

# Research in a Children's Cultural Centre in Rio de Janeiro

An ethnographic study on the transition process of children in a Brazilian favela



Education, socialization and youth policy  
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## **Preface**

This thesis is written under the supervision of Prof. dr. M.J. de Haan, University of Utrecht. Through the organization APS-International, The Netherlands, we conducted our research in a Children's Cultural Centre in Brazil. This Centre is realized by the organizations CECIP and CEACA. Members of CECIP and CEACA, the educators and the coordinator of the Centre helped us throughout our stay in Rio de Janeiro, by providing us with information and feedback but also with making us feel at home. We therefore would like to thank all of them. Especially we would like to thank Claudia Ceccon, member of CECIP, who was always willing to help us, and Mariëtte de Haan, who helped us with all our thesis related questions. At last we would like to thank all the children of the Centre we will never forget, and without whom this research would not have been possible.

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## **Abstract**

Every day children are switching between their homes and the school or daycare environment. These transitions influence their well being and development and can be difficult depending on the contrast between the settings. This ethnographic study is focused on the transition process of children attending the Children's Cultural Centre, located in the favela Morro dos Macacos in Rio de Janeiro, where the children are growing up. How do they switch between the environments of their homes, the community and the Centre, and how do they react to this transition? Using observations in the Centre and the community, interviews with parents, educators of the Centre and children, and the analysis of policy documents, the various aspects of the children's transition process are described. The findings point to differences between the environments which imply a relatively difficult transition for the children. However, the findings also show contact between the environments, suggesting approximation of the settings and facilitation of the transition process. Furthermore the results show different coping strategies of the children: switching between different behaviour patterns for the environments and transferring behaviour from one environment to another, integrating the environments to a certain degree.

## **Chapter 1: Context and theory**

### 1.1 Children's Cultural Centre and the context

Our research is conducted in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This city has a population of around six million people. Around 20% of them lives in poverty and has a lack of adequate state provision for education, health, sanitation and security (Butler, 2009). Furthermore, Rio de Janeiro has serious problems concerning unemployment, violence and inequality. Also there exists discrimination against marginalized populations, which also includes children. In Rio de Janeiro, about 340.000 children under the age of 18 live in risky conditions (Butler, 2009). Official violence against impoverished Brazilian youth is a common phenomenon (Krug et al., 2002, in Raffaelli, Koller, Cerqueira-Santos, & Araújo de Moraes, 2007).

Almost one million people in Rio de Janeiro live in a slum, which is called favela in Portuguese (O'Hare & Barke, 2002). The favelas emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the demolition of the downtown poor houses by the government, with no planning to re-settle the poor population that lived there (Ceccon, Lara, Mumme, Oliveira & Andrade, 2009). The favela was the solution for the working people to remain close to the place of their jobs. They occupied public and private land, which was illegal and therefore considered not part of the city. Habitants of the current favelas live illegally, without access to basic rights and services, although many of them pay taxes. The absence of the State creates space filled by groups of drug dealers imposing their laws on the habitants. Most of the adults living in these favelas want to guarantee safety and wellbeing for the young. Within all their means, they try to construct protected places for children and adolescents (Ceccon et al., 2009). Fortunately there are positive developments in Rio de Janeiro. Towards the end of the dictatorship in 1980s there has been an increase of social movements and non-governmental organizations who want to achieve social justice and citizenship (Butler, 2009). Also recently there has been established a minimum of urban service infrastructure in the favelas and different programs are being implemented by the government (Ceccon et al., 2009).

We carried out our research at one of such non-governmental organizations called Centro Comunitário Lidia dos Santos CEACA. This is a community organization, founded by community members to tackle the problem concerning the care for their children while parents are at work. One of their projects is the Children's Cultural Centre. The creation of this Centre was realised in a cooperation with the non-governmental organisation 'Centro de Criação de Imagem Popular'(CECIP).

The Centre can be found in the favela Morro dos Macacos, Vila Isabel in Rio de Janeiro. In this community children deal with violence everyday. At the age of four they go to school for four hours a day. The other part of the day they are exposed to high-risk situations, amongst them: serious home accidents, violence and sexual abuse, or drug traffickers who use them in the drug distribution network. From 2004 on, the Complex of Morro dos Macacos is a target of violent conflicts between different groups of dealers and the police, and local residents, children as well as adolescents and adults have a chance of getting involved in them (CECIP, 2005).

To meet the community's demand for a safe educational space where children can spend their time after school the Centre was created. The main purpose of the project is to ensure these children between 4 and 11 years old a safe place to learn and play. The aim is to protect them against urban violence and treat them as participating citizens and protagonists of their development and learning process (CECIP, 2005). The Centre offers a place for 200 children a day, giving them access to a library, a computer room, an educational play-room, a room for arts and crafts, an English room and several workshops like dancing classes and music lessons. It is important that the educators who work in this project are from the same community so they understand the local setting. However it was not always possible to find suitable educators from the community. Therefore it was necessary to also hire educators outside the community (CECIP, 2007).

The children who visit the Centre are involved in different environments namely, the community including the home situation, the school environment and the Centre. The children are switching between these environments, which can be difficult when the settings differ from each other. This will be further outlined in the theoretical framework. Our research focuses on the different types of environments, the community, the home and the Centre and the transition the children have to make between them. The aim is to get an understanding of the experiences of the children on this matter. It can be of relevance to gather more information about the transition the children have to make because this can effect their wellbeing. Further it can be relevant to look how the different settings communicate since this can influence the transition. Before we are able to provide information about how the children switch between this environments and how they react to this, we first answer the questions about what the different environments are, how the children respond to the Centre, what the thoughts and expectations of the main caregivers are towards the environments and the children and how the different environments communicate with each other. However first we will give insight in theory behind this subject followed by the method which was used.

## 1.2 Theoretical framework

### 1.2.1 Agency and structural constraints

There is an universal tendency which understands childhood as a natural feature of the human life-cycle which is marked by immaturity and passivity. This has dominated thinking about childhood within the fields of social sciences and development intervention for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (James & Prout, 1990, in Butler, 2009). In recent developments understanding childhood, ideas of ‘agency’ have become more important (Smith, 2008). Agency is defined by Schermerhorn, Cummings and Davies (2005) as ‘children's self-initiated, intentional responses to affect family members...with regard to children as agents of influence on family functioning’ (p. 122). The focus on the agency of children has important implications on the responsibility to listen to the children and take their experiences and views seriously (Graham & Bruce, 2006).

There are different frameworks which all have their own view of how children’s own experience interacts with the structural factors which should determine childhood (Smith, 2008). First there is the ‘tribal child’ which views the children as autonomous and independent, creating their own world and relationships where findings are valid in their own right. The second is the ‘minority child’ which views the child as an ‘active subject’ as well, but takes also a collective approach which suggests that the common interests and experiences of children are important too. For example the experience of being marginalised and discriminated which fits to the children’s rights based approach. The third is the ‘structural child’ which is based on a collectivised view of childhood. This framework is interested in how childhood can be measured and evaluated. Therefore standardized models as well as comparative studies belong to this (Qvortrup in Smith, 2008). The last framework is that of the ‘socially constructed child’ which is a view that problematizes assumptions and beliefs. This entails that the ways that children are identified, assessed and treated are situated and specific, which fits a relativistic model (Smith, 2008). The view of the ‘minority child’ is the most appropriate for our ethnographic research. This because we agree that children have common experiences, which we think can restrain them as we will discuss later in this paragraph. However we also recognize the perspective of the child and see them as active actors in their own lives, which fit into a rights based approach.

A study, conducted by Butler (2009) in Rio de Janeiro, shows the importance of agency. He argues that children who live on the street are not passive victims who are abandoned, but are agents who sometimes choose to live on the street. If one ignore the

agency of the children it is possible to overlook the real issues of the lives of children (Butler, 2009). He argues for greater attention to the experiences and agency of young people. This fits within the 'new social studies of childhood', which is a paradigm that takes into account the ways in which ideas and practices around young people are socially constructed (Butler, 2009).

Butler (2009) argues that children can have agency also in adverse environments. This can explain why children and adolescents do things that on first sight can be difficult to understand, for example to choose a life on the street. However, as Butler (2009) points out, this is true to some extent because there is a limited range of possibilities for these children which often restrain their life path. In our research we had both perspectives into sight. Thus we saw the children as agents and participants of their own lives and not as objects who do not have influence on their lives. However we also recognized the structural constraints that can exist in the lives of the children in the Centre who grow up in an adverse environment.

### 1.2.2 Different approaches on child development

#### Psychological approach

We will first discuss theories on the development of children which are mostly based on Western studies. Discussing these theories is in our view important because it gives valuable information on child development. We realize that the context of the Children's Cultural Centre differs from Western theories and studies. However we think information from these kinds of theories in combination with awareness of the Western setting of the studies can be of high value. The knowledge based on this view can be additional to the social-cultural approach on development, such as represented by authors as Lev Vygotsky (1987) and Barbara Rogoff (2003). This perspective emphasizes the role of culture in the development of children. After discussing the theories from developmental psychology, mostly based on Western middle class families, we address this social-cultural approach, which was the most important approach in our research.

We will now discuss some Western studies which gave important background information for our research. A longitudinal study of Canadian children suggest that neighbourhood disadvantages has indirect effect on the behaviour problems and verbal ability of a child mainly through family mechanisms ((Kohen, Leventhal, Dahinten & McIntosh, 2008). This is in line with social disorganization theories (Kohen, Leventhal, Dahinten & McIntosh, 2008). Neighbourhood social disorganization is associated with less optimal family and childrearing environments. This because of less positive role models, additional

challenges like violence and danger and because these neighbourhoods may have fewer institutional resources such as high quality child care (Kohen, Leventhal, Dahinten & McIntosh, 2008).

Large-scale Western oriented studies, as NICHD, have addressed the quality of child care. “The quality of childcare is related to child-adult ratios, the sensitivity and educational training of the caregivers, the physical space available in the setting, the structure of the program, and the level of stimulation provided in the environment” (Clarke-stewart & Miner, 2008, p. 268). Children in high-quality centres may benefit in intellectual development. This is especially true for children from impoverished backgrounds. However it is important to note that only high-quality care promotes desirable outcomes, if the childcare is of poor quality the effects can be negative.

The results of pre-mentioned studies were interesting for our research because the children of the Children’s Cultural Centre grow up in a risky neighbourhood and go to a child centre. However we do not know to which extent these results apply to the setting of the Centre and Morro dos Macacos because they are not universal applicable. We have to be cautious that we do not impose Western concepts into non-Western cultures because this will distort the results of a research (Spradley, 1980). As stated above the studies of the psychological approach were interesting for us and influenced our view on the research because they are part of our framework of reference. However because we mostly agree with the socio-cultural approach on child development, we wanted to view things as open minded as possible.

#### Socio-cultural approach

Pre-mentioned studies often disregard the influence of culture on development. In the socio-cultural approach of development this topic is given a central role. Rogoff (2003) argues for a sociocultural-historical perspective, which she defines as follows: “Humans develop through their changing participation in the socio-cultural activities of their communities, which also change” (p. 11). Valsiner (1989) argues that it is important for developmental psychology to become culture-inclusive. That means that it takes the cultural organization of child development into account simultaneously with the study of affective and behavioural phenomena. Culture influences the child’s development, while the child in turn has an impact on the form of the culture (Valsiner, 1989). The culture and the personality of the child are in a reciprocal relationship.

