides a basis for an alternative way to interact and form relationships guided by nature alone. That is, how much of perceived negative behaviour in the child stems from the adult. The behaviours, which are stigmatised by adults' in children as annoying or misunderstood, need to be put in context with an understanding of human development and where behaviours emerge from. Further observation in a child led environment could be the basis for further research. If the development of moral functioning is evident in young children, the child's voice should surely be considered and would prove valuable.

As the diagrams were not designed to be static, further research could include other contributing themes. The lived experiences of the participants reflected Montessori pedagogy where the desire to foster respect is through a reciprocal relationship. The interactions between the child and family and centre could also be considered.

Strengths and limitations

This study has offered an insight into the lived experiences of the participants. This has provided data that contributes to the overall findings. The comfort level of the participants was key to their lived experiences. This could be viewed as both a strength and limitation. However, building relationships with the participants before data collection ensured data was natural without being unethical. When researching into relationships it must surely be a pre-request to firstly build a relationship based on respect and trust.

The voices of the participants in conjunction with bracketed observations ensured the data was that of their lived experiences. The semi-structured interviews reflected the observations and provided a platform for further understanding. Open-ended questions allowed the teachers to re-visit the observations and lived experiences from their perspective. Comfort levels of the teachers were also considered as interviewing in a face-to-face manner in a group enabled conversation to flow in a familiar environment for the teachers. This added to the authentication of the observations as the teacher's expressed their thoughts with both the interviewer and each other.

The obvious limitation to this study is the sample size. However, every picture tells a thousand words and this study is simply an introduction to further research into respect, relationships and Montessori education. The limitation was based on the manageability of the study, including time. There is no doubt that more environments could add valuable data as more similarities are discovered. As the diagram suggests this research project is hoped to encourage other teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand to further research within this topic in order to add to the findings. Respect and how each individual defines respect or respectful practice are somewhat subjective phenomena. If researchers really want to understand respect concerning the child, the child's view must be considered in an environment where they are free.

Concluding comments

This contribution to Montessori community is an introduction to further research. It presents a particular understanding of the child in respect to the fundamental needs for development. I found relationships between the teacher and the child exist in conjunction with nature. The identified themes combine to form a basis for the reciprocal and respectful relationship.

My study into reciprocal and respectful relationships is a contribution to practice in Montessori pedagogy. In this project, I originally set out to uncover the basis for reciprocal and respectful relationships in the Montessori environment. The findings presented a particular understanding of what contributes to a reciprocal and respectful relationship. I found the emerging themes work in conjunction with nature to present the adult with a model that can be used in practice. My own practice has

benefited from the research and further reflection with new understandings will aid participation into Montessori Journey to Excellence Te Ara ki Huhutanga (Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand, 2012)[1] and provide further scope for additional research. My journey into teaching the Montessori philosophy will continue to evolve with more research and further understanding of respect.

Investigating the lived experience of people and using the method of bracketing has changed my outlook and perception of experiences and interactions. This newly acquired view enables experiences to be taken at face value, as the subjective is an assumption that avoids true meaning. Looking into shared experiences of others has led to different view and understanding of interacting respectfully with children and adults. If you can see the root of a problem, you have a basis to solve it. A problem is just an opportunity to change something. In most part, this change needs to come from the adult.

My hope is for other professionals to gain an insight into both Montessori and a respectful practice towards children. The development of the diagram designed for change is an example of the beginning of a journey as opposed to a static image as an end.

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[1] **Montessori Journey to Excellence Te Ara ki Huhutanga** is a pilot programme designed to support teachers, management, families and whanau in Montessori centres and schools to engage in a journey of continuous improvement through reflection and review using Montessori indicators for quality practice, with mentor support.

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Glossary

Montessori terms

In this section, I outline and comment on terms that are used in a particular way in Montessori education. Comment from both Montessori and general literature are used to explain the efficacy of these terms.

Sensitive periods

Montessori emphasised an inner impulse that drew children to periods of intense interest in particular stimuli that aided psychological development (Gross, 1986; Lillard, 2007; Pouzar-Kozak, 2008; Standing, 1988). Certain needs develop in conjunction with nature, which children work through. These 'sensitive periods', as Montessori termed them, are a time where it is thought to be optimal for certain development to occur (Cole and Cole, 2001). Cole and Cole (2001) liken sensitive periods to what developmental psychologists today term inner guides and compare them to a searchlight in the child's mind that shines on certain areas and not others.

