

PEDAGOGICAL RELATIONS OF LISTENING AND BECOMING IN
CHILDREN'S EVERYDAY LITERACIES: IN CONVERSATION WITH TED AOKI

by

Janet Pletz

B.A., The University of Victoria, 1980
B.Ed., The University of Calgary, 2000
M.Ed., The University of Lethbridge, 2008

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES
(Language and Literacy Education)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
(Vancouver)

December 2017

© Janet Pletz, 2017

Abstract

In this inquiry a sociocultural lens of literacy was applied to acknowledge how research contexts of everyday life are tied to children's learning and participation in diverse cultural and social situations and settings. In the tradition of reconceptualist curricular theorizing in contexts of early childhood education, this research was aimed at enhancing an awareness of relations of pedagogical listening in teaching situations, especially responsive to ethical possibilities as meaning making for pedagogical change (Aoki, 1978/1980; Pinar, 1994). This inquiry took into account listening to young children as active, knowing participants who bring experiences, insights, and knowledge about their lives and literacies into the classroom. Oriented in hermeneutic curriculum inquiry and narrative-interpretive methodology (Aoki, 1978/1980; Leggo & Sameshima, 2014), the study was located in two Kindergarten classrooms in a major city in Alberta, Canada during one school year, and focused on two students, their teachers, and parents. I explored the pedagogical relations of listening to young children's everyday lives and literacy experiences across borders and contexts of home and school. Through Aoki's pedagogical call (Aoki, 1990/2005) to theorize curriculum through re/awakening listening (dwelling with/in *sonare*), this inquiry aimed to understand: (a) young children's perceptions of literacies, (b) the experience and meanings of relations of listening and literacy pedagogy in early childhood classrooms, and (c) the ways these relations are acknowledged by young children, teachers, and parents. Through conversational interviews (Chase, 2005; Silverman, 2001), narrative portraits (Ellis, 1998a/2006), informal interactions, and observations (Smith, Duncan & Marshall, 2005), and practices of life writing (Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers, & Leggo, 2009), the inquiry evoked meaning

making from the Kindergarten-aged students' narratives about lived experiences with literacy, including technology. Stories uncovered students' perspectives and meanings of literacies when in transition from home to school. Parents expressed curiosity about literacies and "what teachers do" in developing relations with their children. Teachers became aware of, and attentive to, tensions in their teaching, especially regarding how they ascribed personal values to teaching practices as well as students' literacy practices with/in the classroom. Teachers articulated the importance of attentiveness in listening to students' stories as layered narratives of literacy learning.

Lay Summary

Everyday realities of literacy learning, including technology and literacies linked to activities and interests outside of school, makes teaching literacy with young children complex. This research draws on the scholarship of Ted Aoki (1919-2012)—a Canadian curriculum theorist whose pedagogical writing continues to inform educational research. Ted Aoki emphasized the importance of listening in pedagogical relations of teaching. The research focused on relations of teaching and literacy learning through listening. Children’s literacies outside of school are often different than the literacies they are introduced to in school, and listening to Kindergarten-aged children in their first relationship in teaching situations of literacy learning offers insights into early literacy instruction and curriculum. The study was located in Alberta, Canada and involved two Kindergarten classrooms, two students, their teachers, and parents. The resulting narratives added a unique understanding about diverse aspects of early literacy learning and young children’s lives.

Preface

This dissertation is the original, unpublished, independent work of the author, Janet Pletz. The research project was approved by The University of British Columbia (Vancouver), Behavioural Research Ethics Board certificate H13-00266.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Lay Summary.....	iv
Preface.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	ix
Dedication.....	x
An Invitation to the Reader.....	1
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	4
Listening: Embodied in Relations.....	7
Young Children as Literate Beings.....	10
Inspirited Journeying into Curriculum: Ted Aoki.....	12
Sonare and videre.....	14
Between pedagogy and lived experience.....	15
Weaving the Strands Into Inquiry: The Pedagogic Concern.....	16
To the Reader: Listening in on a Conversation.....	17
Chapter 2: The Letters.....	19
Autobiography as Living Research.....	21
Literacy Encounters: Cultural and Social Lives.....	27
Literacies: Listening to Lived Experience, Everyday.....	34
Listening: Pedagogy of Heart.....	38
Inquiry of “In-Between”: Ethical Listening.....	46
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	51
Locating Qualitative Research.....	52
Interpretivist Methodology.....	52
An Aokian situational interpretive-inquiry orientation.....	54
Narrative Inquiry: Relations, Stories, Meaning.....	55
In the midst of relations.....	56
Young children’s stories.....	57
Inquiry Context and Design.....	58
Primary site.....	58
Student participants.....	58
Teacher participants.....	60
Parent participants.....	61
Data Collection.....	62
Conversational Interviews.....	62
Children.....	62
Teachers.....	64
Parents.....	66
Narratives, Stories, and Autobiographical Reflections.....	66
Children.....	66
	vi

Teachers.....	67
Autobiographical narratives of life writing.....	68
Data Analysis.....	69
Structure and Interpretation of Research Texts	72
Ethical Considerations and Research With Children.....	74
Attending to researcher bias.....	76
Chapter 4: Storied Relations of Listening and Literacy Learning	78
Grace.....	78
Memory Stories of Literacy Learning: Lived Experience	80
I don't think I knew any different.....	80
Visit the special teacher	81
"V" helps make "I love you"	81
A Lingering Note: Silence in Relations.....	82
Relational Listening: Everyday Presence	84
Joining in.....	85
A real teddy bear.....	87
A Lingering Note: Attentiveness	89
Relations of Listening: Voices Matter	91
There's only two of them and 40 kids	91
The table by the window.....	92
Their voice matters at school	93
A Lingering Note: Listening in the "Isness".....	94
Chapter 5: Stories of Tensioned Literacies and Continuities of In-Between.....	97
Bobbie.....	97
Literacies: Traditions and Continuities.....	98
It was the job that day	99
The three places in his life	100
They never say that	101
A Lingering Note: Layers of Being	103
Literacies: Listening in the Borders.....	104
Might be one way for him to talk.....	105
They care about that person	106
You're allowed bringing it.....	108
A Lingering Note: Sonorous Borders	108
Literacies: Listening to Play in Imagined and Virtual Worlds	110
I'm building a secret room.....	112
They will get it somewhere else.....	113
It takes him a while to trust.....	114
A Lingering Note: In-difference	115
Chapter 6: Meanings and Moving Forward.....	118
To Linger With/in Listening and Literacies.....	118
1. Relations: enfolded in becoming.	119
2. Relations: as pedagogical attentiveness.	119
3. Relations: tension as presence in teaching.....	120
4. Literacies: layers of being.....	121

5. Literacies: bridges with/in borders.....	122
6. Literacies: in-difference.	122
Relations with Previous Research.....	123
Reflexive “Check ins” During Inquiry	125
Implications and Suggestions for Practice.....	127
Lingering, Weaving, and Dwelling in In/spirited Reflection	128
References.....	133
Appendices.....	152
Appendix A: Range of Data Collection Methods and Strategies	152
Appendix B: Schedule of Interview Activities	153
Appendix C: Researcher Activities (Description)	154
Appendix D: Informal Conversation/Interviews with Students.....	155
Appendix E: Framework of Pre-Interview Activities with Students.....	156
Appendix F: Guiding Questions for Interviews—Teachers	157
Appendix G: Semi-structured Interviews—Parents.....	159

Acknowledgements

With heartfelt gratitude, I extend my appreciation to all those who have supported my journey of passion over many years towards the completion of my doctoral program. As a teacher and researcher living and working in public education, I want to thank Bobbie and Grace, their families, and their teachers Emily and Riley, for allowing me to share time with them in their homes and classrooms. It was an honour to listen to your stories. In addition, I am indebted to my colleagues and particularly my principal who has walked this same journey, and understands a teaching life with doctoral studies.

I am humbled by the patient support of my doctoral co-supervisors, Dr. Carl Leggo at the University of British Columbia and Dr. Erika Hasebe-Ludt at the University of Lethbridge. Carl and Erika, your inspirited care and pedagogical generosity over several years has truly shaped my journey and my lifework. I also extend my gratitude to my committee members, Dr. Teresa Dobson and Dr. Marlene Asselin for your support and positive encouragement. Thank you to faculty, staff, and my doctoral colleagues of the Department of Language and Literacy—community plays such an important role in a student’s journey. I gratefully acknowledge UBC for financial support in Tuition and University Graduate Fellowships that made my doctoral studies possible.