Valsiner (1989) states the development of children from Western countries has become the norm for all children in the world independent of the cultural environments where they come from. He argues that this is a shortcoming, since the majority of children grow up in very different environments than the Western standards. Research conducted in other communities shows that different cultural communities may expect different behaviour and skills of children at different ages (Rogoff, 2003). Human development goals can differ significantly depending on cultural traditions and circumstances of a community. Studies mostly based on Western middle class families, as the psychological approach, often disregard the fact that culture can lead to different development goals (Rogoff, 2003). We agree that human development is influenced by culture and that goals of development can differ. For this reason we valued this socio-cultural approach in our research because for us to understand the perspective of the parents, children and educators of the Centre we had to be cultural-inclusive.

Children's development occurs through active participation in cultural systems of practice. In the cultural systems of practice children learn and extend the skills and knowledge of their community with their caregivers and other significant persons. Rogoff (1990, in Rogoff, Mistry, Göncü & Mosier, 1993) refers to this process as 'guided participation'. As stated above, cross-cultural observations suggest that there are cultural differences in the goals of development and nature of communication between children and their caregivers. The work of Rogoff et al. (1993) gives empirical support that guided participation, across communities, involves also similarities. For example, all communities in this research found collaboration between the child and their caregiver (Rogoff, 1993). Also certain happenings as lack of food are connected to certain similarities in for example family roles.

When using a socio-cultural approach methodological issues arise. We will now consider appropriate methodology for cultural research. To understand human development from a socio-cultural historical perspective, everyday life of a community needs to be examined. Use and changes in cultural tools and technologies need to be studied, as well as involvement in cultural traditions of family life and community practices. It is important to use an interdisciplinary approach in this research, involving among others psychology, anthropology, sociology and educational sciences. A variety of research traditions need to be used in cultural research, including observation of everyday life from an anthropological perspective, as well as psychological (Rogoff, 2003). We agree with Rogoff that both methods can be valuable. In our research we used a socio-cultural approach, but with the theory derived from psychological research in our minds.

When studying other cultures it is important to distinguish understanding of cultural processes from judgments of their value. When taking into account the meaning and the context in which events take place, practices often make sense, while viewed from outside the system the practices may be judged as unwise or even immoral. Value judgments should therefore only be made when well informed by the meaning of people's behaviour within the goals and practices of their community (Rogoff, 2003). This was also important in our research because the practice of the Centre could differ from the Dutch child centres. We therefore had to be careful with making judgments.

In the interaction with people from different communities, whose practices are different of one's own, awareness of one's own practices can arise (LeVine, 1966, in Rogoff, 2003). As researchers we had an outsider's view on the community of Morro dos Macacos where the Centre and the children are part of. It is also important to take into account an insider's view. As Rogoff (2003) states, to get a deeper understanding of human development, the perspective of different communities included, communication between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' is necessary. Rogoff (2003) argues that both perspectives are of great importance and equally valuable. Basing a view solely on an insider's perspective limits the research because they are often not aware of their own practices. In our research we tried to use this combination of an insider's and outsider's perspective. An outsider look, since we were not a part of the community and grew up in different circumstances. An insider look since we tried to involve and understand the point of view of the children, parents and educators from their perspective through observations and interviews.

### 1.2.3 Transitions

The subject of our research is the transition the children of the Cultural Centre have to make between their home and neighbourhood environment and the environment of the Centre and how the children react to this. We think this transition can be difficult for them, the settings are possibly different from one another, having contrasting expectations towards the children which can lead to the experience of significant discontinuities between these environments (Harkness et al., 2005, in Vogler, Crivello & Woodhead, 2008). Theory about transition making, tells us that even when differences between settings are slight, the switch between domains can have an impact on an individual (Vogler et al., 2008). Transitions between the home environment and school or child care settings in general, are of influence on the wellbeing of children and their development. The process can cause difficulties, but when proceeding well, can also strengthen capabilities. Two types of transitions can be

distinguished: vertical and horizontal transitions (Vogler et al., 2008). Vertical transitions are key changes from one state to another, often shifting upwards. For example the shift a child has to make when first attending primary school. Horizontal transitions occur on an everyday basis. These are shifts between different settings or domains of the lives of children. For example movements between home and the child care setting. In our research we focussed on the horizontal transition between the home and community environment of the children and the environment of the Centre.

Campbell-Clark (2000) developed the border-crossing theory to explain how individuals maintain balance between the various settings they participate in. His theory can be applied to the lives of children, when they are crossing borders between home and school and/or day care settings. When moving between two settings, children as well as adults can experience identity shifts. This may encompass changes in roles, behaviour and the way they communicate. When individuals frequently move between very different worlds, conflicts can occur (Campbell Clark, 2000). To avoid conflicts, it is best to balance domains and improve communication between the domains. This balance can be achieved when border crossers are able to identify with their roles in both domains. During our research we paid attention to this aspect.

Despite the difficulties that can occur, transitions must not only be seen as a problem. Making transitions is a part of life. As stated above, adults are switching between different settings as well. Learning how to deal with this is therefore a useful process for children. Their experiences and the skills they can develop in transitions can be benefitted from later in life. As Lankshear and Knobel (2003) argue, in this changing, globalising world where workers are becoming more and more mobile, multi- and cross-disciplinary knowledge and skills and the ability to navigate between different contexts are important intellectual capabilities. Page (2000, in Fabian & Dunlop, 2007) sees the experience of discontinuities as a part of life and learning. When transitions are made successful, this can be a stimulus for growth and development (Bennett, 2007) and can strengthen competencies (Niesel & Griebel, 2005). Therefore, transitions must also be regarded positively, in stead of only problematic.

The earlier mentioned shifts in identity when moving between different domains can be explained from cultural differences between the settings. A domain is shaped by beliefs about child-rearing, material conditions and actual practices (Super & Harkness, 1986, in Vogler et al., 2008). Cultural differences are influential in shaping these domains. Campbell-Clark (2000) states that two domains, like the culture of the home and the that of the school, can differ in the same way as two countries, with different languages and discrepancy

concerning what is seen as appropriate behaviour. Various settings represent different values, goals and expectations (Vogler et al., 2008). This implies variation in the roles and behaviour patterns of children when moving between the domain of the home situation and the daycare or school setting. In the border-crossing theory (Campbell-Clark, 2000) this is called a 'psychological border'. This border contains rules, created by the border-crosser but derived from the domains, stating which thinking patterns, behaviour patterns and emotions are appropriate for one domain but not for the other (Campbell-Clark, 2000). The children in our research also need to deal with different domains and linked variation in expectations, therefore we focus on these subjects. For some, the differences between domains are slight and the culture of for example the school can be a continuation of the home situation. For others, the contrast between the two domains can be much greater, therefore implying a bigger discrepancy in roles and expectations and requiring a more extreme transition (Campbell-Clark, 2000).

Despite spending time in these at times contrasting domains, most individuals succeed in integrating their two worlds to some extent. Others deal with the different domains by segmentation, switching between two identities (Campbell-Clark, 2000). The first way is not naturally better than the second, integration can even be dangerous when domains are very different. In this case conflicting demands can arise and border crossers can become confused about their identity. The border-crossing theory proposes therefore that in case of very different domains, strong, evident borders will, for some individuals, facilitate a better balance between the two domains. This balance can only be attained when the border crosser identifies with his or her roles and activities in both domains. When identification does not occur, balance cannot be achieved and people often end their relationships with people in the particular domain. Another important factor in attaining identification and, through this, balance, is the degree of influence a person has on the domains. When a person is competent in a domain and has internalized the domain's culture and values, he or she has more autonomy and is able to make choices. Research has shown that these people are better adjusted in both domains (Repetti, 1987, in Campbell-Clark, 2000).

Another aspect enhancing domain balance, is the degree to which other domain members are aware of the other domain the border crosser is living in. This can be established by communication between members of different domains and visiting the other domain (Campbell-Clark, 2000). In the case of children moving from their homes to a day care, this can be achieved by stimulating parental participation in the child care setting. However, when domains are very different from one another, border crossers find it difficult to talk to

members of one world about what is happening in the other (Clark & Farmer, 1998, in Campbell-Clark, 2000). Since this communication can be an important way of preventing and resolving transition conflicts (Galinsky & Stein, 1990, in Campbell-Clark, 2000), it is important that domain members are willing to converse about the other domain and they give border crossers the opportunity to do this. Besides these conversations, it is also important that the domain members support a border crosser in circumstances and concerns of the other domain (Campbell-Clark, 2000). The children visiting the Centre will, according this line of thinking, benefit from an open communication and cooperation between educators of the Centre and parents, therefore we paid attention to these aspects in our research. Achieving balance will also be facilitated by the willingness of parents and educators to listen to their stories about the other domain and supporting them in case of difficulties. Socio-cultural research on transition experiences of children, shows the importance of involving parents in transitions processes (Vogler et al., 2008). This strategy is particularly favourable where home cultures differ markedly from those of school.

Parents and educators are not the only individuals surrounding a child who can contribute to the transitions it has to make. Grandparents, older siblings and other significant persons can be of great importance as role models (or 'anti'-role models) but also as sources of emotional and material support (Vogler et al., 2008). All of them play an important role in the earlier mentioned identification process of the children, helping them internalize a domain's culture and values. This can be connected to the concepts 'socio-cultural learning' (Rogoff et al., 1998, in Vogler et al., 2008). Socio-cultural learning refers to the many different ways in which caregivers and communities enable children to achieve the skills of behaviour acknowledged and valued by their culture. Transitions are key moments in the process of socio-cultural learning (Vogler et al., 2008). At these points, children change their behaviour according to new insights they acquired through social interaction with their environment.

The children's succeeding or failing in going through transitions, cannot be assessed without taking into account local practices and the socio-cultural context. In order to harmonise programmes with local practices it is important to collect knowledge about local child-rearing practices and how these originate from cultural beliefs (Vogler et al., 2008). On this point we agree strongly with Vogler and colleagues (2008). Therefore our aim was to understand the local circumstances and practices and how these influence the transition making of the children of the Cultural Centre.

## **Chapter 2: Research design**

### 2.1 The research

We carried out our research in the Children's Cultural Centre in Morro dos Macacos, a favela in Rio de Janeiro. This Centre aims to provide a safe place for children from 4 to 11 years old where they can play and learn. In the previous paragraph we made a short description of the different types of environment in which the children are growing up. On the one hand the children of the Centre live in a risky environment, on the other hand they spend a part of their time in the safe space of the Centre. This implies that they have to be able to switch between these two environments. The central theme of our research will be how children experience this transition and react to it. Furthermore we would like to describe the different environments the children live in, both from the perspective of parents, educators and children themselves, as from our perspective.

#### 2.1.1 Ethnographic methodology

We conducted our research through ethnographic research. Ethnography is the work of describing a culture. The central aim of ethnography is to understand another way of life from the native point of view (Spradley, 1980, p. 3). So we aimed to understand how the children from the Centre experience the transition they have to make from their home and community environment to the Centre. We wanted to understand this through their points of view by describing their perspectives, environment and experiences.

Spradley (1980) states that there are three fundamental aspects of human experience to take into account when studying other cultures. These are: what people do (cultural behavior), what people know (cultural knowledge), and things people make and use (cultural artifacts). Spradley (1980) argues that it is not possible to observe culture directly, you would have to go inside their heads. Although difficult, this is, according Spradley (1980), not impossible. Because informants know things they cannot talk about directly, we had to make inferences from what we observed, heard and studied. However we also made use of what the children, educators and parents said to describe the environment of the home, the community and the Centre.