To be specific, Montessori (1995) said, "man [sic] is born with a vital force (horme) already present in the general structure of the absorbent mind, with its specializations and differentiations…described under the heading of nebulae" (p 95). During infancy, this structure is altered under the direction of the sensitive period. Growth and development are guided by sensitive periods in conjunction with the child's absorbent mind. Crucial to is the experiences of the child of free activity in a prepared environment.

Freedom and discipline

In regards to children, the terms freedom and discipline are not usually associated together. Montessori (1995) discovered that true freedom is "the acquisition of

independent functioning and goes hand in hand with responsibility" (p. 91). Therefore, freedom and discipline complement each other.

To be free is to be independent. Montessori (1964) believed the active manifestations of the child's individual liberty must be guided through activity so as to gain independence. That is, independence from the adult who has the tendency to influence yet hamper the child's spontaneity which is essential for development according to nature.

Freedom is important as it has implications for teaching practice. When naturalists study the habitats of the fauna and forest they do not simply make a series of observations at the zoological gardens because deprived of their liberty their nature is altered (Ramani, 2012). Scientists learn from observation in a natural environment. This ensures the observations and data is accurate according to nature and freed from artificial restraints.

The child's will

Obedience is also linked to another opposed ideology of most people, the child's will. As a result of experience, the development of the child's will is evident as soon as the child makes a deliberate action. As the will is developed according to nature its development can only occur in obedience to natural laws (Montessori, 1995).

Montessori (1995) states, "Conscious will is a power which develops with use and activity" (p. 254). The Montessori teacher aims to cultivate the will as opposed to breaking it. The development of the will evolves slowly through continuous activity in the environment and is very easy to break or destroy (Montessori, 1995).

Will and obedience also go hand in hand. Montessori (1995) explains, "the will is a prior foundation in the order of development, and obedience is a later stage resting on this foundation". Obedience develops in the child in similar fashion to that of other aspects of character. At first it is dictated by the hormic impulse (a vital force that guides the child towards a certain goal), then it rises to a level of consciousness,

and then it develops stage by stage until it is controlled by the conscious will (Montessori, 1995).

The prepared environment

The human brain has an amazing ability to adapt to thousands of environments (Dubovoy, 2005). Early brain development research by Bruer (1997) tells us that the brain is physiologically changing due to interactions with the environment. Neuroscientists have now discovered that the human brain is constantly being modified by experience (Pouzar-Kozak, 2008) and this plasticity is greatest through early childhood (Bruer, 2003).

The environment that is adapted to the child's needs is one that encourages independence. It is only through the childs own activities and interactions with the surroundings that the child's own personality is formed.

The Montessori environment is comprised of three components; the students, the teaching and learning materials, and the teacher. Eissler (2009) echoes Montessori's view that the prepared environment is critical to the healthy development of all children. This led Montessori to advocate the necessity of a 'prepared environment'.

 The preparation and adaptation of the Montessori environment is driven by the ever-changing needs and tendencies of the individual child. Through the simple but effective tool of observing the teacher can modify the environment to suit individual needs. Above all considerations are those concerned with safety, and then support free movement, exploration, making choices, concentration, creating and completing cycles. It is said that these contributing factors contribute to the optimum development of the child (Eissler, 2009; Stephenson, 1998).

The environment at any age, but in particular the 3-6 plane of development, affects the individual. Stephenson (1998) recognises that the organised environment reduces stress and aids the development of an organised, efficient and creative mind. Montessori stated (cited in Standing 1998),

> …but the small child cannot live in disorder. Order is for him a need of life; and if this order is upset, it disturbs him to the point of illness. His protests, which seem like mere caprices, are really vital acts of defense. (p. 125)

Appendices

Appendix A

AUT
UNIVERSITY
TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TAMAKI MAKAU RAU

Date Information Sheet Produced: 27/10/2011
Project Title

Respectful Relationships: How does the Montessori environment foster relationships with respect?