To family and friends who have waited patiently for my return to our lives together—shared events, family outings, and day hikes are within our grasp again. In memory of my mother Shirley, dear father Raymond, and my sons Connor, Brett, and Michael—your lives have inspired mine—thank you for your unwavering support and for knowing when I needed a hug during many years of study and graduate work. I am blessed.

Dedication

For Jocelyn

My sister, dearest friend, beautiful and wise

An Invitation to the Reader

On a September weekend in the mid 1980s while on a road trip through the Scottish highlands, I enjoyed a serendipitous meeting with a Canadian artist. This part of northeast Scotland, now known as Cairngorm National Park, is recognized for its craggy mountains, the River Dee, heather-dotted hills, barren rock, and a concentration of castles, all in the midst of wind-swept sheep country. From our village on the outskirts of Aberdeen on the River Dee, our morning destination that day was Braemar where my partner and I stopped for a picnic with our young sons on the grassy hill designated for spectators while watching the annual Highland Games. From there our destination was a B&B about an hour down the road. While winding our way along the narrow lane I saw a small clapboard sign on top of a wall of ancient rock. In purple paint the sign said: “*Next farm. Weaving. Open.*”

The artist, a Canadian woman who was attending the University of Glasgow, recognized our accent and shared with us that she was in Scotland completing her Master’s degree in Textile Arts. I can’t remember her first name after all these years, although her initials SR affixed on a label are still legible on the back of the weaving that hangs in my book room. That afternoon one weaving caught my eye set against the stone wall and hung under one of the low wooden beams of the outbuilding-studio. I felt something in this weaving that connected me to this land I would call home for three years. Within the large circular loom, with a circumference of almost two meters, the hand-woven scene depicts a Cairngorm vista as I imagined might have once been visible outside the back door of the farm house. My eye was drawn first to the gnarly-rooted tree that spills in 3-D forms from the frame into the body of the weaving. From there, the

heather-coloured knots of wool carve the shape of a babbling brook. Where it meets the horizon my eye is drawn to three rolling wind-swept barren hills opening to the blues and grays of a Scottish skyline. Even today, the portrayal of this woven scene draws me into lived experience and memories of Scotland and this place in the Cairngorms. I realize that I want to name the artist in my storied memory—I will call her Suzanna.

I remember the gentle features of Suzanna's face, just as I remember her story—her interest in weaving, and how coming to Scotland was an important part of learning to work with natural fibres. I have, however, always kept close in my memory what she did next, and what Suzanna said about the artwork. While preparing the weaving to be wrapped in brown paper, Suzanna pulled different coloured wool strands from wooden boards, and cut lengths of specific colours about 10 or 15 centimeters long. She laid them across her open hand, spreading them so that I could see each coloured strand individually. She explained that she doesn't usually tell buyers the 'secret' she weaves into every piece that she creates, but, on this day, Suzanna talked about the meanings of her choices in the work, why she chose the different coloured strands, all the while touching each one thoughtfully and carefully. I remember that she described them as the anchor threads, the strands that hold her creative thoughts as other colours are added into each part of the weaving. Suzanna said that these are the last threads to be woven into the piece. She showed me how the seven strands were embedded in the weaving. "When you find them," she said, "trace them, they only touch each other in one place."

Meeting a Canadian artist in Scotland long ago, with the warm memories of looking at the coloured threads laid across her hand, has stayed with me. I especially remember the way Suzanna touched each thread, each one significant to her creative

portrayal of the Cairngorms, each thread carefully placed in the work, each colour chosen for its part, woven into a story. The wool is as vivid and alive to me today, on my wall, as it was then set against the stone brick wall of a farmhouse in Scotland.

The memory of Suzanna's threads in her hand provides an image of the strands in my research. I invite you into the strands of my stories of inquiry, into the conversation that I have woven. In the strands lying across my hand, you will see young children's literacies in the contexts of their everyday lives. I am concerned about listening to children's voices in classrooms as a place where we live together in teaching and as literacy learners. At times strands of my inquiry touch each other, and overlap, weaving the parts at play reflexively, such as the relations of listening pedagogy and curriculum theorizing. I am reminded of the place and time when Suzanna once invited me to discover a meaning in the weaving. This place in my inquiry is inspired by life writing and theorizing through Ted T. Aoki's pedagogy—the place and time where listening in a new key has inspired all the threads to touch each other. These threads, heartfully woven, unfold in this text.

Chapter 1: Introduction

the meaning and place of children in our lives is the most important consideration to be taken up in education today, not just because the voice of the young has been translated out of any meaningful involvement with the powers that be, but also because the question of the young ... devolves precisely on so many of the defining issues of our time ... of how we might learn to live more responsibly within the earthly web of our planetary home.

(Smith, 1991, pp. 188-189)

To find and follow the path with heart requires courage and heart.

(Chambers, 2004a, p. 6)

I remember snapshots of life experiences along my path into teaching and into academic inquiry like threads that sometimes intertwine, and at times touch and run parallel across the palm of my hand in much the way that Suzanna revealed the coloured anchor threads in her weaving 30 years ago. Stories of times and places of everyday life, as a mother, and teacher, and graduate student, accompany me on this journey through doctoral studies. Not long after starting Master's studies at the University of Lethbridge I remember reading one of many articles by Cynthia Chambers that have steadied my way into this inquiry. In "Finding a research path with heart" (2004), I felt attuned to Chambers' words: "I know something matters when it keeps me awake...when the rest of the world lies still enough so I can hear my heart speaking" (p. 9). My heart has been speaking to me over the years, but paying attention to the heart has always been complicated.

At the University of Lethbridge, I first learned about narrative life writing from Erika Hasebe-Ludt's scholarship. Then, with Carl Leggo and Cynthia Chambers, and the wider life writing community of colleagues, I learned about their methodology of life writing and narrative theorizing as pedagogical praxis (Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers, & Leggo, 2009). Over the years life writing has presented openings for my questions and reflections on the challenges I have experienced in my teaching life and doctoral research inquiry.

Hearing is one aspect of my personal life that contributes to the awareness of a complicated interconnection between my teaching life and my research inquiry. David G. Smith's (1991) hermeneutic process of inquiry speaks to observing and attending to deep self-understanding and awareness, "giving oneself over to the conversation" (p. 198) of inquiry. In English, the etymological roots of "to hear" are derived from Middle English and Old English *hīeran* of Germanic origin, meaning, "to perceive with the ear the sound made by someone or something" *Collins English Dictionary* (2006) defines "to hear" as "to perceive (a sound) with the sense of hearing."

Perceiving and apprehending sound by the ear is critically challenged by profound hearing loss. In my early 20s I was diagnosed with early adult onset sensorineural hearing impairment. Nearly 20 years later, as a teacher, environmental conditions of classrooms and school life impacted my ability to perceive and comprehend young children's voices in speech. I can hear vowels and voiced consonants in controlled environments when speakers are talking one at a time, or when I am facing the speaker. When in environments with more voices engaged at the same time, such as in meetings, classrooms, conferences, and social settings I typically fall behind the stream of

conversation, have a difficult time tracking directionality of sounds and speech, and soon lose comprehension of what is said. In these environments hearing mistakes are frequent and my ability to detect meaningful cues from the jumble of voiced speech sounds is greatly diminished.

Two summers ago I met with Anna, my long time audiologist. I was no longer in a classroom-based teaching position; however, in my literacy leadership tasks and literacy resource responsibilities, I was experiencing an increase in hearing mistakes and diminished confidence in social environments. I had entered a quantitatively defined awkward reality that Anna and other specialists have projected would likely develop. It meant (then and now) that hearing aid technology cannot address the changes and challenges of profound regions of hearing loss, and my hearing profile was/is not profound-enough to qualify me for a cochlear implant. I am “in-between.”

Initially my response was quite visceral; the feeling of letting go, of imagining not wearing hearing aids was a release, and then was closely replaced with uncertainty. My metaphorical leap into the unknown “in-between” was eventually the transitional space of re/invention of experiential hearing. It didn’t happen quickly, or without difficulty. I wanted to cocoon into a safe place and at the same time pushed myself into risking change. Unknown reality and vulnerabilities came with surprises and fears every day. Within a few months, living “in-between” eventually changed my experience of hearing in all aspects of everyday life, including my relations with teaching.

