Understanding parent engagement in preschool
A narrative approach.

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Thank you to my supervisor, Professor Limin Gu, for your guidance and support.

A person’s a person no matter how small.

Dr. Seuss
Understanding parent engagement in Swedish preschool: A narrative approach.

Abstract

The Swedish preschool curriculum and policies place a heavy emphasis on establishing and maintaining long-lasting relationships between the preschool and the home. This engagement between home and preschool is considered central for child well-being and healthy development of the child. The central target of inquiry in this study was thus to investigate the child-, parent and teacher’s understanding of what parent engagement in Swedish preschools is, with particular emphasis on the child’s perspective. The importance of understanding children’s learning as embedded in the social, cultural and family contexts in which it occurs contributes to the overall consensus that children will, in a well-being-, development- and learning perspective, do better with parents who are actively engaged in their children’s pedagogical life. Thus, designing pathways in order to develop the communication between home and preschool is considered a significant factor in children’s developmental outcomes. Against this background, the thesis took its point of departure in the perspective of the child and applied the theoretical framework of the Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems Theory focusing on the interaction between the developing child and the parent and teacher in the preschool context. The study assumed a transformative worldview and a narrative design was applied in order to determine how the participants, specifically the child, personally experience parent engagement. Narratives were collected through interviews, then assembled into a case-study highlighting the interconnectedness of the stories through a thematic analysis. Through identifying harmonies and contradictions in the stories, the thesis has investigated the construct of the child’s-, the parent’s- and the preschool teacher’s understanding of parent engagement in the Swedish preschool. From that perspective the thesis has identified where their stories align and where they contradict, thus broadening the academic debate in regard to how parents and teachers can better prepare themselves for the dialogues within the micro-societies that their children’s immediate world consists of.

Keywords: Child, engagement, home, parent, preschool, teacher.
List of abbreviations

ALLEA  All European Academics
EC      European Commission
ECEC    Early Childhood education and care
ICDI    International Child Development Initiatives
OECD    Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
Lpfö 98 Curriculum for Preschool as revised 1998 (Läroplan för förskolan 1998)
UN      United Nations

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Chapter One

1.1 Background
The first five years of a child’s life are deemed critical in a developmental perspective. During these years the very foundations upon which the child’s early cognitive-, regulatory and social–emotional skills that serve as tools for lifelong learning and social adaptation are established (Sheridan, Knoche, Edwards, Bovaird & Kupzyk, 2010; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). In Sweden, four of these five years are, for the vast majority of children, spent in preschool in the care of preschool teachers and child–minders. According to the Swedish National Agency for Education 84% of all children aged 1-5 years, 97% of all children aged 4-5 years and 98% of all children aged six are enrolled, spending an average of 8-10 hours five days a week in the preschool system (National Agency for Education, 2016; EC, 2018). Thus, four out of five of the child’s first years are primarily spent in the care of other adults than the parents, meaning that the responsibility of raising and fostering children being a shared responsibility between state and family (Hultqvist & Dahlberg, 2001; Karlsson & Perälä-Littunen, 2017).

Since the seventies, the Swedish childcare system has successively become an integral part of Swedish family policy (Gunnarsson, Korpi & Nordenstam, 1999; Hiilamo, 2004) upon which the welfare system rests. In this regard, childhood has become a state affair where the task of fostering children is two-pronged, dividing the responsibilities pertaining to the child, between home and preschool. This makes relevant a management of bi-directional communication between the two.

1.2 The origins of the Swedish preschool
The Swedish preschool system has a long history dating back to mid 19th century when it was privately organised and primarily funded by philanthropists and the Swedish church (Engdahl, 2004). Children were left in care while the mother’s attended their work and from that developed a concept similar to that of Friedrich Fröbel's (1782-1852) 'Kindergarten' movement (Hartman, 2005). Until the 1960’s however, the preschool movement was not considered a state task and there were no regulations or policies in place to define what the preschool task or purpose was (Hartman, 2005). A national committee appointed to oversee the day-care need for working mothers was appointed in 1968 and in 1975 the Swedish Preschool Act was introduced (Engdahl,2004), hence the preschool's role in Swedish family policy was a fact (Hartman, 2005; Lundqvist & Roman, 2008; PERFAR, 2014: Swedish national Agency for Education, 2016; Tunberger & Sigle-Rushton, 2011). At the time of writing the Swedish preschool is regulated by the Swedish National Agency for Education; and the Education Act2.

Today, children as young as twelve months of age attending full-time preschool is the Swedish norm and with the introduction of the preschool curriculum (Lpfö 98) in 1998 including a section also on the role of home – preschool communication, parent engagement in preschool is seen as an integral part of the child’s development (Markström & Simonsson, 2013). However, although the Lpfö 98 promotes an active partnership between the home and the preschool and furthermore defines which rights the parents have in regard to influence, participation and information, it does not define how this engagement is to be executed and/or maintained (Flising, Fredriksson & Lund, 1996).

1.3 Parent engagement in a preschool perspective
Parent engagement in early childhood education and care (hereafter referred to as ECEC) is increasingly seen by researchers and policy-makers across the globe as essential in supporting children’s healthy development and well-being, as well as socialization and learning through play (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; & Ceci, 1993; 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2005; 2006; Markström & Simonsson, 2017; Murray, McFarland-Piazza & Harrison, 2014; Patel & Corter, 2012; Persson & Tallberg Broman, 2017; Vlasov &

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1 Skolverket (2010)
2 Skollagen (2010)
There are several definitions of ‘parent engagement’ that can be applied when describing a parent’s effort to promote the above in child care, preschool and school settings and for the purpose of this thesis, parent engagement in a preschool perspective is defined as “comprising three dimensions of parental behaviours that are highly predictive of children’s social–emotional learning and cognitive development (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2002): (a) parental warmth and sensitivity, (b) support for a child’s emerging autonomy, and (c) active participation in learning” (Edwards, Sheridan, & Knoche, in press; Espinosa, 2002; Pan, Rowe, Singer, & Snow, 2005; Sheridan, Marvin, Knoche, & Edwards, 2008, as cited in Sheridan, Knoche, Edwards, Bovaird & Kupzyk, 2010, p. 128). Furthermore, and according to the 2016 English translation of the Lpfö 98, the role of the Swedish preschool is to, “supplement the home by creating the best possible preconditions for ensuring that each child’s development is rich and varied. The preschool’s work with children should thus take place in close and confidential co-operation with the home. Parents should have the opportunity within the framework of the national goals to be involved and influence activities in the preschool” (National Agency for Education, 2016, p. 13). Below follows an outline of Lpfö 98 according to the areas of responsibility:

**Teachers:**
- each child, together with their parents, receiving a good introduction to the preschool,
- for ensuring that parents receive opportunities to participate and exercise influence over how goals can be made concrete in pedagogical planning,
- for the content of the development dialogue, its structure and how it is carried out, and
- for involving guardians in assessing the work of the preschool (Lpfö 98, 2016, p. 13).