As important in ethnography (Spradley, 1980), we followed a cyclical pattern (see figure 1). During our research we repeated this cycle. Most of the time ethnography is done with one general problem in the mind: "to discover the cultural knowledge people are using to organize their behaviour and interpret their experience" (Spradley, 1980, pp. 30-31). This

encourages to conduct research about everything the informants think is important in a cultural scene. But, as many ethnographers do (Spradley, 1980), we selected our research problems on a more limited problem. According to Spradley (1980) there are three modes of ethnographic inquiry: comprehensive ethnography (document the total way of life), topic-oriented ethnography (one or more aspects of life known to exist in the community) and hypotheses-oriented ethnography (this becomes possible if knowledge increases). Because we already selected a topic for research in consultation with informants of the Centre, our ethnographic inquiry is topic-oriented. Because there already exists some research about the topic we focused on, we made research questions on forehand. This was not to say that these questions were not able to change during our research. While conducting our study we did adapt some of our sub questions, this way they became more appropriate

**Figure 1. Cyclical pattern**



### 2.1.2 The research question

The following question gave direction to the research:

*How do the children switch between the different environments and how do they react to this transition?*

To give an answer to the main question, the following sub questions have been formulated:

1. What are the different environments the children live in?
2. How do the children react to the environment of the Children's Cultural Centre?
3. What are the thoughts of the main caregivers of the children on the different environments and differences in behaviour of the children in these respective environments. And which values, norms and expectations do they have towards the children concerning for example responsibilities and opportunities?

4. To which extent does there exist contact between the two environments, for example: how is the communication between parents and the educators and how do the environments influence each other?

The first sub question will provide information on the environments and the differences between them. This will give us an idea regarding in what aspects the children have to switch and how difficult the transition process will be for them.

When answering the second sub question we describe the reactions and behaviour of the children in the Centre. This will give information about the degree to which the children have incorporated the values, norms and rules of the Centre and to what extent they can identify with their roles. Through this we can give an indication of the proceeding of the transition process.

The answer to sub question three gives an description of thoughts of parents and educators which can supplement our observations regarding differences between the environments and the behaviour of the children. Furthermore, in this sub question the values, norms and expectations of the caregivers towards the children will give information on differences between the environments in this aspect and how this influences the children's transition and their coping.

The fourth sub question will provide information on the transition process through describing aspects of contact between the environments which according to the theory improves the transition process. Furthermore, information on contact can give direct indications of the transition process and the way the children deal with this.

## 2.2 Research participants

We have involved the children as well as parents and educators of the Children's Cultural Centre in our research.

### *Children*

The gender of the children who participated in our research was fairly equal. The age of the children attending the project ranges from 4 to 11 years. The majority lives in Morro dos Macacos but a few live next to this community in the neighbourhood Vila Isabel. We got an overall view of almost all children who are attending the Centre, approximately 140 children. We observed around 20 children with more detail and we interviewed 4 children.

### *Parents*

In total we interviewed 15 (grand)mothers ranging from the age 20 to 50. This includes a group interview with 10 mothers. Five mothers of the group of ten mothers have children attending the Centre, other mothers have children who attend the Crèche or the Centre for adolescents. Furthermore this includes three individual interviews and one interview with a mother and a grandmother of different children at the same time. Also we interviewed one father who is also an educator. We asked all parents, except some mothers of the group interview, for their permission to interview them and to record this, see Appendix C for the consent forms.

### *Educators*

In the Centre we observed 13 educators of whom we interviewed 9 individually. The age of the educators ranged from 20 to 46. Four of the educators are male. One of the educators is the coordinator of the Centre. Except for the first three interviews, we asked all educators for their permission to take part and to record the interviews, see Appendix C for the consent forms.

## 2.3 Research methods

We used three research methods: observations, interviews and policy documents which we describe here. This because these methods are the most appropriate when conducting ethnographic research in which for example it is not suitable to perform tests on children. Because we used multiple sources to retrieve our data, we did methodological triangulation. This way we were able to assess our subject of research better (O'Connor, 2009) which can make the answers to the main and sub questions more reliable. For example an observation can be supported by answers from interviews and information from documents.

### *Observations*

The first method we used are the observations we did in the Centre and in the community. In ethnographic research it is important to observe the whole situation to get a holistic view of the context. Every day, after we went to the Centre and the community or another thesis related meeting, we wrote down all our observations. At the beginning we made broad observations to get an overview of the Centre and the community. Making observations in the community was difficult and sometimes not possible because of safety reasons. However making observations in the Centre was safe and therefore much more accessible for us. Here we made observations of for example the space, the events and the materials in the different spaces. These broad observations continued throughout our research although we got more

focused during time. This entails describing in less detail everything what happened in the Centre and in the community and focus more on the domains we had in mind at the beginning but which we selected after approximately a month of our research in the Centre. The domains we focused on after that month were aspects of the main and sub questions. For example when we wanted to know how children react to the Centre we did focused observations of the new children and how they behaved in the Centre and reacted to it. Later on we compared this with the behaviour of children who visit the Centre for a longer time, which is called a selected observation. This way we were able to see if they new children feel soon at comfort in the Centre in comparison with the other children.

In general we were able, through focused observation of the children, to gain knowledge on what the different environments are where the children live in and how the children react to the environment of the Centre. Furthermore we observed the behaviour of the children in the Centre, the responses of the children to the rules of the Centre and the responsibilities given to them and if the children talk about events outside the Centre to the educators. Through focused observations with the educators during our research we were able to gain knowledge of the environment of the Centre and how they behave in the Centre and reacted towards the children. Furthermore we observed some of their values, norms and expectations towards the children concerning for instance responsibility. Also we were able to observe the contact between them, the children and the parents when present. This way we were able to see how the parents reacted towards their children, the Centre and the educators. With the help of observation guidelines we had some structure to these observations which will be further described in Appendix A.

### *Interviews*

The gathering of the data through interviews did mainly take place in the Children's Cultural Centre. Only two interviews took place in a centre for adolescents. In our interviews we asked both descriptive questions and structural questions. An example of a descriptive question is: "Could you describe the community?". An example of a structural question is: "What do you think is important in behaviour and character of a child?".

We realized that there would be a language barrier, because the language in Brazil is Portuguese. Therefore, we planned not to perform interviews with the children. However at the end of our research in Morro dos Macacos, the coordinator of the Centre suggested that we could do an interview with a group of children. Both of us interviewed two children and asked them questions about what they did like in the Centre, at home and in the community and what they did not like. Also we asked a question about if the environment of the Centre is

different from the environment of the community and home. In this manner we tried to obtain more information about their thoughts about the Centre, the community and the home situation.

The language barrier was also a concern in the interaction with the parents. However, because they are adults it was more feasible to communicate and to interview them. Through these interviews we got a picture of the environments of the children at home and the community. Also we asked them about their thoughts of how the children react to the Centre and how they thought about the behaviour of their children in the two environments and which expectations they have towards the children concerning for example responsibilities and opportunities. Further we asked questions about how the parents perceive the communication with the educators of the Centre and if the children talk about events happened in the Centre at home.

As well as with the children and the parents, the language barrier was also a concern when interviewing the educators. However, as was the case with the parents, because the educators are adults it was more feasible to communicate and to interview them. Through these interviews we were able to gain knowledge about the different environments and how they perceive the children dealing with the environment of the Centre and react to this. We also asked them about what their thoughts are on the behaviour of the children in the two environments and which expectations they have towards the children concerning responsibilities and opportunities. Furthermore we interviewed the educators about the communication between them and the children and the parents. Guidelines for the interviews with the parents and educators will be further described in Appendix B.

#### *Policy documents*

The last method we used are the written documents. Before we started with our research in Rio de Janeiro we read two policy documents about this Centre. These policy documents described the context of Morro dos Macacos, the NGO CECIP, the methodology, reached goals and results of the Centre and new goals. During our period in Rio de Janeiro we also read a book written about this Centre: about how the Centre is established, the structure, what the values are, how the Centre works, what they organise etcetera. We made summaries from this book and from the two policy documents.

#### 2.4 Analyzing our data

Through analyzing our data derived from the observation, interviews and written documents we want to answer the sub questions which subsequently can lead to an answer to the main

question. We will now describe how we analysed the data derived from the three research methods to answer our questions.

### *Observations*

As mentioned above, every day we wrote down our observations. We analysed this data per sub question. Every sub question got a specific colour in Microsoft Word. When we analysed the observations, every word, sentence or part in the observation which gives answer to or is related to a specific sub questions got a certain colour. When all the observations are analysed for all the four sub questions we put all words, sentences and parts in the same colour together. This way the observations are organized by sub questions. After this we analysed per sub question and read the observations belonging to each sub question. When moving on with analyzing we labelled with more detail. For example we used bold or italics for more or less important parts. This way we analysed our observations as accurate as possible to find an answer to the sub questions and main question.

### *Interviews*

As written above we did several interviews with parents and educators. Also we did small interviews with four children. Native Portuguese speaking people transcribed our recorded interviews. We analysed this data in the same way as the observations. This means that we have coloured the answers given by the respondent per sub question. After that we put all answers with the same colour together, by this means we got precise answers to the sub questions. We distinguished between answers from the educators and answers from the parents because they have another position and view.

### *Policy documents*

We analysed these documents by making summaries and colouring these summaries, just as we did with the observations and interviews. After that we analysed the information we found from these documents per sub questions to get a precise answer to the main question.

## 2.5 Our role as researchers

As a researcher you bring a certain view to the field of research. We realize that our framework of reference is shaped by our experiences through living, studying and working in the Netherlands. Of particular influence on our view on childcare centers is our work experience in these centers in the Netherlands. This can be a disadvantage because it influences your view of what a good childcare centre entails. But it can also be an advantage because we have experience with working with children in the setting of a centre and because it can be interesting to view things from an outsider's look. In our descriptions and

interpretations we tried to take advantage of both our knowledge of culturally 'other' child environments as well as from the fresh look we had when we were trying to understand the perspective of the children while observing them within the environment of the Children's Cultural Centre. During our research our aim was to understand the perspectives of the children, parents and educators (insider's view) on our research subject. We realize it is not feasible to understand completely the insider's perspective, but we tried to get as close as possible and to be as open-minded as we could.

## Chapter 3: Analysis and Results

### 3.1 Sub question one: What are the different environments the children live in?

To answer sub question one we will describe the community and the Centre through analyzing observations, interviews and policy documents. While observing in the community we focused on different aspects of Morro dos Macacos. During our observations in the Centre we focused on the setting and the various features displayed. We were able to observe the environment of the Centre more precisely than the community. This is because there was no easy access for us into the community which was too dangerous to wander around by ourselves. Therefore we depended on what the community members were willing to show us. Nevertheless we walked to the Centre every day, which is a walk of five minutes in Morro dos Macacos. This was one of our opportunities to observe the community. Furthermore the interviews gave us an idea of the community's features and what was going on in the houses where the children are living. In these interviews we asked educators and parents to describe and tell their thoughts about the Centre and the community. The interviews supported our observations of the Centre as well. The policy documents about the Centre and the community backed up and supplemented our findings too. The description of the community and home situation and the Centre in this paragraph may lead to an artificial division, however later on we will go further into this subject and discuss how they are related and influence each other.