For years my relations with hearing were polarized by the experience of either, “Yes, I can hear you, I understand what you are saying,” or “No, I cannot hear you, I do not understand.” At this point of storytelling, I gave myself over to a newfound, heightened

sense of trust—that is, my ‘leap’ included realizing that my body could take on this different kind of hearing, of being a conduit for sound, to apprehend and perceive sound, where I had once let myself lean on hearing aids. In reflection, learning to live within “in-between” spaces of hearing challenged me to adjust to this tension by creating a new equilibrium for balancing the unpredictability of “Now what?” When I truly admitted that my aids did not support hearing, my next responses were rooted in an ethical immediacy where I stopped, stood still quietly, and attended to listening. This was a pivotal moment of awareness because now listening required more ethical attention, as all my senses worked together. To listen to gestures and movement carefully with my whole body requires attending to minutiae as infinite potential for understanding.

These threads of everyday life and teaching link my questions aimed at understanding pedagogical relations of listening in the lived curriculum of young children’s experiences as literate beings meeting us and living ethically and hope (fully) together every day in our classrooms.

Listening: Embodied in Relations

In this moment, I lift listening to the forefront of my inquiry as Suzanna once held strands in her hand when telling the story in her weaving. Hold this strand with contemplative reflection for the time being. In the next sections, I begin to weave the strands as they touch, uncovering and lingering with my inquiry several questions as they developed for me. Over time, living “in-between” has taught me that all moments of listening are embodied experiences; they reveal meanings and enhance my perceptions, and they are transformative in the act of relating. From this part of personal storying I move on to listening and relational theory inspired by others who anchor my inquiry.

I return briefly to the etymological root of the word “hearing,” which places emphasis on apprehending and perceiving sound. Etymologically, “to listen” comes from Old English *hlysnan* (Northumbrian *lysna*) “to listen, hear, attend to” and Old High German Old High German *hlut* “sound”; Gothic *hilub* “listening, attention” (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2017). Communication researcher Lisbeth Lipari (2014) draws on the etymological interpretation of “to hear” as perception of sound (as receiving) and “to listen” as emphasizing attention to others, to obey (as giving). Lipari then foregrounds etymological meanings in much broader capacities, drawing on “the self’s experience” (p. 50) with the idea that meanings of the verbs “to hear” and “to listen” inflect different ways of being in the world. In thinking about the verbs “to hear” and “to listen,” then, as inflected with different meanings suggesting different ways of being, I gain new awareness in envisioning listening in teacher and student relations.

Teachers’ and students’ relations of listening in the midst of lived experience in the classroom are significant to my inquiry. Listening, as a relational encounter on the basis of “being” and as experience, signifies an existential or existing connection; a “significant association between or among things” with origins in 1350-1400 Middle English *relacion* from Latin *relātiōn* (stem of *relātiō*) “to carry back” (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2017). Nel Noddings (2003) notes that *relation* is ontologically basic, in that we are products of countless encounters and interactions with others in all contexts of our everyday lives. In education Noddings promotes the ethics of care, particularly in her description of reciprocity and empathy in personal relations (Noddings, 1984). Another feminist perspective from Barbara Thayer-Bacon (2003) contributes a pragmatic social epistemology, joining theory and praxis of relations that strive “for awareness of

context and values” (p. 9) arguing that “knowing is something people develop as they have experiences with each other and the world around them” (p. 9). Thayer-Bacon stresses that teachers and students are indeed social beings in relation; however, teachers must also take care and gain regard for the quality of relations with students (2003). I agree with Thayer-Bacon that teachers must use “caring reasoning” (p. 247) as the means of attending to their students with a focus on valuing students’ perspectives. Turning to teachers’ listening and attending to students’ perspectives of lived experience and learning with caring reasoning is a purposeful condition for understanding.

Gadamer’s (1975/2004) hermeneutics is situated in his concept of *fundamental openness*. Gadamer describes openness with another as a genuine bond of human relations. We experience each other in the relation of being able to speak openly and listen with openness. Gadamer notes, “Without such openness to one another there is no genuine human bond. Belonging together always also means being able to listen to one another” (p. 355). Lipari (2014) interprets this idea of openness in listening as giving up our attachment to what is already familiar and understood in order to “re-cognize” (p. 185) the other. I have considered Gadamer’s attention to openness as an ethical consciousness of listening. In establishing an ethical ground of listening then, Thayer-Bacon’s view of relational listening suggests that teachers should suspend their own views in preparing to listen to students. Gadamer’s fundamental openness asks us (as teachers) to suspend the “willfulness of self” (Lipari, 2014, p. 185) in order to receive, as foreknowledge, the message of the other.

Indeed, in arguing for the verbs “to hear” and “to listen” to maintain their etymological inflections as different ways of being, I also allow listening to others as an

ethical paying attention, to remain open to interpretations of listening through teachers' individual, different meanings. Regarding the possibilities of an ethical understanding of what it means to give, to be mindful, and to feel embodied with patient awareness, I aim to understand the meanings teachers ascribe to practices of listening. With a turn towards being and the relational role(s) of listening to young children's perspectives, I aim my inquiry specifically at contexts of literacy learning in the diverse places of everyday contexts.

Young Children as Literate Beings

My teaching career and doctoral studies have evoked an active consciousness aimed at understanding teachers' relational perceptions of young children's everyday literacies. Always near in my mind in day-to-day life are the overlapping, broad perspectives of sociocultural researchers and the multiple voices of curriculum scholars who, like me, are concerned with understanding what it means to be a young child in relations with literacy learning, their teachers, and curriculum. I agree with critical, sociocultural views that young students have agency. They are meaning makers of their unique histories, with language backgrounds and cultural identities. Their funds of knowledge (Larson & Marsh, 2005; Wolwend, 2009; Razfar & Yang, 2010) inspire me every day in early childhood classrooms.

Over the course of my career, and as a literacy leader in schools, teachers have related their reflections to me about how their students' everyday technologized lives are changing the way students interact with print-based literacy practices in the classroom. These observations are confirmed in research that recognizes the ways in which literacy is changing in society (Larson & Marsh, 2013), the influences that have led to the

reconceptualization of early childhood literacy (Razfar & Yang, 2010; Wohlwend, 2009), and the impact of new technologies and learning (Burnett & Merchant, 2013; Merchant, 2015). Some of these researchers have also documented the growing “disconnect” between school-based literacy practices and those embedded in cultural domains of home and contemporary society (e.g., Gee, 2004; Knobel, 1999). Noticing this disconnection awakens teachers to respond by incorporating models of literacy in school that focus on literacy practices that are used in everyday life (Larson, 2005; Davies and Merchant, 2009). Alluding to tensions and unevenness of different ways that young children experience digital environments in everyday life (Burnett, 2016), early childhood literacy curriculum must also recognize the wide range of digital experiences and practices that arrive daily in formal school-literacy contexts (Larson, 2005; Merchant, 2015; Burnett, 2016). It stirs in me questions about mis/understandings and how we as teachers present our perceptions and values about literacies, and how teachers acknowledge and/or valorize students’ literacy identities.

One of the key elements that I see missing from related understandings of young children’s diverse literacies is the voice of children, particularly their views on how they make sense of the various ways they are literate. Literacy is a value-laden, socially constructed and historically situated practice (Larson, 2006) and in its complexities I view young children as knowing participants who bring experiences, insights, and knowledge about their world into the classroom. From my position as a teacher and researcher, I am interested in hearing children’s stories and their voices, in the hermeneutic sense as “literacy-beings” and what this might mean to them and what it means to classroom teachers. The gap in the research literature points to the need for

ethical listening, particularly for understanding young children's experiences as literate participants in the world.

Inspired Journeying into Curriculum: Ted Aoki

This strand weaves all previous strands into a whole that, above all, guides my inquiry. I included the word “inspired” denoting Ted Aoki’s interpretation “of a space of generative interplay, where newness can come into being—as a site of being and becoming” (Aoki, 1996/2005). I hold “listening” in this potential of generative interplay as I continue to journey, and lift the strands of curriculum theorizing into my inquiry.