**The work team:**
- show respect for parents and be responsible for developing good relationships between staff of the preschool and the children’s families,
- maintaining an on-going dialogue with guardians on the child’s well-being, development and learning, both inside and outside the preschool, and holding annual development talks and,
- take due account of parents’ viewpoints when planning and carrying out activities (Lpfö 98, 2016, p. 13).

The above division of responsibilities suggest that a bi-directional engagement between parents and preschool teachers is central in the Swedish state’s task to provide its children with satisfactory ECEC. Furthermore, the purpose of the above is to build trusting and long-lasting relationships between the home and the preschool, ensuring that each individual family is properly supported in the task of fostering children (National Agency for Education, 2010). Against this background this thesis assumes that the overarching task of the preschool is, “working in cooperation with parents so that each child receives the opportunity of developing in accordance with their potential” (Lpfö 98, p. 4, as cited in Harju-Luukkainen, 2018).

### 1.4 Research problem and relevance

Albeit the Swedish educational culture is designed in such way that children spend the majority of their day in care of other adults than their parents, it is still widely assumed that the parents are responsible for general upbringing and development. On a political level, the Lpfö 98 states that, “the guardian is responsible for their child’s upbringing and development” (Lpfö 98, p. 13). A prerequisite for children and parents to have the opportunity of exercising influence, is that the preschool is clear about its goals and what its works involves” (National Agency for Education, 2010). A common view is that both parents and preschool teachers are expected to establish and maintain a bi-directional communication in an effort to ensure the children’s best interest. However, how this is to be achieved is a matter of interpretation. In response to the above, this study investigates the understanding of parent engagement in preschool and from that perspective identifies the differences between the child and adult understanding.
1.5 Purpose of study
As discussed in the previous sections, Swedish children are introduced to the care of preschool from as early as twelve months of age and in accordance with the steering documents the preschool staff are obliged to ensure that each family receives a smooth transition for their children (National Agency for Education, 2016; OECD, 2017). In a Swedish perspective, with the collective opinion being that the parent is the primary caregiver and the child the central agent in the preschool setting, it is contradictory to the purpose engagement between home and preschool that such minimal space has been allocated these perspectives in the academic debate. In response to the above, this study will examine the understanding of parent engagement in the Swedish preschool, by investigating the phenomenon of parent engagement from three perspectives: 1) the child, 2) the parent and 3) the teacher.

1.6 Central targets of enquiry
As the thesis has shown thus far, the Swedish preschool system and family policy place strong focus on communication between the home and the preschool, promoting parent engagement as the foundation for child well-being, a healthy development (Widding & Berge, 2004; Johansson & Pramling, 2006; Löfdahl & Hägglund, 2006). Against this background the central target of inquiry in this study is,
- to explore the perspectives of child-, parent- and teacher that interconnect, in order to,
- better understand what parent engagement in preschool means to the child.

1.7 Disposition
In this chapter, the thesis looked at the history of the Swedish preschool as well as defined the role of parents in the curriculum, the research problem as well as relevance of study was defined, providing also a purpose of study and central targets of enquiry and limitations therein. Hereafter, the thesis is presented in five chapters divided as follows; chapter two, the theoretical framework for the thesis, the Bronfenbrenner Ecological System’s Model is presented; chapter three, a short literature review where a brief exploration of existing research in a Swedish and international context is provided; chapter four discusses methods, participants and ethical implications; chapter five provides the stories and findings as derived from the interviews, before concluding with chapter six; where a discussion of finding and limitations- and recommendations for future research are presented. A reference list and appendices conclude the thesis.

Chapter Two

2.1 Theoretical framework
There is an increasing focus on the role of parents in children’s ECEC (Hayes, O’Toole and Halpenny, 2017) and the overall consensus is that children will do better with parents who are actively engaged in their pedagogical development (Borgonovi and Montt, 2012; Desforges and Aboucaar, 2003; Emerson, Fear, Fox and Sanders, 2012; Goodall and Vorhaus, 2008). Against this background, this thesis applies the theoretical framework of the Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (Urie Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Bronfenbrenner (1979) defines the theory as “the ecology of human development involves the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 21). The theory defines six layers of environment, each which are important in understanding child development. See figure 1.

2.2 Micro-system: home and preschool
The most intimate and immediate systems of a child’s world are the micro-systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). A microsystem is defined as “a pattern of activities, social roles and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical, social, and symbolic features that invite, permit or inhibit engagement in sustained, progressively more complex interaction with, and activity in, the immediate environment” (Bronfenbrenner, 1994: 1645). The more nurturing and encouraging the relationships are, the better the child will be able to develop healthily.

2.3 Meso-system: relations and communication
The mesosystem is constituted by two or more microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and is defined as “a mesosystem comprises the interrelations among two or more settings in which the developing person actively participates, such as school, peer group and family, and acknowledging their impact on the individual” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979: 25). From the child’s perspective the relationship that constitutes
the engagement between home and preschool is perhaps the most visible; the one providing important linkages between the two contexts where the child spends the majority of his or her time (O'Toole, 2017).

2.4 Exo-system: the curriculum and preschool policies
Networks and relations that are likely never directly participated in by either parent or child, will still impact on the child’s life-experience. The exo-system is defined as the system that “comprises the links and processes taking place between two or more settings, at least one of which does not contain the developing person, but in which events occur that indirectly influence processes within the immediate setting in which the developing person lives” (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, p. 24). Hence, an exo-system refers to settings that do not directly involve the child, but in which what happens may still affect the child. To exemplify, the preschool curriculum: how it is interpreted, understood and executed by both parents and preschool teachers? How this is done affects the child as a matter of action reaction.