We start by describing the community's environment by showing some results from policy documents about Morro dos Macacos. After that we describe the community through discussing our observations and interviews during which we paid attention to daily life, the basic needs of the residents, the pollution, difficulties in the families of the children, the landslides and the violence. Next we give two examples of observations which portray the community. We will start with the policy documents. One document (CECIP, 2005) stated that the population density in the complex of Morro dos Macacos is around 3581 residents per hectare. In total there are around 11.000 residents, irregularly distributed over the area (Ceccon et al., 2009). There is a serious shortage of schools in this area, from kindergartens to secondary education, and of materials for health and leisure (CECIP, 2005). From the interviews we learned that the parents<sup>1</sup> did not finish high school, do not have fulltime work

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<sup>1</sup> When we mention parents in our thesis this can entail different things. When we write about the parents who we interviewed, we usually mean the four mothers and the grandmother we interviewed individually, but sometimes we also refer to the mothers with whom we did a group interview. However when we use parents in a more general term, parents can mean mothers, fathers, grandmothers, grandfathers or even adoption parents.

outside the house, except a mother who is a waitress, and the majority told us they spend most of the time in their houses.

From our observations and interviews with the educators and parents we learned that the community is not all that bad. When we walked up to the Centre everyday we noticed residents having brief conversations with each other, residents playing domino along the road and children talking and walking to school. Furthermore we observed initiatives in this community, besides that of projects such as the Centre, like a little recycling store where they make new products out of garbage gathered by other community members. The owner of the shop hires troubled adolescents to help her make bags, belts and toys. From our interviews and observations we learned that the majority of the community residents get their basic needs, live in houses of stone and have free electricity. Although it may be an antique one, most people have a television and a computer. We visited the house of an educator, who lives in this community, and noted:

*“He lives with his wife and their children in a small but nice house. It has five rooms: a living room, a children’s room, the parent’s bedroom, the kitchen and a bathroom. There is a television, a computer (in the girls’ room) and air conditioning. There is not a lot of decoration but it is clean and there is everything one needs.”*

Besides these findings we also observed and heard about residents who live in small houses and have to struggle for their basic needs. Also we noticed burned out cars, polluted water stream and the smelly garbage dump in the community. Furthermore from interviews, supported by policy documents, we learned that some children come from troubled backgrounds, e.g. their parents are divorced or their father is a gang member and sometimes even in jail. Also we read and heard about violence occurring in some families. Another problem is the unsafe ground where people have build their houses. For example in the night of the 5<sup>th</sup> of April to the 6<sup>th</sup> of April, a large amount of rain fell and landslides occurred in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Approximately 250 people died and around 5000 people became homeless. In Morro dos Macacos we also observed collapsed houses and landslides; five members of one family died.

From interviews and observation we learned that the gang members, the drugs, the police invasions are huge issue in the community, and with it the violence this brings into the community. From our interviews with the parents, the educators and the children it became clear that the violence, and especially the unpredictability of it, made it an unsafe place to

play around freely. We understood from the interviews with educators and parents that the number of times these police invasions happen varies from once a week to once a month. Several experiences and observations displayed the violence happening in this community to us. For example, we noticed children thinking to hear gunshots, which showed us that they were alert. Also we saw children shooting with their hands to helicopters which can originate from the happenings in October 2009<sup>2</sup>. Not only the police invasions cause violence, also, as stated in paragraph 1.1, different groups of gang members are fighting with each other.

We will give two examples of observations which portray the community. The first example is an observation in the community of a girl who visits the Centre:

*“The girl walks outside bare feet, goes in and out of a house. She skips, dances and looks happy. She belongs there, she fits in a good, wonderful way. She looks one with the environment, with the sun and the nature, dogs, the small houses and the people. It looks normal and free when you see her walk around. No doorbells, big fences, big separate gardens or anything. Just small houses of stone on a hill. But there is this other side. At the same moment as the girl is happily running around a group of people passes by, among them are children. One guy of this group has an enormous gun hanging around his shoulder as if it is normal. He chats with other people. Nothing is going on. For me, this is weird, I mean it is still a gun!”.*

The second example is an observation made when we got a tour from two educators around Morro dos Macacos:

*“We walk around and watch mothers doing the laundry, while children and youth are playing. It feels safe and the view we get upside the hills is gorgeous. Then we hear screaming and yelling. When we walk further and turn around the corner we see three gang members jumping and screaming to another group, holding their machine guns in the air. The atmosphere feels tense and dangerous and the educator who is showing us around decides that it is better to walk back and take a different route.”*

This example shows daily life but also the violence occurring in the community which can easily get out of control (see footnote two).

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<sup>2</sup> It was on a Monday, the 17<sup>th</sup> of October, when two gangs, one from Morro São João and one from Morro dos Macacos entered in a heavy conflict. The military police interfered and this resulted in a terrible fight, 16 people died and one police helicopter went down.

After focusing on the community we now continue our description by focusing on the Centre. In this part we briefly depict the setting of the Centre by describing the different rooms and the team of educators which we focused on when we made observations. After that we discuss three general features which got our attention during our research. But first we start with some aspects of the Centre as described in a policy document. From this we learned that the Centre aims to create a place for the children from Morro dos Macacos where they are protected against various forms of violence, and where they are key players in the creative activities they undertake (CECIP, 2005). Currently there are 200 children enrolled in the Centre, of which 140 are daily visitors. They are divided in two groups, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The groups are not classified by age.

The Centre contains of different rooms with two permanent educators who rotate during the day. In the different rooms are a lot of materials presented for the children. For example, the playroom contains many second hand toys and the arts and crafts room contains a lot of different materials. The children can involve themselves in many different activities. For instance they can read books in the library, play games in the air-conditioned computer room, learn English in the English room or play an instrument in the music room. Furthermore there are many sport activities in the gymnastic room and the place outside such as soccer, dodge ball and dance. When it is time for a break the children go to the canteen where the cook will provide them with a snack that can vary from fruit to cake and a vitamin drink to coffee with milk and sugar. The educators working in these rooms differ in educational background. Some of them live in Morro dos Macacos while others live two hours away from this community. Most of them have studied, varying from pedagogy to music. From our interviews we learned that all the educators are aware of the methodology of the Centre, that will be explained in the next section when we discuss the three general features we noticed during our stay in the Centre.

The three general features of the Centre we focused on are child related. The first one that got our attention is the methodology. According to our observations and interviews important features appear to be responsibility, autonomy and protagonism. An example of responsibility is that children get the accountability to give an important note, a '*bilhete*', to their parents. An example of autonomy and protagonism of the children, which we observed many times, is the opportunity to choose what they want to do in the room they are attending. This way the children learn that they can control their own life, that they are the players of their life and can change it. We observed all educators getting a training in the methodology of the Centre in February. This training occurs almost every month. Also we heard and read in policy papers

that educators get a training before starting to work in the Centre. The second important feature of the Centre is the structure. We observed that the different rooms are an important structure of the sometimes really crowded Centre. This structure ensures that the number of children is distributed among the rooms, which have a limit to the amount of children. The rules also structures the aspect of the methodology as that the children can choose what they like to do. For example the children can not switch from different rooms the whole time, which they know really well. The third and last feature which was noticeable for us, concerns the different activities for the parents, educators and children. For example 'Sábado Divertido' which entails that the parents can come to the Centre where children show them around, a monthly training session for the educators and an assembly for the children. This assembly entails a meeting where children can express their opinions and make suggestions for improvements .

In this paragraph we described the different environments of the children as precise as possible. We observed the different aspects of the community and the setting of the Centre and their three most important features. It is clear that there are differences between the environment of the community and the home situation, and the environment of the Centre such as the amount of violence. These differences will be outlined in paragraph 3.3. However before we go further in that subject, we will provide an answer to the question *'how the children react to the environment of the Centre?'* in the next paragraph.

### 3.2 Sub question two: How do the children react to the environment of the Centre?

To provide an answer to sub question two we turn to our observations in the Centre as the main source. Besides these observations we analyzed information derived from interviews and policy documents to support our observations. The interview questions we analyzed focused on how the educators and the parents perceive the Centre and if they thought the child enjoyed the Centre or experienced any difficulties. To describe the reactions of the children to the Centre we use different terms which we have devised to order the most noticeable reactions. The reaction of the children will be described in the terms: comfortable, independent, collaborative, concentration. While observing for each term we paid attention to certain aspects which will be described after the introduction of each term. Before we can discuss these terms it is important to realize that the reaction of the children to the environment of the Centre can be caused by different influences. One important influence is that of the Centre. Because of the methodology and the rules of the Centre, which are discussed in the previous paragraph, children are expected to behave in a certain way. On the other hand reactions can also originate from the character of the children or stimulated behaviour by their parents. When we address the four terms we keep these different causes in mind.

The first term we will discuss here is comfortable. Most of our attention was on this term and therefore we will discuss this most extensive. Because it is not possible to observe this term directly we paid attention to: how the children play (with what kind of facial expression), learn and behave on a daily basis, how they interact with each other and the educators, but also how they react to incidents such as the landslides and the police invasion. Another aspect which we focused on is how the new children behave in the Centre. This way we get an idea to what extent the children feel at comfort in this environment. Many aspects of the Centre we observed ensured that the children feel comfortable in the Centre. Playing in harmony, learning new things through play and interacting with each other were accentuated. However, some aspects can also be caused by the character of the children.

The educators made sure that the children could play in harmony in all rooms. The facial reaction of the children in these situations was smiling and excited. Furthermore we observed that many activities were organized so that the children can learn through play. For example, we saw how an educator drew the map of Brazil on the floor with the children to learn about their country. Depending on the activity, the children can learn different things in the Centre such as how to make a doll and play an instrument, but also learn to respect each

other and share. Most of the time the children reacted lively and excited for the activities organized in the different rooms. They participate in the organized activities and we also observed children initiate their own games. This capability of exploration indicates a sense of comfort. We daily observed children who did not want to leave the Centre after closing hour and hugged the educators, which also demonstrate a sense of comfort.

Furthermore we observed that children entered a room looking sad but left the room with a smile. One time we observed this clearly in the music room:

*“We are observing in the music room today. There are around seven children in the room. Most are really enthusiastic, but one girl of around 10 years old is looking bored and annoyed. She is not participating and just looks in front of her while others are making music with the educator. Then the children have to come up with a lyric on samba music. After a while the girl joins and helps to write down the lyric. Over time she gets more and more excited and in the end she is singing loudest of all!”*

Another example to illustrate the term comfortable is that we saw children reacting thoughtful to an educator, for example after the landslides when children tried to comfort an educator whose neighbours died because of this disaster. Also the reaction of the children when there was a police invasion was interesting for us:

*“Although we could hear shooting just around the corner and see police men passing by with their machine guns in preparation ready to shoot, the response of the children and educators was really relaxed. The educators put the children into safety and that is it. The children just continue their play and when children want to use special materials for their drawings and they cannot because it is meant for tomorrow, they react disappointed, this while shooting occurs just a few meters further.”*

Although we did not observe the reaction of the children to a police invasion when being in another environment, their reaction in the Centre was notable for us since they seem to feel comfortable at a moment when violence occurred nearby. Although we heard that the children do worry about their relatives' safety during such times

Noticeable is that we observed new children, also older new children, run around and laugh in the Centre, even when it was their first week. They participated in the activities and interacted with the children and the educators just like the other children. The Centre tries to

stimulate this by organizing regular visits of the children from the crèche to the Centre. An example of a new child who got used to the Centre fairly quick, is a story an educator told us during an interview which we did not record:

*“She told us how a child changed during her stay in the Centre. When she started attending the Centre the girl did not speak to anyone because this girl had a very troubled past, her father had killed her mother. So she had a lot of troubles in her mind, and this is still affecting her. However, soon she got along with many other girls of the Centre, she still can be quiet however she speaks to the educators and the other children a lot more now.”*

The observations described above made it presumable that the children feel comfortable in the environment of the Centre. These observations are supported by interviews we did with parents and educators. They all told us that the children feel at comfort in the Centre.