I am a student, one of many past and present, of Ted Tetsuo Aoki (1919-2012). Ted’s ‘first’ students of curriculum theory, many of whom I call my teachers today, have personally and collectively mentored me in my exploration and study of Ted Aoki’s scholarship and pedagogy. During my first curriculum studies course as a Master’s student, in the spring term of 2006, Dr. Erika Hasebe-Ludt at the University of Lethbridge introduced us to many eminent curriculum theorists. I was captivated by this new discourse for thinking and living theoretical, critical, and creative possibilities for theorizing curriculum and classroom life. Erika’s teaching and the work of curriculum scholars opened a door for me, a feeling of clarity and attunement with a place, and for the first time since beginning graduate work, I felt a sense of home, of belonging. I remember listening to Erika’s stories during one Saturday morning class, about the life work of a Japanese Canadian scholar—her stories were full of passion and hope, heartbreak and attunement—stories once lived and told by Ted Tetsuo Aoki, and on that Saturday, lived and retold by Erika.

I listened to Erika's stories about her teacher that day and I remember feeling inspired by something new, equal parts hope and challenge—the call to teaching that Ted so eloquently described, and shared just as eloquently by Erika, stayed with me for days, and in fact has not left me. I admit that I did not have a pre-determined, already-set path into graduate studies. I was on a quest. I realized only that I was searching to find a path that would orient my teaching and pedagogical heart into seeking meaning. From my first readings, I felt something stir in me when reading Ted's phrases "curriculum-as-plan" and "curriculum-as-lived" and shared the story of "Miss O" (Aoki, 1991/2005). I felt a desire to join in this inspirited conversation, to listen more. The title of my Master's thesis, *Literature-as-lived in practice: Young children's sense of voice* (Pletz, 2008) reflects an early influence of Ted's pedagogy in my lived curriculum with students in my classroom practice.

From Ted's scholarly works, I was drawn into his hermeneutic attention to words and language for theorizing a teaching life. With a developing sense of attunement, I was learning to be aware when listening for Ted's phenomenological descriptions of educational experience in everyday classrooms. At the same time, I was seeking out curriculum thinkers in my doctoral studies who helped me broaden my understanding of the complexities of Ted's pedagogy. In learning about Aokian pedagogy I was learning to live more connectively with curriculum by challenging myself to live curriculum more courageously in my classroom. In Aokian terms I was beginning to live with the meanings of Ted's theme of curriculum as "essentially belonging to the world of the practical" (Aoki, 1985/1991/2005, p. 232).

Sonare and videre. Ted Aoki's summons to "call upon *sonare* to dwell juxtaposed with *videre* (1990/2005, p. 373) inspires my inquiry. I consider the meanings of the Latin *sonare* (to resound, to announce by means of a sound) as a timely query for deeper understanding in contexts of early literacy pedagogy. To curriculum workers in 1990, Ted turned our attention to his observation over years of schooling and teaching that we had "become beholden to the metaphor of the I/eye—the I that sees.... accepting without questioning the primacy of the disembodied, objective world...resplendent with the glamour of the scientific...and embraced almost lovingly" (Aoki, 1990/2005, p. 373). Ted shares with us that he too had "become enamoured, to revel in curriculum words such as "images...insights...supervisions...and light that illuminates our seeings" (p. 373). Ted points to Wittgenstein's cautionary note about our overreliance and overemphasis on visuality in the language of teaching, thereby "diminishing the place of other ways of being in the world" (as cited in Aoki, 1990/2005, p. 373). More than 25 years later, Ted's interpretation, with Wittgenstein's emphasis, continues to hold timeless meanings in our current times. I attune to Ted's urgency when he declares unabashedly, "the time is ripe for us to call upon...and make room for *sonare*" (p. 373). Ted echoes his experiences of *sonare* through his lifeworld theorizing of music pedagogy and musical instruments to exemplify his resonance for hearing and listening in curriculum. Informed by Aoki, I seek a curriculum of listening to young children in their everyday lives. Teachers and students are in relations of 'seeing' and 'listening' and being with each other in classrooms on a daily basis. My interest in *sonare* brings me to wonder about the ways in which teachers listen to young children in the planned and lived curriculum

world of praxis. I am also curious about the ways in which teachers relate personal meaning of a curriculum of listening with their students.

Between pedagogy and lived experience. Seeking deeper understanding of *sonare* and *videre* evokes my research interest in situations of listening in everyday life and in teaching through literacy pedagogy. Ted theorized engagement in situational experiences as a research perspective (Aoki, 1983/2005) to “gain insights into human experiences...as they are lived within the situation” (Aoki, 1978/1980/2005, p. 104). I am interested in understanding experiences of literacy pedagogy and relations of listening between teachers and students, between parents and teachers, and between contexts of home and school literacies.

To understand listening as lived experience through young children, their teachers, and their parents in situations of literacy I bear in mind Ted’s perspective that lived curriculum is always in motion. Leaning on Deleuze’s idea that life is ever in flux, Ted’s view of lived curriculum through a lens of multiplicity acknowledges a readiness for “more things to happen” (Aoki, 1993/2005, p. 297). In quoting Deleuze and Parnet (1988) Ted notes that what counts in a place of multiplicity are the relations between the elements of lived experience, as “relations are not separable from each other” (p. viii).

Literacies and relations lived in-between spaces with planned curriculum, between teachers and students, between home and school also acknowledges Ted’s theorizing the space of “and” as a place for lingering and intermingling in and with/in differences. In time of tension, and spaces where either/or dichotomies may reside, understanding differently is recognition of the generative discourse that “grows in the middle” (Aoki, 1993a/2005, p. 297).

Weaving the Strands Into Inquiry: The Pedagogic Concern

In this inquiry it is my purpose to understand and deepen the “language of humility...to listen for a new kind of discourse that grows in the middle” (Aoki, 1993/2005, p. 299) that is inclusive of children’s voices in a new conversation. With the aim of listening to relations of lived curriculum of literacies while considering how young children’s place in diverse kinds of relationships might bear witness to the ethical ground that Ted meant when he said, “What can I do for this child?” (Aoki, 1991/2005, p. 383).

Through returning to the imagery of Suzanna lifting strands of wool from her hand many years ago as she shared the story within my weaving, I too have identified the strands that are woven into the fabric of my inquiry. This chapter introduces the threads that evolved through teaching young children, autobiographical narratives of everyday life experiences, and pedagogically inspired academic study and contemplation of theorizing literacy learning, especially through Ted Aoki’s scholarly work.

My inquiry is concerned with young children’s literacies in their everyday lives. I am compelled to hear their stories in their voices. The aim of the inquiry is to understand: (a) the phenomenon of listening to young children’s perceptions of literacies in everyday life through an Aokian perspective of pedagogical theorizing, (b) the experience and meaning of relations of listening and literacy pedagogy in early childhood classrooms, and (c) the ways in which these relations are understood and acknowledged by young children, teachers, and parents.

To the Reader: Listening in on a Conversation

In Ted's words, curriculum as a conversation is a matter of attunement. I acknowledge your participation as if our open conversation was dialectic, even face to face. At times, in some chapters, you may read and feel that we are part of a private dialogue. At times, you may feel like you are listening in, with me, ready with your questions in helping me understand your personal experience in the conversation of my inquiry. In writing, I present the conversation that unfolds, and thus, a vulnerability that is felt in our meeting together here. I invite readers into the conversation, "where talk is without a conclusion" (Oakeshott, as cited in Aoki, 1981/2005, p. 220).

Chapter 2 consists of a series of letters written to Ted Aoki. I did not have the pleasure of meeting Ted during his life however, writing letters in an informal voice to an 'acquaintance' in conversation provided me an imagined way to meet, and although "not physically present, [Ted] was vividly present before me" (Aoki, 1981/2005, p. 222). Each of the five letters is named by a heading, denoting a theme. At times autobiographical, at times theoretical, and at times pedagogical, the content of the letters present a theoretical framework.

Chapter 3 describes how I conducted the inquiry. As an interpretive inquiry, the narrative design holds young children's everyday experiences and perspectives of their literate lives in the forefront. The inquiry is also about relations of listening, of/between/with teachers and parents, describing their experiences and perspectives of their students/their children with literacy at home and at school or in the community. Specific protocols and procedures are represented in the Appendix section of the text.