An Invitation

Tēnā koe
Ko tenei tōku pepeha
Ko Putangi tōku maunga,
Ko Mangapiko tōku awa,
Ko Tainui raua ko Te Arawa tōku waka,
Ko Tangata tōku iwi
Ko Ngati Tangata tōku hapū,
Ko Ngati Tangata tōku marae
Ko Pāora Scanlan tōku ingoa

My name is Paul Scanlan. This is an invitation to be a part of my research about respect in the Montessori environment. I am doing a research project called Respectful Relationships as part of a Master of Education degree with a Montessori component at AUT. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Participants whether they choose to participate or not will neither be advantaged nor disadvantaged.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to discover similarities in Montessori environments that foster relationships built on respect for the child. This will contribute to my current study towards a Masters of Education. Given the opportunity the research could be presented at MANZ (Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand) conference(s). Furthermore it will be published and made available in the AUT library and online. The thesis may also be reported in *Montessori Voices, Montessori Life* or similar publications.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

Each centre has been selected in conjunction with MANZ to ensure that Montessori principles are present including unquestionable respect for the child. In addition, each centre will have a point of difference. Points of difference may include foci such as Te Reo Maori, decile rating, privately run, community, rural, or teacher training. All members of the centre will have the opportunity to participate including staff, parents/caregivers and children.

What will happen in this research?

I will be observing in your centres environment, looking at how teachers interact with both other adults and children. If you are a teacher I would like to observe your interactions with parents and children and interview you, if you're a parent I would like to observe your child interacting with teachers and other children.

These interactions will be recorded either by video or notes will be taken. You can talk to me and ask questions at any time, my role is to simply observe the routines of the class. You (parents and children) are not required to do anything aside from consenting to the research. Teachers will have an informal interview with me, which will be more like a conversation.

What are the discomforts and risks?

There may be some discomforts for participants as the study is based on observations and some will be filmed. It shall be noted that I am not judging peoples teaching performance.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

I am an open and very friendly person. I will be visiting your centre twice for half a day before I start collecting any data. If you have any questions, concerns or would like to chat please come and see me at any time. Alternatively a scheduled time will be available for me to explain this research to all in person.

Your centre has been identified as suitable for this research because it is respectful to others. All data collected will be positive and in the best interest of each participant and the Montessori community.

Filming will be as discreet as possible. A small camera will be placed in a static location. Participants will know when recording is active by a visual marker, which will be a flag, and a badge that will be displayed when recording is taking place. The badge will be placed on the researcher and the flag on the signing in table.

A signal to stop recording will be negotiated if needed. Because this research is based on respect and relationships all aspects of recording information in any form, will be determined by the participants. The participants have the right to terminate any recording or interview to edit any recorded information and to decide on anonymity.

What are the benefits?

I am planning to complete this research to clarify and aid understanding of the importance of respectful relationships and the role of relationships in both teaching and learning. The Montessori and wider community could both benefit from in depth study as this has been identified as a gap in the literature in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This research is anticipated, to benefit first and foremost, each individual Montessori community in the study by providing better understanding of how relationships are fostered and sustained in a Montessori setting.

The benefits for the researcher include knowledge and practice. By adding to knowledge on respect, it is anticipated that the research could also assist in the wider teaching and learning field.

How will my privacy be protected?

Participant information forms, consent forms for parents and assent forms for children have been developed from templates provided by the university's ethics committee. These will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the School of Education for the required six years. The names of teachers, parents and children will be changed throughout. Where a name is used it will be a pseudonym. The assent form for children gives them permission to change their mind and space to indicate whether or not they wish to be involved.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

Teaching participants will be asked to participate in an interview that is expected to be no longer than one hour. Other participants will not be required to spend any additional time on the project.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Participants will need to complete invitation forms before 17th of November 2011

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Participants will need to complete consent forms (teaching staff and parents) and assent forms (children). These will be made available in each participating centre.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

The research will be available to all in the form of a written thesis. This will be available online from the AUT library website. The results could potentially be presented at the following MANZ conference after completion.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, *Nicola Chisnall,* nicola.chisnall@aut.ac.nz *(09) 921 9999* ext. 7233

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEC, Dr Rosemary Godbold, *ethics@aut.ac.nz*, 921 9999.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details: Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Paul Scanlan   *Nicola Chisnall*

pscanlan@aut.ac.nz   nicola.chisnall@aut.ac.nz

(09) 921 9999 Ext 7412   *(09) 921 9999* ext. 7233

Appendix B

Consent Form

For use when interviews are involved.