The second term we paid attention to was an independent reaction of the children towards the Centre or the educators. They stimulate this through aspects of the methodology as responsibility and autonomy. Interviews also showed that parents too think of responsibility as important. The independent reaction to the Centre can therefore have different causes. For this term we paid attention to the reaction of the children to the methodology, the capacity of the children to be without supervision and to do minor assignments. We observed children wanting to get the responsibility of bringing a note from the Centre to their parents. Also we observed children choosing an activity and applying this methodology on other children. We furthermore observed that educators could leave the children without supervision. We also observed educators asking the children to do certain chores independent. This way the children did do a lot of minor assignments such as cleaning up and making photos of a special activity. Also children did help the educators, for example by making the rules.

Sometimes we observed that a quarrel occurred and the help of an educator was needed. This because the reaction of some children can be heated towards other children and they are not scared to slap another child. When a fight starts an educator, most of the time, will not only separate them but also talk to them and try to mediate. This way the children incorporate the rules and learn how to react when angry. We saw several times that children, when in a fight, wait for educators to talk about it. Furthermore, the children learned to incorporate the rules because they were involved in composing them. Sometimes the children are loud but most of the time we observed an educator to interfere. We also observed

educators complimenting a child who was noisy at first, but was quiet after a warning from that educator. Thus, most of the time the children behaved independent in reaction to the Centre and the methodology. However sometimes the children made noise or reacted heated in the Centre towards another child. Then the children needed someone to remind them of the rules or to mediate in a quarrel.

The third term we discuss here is if the children reacted collaborative to the environment of the Centre, something the Centre and some parents encourage. For example parents who stimulate their oldest child taking care of their younger sibling. The Centre encourage this through stimulating the older children to help the young ones. For this term we paid attention to the following aspects: how the children played together, if older children were helping the younger children or bossing them around and if siblings are helping each other. As stated above, most of the time we observed children play in harmony and older children help younger ones. However we observed older children bossing younger children around and sometimes getting their way much easier than younger children. From interviews with the parents and our observations we learned that siblings often stay close together, keeping an eye on each other. In the Centre we observed the older sibling helping their younger sibling with different things, such as writing down their names. However we also observed them slapping their little brother or sister when they annoy them. Thus, we observed children collaborate with each other but we also saw older children bossing around the younger ones.

The fourth term we paid attention to is if the children reacted with concentration to the activities of the Centre. The ability to concentrate is not something the Centre specific attempts to stimulate. To see if the children could react concentrated, we observed the children when joining an activity in a room or when we interviewed them. For example, we observed children listen carefully when an educator explains a quite complicated dance or tells them how many states Brazil has, even though it is not obligated for the children to participate. Our observation shows that many children were concentrated when doing an activity such as painting or writing. However when they watched a movie in the library many children were talking and moving around. Also when they played a board game some of the children could not concentrate for a long period of time. When we interviewed four children in the age of 9 to 11, they had a difficult time concentrating on the questions and did get distracted pretty fast. In short, depending on the activity the children were able or not to concentrate.

Summarized it seems that the reaction of the children to the environment of the Centre is that they generally feel comfortable, in some aspects are able to act independent, can be collaborative and depending on the activity react concentrated. The features of the Centre stimulating these reactions indicate that they play an important role in incorporating the manners of the Centre. However, reactions can also be caused by stimulated behaviour by parents and character of the children. In the next paragraph we go further into the subject of stimulating behaviour of educators and the parents when discussing among others the expectations of the main caregivers towards the children.

3.3 Sub question three: *What are the thoughts of the main caregivers of the children on the different environments and differences in behaviour of the children in these respective environments. And which values, norms and expectations do they have towards the children concerning for example responsibilities and opportunities?*

To answer this sub question we analysed the interviews with the educators and the interviews with the parents, supported by our observations and the analysis of the policy documents. For all topics of this sub question we have asked different interview questions. The answers to these questions we have analysed for as well the educators as the parents. Policy documents and observations are analyzed concentrating on reflections of thoughts of the main caregivers on these topics and information supporting or falsifying their thoughts. This analysing resulted in general ideas of the parents and of the educators on the different topics. We found a lot of recurring thoughts in the answers, especially within the groups of educators and parents. We will discuss answers of educators and parents per subject, starting with their thoughts on the differences between the environments the children live in.

The educators we have interviewed all think the environment of the Centre is different from the home and community situation of the children. The difference most mentioned is the autonomy the children have in the Centre, their opportunity to choose and the voice they have in the rules and activities. According to the educators the children do not have this autonomy at home. In general, the majority of the educators think that the Centre brings things to the children their parents cannot offer, in terms of material things but also in attention and affection, which some parents do not give enough to their children according to some educators. Parents also think the environments are different. They mention mostly the liberty they have in the Centre, which they do not have at home. For example a lot of the children are not allowed to play outside by their selves, while the houses are small. Some parents indicated the small space of their home as an important difference between the home and the Centre. Further it is mentioned that in the community and at home they do not have a lot of things to do and to play with, while in the Centre there are lots of toys and educative activities. When we interviewed some of the children they also named this aspect as a difference.

We also asked parents as well as educators about the behaviour of the children in the different environments. The educators tell that the children take characteristics of the environment, like manners and rules, to their homes. In our observations in the Centre we noticed that the children do copy a lot of the behaviour they see in the Centre. This is illustrated by the following passage:

*“E. taught me how to fold all different kinds of animals. He really seemed to enjoy this teaching, later he learned it to Y. as well. (They are stimulated to learn things to other children). During our play I noticed one particular comment of E. which I found very typical for the Centre. He said to the other children that they could choose whatever they wanted to do, he said they did not have to do something if they did not want to.”*

As stated in the previous paragraphs, the children know the rules of the Centre well. We perceived this during our observations and this was confirmed by both parents and educators.

We also asked educators and parents about possible differences in behaviour of the children between the different environments. Most parents confirmed that they thought their children behave differently at the Centre than at home and in the community. The difference most mentioned is that they are free at the Centre, while at home and in the community they are not. One parent even refers to it as ‘imprisoned’. In the Centre they are ‘set free’ and they have space to play. One mother mentions that her children are more together in the Centre and more protective over one another than they are at home. This is something we observed in a lot of brothers and sisters, as explained earlier. Other parents also mention that their children stay together in the Centre and that they are more united at home now too, compared to before they attended the Centre. Some parents state however that they do not think their children behave differently in the environments, like the majority of the parents in the group interview. They did mention though, that the behaviour of their children had improved. They had learned a lot in the Centre and this had improved their behaviour in general, according to the participating parents. Although a lot of educators also suggest children behave differently in the different environments, the phenomenon most mentioned is the change in behaviour over time, integrated in the environments, like mentioned in the group interview with parents. In the documents about the Centre is also noted that parents have told about this development. Both educators and parents tell about improvement in the behaviour of the children. They have improved in for example concentration, they behave less aggressive and more thoughtful of others.

Besides autonomy, responsibility is one of the pillars of the Centre. During our observations we saw the children are given a lot of responsibilities in the Centre. For example, they have the responsibility to take care of their name tag and bring it to the Centre everyday, but also in the assemblies which are held. These observations are confirmed in the documents about the Centre, in which responsibility is stated to be an important aspect of the

methodology of the Centre (Ceccon et al., 2009). Also in the interviews with the educators the responsibility the children have is mentioned as a main issue. Even some parents mention this as an aspect of the methodology. They seem to think about this as an important part of the raising of their children in the home as well. All children of the interviewed parents have to help around the house. One mother explains why she thinks this is important:

*“They have to help with throwing away the garbage, cleaning the bathroom, tidying up their rooms. You have to learn this to them, because if the mother dies they will know nothing about all these things, they will not know how to take care of themselves.”*

Responsibility and ‘taking care of their things’ are also mentioned when discussing the rules and desirable behaviour with the parents. The most mentioned desirable behaviour by the parents is ‘being educated’ or ‘studying’. The parents who participated in the group interview express how they value this, and also in the individual interviews most parents report this as desirable behaviour in their opinion. Furthermore ‘no quarrelling/fighting’ and ‘respect and love others’ are behaviours reported a lot as being desirable. Other desirable behaviour mentioned by several parents are ‘obey parents’ and ‘respect the elder’.

Respecting other people is also mentioned by the educators as desirable behaviour. Further they stress ‘solidarity’, ‘protagonism’ and ‘solving conflicts by talking’. The desirable behaviour mentioned by parents and educators are reflected in the rules of the home and the Centre and the way the children behave in the Centre. Parents mention for example the rule the children first have to finish their homework before they can play (in response to the desirable behaviour ‘being educated’ and ‘studying’) and they are not allowed to argue with their mother (linked to the desirable behaviour ‘obey parents’). This last mentioned issue about arguing with adults could be contradicting to the rules and norms of the Centre where articulating their opinion is stimulated. Besides rules like obey parents, one parent also mentions that she hits her children. The coordinator told us that domestic violence is common among the families of the children. In the interviews with the children, one of them also mentioned his mother hitting him as something he did not like about his home. But when interviewing other parents we also indicated similarities between their thoughts and those of the educators on this topic. For example, some parents mention talking as the preferable way to solve conflicts. Furthermore some parents named being responsible and respect others as desirable behaviour and part of the rules of their home, just like educators did for the environment of the Centre.

When it comes to opportunities for the future of the children, all the parents as well as all the educators name the Centre as a contribution to a better future. Because of the educative environment and the opportunity to learn new things, but also because it keeps them off the streets and it provides a safe place to play. Educators tell more comprehensively about their thoughts on this topic. They explain the children have access to another world here in the Centre in which they can learn and develop skills they can use in their future life. In the Centre an alternative life is shown to them, another option for their futures, which the parents, by their selves, cannot offer, according to the educators. This gives the children hope, the belief they can achieve something in life. Parents explain the role the Centre can play in improving the future of their children through the things they learn and the fact that they are 'off the streets' when playing in the Centre. They also mention the support the Centre gives them in the education and raising of their children, the Centre pursues their attempts in raising their children well. As one mother puts it in an interview:

*“The perspective here [the Centre] is very good, in learning, teaching and sharing. Out there [the community] you need to have a lot of strength to continue. Here it's good, because they reinforce the education I give at home, in terms of sharing and helping. What they learn at home, they practice here and what they learn here they practice at home.”*

We asked the parents what they think or hope their children can achieve in life. All mention studying and/or having a good job. No high aspirations are expressed, instead they mention the basic wish for their children to 'learn to grow up'. Some educators do express higher expectations for the futures of the children. They believe that the children can become writers, musicians, dancers, or teachers of these things.

As explained above, there exist differences between the thoughts of the main caregivers of the children about norms and values concerning the children, their behaviour, responsibilities and what they expect of them. The thoughts of parents contrast with those of educators, but some parents also express similar thoughts to the educators in some aspects. In the next paragraph we describe the contact between the different environments and their members on various aspects. This way we can attain more information on differences between the environments and possible approximation or separation.

3.4 Sub question four: *To which extent does there exist contact between the different environments, for example: how is the communication between parents and the educators and how do the environments influence each other?*

The theory about transition-making and earlier research in this domain, as described in paragraph 1.2, show that to avoid conflicts in transition-making, it is best to improve communication between the environments concerned in the transition. Therefore, the answer to this sub question tells us about the transition of the children of the Centre and if and how this is facilitated by the amount of contact between the different environments. We do this by describing the different aspects of the contact between the environments we observed and the information we received about this through analysing the interviews and the policy documents. First of all, contact between the environments entails the involvement of family and community members with the project and the other way around the involvement of educators in the home and community environment. Other aspects we focussed on are the communication between parents and educators and the communication between children and the main caregivers about their lives in the other environments. Finally, contact between the environments encompasses the way the environments influence each other. To give a complete depiction of the contact we will now describe all mentioned aspects.