2.5 Macro-system: Swedish National Agency for Education
The macrosystem is the overarching system in which individuals live. This system includes economic- and political climate, both national and global. Each child and his or her parents are part of a larger overarching cultural- and ideological context, wherein the participants share common values-, religious and ideological beliefs, as well as cultural identity (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

2.6 Chrono-system: changes in systems over time
The chronosystem’s overarching function is to identify the “changes in the other systems over time, by process of mutual accommodation” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), meaning that the chronosystem includes the child’s life transitions (such as the transition into preschool).

In summary, this thesis aims to narrate the understanding of the concept of parent engagement in preschool from three perspectives, placing the child’s voice in the centre. When applying the Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems Theory, the thesis is able to execute this making visible the alignment- or misalignment of the participants understanding.

Chapter Three

3.1 Literature review
This review aims to execute a systematic search of literature in order to identify that which is relevant for the thesis topic and to synthesise existing research findings from a number of studies on the topic of parent engagement in preschool (Bryman, 2016). The overarching aim of the literature review is thus to define the very context of the study by providing reviews of international- and Swedish/Nordic literature respectively, on the topic. Hence, the overarching aim of this chapter is to synthesise some of the current research thus illuminating to which extent research focuses on the adult voice- and the child’s voice, respectively.

3.2 International context
Many researchers agree that parent engagement in ECEC is the foundation on which children’s educational development is built (Borgonovi and Montt, 2012; Desforges and Aboucaar, 2003; Emerson, Fear, Fox and Sanders, 2012; Froiland, Peterson & Davison, 2013; Gileece, 2015; Goodall and Vorhaus, 2011; Johnson, Arevalo, Cates, Weisleder, Dreyer and Mendelsohn, 2016; Kavanagh and Hickey, 2013; O’Toole, 2017; Ma, Shen, Krenn, Hu and Yuan, 2017; Sheridan et al., 2010) and the literature
Increasingly highlights parents’ role in children’s learning within the global debate. One of the primary discourses within the international arena however, is result oriented, focusing primarily on academic performance. Research focusing on measuring how parent participation play a role in matters such as academic learning, test scores and homework (Borgonovi and Montt, 2012; Desforges and Aboueaaar, 2003; Emerson, Fear, Fox and Sanders, 2012; Goodall and Vorhaus, 2008) are plentiful, overlooking the, for the child, less dogmatic values such as understanding and meaning. Many researchers have studied the effects of the parent – child relationship in terms of cognitive and academic development (Chong & Liem, 2004; Nisbett et al. 2012; Phillipson & Phillipson, 2012; Phillipson & Phillipson, 2017), with the findings that Swedish children are often times subject to the two-pronged education and care by both parents and teachers in two different settings, that of the home and that of the preschool, making partnerships between the microsystems of preschool- and home perhaps even more relevant.

In both education practice guidelines and policy statements, parents are considered the most important actors in terms of educating the child (OECD, 2012). The literature also reflects that there is a need to support parents (Kernan, 2012; OECD, 2012). Throughout the international field of ECEC, “good communication and coordinated partnership between parents and staff is seen as essential to high-quality care and education of young children” (Mac Naughton and Hughes, 2008; OECD, 2012; Urban, 2009, as cited in Kernan, 2012, p. 14). However, the vast majority of the existing research is focusing on hard values concerned with children’s outcomes and which factors within the home-to-preschool partnership cause ripples of positive and/or negative effects on the child.

3.3 Swedish (and Nordic) context
With preschool being a cornerstone in Swedish family policy, there has always been a strong emphasis on good relationships between preschool and the home (Lundqvist & Roman 2008; PERFAR, 2014; Skolverket, 2010; Tunberger & Sigle-Rushton, 2011). An increased interest surrounding the subject of parental engagement in preschool is a Swedish context has emerged in recent years and scholars have made substantial progress in developing the knowledge base in the field of research concerning parent engagement in ECEC. Recent years have witnessed an overall heavy emphasis on establishing strong home - preschool relations in the curriculum and parental engagement in preschool is seen as important for reasons such as promoting healthy development of the child, as well as socialization and learning through play (Widding & Berge, 2004; Johansson & Pramling, 2006; Löfdahl & Hägglund, 2006). However, little or no emphasis is placed on the child’s perspective within the academic debate.

Moreover, research in the Swedish context is sparse in terms of the perspective of the child, meaning the literature is limited in its representation of perspectives. In Sweden and Finland, research is particularly concerned with partnerships between home and preschool against the background of parents being encouraged to assume a more active role in their children’s pedagogical day in preschool (Hakyemef-Paul, Pihlaja & Silvennoinen 2018; Hujala et al. 2009; Venninen & Purola 2013; ). Evidence for this assertion is made visible through the growing number of systematic reviews of research that have been published in the following decades.

The first category, the research concerned with result-oriented outcomes considers the “critical factors affecting children’s educational outcomes across the world include families socio-economic and cultural status (HarjuLuukkainen et al., 2014; Yamamoto & Holloway, 2010), parental involvement in their child’s education and the type of expectations that families have” (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010, as cited in Uusimäki, Yngvesson, Garvis & Harju-Luukkainen, 2019). This indicates that during the twentieth century, factors such as socio-economic background is considered one of the primary variables when discussing student performance (Uusimäki, Yngvesson, Garvis & Harju Luukkainen, 2019) and that together with academic, hard and sterile variables, as well as social status indicators (Yang, 2003; Uusimäki et al., 2019), this research dominates the existing literature.
Although the educational values in Sweden have their starting point in the holistic view of the child (Swedish Agency of Education, 2010) and many studies have shown that successful corporation between a child’s microenvironments are hugely beneficial to the child’s development (Patel & Coter, 2013; Persson & Tallberg Broman, 2017; Markström & Simonsson, 2017; Murray, McFarland-Piazza & Harrison, 2014; Reinhardt, 2016; Vlasov & Hujala, 2017) in Sweden, very few of these include the child’s perspective. Thus, in a Swedish perspective, the three most popular discourses that have been pursued are efficiency, performativity and responsibility (Karlsson, Löfdahl & Prieto, 2013; Markström & Simonsson, 2011; Markström & Simonsson, 2013; Markström & Simonsson 2017; Tallberg Broman, 2013), which informs the literature that previous research have focused on adult vices (first and foremost teachers), leaving out the vices of children and their parents.