Project title: **Respectful Relationships**

Project Supervisor: **Nicky Chisnall**

Researcher: **Paul Scanlan**

○ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 27/10/2011.

○ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

○ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be video-taped and transcribed.

○ I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.

○ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.

○ I agree to take part in this research.

○ I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): Yes○
      No○

Participant's signature:

....……………………………………………………
………….

Participant's name:

....……………………………………………………
………….

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 28 October 2011**, AUTEC Reference number** Ethics Application Number 11/274
Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

**Consent and
Release Form**

For use with video
projects

Project title: **Respectful Relationships**

Project Supervisor: **Nicky Chisnall**

Researcher: **Paul Scanlan**

○ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 27/10/2011.

○ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

○ I understand that I may withdraw myself, my image, or any other information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.

○ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information will be destroyed.

○ I permit the researcher to use the video recordings that are part of this project, either complete or in part, alone or in conjunction with any wording for educational and examination purposes.

○ I understand that the video will be used for academic purposes only and will not be published in any form outside of this project without my written permission.

○ I understand that any copyright material created by the video is deemed to be owned by the researcher and that I do not own copyright of any of the photographs.

○ I agree to take part in this research.

Participant's signature:

.....................................……………………………………………………
…………

Participant's name:

.....................................……………………………………………………
…………

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 28 October 2011**, AUTEC Reference number** Ethics Application Number 11/274

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Parent/Guardian Consent Form

For use in conjunction with an appropriate Assent Form when legal minors (people under 16 years) are participants in the research.

AUT
UNIVERSITY
TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TAMAKI MAKAU RAU

Project title: **Respectful Relationships**

Project Supervisor: **Nicky Chisnall**

Researcher: **Paul Scanlan**

○ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 27/10/2011.

○ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

○ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be videotaped and transcribed.

○ I understand that I may withdraw my child/children and/or myself or any information that we have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.

○ If my child/children and/or I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.

○ I agree to my child/children taking part in this research.
   ○ I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one):
   Yes○ No○

Child/children's name/s :

………………………………………………………………………………………………

Parent/Guardian's signature:

....………………………………………………………………
…

Parent/Guardian's name:

....………………………………………………………………
…

Date:

***Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on** 28 October 2011*, **AUTEC Reference number** Ethics Application Number 11/274
Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Thank you for completing this form – will you ask you parent/caregiver to sign here

- (signature)

if they feel that you understand what the project is about and give this form back to your teacher at the centre tomorrow please.

Researcher Name: Paul Scanlan

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, *Nicola Chisnall* nicola.chisnall@aut.ac.nz *(09) 921 9999* ext. 7233

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEC, Madeline Banda, *madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz* , 921 9999 ext 8044.
Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 28 October 2011**, AUTEC Reference number** Ethics Application Number 11/274**.**

Appendix C

Respectful Relationships

Information Sheet and Assent Form for Children

This form will be kept for a period of 6 years
Hello – my name is Paul Scanlan.

I would like to spend time at your Montessori centre and will come to visit 2 times a week for 3 weeks.

When I am there I will do some writing and you will notice me. You will know that I am not one of your teachers. You can talk to me and we can get to know each other. You can ask me about my work whenever you want. Sometimes I might use a video recorder. Let me know how you feel about this by colouring in one of these words –

If you are not sure or worried come and talk to me about it or ask one of your teachers or your parents about this.

I am finding out about respect, and how we make friends and relate to people – you might like to find out about this as well.

I teach in a Montessori centre like this one. I am interested in meeting new people and learning new things.

Please circle if you would like to be in the videos I am recording
Please circle if you do not want to do this
Please circle if you are not sure. If you cannot decide that is fine because you can come along anytime and tell me or one of your teachers or your parents that you want to join in.

This is my photo

I hope we can do this together. It will be great to meet you and you will know who I am because of my photograph. I will also wear a badge with my name on it when I am in your centre.