The Centre is founded because of the expressed need for it by the community. The Centre was an initiative of the community, facilitated and supported by other organisations. The wishes of the community, expressed in a special gathering, were incorporated in the project plan (Ceccon et al., 2009). Of the people attending this gathering, 70% was willing to cooperate with the Centre. From the start of the project, contact between the environments was a main issue and stimulated in many ways. The coordinator of the Centre explains this to us in an interview:

*“We are partners: the mother, the father, the coordinator, the educators, and the children. We are partners in helping the child look for her future, to construct her future.”*

The Centre is located inside the community, which improves the possibilities of contact between the environments and of integration of the project within the community. One of the goals of the project is to provide a place where family members can integrate with their children (CECIP, 2005). Contact between the two environments is through this goal already anchored in the project. This goal is mainly realised through ‘Sábado Divertido’, like

described earlier. During one such day we noticed that most children expressed a lot of joy and excitement in showing their parents around and seeing them participate in the activities. One girl was very eager to show us to her mother and she immediately wanted us to meet her. There was a lot of enthusiasm during this day, among parents and educators as well as children:

*“I could notice that most children had a lot of fun in showing their mothers around. Some stayed with them the whole time, others went playing with other children for some time. Some mothers were learning a dance from T. [educator] in the gym room, other mothers were shy and stayed in their chairs to watch. But T. [mother] joined, and I saw one big smile on C.’s [son] face when he was looking at her as she joined the group and was learning the dance.”*

Besides this ‘Sábado Divertido’, there is a weekly meeting on Tuesday morning which parents of the children from all the projects of CEACA can attend. All kinds of topics are discussed in these meetings and parents are informed about the activities CEACA organizes. From what we have seen, generally 10 to 15 women participate, most of them visit the meeting regularly. At times the Centre organizes other activities for the parents in the Centre. Furthermore, a special section of CEACA, called ‘Núcleo de familia’ carries out home visits to the houses of the children and youth participating in the projects.

Besides these organized meetings, there are also a lot of daily moments of contact. Some children come and go from and to the Centre by their selves, but a lot of others also are brought and picked up by their parents. These moments of contact are often short but also accessible, parents and educators easily start a conversation at these times and the contact seems friendly. As mentioned before however, not all parents come to the Centre. A way to reach them is through the notes mentioned in the previous paragraphs, brought home by the children. Through this, parents are informed about news in the Centre. The contact through this way is often one-way, from the Centre to the parents. In reverse, these parents do not always share information with the educators.

Contact between the different environments entails not only the involvement of the families of the children in the environment of the Centre. The other way around, the involvement of educators in the home and community environment is also part of this. In our observations we noticed that a moment of contact arises out of daily walking through the community on their way to and from the Centre. Educators meet children and their family-members in the streets and they greet each other or stop for a conversation. The educators

who live in the community do even have these opportunities of contact more often. The interviews with parents and educators show that educators living in the community have more contact with the families of the children, especially in the environment of the community. Most educators not living in the community describe the amount of contact with parents as little, while educators from within the community state that they have a fair amount of contact with the parents. Some educators, as well from within as outside of the community, have visited houses of the children. The majority of the parents we have interviewed state that there is a fair amount of contact, with some of the educators more than with others. All interviewed parents were regularly present at the Centre, but there are also a lot of parents who do not visit the Centre regularly or even not at all.

Besides communication between members of the different environments, other ways of contact exist. One more indirect but important way is the opportunity for the children to tell about their lives at home to the educators in the Centre and vice versa about their lives in the Centre to their parents. In the interviews with the educators all of them confirm that the children do tell a lot about what happens at home or in the community. One of the educators stated the following:

*“They do tell [about what happens at home and in the community]. The majority tells what they did in school, some tell about neighbours, others tell secrets, the majority shares personal things or how they are feeling, or how they are feeling during shootings.”*

Our observations are in line with these statements. We saw a lot of examples of children telling about their family and educators asking them about this. The other way around, according to the parents, the children tell a lot about their activities in the Centre at home as well. Almost all parents stated that their children tell everything they do and experience, only one parent states that her child tells little. We also noticed children telling about the Centre to their parents during our observations. The girl who introduced us to her mother on ‘Sábado Divertido’ already had told a lot about us, as her mother said when we met her. In the group interview the participating mothers also stated that their children always come home telling about the Centre and the new things they have done.

The existing contact between the environments also appears from the way the environments influence each other. First, this is indicated by statements of parents and educators that children bring learned behaviour in the Centre to their home environment. This is reported by educators, the mothers of our group interview as well as quoted parents in the

policy documents (Ceccon et al., 2009). The other way around, children also seem to bring behaviour learned at home or in the community to the Centre. Most educators suggest this in the interviews. One example is the fact that brothers and sisters stay together a lot in the Centre. According to the coordinator of the Centre they are accustomed to do this in the community and bring this behaviour to the Centre:

*“The father has to work, the mother has to work, the older brother has to work. Therefore it is very common that we see the children taking care of their selves. Thus, this relationship between siblings is a positive thing, stemming from their necessity to survive. So, they go out of school by their selves, so the older has to protect the younger who goes through the streets alone.”*

Second, the influencing is indicated by the way the methodology of the Centre is spread among educators and also parents. A lot of the educators we have interviewed, tell about how they incorporated the methodology of the Centre in their family life and the way they raise their own children. Some parents also tell about the methodology of the Centre and how they use aspects of it at home, like responsibility and respecting others. This is confirmed by educators, of whom almost all state that the children bring aspects of the methodology to their homes and pass it on to other family members.

Like described above, there are a lot of factors stimulating the contact between the different environments. Many efforts are undertaken to improve participation of the families in the Centre and children are given the opportunity to tell about their home situation and their lives in the community. The other way around, also some parents put energy in the involvement with the Centre and almost all of the parents we have interviewed state that their children tell a lot about the Centre at home. However, a reasonable amount of parents are not involved in their children’s life at the Centre, like one of the educators puts it:

*“There are families who are interested in the activities of the Cultural Centre and who are also always participating. But, there are also those families who do not really seem to bother.”*

In the next chapter we discuss the main question of our research: how the children switch between the different environments and how they react to this transition. Using the topics we have discussed up till now, we try to answer this question as accurate as possible. Also we Link the theory discussed in paragraph 1.2 to our findings.

## **Chapter 4: Conclusion and Discussion**

### 4.1 The main question

The main question of our research is to describe how the children switch between the different environments and how they react to this transition. We answer this question by combining the information about the transition process, derived in the sub questions. We focus on three aspects: the differences between the environments, which tell something about the difficulty of the transition, the reaction of the children to these differences and to the transition, and the amount of contact between the environments, influencing the extent of the transition process.

#### 4.1.1 Differences between the environments

When we described the different environments between which the children have to switch everyday, we noticed a lot of differences. According the literature these differences have implications for the transition process of the children. From earlier research on transition making is concluded that switching between environments becomes more difficult when the environments are very different from one another (Campbell-Clark, 2000). The first important difference between the environments is, in our opinion, the child-centeredness of the Centre in comparison with the environment of the community which seems not to focus on the child and in with respect to the violence, can even be considered child unfriendly. Our findings indicate that there is little in the community for the children. From the information we got about the home environment we understood that this is also less child-centred, with less opportunities to play and parents who have less attention for the perspective of the child. In the Centre the child is the focus, all activities are directed at the children and their opinion is valued and respected.

Another difference between the environments concerns the safe space of the Centre in comparison with unsafety in the community. We can conclude that the Centre is a safe place for the children. They seem to be comfortable and play untroubled and carefree. Although we also noticed children sometimes being alert regarding the signs of danger when playing in the Centre. We learned that the children do play in the community as well, although the unsafety during these activities are outlined, for example to become involved with the drug traffic. Furthermore the constant danger of violence and especially the unpredictability of it limits the children and their ability to play in the community.

A third aspect differentiating the environments are the differences in values, norms and rules towards the children. The Centre focuses on autonomy, while at home this is no

important aspect and the focus seems to be on obedience in a lot of cases. These differences will make the transition process more difficult for the children. On the other hand, there are also similarities, in both environments responsibility, respect and solidarity are highly valued. From the theory we know that the similarities decrease the distance between the environments, which will favour the transition the children are making (Campbell-Clark, 2000). Our findings indicate that the degree of discrepancy in the environments' values, norms and rules differ per family.

The differences between the environments indicate that the children have a relatively big transition to make. Similarities between the environments in values, norms and rules towards the children can approximate the domains and facilitate the transition process. For the children from parents with more different values, norms and rules it can be more difficult to make a transition.

#### 4.1.2 Reactions of the children

From our findings we can conclude that the children deal with the transition in different ways. First of all, our findings show that children can behave differently in the Centre, at home and in the community. One explanation for this could be the differences between the environments, which demand certain behaviour. When in an environment other rules and appreciation of different behaviour applies, this could affect the actual behaviour of the children. We noticed that in the Centre the children have incorporated the manners, which is stimulated by the methodology through giving them influence on the environment of the Centre. Researchers suggest that the ability to influence is very important for identifying with the environment (Campbell-Clark, 2000). Our findings also point in this direction, because the children know the rules of the Centre very well and seem to have internalized them, for they are applying them to each other and because of the transfer to other environments. We cannot prove if this is caused by their ability to influence the environment, but the fact both phenomena happen at the same time does support earlier research conducted on this topic.

Another way of dealing with the transition and the differences in the environments, is the transfer of behaviour learned in the Centre to the home environment and vice versa. These changes in behaviour, transferred from one environment to the other, indicate contact between the environments and could even point to a certain degree of integration of the environments. The fact that these children do not have strictly separated identities and corresponding behaviour in the different environments, but that their behaviour in the environments influences each other, indicates that the behaviour patterns appropriate in the environments

are not necessarily very contrasting. This way, we think, that the children are able to integrate the environments better. Research found that integrating the environments can be positive for the transition process (Campbell-Clark, 2000). Thus our findings indicate that the children can react in different ways to the transition: with different behaviour patterns in the different environments and with transferring of behaviour.

#### 4.1.3 Contact between the environments

As earlier mentioned, research found that a bigger discrepancy between environments can complicate the transition process (Campbell-Clark, 2000). Therefore, approximation of the environments through contact, can facilitate the transition of the children. Improving contact between the environments has been an important issue in the project since the foundation of the Centre. They have always focussed on the participation of the community members. The Centre especially tries to stimulate the involvement of the children's family. The amount of contact between parents and educators varies. Some parents are more involved in the Centre than others. Furthermore educators living within the community generally communicate more often with parents than educators from outside. An indirect way of contact, in earlier research shown to improve transition processes (Galinsky & Stein, 1990, in Campbell-Clark, 2000), is conversation with the children about the other environment and supporting them in case of difficulties. We learned that most children tell a lot about their lives in the different environments. This communication can make it easier for them to deal with the different environments and to approximate both environments to each other.