Chapter 4 introduces the reader to Grace, a Kindergarten-aged girl, who chose her pseudonym name based on a name she would like for a new doll. I begin the chapter with an autobiographical narrative of lived experience—a memory of parenthood—a parallel narrative lens aroused by Grace’s lived experience. The narratives of Grace’s teacher, Emily Carter, and Grace’s mother, Lynne, reflect the themes that evolved through analysis of Grace’s conversational data. Grace’s narratives primarily reflect themes of listening relations in teaching and learning situations.

Chapter 5 introduces the reader to Bobbie, a Kindergarten-aged boy, who chose his pseudonym name because he liked the sound of it. Bobbie’s narratives also place him in the centre of relations with his teacher, Riley Wyatt, and his mother, Norah. The themes that arrive through Bobbie’s narratives portray his experiences of literacies in his relations of listening. The continuity of interpretation of Aokian pedagogy and theorizing is highlighted in the sixth theme in Chapters 4 and 5 through “A Lingerin Note” which Bill Pinar describes for us as Ted’s pedagogical device for dwelling in the moment of questioning and reflecting (Pinar, 2005, p. 26).

Chapter 6 is the last chapter of this manuscript. In the way that Ted may contemplate with his listeners and readers not to rush to the end, the function of this chapter is to contemplate, and go back to where we have been. It provides me one lasting feeling that our conversation is part of an ongoing dialogue. The last life writing letter to Ted links my inquiry experience with a reflexive lens on pedagogical theorizing—in ways, both personal and practical—of dwelling, and going forward in relations of listening.

Chapter 2: The Letters

In June 2012, I spent a day in Cumberland, the small Vancouver Island village where Ted Aoki was born. My elderly parents were with me that weekend and this was one of our planned stops. The visit spurred my mother's long ago memories of time spent during World War II summers with her extended family in the area, particularly the logging camps at the far end of the nearby lake. Our day included a visit to the Cumberland museum. Knowing little at the time about Ted's early life, I was delighted to see pictures of his parents on the walls, a record of their professional lives as teachers in the Japanese Language School. Through photos, I was able to bear witness to a few moments of Ted's childhood as captured in the still images. Afterwards, while taking a meandering drive through the village I listened to my mother's storied memories about logging camps. On the village roads of Cumberland, I could almost picture the presence of a little Japanese Canadian boy, Theodore Tetsuo Aoki, walking with his family almost a century ago.

A few weeks after this serendipitous "meeting" through history and images, I wrote a letter to Ted in my journal, opening it at the middle, creasing flat the centre pages and apart from my usual jot notes. In my letter I positioned myself first as an observer describing a unique encounter in a museum, of historical time through this glimpse into Ted's early childhood in portraits. Geographically, I related to Cumberland in a temporal sense through my 21st century experience of walking down the street. I had never met Ted, nor had I heard his voice in person or recorded. After this salutation, I introduced myself as an early childhood teacher, a researcher of literacy education, and a second-generation student of his students of curriculum studies. I felt a kinship to this experience

of writing, sharing an encounter as a glimpse into Ted's family background. In the following weeks of that summer, news of Ted's passing was shared across the academy, across Canada, and internationally, and I continued writing letters.

This chapter consists of a series of letters addressed to Ted. In part, they are autobiographical and pedagogical conversations of everyday life in teaching and inquiry, as interconnecting themes of Aokian pedagogy in curriculum theorizing. In addition, the letters explore the theoretical framework guiding this inquiry. In many of Ted's conference presentations, he addresses "conversation" as a metaphor for bridging two ways of knowing, as interactions across contexts of living and being in teaching and curriculum (1981/2005). My letters represent my journey with Ted, an encounter of curriculum conversation "with the meaningfulness of understanding coming into view" (1981/2005, p. 228). Ted Aoki is pedagogically present in the letters with me in quiet reflections, dwelling-in ruminations, and conversations with others. In Pinar and Grumet's (1976) proposal for self-reflexive theorizing, as the course of *currere* and method for examining lived experience, the letters link autobiographical texts, past and present, to teaching and inquiry explored in this chapter. Together with Aokian perspectives on conversation and Pinar and Grumet's conceptualization of *currere*, the letters speak most to "permission-giving" (Smith, 2012, p. xv) as a life writing form and inquiry process that allows heartwork in educational research to emerge through the interconnectedness and relations with the personal and pedagogic (Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers, Leggo, & Sinner, 2014).

Autobiography as Living Research

October 5

Dear Ted,

One of your conference presentations from 1993 started with your reflexive thoughts about how naïve you felt teaching reading to your Grade 1 students in the one-room school at the Hutterite community east of Calgary (Aoki, 1993/2005). Ted, I'm smiling to myself when I read your thoughts in the article because, honestly speaking, I know that "naïve" would be my best outlook for smiling through the day upon entering a one-room schoolhouse in the 1940s! In referring to the story of your first experience of teaching reading in the complicated space of your teaching assignment, you acknowledge your re-reflexive thoughts (in wisdom) later in your career, recognizing then the mundane in the narrow scope of an instrumental curriculum. This captured my heart as you shared these memories of a curriculum viewed in technological ethos from a teacher's perspective, and you were also acknowledging your heart-full dismay on behalf of your students in rural Alberta in the 1940s.

These thoughts, and your story take me back several years to my own story of learning to read. When I was a Grade 1 student, living in a small Kootenay town in the early 1960s, my basal reader, called *Fun with our Family*, developed through the same *We Think and Do* workbooks, triggers many memories. Reading time at school always had to be workbook time. It was the worst part of my school day and fuelled many years of self-doubt—was I a reader when I did my workbook? The paper these exercises were printed on still conjures a smell and feel that appealed to me, but they did not stand up

well to my teacher-professed errors and my attempts to correct them, a testament to holes made on several pages, my pink pearl eraser working fervently in frustration. The light at the end of the tunnel was the relief of finally standing in a long line, working my way up to the front, one student and one step at a time, and after several false attempts finally watching my teacher at her desk, cut the top right hand corner with scissors—the unspoken signal that one more workbook page was done and that the next one was waiting for me.

The next year, in Grade 2, my RCMP family moved to another small Kootenay town, and I was again introduced to new readers, called the *Janet and John* series. Ted, this set of books appealed to me at first. As a seven-year-old child reading my name and my brother's name in my reader every day was very exciting to me. I remember flipping pages ahead in my reader on that first day, looking for the name Jocelyn, which is my sister's name. After this initial good feeling of reading about Janet and John, I soon noticed that the John character was always on the edge of mischief, 'in trouble' or behaving silly, which usually resulted in the other characters laughing at him. I remember feeling protective, I didn't want my brother to have to read this book the next year when he was in Grade 2. I didn't want him to have the same experiences as the character named John. These early memories of learning to read as a young child influenced my childhood attraction to stories that had characters that I could see myself in.

Reading was just so different because a workbook was not waiting for me at my house when I got home from school. I wasn't a child that fit into a "bookworm" category, but I loved having a library card. Some of the Kootenay towns we lived in had a library. If not, we travelled every two weeks. This outing was never a hurry-up-and-choose

activity. One of my favourite books in Grade 2 were the animal series by Thornton W. Burgess. I still keep several titles in a basket on a bottom shelf in my book room. That summer, for my birthday, my aunt gave me a new one, *The Adventures of Chatterer the Red Squirrel* (1964). After reading as much of it as I could by myself, I went back to page one—and copied it—printing the book from beginning to end, on RCMP legal-sized foolscap paper. Ted, I taught myself to read the whole book that summer, writing down every word, sentence after sentence, to make sense of reading. Printing a word, then a sentence, then reading the word, then the sentence, looking at words in parts, and then seeing them as wholes as I put letters down side-by-side in my best printing, this was my way of learning to read. Of course, it is with my teacher/researcher hindsight that I make this remark today; however, I remember being a determined little girl. In this memory, I was making meaning of the reading/writing connection in order to make sense of what reading meant. After a couple of weeks of this determined activity, I practiced reading the story to my younger sister who would be entering Grade 1 in September. This was so easy for Jocelyn; she already knew how to read! I thought about this a lot. Next we drew pictures for every page, coloured them with pencil crayons and wax crayons, and then taped them onto the bottom of each page. We stapled all those pages together down the spine, just like a real book. Unknown to us, our mother had saved it all these years and kept it at the bottom of a storage tub full of her lifelong collection of letters, and we rediscovered our ‘book’ two years ago after her passing.