3.8 Summary
These reviews of research have contributed to the codification of what we know, what we think we know and what we do not yet know about the intimate sphere of a child’s life, that of the family (parent and child), surfacing a void in today’s existing literature. Thus, the final task of this literature review is to guide the pending study of parental engagement in Swedish preschool from the three perspectives (child-parent-teacher), ensuring that the child’s voice is central in the narrative. The chapter that follows moves onto describing the methodology of the study, as well as the applied methods-, participants and ethical implications in regard to both methods and participants.

Chapter Four

4.1 Methodological framework
Narrative enquiry can be explained as the search of understanding human behaviour through the use of language (Seidman, 2006), where being human “is the ability of people to symbolize their experience through language” (Seidman, 2007, p. 8). In order to investigate parent engagement the study therefore assumed a transformative worldview, applying a narrative design in a quest to discover how the study’s participants interpret, understand and execute parent engagement (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) and this methods chapter will focus on how and why the research was executed this way.

4.2 Methods
Why a case study?
In broad strokes, a case study is a method through which the researcher can investigate a phenomenon within its natural context (Yin, 2013). In a case-study, “the emphasis tends to be upon an extensive examination of the setting” (Bryman, 2016, p. 60), making it a suitable method when investigating a phenomenon pertaining to understanding the conceptions of a child. In his book The Ecology of Human development, experiments by nature and design, Bronfenbrenner argues that “the ecological environment is conceived as a set of nested structures, each inside the next, like Russian dolls and the innermost level is the immediate setting containing the developing person” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 33). In order to map the perspectives of the participants therefore, a case-study comprising of a child, a parent and a preschool teacher was determined upon in order for the study to be enabled to pursue a detailed analysis of just one single case and the process and activity of the three participants therein (Bryman, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In order to preserve the unique features of the case (Bryman, 2016), the case was limited to only three perspectives making possible an illumination of contrasts between child- and adult perspectives.

Why semi-structured interviews?
In undertaking the task of designing and executing an interview, the departure point was that of obtaining information regarding the child-, parent- and teachers’ perspective in terms of understanding
parent engagement in preschool. According to Bryman (2016) semi-structured interviews “refers to a context in which the interviewer has a series of questions that are in the general form of an interview guide but is able to vary the sequence of questions” (Bryman, 2016, p. 201). Obtaining data that provided insights into how the participants viewed the preschool curriculum in everyday life in preschool, was poignant to the study and as a response, the semi-structured interview method was deemed suitable due to its flexible nature (Bryman, 2016). The semi-structured interviews method entails the researcher preparing an interview that is directed at all the participants, however additional questions may be added during the course of the interview and the participant may even be asked to expand or clarify certain issues. Prior to executing the interviews an interview guide was designed. See figure 2.

Figure 2.

Process of designing interview guide (adapted from Bryman, 2016, p. 470).

Thematic analysis
The study sought to identify thoughts and conceptions regarding parent engagement in preschool, thus the interview questions were divided into the following areas, 1) understanding, what knowledge do the participants have of parent engagement; 2) meaning, what is the purpose of preschool and which role do parents play and 3) practice, how is parent engagement practiced, or executed. The three perspectives that were investigated were child – parent and teacher. The interviews followed the same guide; however, the questions were adapted to suit the participants. See appendices 4 – 6, pp.

To avoid leading questions, I aimed to use also indirect questions that could promote reflection and thought in the participant (Bryman, 2016). All the interviews were digitally recorded and thematically analysed according to the principals of Hjerm, Lindgren & Nilsson (2014). This process is founded on three steps. These are, 1) coding, 2) identifying themes and 3) determining findings through identifying patterns (Hjerm, Lindgren & Nilsson, 2014). By applying this structure, I was able to see patterns in each question category as defined by the interview guide whilst also building a foundation for thematic analyses and findings. In the findings and discussions section some central quotes from all three perspectives have been included in order to illuminate the patterns considered vital in the task of answering the central queries of the thesis.

Limitations
The empirical data reported in this thesis must be considered within a few limitations. These limitations are constituted of 1) scale of study, 2) the interpretative nature of the methods and 3) cultural context. Below a short outline of each is provided. Firstly, the scale of the study was limited by that it reflects only the voices of three people. Thus, scientifically the thesis does not seek to generalise a truth; rather it is an inquiry into the lived experiences of the participants (Bryman, 2016). Secondly, when applying qualitative methods such as narrative interviews, it must be considered that these are interpretative by nature and promote the concept of emotional labour (Bryman, 2016). Emotional labour is “labour that requires one to induce or suppress feelings in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces
the proper state of mind of others” (Hoschild, 1983, p. 7 as cited in Bryman, 2016, p. 382), meaning that the participants responses may be subject to the researcher’s attitude which can play a role in constructing their responses. Thirdly, the child, parent and preschool teacher dyad that constitute the case-study, are all part of the same subculture in a small town, thus the study is limited to that particular cultural context.

4.3 Participants
The three participants in the dyad were recruited with the help of a gate-keeper at a local preschool. The child was selected on the basis of his age, command of language and assumed willingness to engage in conversation. The child is five years old at the time of writing and after gaining permission from his mother, he was approached and asked if he would like to partake in the study. Assuming his understanding of what exactly he was approached about was limited, every care was taken not to compromise his needs and/or wants in tone with the UN’s Conventions of the Rights of the Child (1990). He was informed of what was expected of him and he was left in complete control of where and when the interview would take place, how long it would last and what we would do together during the time we talked. The mother was also selected based on willingness to participate and positive attitude to the project. Finally, the preschool teacher who was approached is the child’s mentor and therefore the most suitable teacher to complete the dyad.

4.4 Ethics
When discussing ethical practice in qualitative research, particularly with observations, we can start by making the distinction between consequentialist approaches and deontological approaches. The former focuses on the actual outcome of the research, on whether participants were harmed or injured during the research, while the latter focuses on the (human) rights of the participant - for instance the participants right to such things as respect and privacy (Murphy and Dingwall, 2001). Case-studies comprising observations and interviews are methods which concern themselves with the submergence of the researcher into the social setting being studied and the results of this are most commonly a research report describing social phenomena in a scientific manner. Below follows some of the legal and ethical implications to consider – particularly when researching with children - as outlined by the United Nations and the Swedish Research Council, as well as a brief description of the implications of consent versus assent. Additional attention is given to the ethics surrounding the non-participating children in preschool who act as moral and social support for the participating children.