Another aspect concerning contact between the environments is the way they influence each other. This influence is indicated by the transfer of behaviour learned in one environment to another, as well from the Centre to the home and community environment as the other way around. But also the way aspects of the methodology of the Centre are adopted by majority of the educators and some of the parents and used in their home situation. Concluding, we can say that there exist a lot of ways of contacts and the Centre tries to stimulate this in various ways. However some parents maintain less contact with the Centre which implies their children will have more difficulty making a transition.

#### 4.2 Transitions

Now we have answered our main question and discussed our findings, we will link our conclusions to the theory, starting with the literature on transition-making. Some aspects of the theory are confirmed by our findings. First of all, as stated in our theoretical framework,

Campbell-Clark (2000) mentions two coping strategies in making transitions, namely segmentation and integration. Our findings are in line with this, pointing to two types of reactions: transferring of behaviour, in line with what Campbell-Clark calls 'integration' and different behaviour patterns in the environments, as Campbell-Clark calls 'segmentation'.

An aspect on which our findings did not confirm the theory was the statement of Clark & Farmer (1998, in Campbell-Clark, 2000), that when domains are very different from one another, border-crossers find it difficult to talk to members of one world about what is happening in the other. Our observations and interviews show that the children of the Centre did talk a lot about happenings in the other environment. Therefore our findings contradict with earlier research, but it is possible that there were children in the Centre who did have a problem with this whom we did not observe. It could also be that the environments differ too little for this to apply.

Our findings can supplement the current theory linked to the aspect of communication between the environments. When mentioned in the theory as improving the transition process, only parental participation in the childcare centre is suggested to achieve this (Vogler et al., 2008). The possibility of educators to become engaged in the home and community environment is overlooked. Our findings do point to these possibilities, showing how approximation of environments can be achieved by the efforts of two parties.

Furthermore, theory also points to the possible positive effects of transitions on the development of children (Bennett, 2007). Our findings support this statement, suggesting that the transition of the children to the Centre generates changes in their behaviour, regarded as positive developments by parents and educators. The Centre tries to facilitate the transition processes of the children in various ways, however the positive contribution of transition experience, mentioned by various authors (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003; Page, 2000, in Fabian & Dunlop, 2007) seems not to be a main focus in this project. The methodology of the Centre is more aimed at offering another environment and influencing behaviour and thinking patterns of the children. Building of transition competence, in our opinion, could be a valuable addition to this.

#### 4.3 Agency

Our perspective on children, as described in paragraph 1.2.1, is seeing them as agents but also recognizing the structural constraints. For example, the violence or the lack of public organizations which can limit their opportunities. Because we were not allowed to interview the children, except one interview on the end, we mainly needed to understand their

perspective through observations. Our findings showed how the children influence family life by bringing behaviour learned in the Centre to their homes and visa versa. This confirms and adds to the theory of Schemerhorn, Cummings and Davies (2005) who see children as agents who influence family life. Our perspective to view children as having agency enabled us to gain more understanding about how the children switch and react to the transition process. This was of high value for our research, therefore we think this is important for all researchers interested in children.

The educators and the methodology of the Centre views children as active subjects who participate in and influence their environments. The educators stimulate the agency of the children by giving them responsibilities and autonomy. Our findings show that the majority of the children were able to act as agents. The parents and therefore the home situation do not always see the children as agents. Depending on the parents the children are expected to obey and are not always listened to, which is when done, an important feature of agency (Graham & Bruce, 2006). Thus we can confirm the literature that there are different frameworks which have their own view of children as agents (Smith, 2008).

#### 4.4 Two approaches on child development

In our theoretical framework we discussed two approaches on child development: the psychological approach, mainly based on Western standards, and the socio-cultural approach based on culture-inclusive research. Since the context and method of our research differs very from the traditions of research in the psychological approach, this framework is less appropriate to interpret our findings. However, the theory on transition, constituted in our theoretical framework consists of research of both approaches. Research on transitions of the psychological approach has been very useful and important for our research. Moreover, the combination of research from both approaches is a good example of how they can complement each other.

Nevertheless, the context of our research and the ethnographic method we used are more in line with the socio-cultural approach. As important in this approach we involved the perspective of the parents, children and educators in our research which enabled us to achieve a holistic view. Moreover, we conducted the research from this framework, studying children in their environment and being culture-inclusive in acknowledging that the culture of the environment plays a role in their development. Earlier research in this approach concluded that children and the culture they live in influence each other reciprocally (Valsiner, 1989). We observed this in the Centre, where the children contributed to the culture of the Centre by

giving their opinion in the assemblies and having a voice in composing the rules. Furthermore, Rogoff (2003) states that human development goals can differ depending on cultural traditions and circumstances of a community. This can explain the differences we observed between the environments the children live in.

#### 4.5 Limitations and recommendations

Although we tried to have a socio-cultural approach in our research, at times there were limits to what was feasible. We will discuss the four main limitations of our research. One of these limitations was the fact that we did not speak Portuguese fluently. Therefore it is possible that we missed meanings of what people were saying. We have had our interviews transcribed by native speakers to narrow down the effects of this limitation. Our second limitation is that it was difficult to observe daily life in the community. Although we walked through the community every day, it was unsafe to wander around by ourselves which made systematic observations not feasible. Because of this, we were dependent on the information of others. Thirdly, with interpreting the results we have to consider that many of them are retrieved from the perspective of educators and parents and therefore can be biased. Especially educators did understand the methodology really well, because of the training, which can lead to perfect and standard answers to some of our questions about this subject. Our fourth limit is that we only interviewed six parents individually, therefore we did not gain as much information from their perspective as we would have liked.

Because our research is mainly descriptive, it was not feasible to make firm conclusions about the transition process and how this influences the children. We were able to describe differences in the environments and the way the children deal with this. Furthermore we found that the Centre attempts to make the transition process go easier and we think that it is feasible that the children of the Centre can make a successful transition. We recommend the Centre to maintain the aspects that are favouring the transition process and continue stimulating contact between the environments. We suggest to pursue reaching out to the families less involved in the Centre to try to establish a certain amount of contact. For example, by making more structural home visits. During these visits we would recommend that the methodology of the Centre is explained to the parents. This way the parents gain knowledge about this methodology, which can influence the education of the parents towards their children and approximate the environments. Furthermore we would recommend to continue research in this community on transition processes of the children of the Cultural

Centre which can supplement existing knowledge about transitions and can give the opportunity to retrieve new or confirming insights.

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## Appendix A – Observation guidelines

There are three types of observations.

- First there are the *descriptive observations*. This is a broad observation to get an overview of the social situation. This is the foundation of all ethnographic research and will continue throughout our research. Here we try to record as much as possible. There are two major types: grand tour observation and mini-tour observation. The first gives an overview of what occurred and provides only the most general features of an event. There are nine features of social situations that can help us with identifying grand tour questions and making observations. These are: space, actor, activity, object, act, event, time, goal, feeling. Some will be more important for us than others. An example of a grand tour question is: “Can you describe in detail all the activities?”. The findings will then give us opportunities to investigate smaller aspects of experiences. Mini-tour questions deal with a smaller unit of experience and lead to a lot of detailed descriptions. An example of such a mini-tour question is: ‘How are actors involved in activities?’. Because the questions we can formulate which can lead to grand tour and mini-tour observations are almost limitless we will use the nine dimensions of social situations as described above. This can guide us for checking our thoroughness.

Important grand tour descriptive observations in the Children’s Cultural Centre with the nine dimensions are:

- Space: How many different rooms does the Centre have and how can you describe in detail all the rooms.
- Object: What kind of objects are there in the Centre?
- Act: What are the acts happening in the Centre?
- Event: What are all the events happening in the Centre?
- Activity: What are, in detail, all the activities happening in the Centre?
- Time: What are the time periods in the Centre?
- Actor: Who are participating in the Centre?
- Goal: What are the goals of the Centre?
- Feeling: What are the feelings of the children in the Centre?

We will also use the mini tour descriptive observation when appropriate/necessary. When we describe, in our weekly observation, the nine dimensions we will sometimes combine them. For example when combining the dimensions object and space we will, when we describe the space, also describe what kind of objects there are. This way we get a more detailed description of the Centre.

- Second are the *focused observations*. It is important for us to limit our research because of the impossibility to describe everything in a completely thorough manner. In our research some features of the Centre will be getting more attention than other features. When our research progresses there is always the opportunity to discard or refine the original focus. We already know what our specific focus will be and so we want to conduct an in-depth investigation on our selected domains. However it is also important for us to also gain a surface understanding of the whole scene (Centre). So although focused observations will be increasingly important, we will also spent time doing descriptive observation. In order to do focused observations we will have structural questions. So we will prepare five or six structural questions. With this questions in mind we will do our focused observations.

Examples of relevant questions for our research are:

- Do the children play in harmony with each other?
- What do we notice from the environment of the favela we walk through to reach the Centre?
- How do the children react on the Centre, do they seem to enjoy it?
- Are there any causes of conflict in the Centre?
- Does the Centre look like a safe environment for the children?
- How do the children behave in the Centre?
- How often do the parents come to the Centre?

Spradley (1980) has four simple suggestions that will help us plan for making focused observations: “1. list the domains you have tentatively selected for focused observations; 2. write out the structural questions to ask yourself as you observe; 3. Identify observation posts that would give you the best opportunity to make your focused observations; 4. identify activities in which you might participate to carry out your focused observations”(p.111).

- Third are the *selected observations*. We will also conduct ethnographic interviews (see appendix B). With this interviews we will be able to discover the cultural meanings people have learned. To make selective observations will we use contrast questions. These are based on the differences that exist. The meaning of each domain will come form the differences as well as the similarities. There are three types of contrast questions we can use in our research: dyadic contrast questions (it takes two members of a domain and asks: in what ways are these two things different?); triadic contrast questions (this type of question uses three terms or categories at the same time); card-sorting contrast questions (Write all things down on small cards and sort them into piles. Then ask yourself the question: are there any differences among these things?). Selective observations represents the smallest focus of all three observation types. We will go to our social situation and we will be looking for differences among specific cultural categories. Depending on what we found so far we will look for more differences that exist, or we want to find out if it applies to other members in the cultural Centre. If we conducted selective observations we have to plan carefully. When doing descriptive observation we only have a few general questions in our mind. But now we will need to write out specific contrast questions before we approach the social situation that answer each of our questions. To answer this question we can make use of our own memory, from field notes or from making new selected observations.

An example of such a contrast question can be:

- What is the difference between entering the Cultural Centre and leaving it?
- Is there are difference between the experience of younger children (new children) and older children in the Centre?

These three observation types thus have different questions to keep in mind. Important is that this observation needs to be analysed before going to the next kind of observation. Also important is that when starting solely with descriptive observation, focused and selective observation will be slowly added to the observations and not rule each other out. Also it is important to not do the observation just once but conduct them over and over again.

## Appendix B - Interview guidelines

### 1. Points of concern regarding interviewing

Ethnographic interviews can be seen as a series of friendly conversations into which the researcher slowly introduces new elements to assist informants to respond as informants (Spradley, 1979). The three most important ethnographic elements of an interview are:

- *Explicit purpose*: the talking is supposed to go somewhere. The ethnographer must make it clear where the interview is to go. This purpose and direction of the conversation makes it more formal than friendly conversations. The ethnographer needs to direct it in those channels that lead to discovering the cultural knowledge of the informant (without being authoritarian).
- *Ethnographic explanations*:
  1. Project explanations: the ethnographer must explain the goal of doing ethnography.
  2. Recording explanations: explain why you want to tape record the interview (so you can go over it later on).
  3. Native language explanations: the ethnographer seeks to encourage informants to speak in the same way they would talk to others in their cultural scene.
  4. Interview explanations: Explain different kinds of interview-types/different kinds of questions.
  5. Question explanations: Explain ethnographic questions (see next point).
- *Ethnographic questions*: Three main types of ethnographic questions can be distinguished:
  - Descriptive questions, for example: “Could you tell me what you do at the Children’s Cultural Centre” or “Could you describe the staff meeting you attended?”. One type of a descriptive question is the ‘grand tour question’, for example: “Could you describe what happens on a typical day of work from beginning to end?” These questions need to be asked not in a simple statement, but with repeated phrases, expanding on the basic question. Expanding allows the informant time to think, to prepare an answer.
  - Structural questions. These questions aim to discover information about domains and to find out how informants have organized their knowledge. For example: “What are all the kind of activities you do at the Centre?”. If an informant identified a number of types of activities, you can repeat the ones mentioned and ask if he/she can think of any more types.