In the context of my interest in understanding curriculum theory for literacy education, Pinar (2004) suggests that self-reflexive study of educational experience is one of the tasks of scholarly inquiry. I recall reading that you started your schooling in the

Japanese Language School in Cumberland, and shortly thereafter in Grade 1, you changed schools to the public school located a little way up the hill. I often wonder what it might have been like for you as a young child living in rural Vancouver Island in the 1920s with your parents. I then try to imagine your experience of walking into the Japanese Language School with your parents every day given their positions as teachers and administrator at the school. On the day I visited the museum and archival collections I noticed your name at the bottom of a class photo, one of only a few Japanese Canadian students. The image made me wonder about a young child's experience of languages and curriculum, of learning to be a student of two cultures a century ago, not to mention of being a reader and writer as a young child. Sixty years later, perhaps self-reflexive study of life experience influenced your conference paper in 1992 (Aoki, 1992/2005) in which you addressed the discussion and construction of Japanese Canadian curricula. In that paper your idea that "language allows us a way to understand the texture of two landscapes" (p. 264) has provided another way of viewing the landscape of language as a lived curriculum of in-between. Might it be so that by allowing us to orient our being with language, and languages, as a place of hope—where young children might also experience the textured landscape of the lived curriculum within the languages they speak, and read, and write?

Your vision is shared with Bill's, about scholarly inquiry, and in writing about educational experience he also attunes to the voice of autobiography in pedagogical texts of teaching. I relate to an ethos of indwelling within educational spaces (Aoki, 1986b/1991/2005) as the place where I can attend and attune to the meanings of experience. In my text as a student of reading, one of the critical locations for inquiry for

me lies in the autobiographical as a site for reminding myself that all my students have their own story, their own meaningful way of learning. Dwelling in this autobiographical conversation returns me to the question of what it means to “be literate” in education and in schools today. As you have invited us into your lived curriculum through autobiographical stories, this question can be traced through your stories of lived experience decades ago. Pinar (2012) describes the phenomenological approach to lived experience as a form of curriculum theory informed by teachers’ “autobiographical truth-telling” (p. 35).

By the early twentieth century your reference to Western modernism (Aoki, 1993/2005) provides a glimpse into your often-uncomfortable reflections of teaching reading to Grade 1 students in the 1940s. History and society linked your experience of not recognizing (at the time) the ways in which instrumental, narrow skills dominated the understanding of reading. From the postwar years toward the technological era of curriculum, I too have lived in these times as a student and subsequently as a teacher have been influenced by your cautionary words about the danger of an instrumental language (of reading and teaching) which “disengages us from our bodies, making of us...dehumanized, indifferent beings” (Aoki, 1990/2005, p. 369). Indeed, Ted, the historicity of Western modernism evoked through instrumental understandings of reading is the traceable roots for understanding how early childhood contexts of literacy emerged as a field of study.

In the years leading up to your first teaching assignment, teachers in Canada most likely would not have had access to the 1931 report by American psychologists Mabel Morphet and Carleton Washburn who claimed that the dominant concept at the time,

reading readiness, was closely linked to mental age. By 1937, Edward Dolch and Maurine Bloomster suggested that the mental age of seven was the lowest at which young children should be expected to understand and use phonics. For the next 50 years, Ted, and well into the years that you started your teaching career in Alberta, the notion of learning to read was perpetuated as an activity centred on ideas of readiness skills and perceptual tasks (Gillen & Hall, 2013). Those same mundane narrow skills that you spoke about during your conference presentation were reinforced as requisite. By the time I was a seven year old, acquiring mastery in learning to read was based on behaviourist-theory assumptions such as: “children’s agency was insignificant, that children could learn nothing for themselves, that they were objects to be manipulated by teachers, and that reading and writing were individual acts involving sets of discrete perceptual skills” (Gillen & Hall, 2013, p. 4). Given that I was a young child myself during these behaviourist times of “invisibility,” I wonder if educational research at the time took notice of my generation of young children, particularly in light of the notion of resiliency. I can surely speak to the challenges in finding my own voice as a learner. Striving to do just that in academia continues to be meaningful work.

Ted, it wasn’t until the 1970s to 1990s that literacy research began to recognize and report on the roles that young children play in making sense of own their literacy learning in school. Using the word “literacy” in early childhood contexts was important too, as it communicated the idea that young children also participated in broader contexts of literacy learning. This started a conversation about children’s lives in other contexts outside of school. The realities and complexities of young children’s everyday lives insist that we, as teachers and curriculum thinkers, must continue to be responsive on behalf of

young children today. It is declared, during these times, that literacy does have a life outside of and beyond schooling (Larson & Marsh, 2013). I listen to your voice now, in pedagogical care, and in asking myself how I can respond to the historicity within the field of early childhood literacy, how I can hear it “come forth not so much from [my] head but from life lived thoughtfully, questioningly, and pedagogically with children” (Aoki, 1991/2005, p. 386).

| ~ ~ |

Literacy Encounters: Cultural and Social Lives

November 5

Dear Ted,

I am always a learner, perhaps appropriately felt when listening and attending to reading and re-reading your papers. While continuing the conversation that guides this inquiry, I need to provide you with a contextual map that frames my inquiry relating early childhood literacy curriculum and students’ everyday lives. I focus on issues of literacy learning situated in social, historical, and cultural contexts of children’s participation in and connections to their experiences of home and school. This points me to concepts of sociocultural theory and early literacy learning for this inquiry because of affordances for a more dynamic, broad understanding and interpretation of children’s everyday literacies (Gutierrez, 2002; Moll, 2000).

At the same time, I am centering myself in a situational interpretive orientation (Aoki, 1978/1980/2005) of curriculum inquiry. As I enter into sociocultural perspectives, I also acknowledge that my reflections woven throughout this section represent a position that allows me to participate with conscious attention to curriculum theorizing in relation

to life experiences as a teacher and researcher in the field. Listening in contexts of everyday experiences of teachers' and students' pedagogical lives guides my inquiry and provides a sense of place, of situating myself in relations with/in a wider conversation of curriculum theorizing. I perceive this movement, then, of children's literacies in relations within, and between contexts of literacy theorizing as a humanizing validation of a child's sense making of their world. Your ideas on curriculum thought in person/world relationships (Aoki, 1978/1980/2005) provide an orientation for inquiry that authenticates the meanings of teachers' and students' social and cultural experiences.

Sociocultural approaches and perspectives have emerged out of various disciplines. As an approach to literacy, sociocultural literature constitutes an interdisciplinary field, evolving from linguistics, anthropology, social psychology, and education (Gee, in Iannacci & Whitty, 2009, p. 22). Historically, sociocultural perspectives of learning can be traced to the theoretical work of Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934). He posited that human beings engage and interact with their worlds through mediational means, such as cultural artefacts or tools, symbols, social interactions, and most significantly through language. As a mediational tool, language is the primary medium drawn on for learning, cultural transmission and meaning making (Vygotsky, 1978). In terms of young children's literacy learning, researchers who are grounded in Vygotsky's theoretical ideas view the classroom as a cultural site, in which literacy learning cannot be abstracted from the cultural practices in which it is situated (Razfar & Gutierrez, 2003/2013). Understanding children's literacy learning in this relation to culturally situated contexts is of interest to sociocultural inquiry. Aria Razfar and Kris D. Gutierrez (2013) have also suggested that the relations of practices in classrooms need

always be in our minds because literacy is social rather than individual. How children make sense of their lives and how we, in turn, listen to the voices of young children and their learning in diverse contexts, is pedagogically important.

Another of Vygotsky's (1978) core tenets is the concept of mediation: Our interactions with the world are always mediated through social interactions, assistance in activities, and use of tools. For the young child, then, the capacity to learn is not dependent on development; instead, the potential for learning is always changing in relation to what the child already knows, mediated through tools, language, and the quality of the child's social practices and interactions (Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000).

Ted, there is much to draw from Vygotsky's early work when I think about meaning making and literacy learning in early-childhood contexts. As a learning process meaning making developed from our need to organize life experience (John-Steiner, Connery, & Marjanovic-Shane, 2010). Vygotsky viewed young children's early meaning making as a complex process that is experienced in connection with social relationships, paired with emotion and thought (Vygotsky, 1978). I believe that Vygotsky would agree that teachers' awareness of young children's meaning making implies the importance of listening, a pedagogic paying attention—a “watchfulness” for listening in care (Aoki, 1992/2005). As Vygotsky relates social activities with mediational tools through language, how might our interactions, our conversations in contexts, and our social connections with young children hold meaningful relevance in early childhood pedagogy?