4.4.1 United Nations
Article 3.1 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of The Child, states that “In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration” (UN, 1990). Thus, when researching with children, the researcher must protect the best interest of the child and protect the child from experiencing any discomfort, emotional or otherwise.

4.4.2 The Swedish Research Council
According to the Swedish Research Council and the CODEX as stated by the Ethical Review on Research, the act concerning research involving humans was introduced in January 2004. The act states that "It is fundamental that research only be approved if it can be conducted with respect for human dignity and if human rights and fundamental freedoms are constantly heeded. A person’s welfare should be prioritized over the needs of society and science. A subject is therefore allowed to, for instance, withdraw his/her consent to participate in a research project at any time, effective immediately” (CODEX, Centre For Research Ethics, 2018). Furthermore, The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, good research practice rests on the four principles of reliability, honesty, respect and accountability (ALLEA, 2017).
4.4.3 Consent versus Assent

It is important to note that prior to partaking in research, all participants must give consent. However, in the case of a child, obtaining this consent does not mean that consent has been gained from the child, however it does mean that consent to approach the child regarding the research and engage the child in a conversation regarding the research. Children are potentially vulnerable to the manipulations and exploitations of adults, and also have little or no control over the power relationship between child and adult (Research Ethics Guidebook, 2018). Thus, children can give assent through the expression of approval or agreement, but not consent. Furthermore, before engaging in interviews or observations with the child, each child was approached regarding the research so that he had the opportunity and space to decide for himself whether or not participation was desirable. The child was also in charge of whether or not digital audio recording was acceptable and for how long the interviews were to last. The child was under no circumstances pushed, persuaded or otherwise – to participate.

4.4.4 Confidentiality

Protecting the identity of participants is central in social research (Bryman, 2016), thus in an effort to manage anonymity and confidentiality throughout this thesis, every consideration has been taken to ensure that the data provided in the work cannot be traced back to the participants, neither through reports, presentations or any other forms of dissemination (Bryman, 2016; Crow & Wiles, 2008). In order to achieve this, the thesis applies the use of pseudonyms.

4.4.5 Researcher’s personal ethical position

In a report written for the European Commission (DG Research and Innovation, 2018) on the subject of ethics (in ethnography and anthropology) Dr. Iphofen writes, “reflexivity is required in which the researcher maintains self-awareness. The researcher must be aware of the consequences of their presence for what may be found out. The findings may be influenced by the researcher’s presence either by producing thoughts or actions which are not normally engaged in, or by discouraging people from revealing as much as they normally would” (p. 11). This was taken into consideration, particularly since the study included a child as the central agent and because scholars have argued that even the most informed consent is so minimally informed that the giving of consent itself becomes both a polyvocal and ethical debate (Dingwall, 1980; Murphy & Dingwall, 2001; Atkinson et al., 2001). At the forefront of the researcher’s personal research ethics, is the German philosopher Emmanuel Kant (1724-1804), who argues that human beings must never be simply a means to an end.

Chapter Five

5.1 The interviews

This thesis explore matters concerned with understanding and to this end the study inquired into the perspectives of three different participants, each one representing a voice in terms of parent engagement in preschool. The definition of parental engagement as applied in this study, was defined on page 3 (of this thesis) as “comprising three dimensions of parental behaviours that are highly predictive of children’s social–emotional learning and cognitive development (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2002): (a) parental warmth and sensitivity, (b) support for a child’s emerging autonomy, and (c) active participation in learning” (Edwards, Sheridan, & Knoche, in press; Espinosa, 2002; Pan, Rowe, Singer, & Snow, 2005; Sheridan, Marvin, Knoche, & Edwards, 2008, as cited in Sheridan, Knoche, Edwards, Bovaird & Kupzyk, 2010, p. 128). This thesis focus on (b) and (c) respectively, where firstly parent engagement in preschool is concerned with child’s emerging autonomy and the ethical stance that children should, in accordance with the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, have a say in all matters concerning them and secondly, that both parents and the preschool teachers should, “maintain
an on-going dialogue with guardians on the child’s well-being, development and learning” (Skolverket, Lpfö 98, 2010).

I entered into interview situations with three different individuals who were all active agents of the same micro-system. One was a five-year-old boy and the other two his mother and his preschool teacher. When interviewing the boy, I had already interviewed his mother and teacher and was therefore equipped to in-situ exercise emotional reflexivity (Blix & Wettergren, 2015) and draw parallels between the stories as delivered by the boy, to those previously delivered by the mother and teacher. Common for the interview with the parent and also the teacher, was that I at both events was welcomed, shown to a room and invited to sit down. With the formalities of the way, I requested that I may start recording and did so upon receiving verbal approval (in addition to the written consent). Systematically, both interviews open with my stating my name, name of university, the purpose of the interview and research, as well as research topic, followed by an invitation (by me) for the parent/teacher to state their name as well. Common also for both interviews, was that the more into the interview we got, the more any tension that may have existed dispersed and both the participants and I relaxed in each other’s presence.

During the teacher interview, I paid particular attention to her body language, facial expressions and tone of voice as she spoke. An unwritten rule that was central with the teacher, was that she felt it beneficial to become personal with parents, but never private. During our time together, this appeared to be the case with me too; the teacher sharing information of her thoughts and experience yet stopping short of ‘confessions’ and adhering instead to the correctness of the curriculum. In this perspective, it was helpful to think of the teacher’s narrative as it emerged from the interview, as the most typical form of social life (MacIntyre, 1981/1990, p. 129). MacIntyre’s philosophy suggests that all social life is a narrative. Against this background and for the purpose of this thesis we can make the assumption that the social life of humans consists of events from which we create experience and meaning. This in turn is then narrated into stories that are storied and restoried over time (Craig, 2006; Czarniawska, 2004).