- Contrast questions. These questions serve to find out how informants distinguish objects and events in their world, for example: “What is the difference between the play room and the arts and crafts room?”

There are a lot of things to take into account when interviewing an informant. Spradley (1979) appoints some important issues. First, it is important to express interest as much as possible. When the informant pauses, this is a good time to show interest. In long responses to grand tour questions it is important to watch for every opportunity to verbally express interest. Secondly, it is important to restate the informants utterances. Begin to use the informants words, this tells him/her it is important for him/her to use them. Further, it can help return to the original question and it helps the informant to expand on his/her given description. Thirdly, in line with the latter issue, incorporating native terms in your questions is very important. Ethnographers must deal with their own language and that of informants. Important is to distinguish native terms and observer terms carefully, especially in the ethnographic reports. Fourthly, an ethnographer needs to express cultural ignorance in the interviews, for this will tell the informant the ethnographer needs explanation of things the informant takes for granted. Finally, ending an interview needs to be done careful. After expressing interest and that there is much more to learn, the ethnographer needs to identify topics he/she doesn't know about yet, things he/she wants to find out in the future. Another important note: go slowly on introducing a tape recorder immediately, but always carry one so if the informant says it is okay or introduces taping the interview himself, you will have one with you. Watch for opportunities to tape record even a small part of an interview. After talking for half an hour, it might be appropriate to say: “This is so interesting and I'm learning so much, I wonder if you would mind if I tape recorded some of this. I can turn it off any time you want.”

The relationship between ethnographer and informant is different from other types of relationships. Often, building this relationship takes place in a process, which is called the *rapport process* (Spradley, 1979). This refers to a harmonious relationship between ethnographer and informant. The rapport process proceeds through different stages, starting with a degree of uncertainty during the first contact but often leading to cooperation and participation when informants help to discover patterns in his/her culture.

### *Descriptive questions*

In ethnographic interviewing, both questions and answers must be discovered from informants. The task of the ethnographer is to discover questions that seek the relationship among entities that are conceptually meaningful to the people under investigation. This can be done by listening to the questions people ask in the course of everyday life, or by directly asking about questions used by participants in a cultural scene. Descriptive questions are also useful to find out what further questions need to be asked. In order to be able to ask descriptive questions, it is necessary for the ethnographer to know at least one setting the informant does spend time in, for example his/her work, home, etc.

There exist five major types of descriptive questions, but their precise form will depend on the cultural scene selected for investigation. The purpose of descriptive questions is to gain utterances in the informant's native languages, to encourage him/her to talk about a particular cultural scene. These questions often need expansion to give informants clues of what you want to know and give them some time to think. Further this expansion says you would like the informant to tell you as much as he/she can, in detail. An example of an expansion is: "I've never been there before, so I don't really have an idea what it is like. Could you kind of take me through and tell me what it's like, what I would see if I went in and walked around?".

There are five major types of descriptive questions:

- Grand tour questions: sometimes it is not possible to get a tour in the setting you want to collect information of. In this case you can ask an informant to give you a tour without being on the scene, but just through speech. This way you can collect a large sample of native terms about the cultural scene. Grand tour questions can also be asked for a time period: "Could you describe the main things that happen during the school year, beginning in September and going through May or June?"; or a sequence of events: "Can you tell me all the things that happen/you do when you come home from work until you go to sleep?". Other possibilities are grand tours of people (the informant knows), activities (in a cultural ceremony) and objects (informant uses in his occupation). Grand tour questions can be asked for a description of how things usually are (typical) or for the most recent day or the place best known to the informant (specific). Another kind of grand tour question is the task-related one, in which the ethnographer can for example ask the informant to draw a map and give an explanation.
- Mini tour questions: Responses to grand tour questions offer almost unlimited opportunities for investigating smaller aspects of experience. Mini tour questions are identical to grand tour

questions except they deal with a much smaller unit of experience. For example: “Could you describe what you do when you pick up your child at the Cultural Centre?”.

- Example questions: These questions are even more specific. Take some single act or event identified by the informant and ask for an example. This type of question often leads to the most interesting stories of actual happenings and can be asked throughout an interview.

- Experience questions: to ask informants for any experiences they have had in some particular setting. “Could you tell me about some experiences you have had working as an educator in the Centre?”. Because of the open-endedness of the questions, informants sometimes find it difficult to answer them. They tend to choose atypical events rather than routine ones. This type of question is best used after asking some grand tour and mini tour questions.

- Native language questions: these questions aim to minimize the influence of the translation competence of the informant. They ask informants to use the terms and phrases most commonly used in the cultural scene. For example: “How would you refer to the CCCria?” (how do you and the other educators call it). This type of questions remind informants the ethnographer wants to learn their language. Three useful strategies are: direct questions (like the example above, how would you refer to it?), hypothetical-interaction questions (How would you say this when you are talking to a colleague?), typical sentence questions (What are some sentences I would hear that use the term ...?).

Descriptive questions form the basis of all ethnographic interviewing. They can be phrased personally or culturally. When phrased personally, the ethnographer asks what a typical day (for example) for the informant would be. When phrased culturally, the ethnographer asks what a typical day for most of the educators (for example) would be.

### *Structural questions*

Concurrent with descriptive questions, it is important to also ask structural questions, to discover how informants organize their knowledge. Structural questions are complementary to descriptive questions. These type of questions often need to be explained, the questions need to be accompanied by an explanation of the purpose of the question and what the ethnographer exactly wants to know.

Structural questions need to be repeated in order to gain all the native terms. When the informant gives a list of terms, the ethnographer needs to repeat them later on in the interview and ask if there’s any more the informant can think of. For this reason it is also important to

alternate between structural and descriptive questions, because informants will otherwise get bored and they will not recall all the types immediately.

When first introducing a structural question, it needs to be embedded in contextual information. It needs to be introduced carefully with an explanation of where you're heading so the informant will understand.

Structural questions can be phrased in cultural ways ("what types do you know about, are being used") as well as personal ways ("what types do you use"). It is easier for informants to talk about their personal experience, so it is best to start with this. Later on the questions can be rephrased in cultural terms.

## 2. Our interview

We will present the question of individual interviews with the educators, parents and the children as the groups interview with the parents. We divided the individual interviews with the educators and the parents per sub questions, it is possible that one question will be presented more than once.

### **Interview educators**

*Sub question one: What are the different environments the children live in?*

- We would like to know more about the community. Do you know how many habitants there are, more or less?
- Do you know anything about the distance between the homes of the children and the Centre? Is it sometimes dangerous for the children to walk to the Centre?
- We would like to describe the environment of the community. Could you tell us something about this?
- Is there a specific issue going on in the community at the moment? Is it now more quiet in the community than when the accident in October happened, or is it still tensed?
- Does the police come to the community often? For example once a month?
- Do you know of how many persons the group of drugs bandits exists? Is this a big group?
- Do you think there is a difference between the families of the children in income/salary/poverty and the part of the community they live in?

- What do you think of the Centre?
- What do you think about the methodology of the Centre?
- Which behaviour and attitudes of the children are good and desirable in the Centre?

*Sub question two: How do the children react to the environment of the Centre?*

- What do you think of the Centre?
- Which behaviour and which attitudes you think are good and appropriate?

*Sub question three: What are the thoughts of the main caregivers of the children on the behaviour of the children in the two environments and which expectations do they have towards the children concerning responsibilities and opportunities?*

- How do you think the children make a transition? Could it be that they have different behaviour and attitudes here in the Centre than in the community?
- Which behaviour and attitudes of the children are good and desirable in the Centre? Do you try to stimulate that kind of behaviour?
- What do you think the children of the Centre can achieve in life?
- What kind of responsibilities do the children have in the Centre? What kind of rules do they have to comply with?

*Sub question four: To which extent does there exist contact between the two environments, for example: how is the communication between parents and the educators and how do the environments influence each other?*

- Do you use the methodology of the Centre at home with your children?
- Do you have a lot of contact with the parents of the children (in the Centre or in the community)?
- Do you visit the community or the houses where the children live?
- Do the children tell you stories about what they do and about what happened in the house or in the community?

## **Interview parents**

*Sub question one: What are the different environments the children live in?*

- Could you describe a typical day of your family? From the time you get up until you go to sleep, what are the things you do?
- What do you think about the Centre?
- Do you think the Centre is a very different environment then the community where your child grows up in?
- We would like to know more about the community, can you tell us something about this? How is it to grow up here in this community? Do you know how many habitants there are, more or less?
- How far does your child have to walk to the Centre? Does your child walk alone or with company? Is it sometimes dangerous for the child to walk to the Centre?
- Does the police come to the community often? For example once a month?
- Do you think there is a difference between the families of the children in income/salary/poverty and the part of the community they live in?

*Sub question two: How do the children react to the environment of the Centre?*

- Do you think your child enjoys the Centre/ feels at comfort in the Centre?
- Does your child experience any difficulties at times when being in the Centre? For example with the rules of the Centre, which can be different from the rules at home?

*Sub question three: What are the thoughts of the main caregivers of the children on the behaviour of the children in the two environments and which expectations do they have towards the children concerning responsibilities and opportunities?*

- Could you tell something about your child and his/her characteristics? What is he/she like? What are the things he/she likes to do? (at home)
- Do you think your child's behaviour is different at home then in the Centre?
- What do you think is important in behaviour and character of a child (obedience, honesty, etc.)?
- What kind of behaviour do you try to stimulate?
- What kind of rules do you have at home?(opportunity to choose)
- What do you think your child can achieve in life?
- Do your children have to help you around the house (obligations)? Or do they have any other responsibilities?

*Sub question four: To which extent does there exist contact between the two environments, for example: how is the communication between parents and the educators and how do the environments influence each other?*

- Are you familiar with the methodology of the Centre? Can you explain it to us?
- If the parent is familiar with the methodology: do you use the methodology at home?
- How often do you speak to one of the educator? Is that in the Centre or also at home or in the community?
- Does your child tell you about the things that he/she does at the Centre, about things that happen? Do you ask about how his/her day was at the Centre?

### **Interview children**

- What do you like about the Centre?
- What don't you like about the Centre?
- What do you like about home?
- What don't you like about home?
- What do you like about the community?
- What don't you like about the community?
- Do you think in the Centre it's different than at home?
- What do you think is different?
- Do you think in the Centre it's different than in the community?
- What do you think is different?
- Are there other rules at home than in the Centre?
- Are there other rules in the streets than in the Centre?

### **Group interview parents**

- We have not seen much of the neighbourhood yet. Could you describe what it is like?
- Do you think your child is/feels comfortable at the Centre?
- Do you think your child behaves different in the Centre than at home?
- What do you think is important in behaviour and character of a child?
- How often do you communicate/contact the educator here in the Centre?