In recent decades of change, sociocultural theorists working in the field of early childhood literacy have expanded Vygotsky's core principles, guided by the

understanding that our environments are always in flux and change, and these factors are dynamic entities in every child's development (Iannacci & Whitty, 2009). In Canada, reconceptualist views, forwarded by Luigi Iannacci and Pam Whitty (2009) in their leading work in early childhood education settings, are consistent with the contexts of early childhood literacy as well. The aim of reconceptualist inquiry is to assert and interrupt once limited understandings—towards understanding power relations and social transformation—motivated by hope and possibility for reconceived understandings of curriculum (p. 22). In thinking about a reconceptualist view of the field of early childhood literacy, I interpret this move as a call to teachers and researchers to foster social change, or at least (re)learn what they know (Pinar, 1994). I begin to see a new space for engaging literacy teachers and leaders, a space for listening first to the dynamic, changing lives of young children. Ted, I look at your view of curriculum as critical reflection when I think of the individual work that accompanies transformation and social change. For early childhood literacy, then, may it be that young children's lived experience should always be the starting place, and only then can we manifest "attitudes that a [person] can assume in relating to his world" (Aoki, 1978/1980/2005, p. 107).

Michael Cole (1996), Luis Moll (2000), Barbara Rogoff (1990), and Carol Lee and Peter Smagorinsky (2000) expand views of literacy by theorizing the nature of literacy learning as linked with the idea that children are active participants and members of ever-changing larger cultural and global systems. Moll (2000), regarding this relationship of "living culturally," values the significance of literacy as a tool that children in communities use for themselves, highlighting the idea that these experiences cannot be isolated from instruction and teaching practice. Rogoff (1995, 2003) expands

these notions by suggesting that children use and develop tools for thinking and learning as occurring on three planes—the personal (the individual child), the social (interpersonal between children), and local community contexts. Central to Rogoff’s view is agency, particularly related to children’s development of tools, including literacy practices that are mediated and appropriated in various contexts and communities, including home and school. At the same time, children participate in larger, changing, cultural systems through their exposures to technology in social or visual media (Wohlwend, 2009). Ted, while this body of work is positive in acknowledging what young children are capable of, I wonder what teachers know about young children’s perspectives on their personal, social, and cultural tools. What do young children want their teachers to know, and what do they say about their interests and cultural activities in everyday lives? I am curious about how teachers listen to young children’s stories of experience.

David Barton and Mary Hamilton’s (1998) theory of literacy as a social practice champions a broader interpretation of texts within a sociocultural framework. Literacy in this view, Ted, functions in the forms of texts and their meanings in everyday life and the activities by which people relate, participate, interact, and behave. In everyday contexts the terms “literacy practices” and “literacy events” encompass an always expanding range of text features, structures, and formats (Mills, 2016). In education contexts, practices and events extend to this broad and expanding view of texts in language and literacy education contexts. The term “literacy event” has its roots in the sociolinguistic idea of speech events conceived by Dell Hymes (1962) and further developed by Shirley Heath (1983) to describe children’s actual instances and situations in which reading and writing were used in their day-to-day lives. Barton and Hamilton (1998) noted that

literacy events are the particular situated events and literacy occasions where written texts have a role. In everyday life, literacy practices are the cultural ways of using literacy at a particular time and place within a literacy event, such as reading menus, or reading aloud to children. In contexts of early-childhood literacy, Barton's ecological, social practice framework describes young children's changing uses of literacy events in the context of broader social practices they participate in. A contemporary view takes into account children's practices and technological literacies embedded in social interactions, situations, and environments—the lifeworld of home, school, and their communities.

Another inclusive view of literacies as a social practice is to take into account language socialization as a lifelong process, thereby situating young children's meaning making and gains in language and literacy across contexts and groups (Lave & Wenger, 1992). Étienne Wenger (1998) later proposed a framework of “communities of practice” to describe the ways in which people produce meanings of practices through a negotiation with each other and the world. He sees the world as composed of many different communities of practice, and we belong to many. This view provides a way to see young children as learners who are constantly and actively involved in activities and language experiences, and participating in various social lives (Wenger, 1998). Wenger proposed that children's relationships with knowledgeable others (e.g., parent, teacher, caregiver, family member, peer) in various communities of practice has influence on children's language and social experiences.

Many years after the technological era of curriculum, sociocultural theory presented a lens for understanding society and changing roles of participation in young children's lives, particularly the impact and innovations of digital technologies (Razfar &

Gutierrez, 2013). Children's access to and encounters with digital tools and technologies in everyday life inform their diverse literacy learning experiences. These forms of knowledge and use of resources as participants in technology represent underlying funds of knowledge (Moll, 2000), that lead some stakeholders' perception of young children's participation as a contested site (Ghiso & Spencer, 2011; Marsh, 2007) in traditional contexts of early-childhood literacy pedagogy. The "unhelpful polarization of what technology can do and what children can do" (Burnett & Merchant, 2013, p. 583) complicates conceptions of what constitutes literacies and which literacy practices are validated. Children's lives are also infused with technology through experiences and/or access to digital modalities, popular culture, and new forms of communication. These changing dynamics have begun to assert pressure on education's need to re-frame understanding about young children's literacy learning across contexts (Razfar & Gutierrez, 2013).

In sum, sociocultural views of literacy learning are intimately braided and tied to language and affirm and legitimize young children's literacy learning as active participants in their diverse culturally and socially mediated interactions of everyday life, in both formal and informal settings (Larson & Marsh, 2005). The work of Vygotsky explains the relevance for understanding young children's simultaneous and collaborative interactions and social language learning as scaffolded with others—at home, in communities, and in schools—in becoming literate in contemporary society (Bruner, 1975; Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Ted, the extent to which young children's literacies are changing in a technological, contemporary society is not completely "un/heard" by your ear. Your view

of technology as an always-fluctuating relationality from moment to moment revealed in everyday situations (Aoki, 1987/1999/2005, p. 156) is a good position from which to contextualize the conversation.

| ~ ~ ~ |

Literacies: Listening to Lived Experience, Everyday

February 13

Dear Ted,

A story comes to mind today. It is an everyday story of everyday life in my early childhood classroom a decade ago. It's a story of a student, Cory, in my Grade 1 class at the end of the school year, in a large urban school in a western Canada metropolis. At the time, Cory's experience prompted my own reflexive thinking even though I did not have the vocabulary and discourse that I use today as I write. This story mattered to me, and as Cynthia Chambers' wisdom speaks through her words, my story of Cory's event compelled me to pay attention, and as I listened, I learned from this what matters to me (Chambers, 2004). Ted, in its everyday way this story has occurred multiple times, in various ways and contexts since, but in my reflexive work, I learned and listened my way towards a path with heart (Chambers, 2004).

In June, it was time again for the year-end, school-wide, letter-writing activity, normalized over time as a school tradition. By description, this traditional literacy event provided teachers with narrative accounts of student-chosen and memory-evoked anecdotes of their year in classroom life. The students' next year's teachers received the letters as a first introduction.

When Cory proudly handed me his letter, my eye was immediately drawn to a detailed sketch of a cell phone. It covered half the page. The cellphone was hinged, an older-model flip phone displaying a screen and the alphabetic/numeric digital keypad. He drew it from a bird's-eye view, a sketching strategy for representing details we had been practicing and applying to many contexts all year. On each key Cory had printed the corresponding letters with their numbers, and other function keys, a feat of memory and knowledge in itself. Under the sketch was his letter written in pencil, to his unknown Grade 2 teacher, completed in his lived experience as a text message, copied:

hi g 2 teacher. my name is cory and im 7. do u txt? txting is awsom. i txt
all the time on my moms phone. txting is fast riting—do you hav a
iphone? i want 1. hav a good summer. from cory. ps. my favrit color is blue.

Cory and I started a new conversation that day. When he gave me his letter for his Grade 2 teacher, I asked many questions full of curiosity, and excitement, and care. I learned that his weekly text messages to his grandmother were an arranged time together, usually during the week on a day he didn't have soccer practice. He borrowed his mother's phone and waited for his grandmother to start.