The teacher interview took place on the preschool premises and was measured strictly against the overarching steering documents to which the teacher adheres in her professional role. This was done in an effort to theorize the preschool teachers as the member of the case-study dyad as a professional representative of a Swedish educational institution. In contrast, the parent was interviewed in the private setting of her home and not theorized but, considered instead as an agent central in the child’s life and understanding of parent engagement. The following section will tell three stories intertwined, with the voice of a young preschool boy as the departure point. As the stories evolve, the symbiosis (or lack thereof) between the child and adult understanding of the investigated phenomenon will be highlighted making visible the patterns the form the foundation of the findings for this thesis. When discussing children’s cognitive development and how the interactions of the participants of the children’s lives affect a child’s development, Bronfenbrenner (1979) promotes that the more encouraging and nurturing these relationships are, the better the child will be able to achieve a healthy development.

The primary inquiries of this thesis as outlined in chapter 1 (1.6) was to explore the perspectives of child-, parent- and teacher that interconnect, in order to better understand what parent engagement in preschool means to the child. The purpose of this was to investigate where the stories of the participants align and where they contradict, thus broadening the academic debate in regard to how both parents and teachers can better prepare themselves for the micro-societies that their children’s world consist of (Feuerverger, 2011). Looking across the three perspectives of the case, we will see how the two adult perspectives contradict or blend with Noah’s, forming a perception of what parent engagement means to Noah.
5.2 Case Noah

It was morning and I arrived at the preschool a few minutes early. I could hear children’s voices as I entered and looked at my watch. It was 8am. They were just finishing breakfast. ‘Noah’ his teacher called, ‘look who is here for you’. Noah turned around and gave me a bright grin. With his teachers and peers watching, Noah walked confidently toward me. This particular boy had been approached for the study on account of his well-developed verbal abilities. Having spoken to Noah several times while visiting the preschool on various errands, we had gradually built up some level of trust. Once he reached me, I bent down and asked him how he was feeling today. Noah answered that he felt good. I asked him if he knew why I was there, he told me he did. When we were both satisfied that we knew what it was that we were going to do together this morning, he took my hand and as we stood there for a moment, I perceived his belonging; his ownership of self and contextual identity (Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008; Wenger, 1998). With his warm little hand still firmly holding mine, I looked at his teacher who let him take charge of the situation and then left us to go and tend to a group of children nearby. I walked with Noah through the main room and into a smaller room where we were to spend the next couple of hours. Below follows an outline of the findings followed by a short discussion pertaining to each.

5.3. Findings and Discussion

Finding 1: Understanding
Noah is a happy child, easy to talk to and rewarding in terms of things he likes to do – he made my task easy for me, volunteering information and answering every question happily as we constructed a large, non-descript object which he later told me was a boat. Sitting there in the morning light, Noah and I find ourselves discussing several subjects at the same time. Noah’s ability to hold a conversation with an adult is impressive and I slowly work my way through the interview guide. Whenever asked a direct question about his parents or his preschool, he pauses and takes his time answering. Noah’s body language is calm, bereft of fidgeting; he appears to feel safe. Albeit only five years of age, the boy in front of me displayed a remarkable sense of meaning through his expression of belonging. It was similar to that of a community of practice. According to Wenger (2014), a community of practice is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. It seemed that this was Noah’s place of practice, a place in which he felt both safe and at home. Alignment, imagination and engagement are three factors which create a feeling of belonging (Wenger, 2014). Noah, by sharing with me his snippets of information, he narrated his parents’ role in his pedagogical context and development. Through this, Noah demonstrated that the preschool was in fact, ‘his preschool’ and not his parents. When asked where his parents were when he was in preschool, he replied that they had work to do but that he would have been in preschool regardless of what they were up to. Thus, when asked about the concept of parent engagement in preschool, Noah narrated that parents’ role in preschool was primarily to bring him there and to pick him up again.

Tina: Why are you in preschool?
Noah: Because I like to learn things.
Tina: And what do you do here all day?
Noah: I play a lot and learn new things.
Tina: Do you know if your parents have something to do with preschool?
Noah: No, I don’t think so.
Tina: So, whose preschool is it?
Noah: Mine. Ours. It’s the children’s preschool of course! (giggles)
Tina: Why is it the children’s?
Noah: Because we come here to play and to learn.
Tina: And what do your parents do here?
Noah: They come to see us sing at Christmas, and they have to take me here and pick me up!
Noah’s understanding of the connection between his home and his preschool, highlights his understanding of an interconnectedness between microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). He describes that he is taken to preschool by his parents and that he is picked up again when his day is finished. Noah also informed me during our time together that he knows that his mum ‘knows everyone’ at the preschool and that they talk ‘all the time’. This makes visible that Noah has an understanding of the pathways of communication between two microsystems in his world, his home and his preschool – and that this rests between the interactions of the bi-directional dialogues and relationship (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) between his home and his preschool.

When interviewing Noah’s mother on the same topic, she informed me that her and her husband have an overall stable relationship with the preschool. Her primary concern when it came to her son, was simply his happiness on a day-to-day basis, striving toward meeting his developmental needs as a parent. The mother also shared with me that although she nor her husband were perhaps lazy in terms of preschool arranged activities (such as parent nights), she was greatly invested in the small things that the child could see, like a conversation with the teacher, or simply entering the preschool premises to look at something Noah wanted to show her. The mother also narrated the importance the family placed on including Noah in any conversation pertaining to his life in preschool, making sure always that he was not left on the periphery of his own existence.

It was clear from the onset when interviewing Noah’s teacher, that her primary target in conceptualising the role of the preschool, was that it was not child-storage. The teacher told me that it was important that the language we use when talking about preschool is important, that it must be talked of as an educational institution where the goal is to, together with the parents, assist in the healthy development of young children. The teacher also placed heavy emphasis on the little conversations, the morning- and the afternoon chats that are had in view of the child. Thus, the teacher’s narration of preschool and her conception of the role of the preschool in a family’s life, harmonised with the mother’s story that the child’s well-being was the focal point of the institution.

The teacher was actively engaged in Noah’s interview process and situation, communication to him both verbally and bodily his position of ownership of both identity and self in the preschool setting. The teacher emphasised this by being present upon my arrival and visibly allowing him space to take command of the situation. This blends with the preschool mission to ensure child well-being through assuming a holistic approach (see p. 24) to the child and the mother’s assumption that the preschool will do what is best for the development and well-being (National Agency for Education, Lpfö 98, 2010) of the child.

Finding 2: meaning
The nature of the child’s first micro-system, the home, is that it promotes the child’s interrelationships to other areas of life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and from the interview with his mother, I knew that Noah spends approximately nine hours a day in preschool with the exception of every second Tuesday off. This is relevant because it would be reasonable that Noah would consider that he spent so much time in preschool due to his parents being at work. However, instead Noah connected the preschool to the curriculum, stating verbally during the interview that he was in preschool to learn.

Against the background of the Bronfenbrenner theory (1979), this thesis draws the conclusion that this understanding is born from the parent and teacher making visible to Noah the pathways of communications between home and preschool, resulting in Noah’s understanding of preschool thus being aligned to the curriculum, where “the task of the preschool means working in co-operation with parents so that each child receives the opportunity of developing in accordance with their potential” (Lpfö 98, p. 4).
The above findings (1 and 2) indicate that Noah possessed a clear understanding of the symbiosis of the microsystems, demonstrating both ownership of self and a sense of belonging (Wenger, 2017). Noah’s teacher’s behaviour during our meeting early that morning when I arrived for his interview, where she demonstratively allowed him both agency and authority to assume control of his meeting with me, mirrored a strong sense of confidence and interconnectedness between child and adult.

**Finding 3: Practice**
In an attempt to map where the stories entered a state of harmony, an alignment between Noah’s and the adult’s perspectives was identified. It was visible throughout the narrations from all three perspectives, that the conversations regarding the parent’s role in preschool and also Noah’s position (and reason for being in preschool) was done with Noah included. Noah did not find himself on the periphery of the adult conversations, rather he was central in them.

The difference between having a child’s perspective and taking the child’s perspective (Nilsson et al., 2015), became apparent and the harmony between these three perspectives supported that whilst the adults can’t take a child’s perspective, the child can, if allowed, offer it to the adult conversation. Therefore, in regard to practice, the primary finding was that when the adults who partake in the two microsystems carried out these conversations with the child, the child is included, providing both agency and sense of self. Both which are imperative to child development and well-being (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

**Chapter Six**

6.1 Conclusion
The Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory dictates that conceptual as well as behavioural models that are typical for the macrosystem, are inevitably passed down from one generation to the next by channels of communication such as extended family and activities that suggest intermediating a child’s processes of socialization (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). However, in order to do this, parents must allow time for it. Since the Swedish welfare system relies on two parents working (PERFAR, 2008), making time for creating pathways (that are visible to the child) may not always be an easy affair. This suggests that the macrosystem, which is defined as the outmost layer for a child, is at risk of being caught between housing the steering documents that dictate the engagement, and also not achieving its goals due to voids in understanding on a micro- and meso level. This means that events and transitions over a life course affect- and are affected by, intrafamilial processes (Bronfenbrenner & Scarr, 1986), causing a ripple effect in the child’s overall development and well-being.

Albeit Noah is not consciously aware of this, we can speculate, based on his behaviour when discussing home and preschool, that a suggested finding in this narrative, is that this engagement between the systems, which is executed through face-to-face dialogue between teacher and parent in view of the child, contributes to his sense of self and well-being (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Haiden, Haine, Fivush, 1997). Aged four and a half, Noah may not have reached a level of cognitive awareness sophisticated enough to reflect on this occurrence (Bamberg, 2011; Piaget, 2002), however he is aided in his understanding of the scope of his world through the visible communication of the adults and their collective effort to “maintain an on-going dialogue with guardians on the child’s well-being, development and learning” (Lpfö 98, 2010).

The interconnectedness between the children’s microsystem forming the overarching mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner 1979) of the day to day activities of the child was evident in Noah, his mother and his
teacher. When placed in the preschool context, the stories blend in that they meet and the meaning and understanding of their lived experience is harmonious. This study sought to identify understanding by applying a narrative approach, and to within the narratives identify where the stories blend, and where they contradict, which this thesis has done.

6.2 Limitations and recommendations

The thesis was found to be limited insofar as making impossible any sweeping- or generalising statements. The results were however informative and provide the reader with a snapshot in time into the situation- and relationship between preschool and home from three perspectives (Bryman, 2016). The role of the limitations mentioned in chapter one however, was expressed as confining and densifying the inquiry (Bryman, 2016) in order to avoid misunderstandings in terms of what the primary target of the study was; that of recording the narratives of lived experiences from three perspectives. One way to overcome this limitations in future studies (Bryman, 2016) would be to execute the study across a larger geographical area, applying also alternative methodologies to the one presented in this study. Other methods could be applied, such as mixed methods, including surveys-, observations-, interviews- and focus groups (Bryman, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Lowing, 2011).

The study investigated only three voices in a limited cultural context and whilst the findings may not translate to preschools in other municipalities, or even in other child-, parent- teacher dyads across the same municipality, the results may be considered as indicative of how we read, interpret, understand and practice bureaucratic texts in political documents (such as Lpfö98). The Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) can provide an appropriate conceptual framework through which to interpret parental involvement, engagement and partnership (O'Toole, 2017), indicating that a study of similar nature but of grander scale may be widely applicable within Swedish ECEC.
References


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3 Author’s translation.
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United nations - Convention on the Rights of the Child: Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 - entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49. Downloaded from http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx


Appendix 1: Information letter

**Project title** Parent engagement in Swedish preschools: A narrative approach.

**Researcher:** Tina Elisabeth Yngvesson BSc. (Hons), MSc.
Course: Bachelor of Education
University of Umeå
tinayngvesson@hotmail.com
Tel: 0705632463

**Why is the research being conducted?**

There is an overall heavy emphasis on establishing strong teacher-parent relationships in the Swedish National Curriculum for Preschools and parent engagement in preschool is considered important for reasons such as promoting child well-being, healthy development and socialisation and learning through play. The central target of inquiry in this study is thus to investigate children- and adults’ understanding of parent engagement in Swedish preschools.

The importance of understanding children’s learning as embedded in the social, cultural and family contexts in which it occurs contributes to the overall consensus that children will, in a well-being-, development- and learning perspective, do better with parents who are actively engaged in their children’s pedagogical life. Thus, designing pathways in order to develop the communication between home and preschool is considered a significant factor in children’s developmental outcomes.

The study will apply only qualitative methods, whereof the narrative interviews and observations are the primary data collection tools. Through identifying harmonies and contradictions in the child’s and adult’s narratives as constructed during interviews, the thesis has investigated the construct of child-, parent- and preschool teacher’s understanding of parent engagement in the Swedish preschool and from that perspective identified where the stores align and where they contradict, thus broadening the academic debate in regard to how parents and teachers can better prepare themselves for the dialogues within the micro-societies that their children’s immediate world consists of.

This overall study aims to investigate the understanding of parent engagement in preschool from the perspective of the child, the parent and the preschool teacher. The study is conducted as part of the Bachelor course in Education at the University of Umeå.

Tina Yngvesson
Student
University of Umeå
Appendix 2: Letter of informed consent for child

**Project title** Parent engagement in Swedish preschools: A narrative approach.

Researcher: Tina Elisabeth Yngvesson BSc. (Hons), MSc.
Course: Bachelor of Education
University of Umeå
tinayngvesson@hotmail.com
Tel: 0705632463

**Why is the research being conducted?**
This study aims to investigate the understanding of parent engagement in preschool from the perspective of the child, the parent and the preschool teacher. The study is conducted as part of the master thesis requirements for the Bachelor course in Education at University of Umeå.

**What will your child be asked to do?**
We would like your child to engage in conversation with the researcher and talk about how he/she feels about preschool as well as pathways and understanding between home and preschool. The child may be asked to engage in drawing and play in order to stimulate conversation.

The child will be interviewed once in the preschool setting and once at home. An informal meeting after the interviews are concluded will also take place (in the preschool).

**Consent**
I hereby provide consent for my child to be involved in the project. I agree and am aware that:

- My child’s will be referred to by pseudonym.
- My child will be asked questions regarding relationships with and between parents and teachers, home and preschool.
- I can receive a copy of the findings by emailing Tina Yngvesson at tinayngvesson@hotmail.com
- I can withdraw my child from the research project at any time.
- I can contact Tina Yngvesson if I have questions about the project or my child’s participation.

Date:

Name:

Signature:
Appendix 3: Letter of informed consent for adult


Researcher: Tina Elisabeth Yngvesson BSc. (Hons), MSc.
Course: Bachelor of Education
University of Umeå
tinayngvesson@hotmail.com
Tel: 0705632463

Why is the research being conducted?
This study aims to investigate the understanding of parent engagement in preschool from the perspective of the child, the parent and the preschool teacher. The study is conducted as part of the master thesis requirements for the Bachelor course in Education at University of Umeå.

What will you be asked to do?
You will be asked to partake in two interviews, one face-to-face and one per telephone. The interview will focus on parent engagement in preschool from the parent/teacher perspective.

Consent
I hereby provide consent for my participation in the project. I agree and am aware that:

• My identity and the identity of (my) preschool will be anonymous and confidential
• I will be asked questions regarding relationships with- and between parents and teachers, home and preschool, as well as questions regarding my child and his relationship to preschool
• I can receive a copy of the findings by emailing Tina Yngvesson at tinyng@student.gu.se •
  I can withdraw my child from the research project at any time.
• I can contact Tina Yngvesson if I have questions about the project or my child’s participation.

Date:
Name:
Signature:
### Appendix 4: Child interview questions

#### Topic 1: Understanding
- Why are you in preschool?
- Where are your parents when you are in preschool?
- Who brought you here this morning? Who is picking you up?
- Where did you have breakfast?
- Do you think that your mum and dad have something to do with your preschool? If so: What?
- Do you think your mum and dad knows your teachers? If so: Why?
- How does that make you feel?

#### Topic 2: Meaning
- What do you do here all day?
- Would you rather be here or at home? If so: Why?
- How does that make you feel?
- Who does preschool belong to?
- What do the teachers do here?
- Do you talk about what you do here at home? If so: With whom?
- What do you talk about when you talk about preschool?
- Do you think about preschool when you are not here? If so: Whom?
- How does that make you feel?

#### Topic 3: Practice
- Have you heard of Unikum? If so: What is it?
- Have you seen it? How do you feel about it – any thoughts?
- Have you ever seen your mum and/or dad talk to your teachers? If so: What?
- Why?
- Do your parents ask you about your preschool? If so: What?
- How does that make you feel?

### Appendix 5: Parent interview questions

#### Topic 1: Understanding
- What is your understanding of early learning?
- Have you read the steering documents? If so: Why?
- What is your understanding of parent engagement?
- Do you think this sort of parent engagement in children’s every day is important? If so: Why?
- Can you talk about how you forge relationships with teachers?
- In relation to parental involvement. What do you value most from teachers?
- Do you think this sort of parent engagement in children’s every day is important? If so: Why?
**Topic 2: Meaning**

What do you believe are the primary obstacles to parent engagement in preschool?
Can you as a parent in preschool aid in reducing these obstacles to close the gap between home and preschool?
Can the child assist in this? (i.e. bring home various art/craft/tasks for discussion at home)
How do you exercise parent engagement?
Do you think this involvement makes a difference to the child in understanding the connection between home and preschool?
Do you think it is important to the child?
In cases where you want to increase cooperation and engagement between home and school, is it mostly:
- a) steering documents, b) teacher attitude or c) your attitude, that hinders that process?

**Topic 3: Practice**

Can you explain how (if at all) you share information about your child to the teacher?
Do you believe these methods to be valuable?
Which is most/least valuable?
For whom is it valuable (parent, teacher, child)
Is the child aware of this information sharing? If so: Why? Why not?

Do you have any thoughts on data security in preschool? I.e. Unikum.
Is your child inquisitive regarding this, or indifferent?
As a parent, how much of data security from a teacher perspective do you think is based on:
- a) parental opinions and permissions, and b) children’s opinions and permissions?
Have you ever been part of the parent – teacher association?
Can these associations achieve other results in regard to parent engagement? If so: How?
How important is the child perspective in these associations?
Can it be a forum to have children’s concerns raised?
What has been your experience working with teachers who appear disinterested in pursuing stable and long-lasting relationships with the home?
Do you think parents overall in your preschool is invested in their child’s life at preschool?
Do you think parents at your preschool view preschool a babysitting service, or an educational facility?
What do you think is the teacher’s perception of this?