With a small bundle of student letters in my hand that day in June, I delivered Cory's letter to his new teacher. I was excited. I remember using the words "creative" and "his voice is distinctly his," and finally I remarked that "I enjoyed Cory's story shared with me about his relationship with his grandmother." My teacher-colleague flipped rapidly through the small stack of letters and singled out Cory's. Downcast and wincing, she turned to me, made eye contact, put Cory's letter down on her desk, and said, "Looks like I have my work cut out for me next year."

Cory's text message shook me awake. In practice, I am "gifted" by children's presence during moments of reflexive attention to teaching. This feeling in teaching practice often provokes me to pay attention differently. On this occasion, Cory's generative interpretation of the activity triggered my entry into pedagogical wakefulness (Aoki, 1992a/2005). Such moments surprise me with a feeling of unpreparedness, an eruption (if I listen inward) that arrives and opens a different window into consciousness (Jardine, 1997). For me, this pedagogical awakening opened by Cory's text message was a defining moment of realizing that Cody, at 7 years old, was already stretching boundaries of reading and writing, and in that transaction invited me with pedagogical insight into his lived experience. Through his access to a cellphone and his knowledge of tools and language, Cory's agency had already equipped him to participate in broader social and cultural contexts of his everyday literacies (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Dyson, 1993; Larson & Marsh, 2005).

Ted, this story has many layers. In the ways this event mattered to me, I easily positioned myself as a parent—it was a feeling—a moment when my heart worried that Cory's voice might diminish if not encouraged to explore and participate in his literate texts, at home and at school. I also positioned myself as a classroom teacher and novice literacy researcher at the time. With Cory in mind and my colleague whose "hard work ahead" was situated in her evaluation of Cory's sentence composition and conventional word spelling, I wondered how literacy inquiry would benefit from understanding young children's experiences engaged in diverse literacies, and their experiences across domains as knowledgeable participants. I have been interested in children's autobiographical voices, and how we as teachers and researchers validate their autobiographical

texts/experiences in their daily lives. At the time, Ted, I was so proud of Cory for his interpretation of “letter” and his creativity. He understood the tradition of the year-end letter, indeed a traditional text genre, while at the same time choosing a contemporary genre form, a text message that made sense to him and was a familiar practice in his everyday life—weaving his text to “fit” into the expected school-wide form for this activity. At seven years of age, Cory entered into an experimental form of writing in school, authentically drawn from his lived experience of a literacy practice learned at and practiced in the home. As literacy teachers, we need to provide the learning environment where young children learn to value the importance of their texts. We need to honour their voices and identities, so young children can learn to assert their agency and grow in their worlds as value-able learners.

I also position myself in the curricular landscape of literacy inquiry, a site that matters to me for recognizing and legitimating children’s lived experiences in literacy learning and pedagogy. Ted, I quote you, as your words inspire and ground me in all the listening that leads to the unfolding layers of inquiry. “If living on earth as humans, experiencing being and becoming, matters in education, it behooves us to transform the language of school life such that multiple meanings of the word *curriculum* [author’s emphasis] can prevail” (Aoki, 1996/2005, p. 420).

Cory’s story is just one memory of my living in-praxis as a teacher and learner with your pedagogic principles, Ted. The generative interplay (Aoki, 1996/2005), as you would say, between *curriculum-as-planned*, and *curriculum-as-lived* (Aoki, 1986/1991/2005) chimed into classroom life through the slightest opening itself, sometimes a word, sometimes a gesture, sometimes in the stillness of conversation. The

school-wide letter-writing activity was, indeed, ingrained into the curriculum plan in this school. The plan itself was delivered in the same routines across all grades and classrooms. Cory's response to the curriculum "plan" reminded me that our students are often the pedagogic leaders in this generative space. Cory interpreted the literacy event in his own way. In mindfulness of this timely moment Cory taught me that his literacy learning and life experience are intertwined, an indwelling space where teaching relations inspire the lived curriculum of every student. This reflexive moment became an endearing and sustained question for me, Ted. I wonder about the relations of listening ethically as a teacher and researcher of early-childhood literacy. How do teachers understand and acknowledge listening in literacy education curriculum?

| ~ ~ ~ ~ |

Listening: Pedagogy of Heart

June 20

Dear Ted,

"Listening is the invisible and inaudible enactment of the ethical relation itself; on it, everything depends" (Lipari, 2012, p. 3). Ted, I was drawn to these words by Lisbeth Lipari, and they reminded me of your collection of spirited and heartfelt short sayings about listening included in your chapter on "Sonare and Vedere" (1991/2005). Lipari's work explores listening through interdisciplinary dimensions in which listening is both an ethical relation and a way of being in the world (Lipari, 2014). Later in this letter, Ted, I will return to autobiographical life writing, briefly, as this strategy of self-reflexive study situates my relation of listening to my *currere* (Pinar, 2004) and this inquiry. I will also

return to listening as curriculum theorizing through my interactions with *sonare* and *videre*.

There are so many ways of thinking about listening in education, and what listening means in relation to literacy learning. The literature that situates listening and pedagogy in early childhood education interests me; however, examples from the field on holistic and interpretive studies related to listening pedagogy in early childhood literacy contexts are scarce. The gap in the research indicates that we need to develop more understanding of young children's lived realities and their interpretations of learning in literacy contexts.

As Bradley Baurain (2011) states, language and literacy education carry a “distinctive responsibility” (p. 176) for pursuing the study of listening in teaching. However, as Mary Jalongo (2010) points out in her review of early childhood education, listening has been neglected as “the Cinderella skill” (Nunan, 1997) and changing its status will require a fundamental shift in thinking (Janusik, 2002). Ted, the dominant focus of listening pedagogy when I was an undergraduate education student was firmly entrenched in the five skills in English Language Arts: reading, writing, speaking, listening, and representing (Alberta Education, 2000). Listening, as a language skill, is focused primarily on the instrumental development of children's abilities or as related to teaching skills in early childhood contexts (Helgesen, 2003; Morley, 2001; Scrivener, 2005; Wolvin & Coakley, 2000).

My interest in research that explores pedagogical relations of listening in early-childhood contexts of literacy education is underrepresented in the body of listening research. From a pedagogic and psychological perspective, some researchers outside of

early education have made parallel distinctions to education. For instance, Michael Nichols (2009) sees listening as a form of moral support that is key to interpersonal communication relationships. Nichols hypothesized that the child who has been listened to is more confident and trusting in relations with teachers. His overall focus on listening research in the context of relationships argues that listening is at the core of relationality, thus making others feel validated and valued. Mark Pike (2004) takes a different educational approach to relationality in listening research. He argues for an alternative aesthetic—seeing learning as a “messy” place where teaching can be framed as a relational “reading” of people and texts alike. Pike (2004) describes an aesthetic conception of listening that is contingent on techniques and skills, but he states that skills play supporting roles to inspiration and creativity in the classroom. Ted, this body of work is situated fairly within perspectives of psychological and linguistic elements of listening. I believe listening pedagogy in early childhood language education needs to reflect deeper meanings, in the tension and spaces between and among young children as they explore learning in these relational interactions.

Suzanne Rice (2007) asserts that listening is an active process of sense making in contexts of effective instruction. In her view, a holistic sense of “listening well” (p. 111) carries a moral significance both personally and professionally for teachers. Herein, Rice argues that “listening well” in classrooms constitutes an awareness of situations; where the form (how) of listening, the content (what), and the purpose (why) constitute the moral quality where listening lies (p. 111). In teaching students, Rice purports teaching listening in the following contexts: (a) via experiences that unsettle habitual ways of hearing and perceiving; (b) via different lenses of perception including the arts

curriculum; and (c) via broader views of morality, awareness and the moral meanings inherent in the act of listening (p. 112). An application of Rice's model for listening pedagogy is a step in conceptualizing a level of relationality with an orientation for meaning making in listening as a moral position in education contexts.

Kathy Schultz (2003) agrees with relational priorities as a moral approach to listening. For Schultz, listening is an active, interpretive process that is fundamentally connected to teachers' pedagogy, requiring "confidence to enter into teaching as a learner as well as a knower" (p. 8). A listening stance is fundamentally an active relational and interpretive process with another person. It is through this relationship of listening that change or transformation is manifested. Schultz talks about four types of pedagogical listening: (a) listening to know particular students; (b) listening to the rhythm and balance of the classroom; (c) listening to the social, cultural, and community contexts of students' lives; and (d) listening for silence and acts of silencing (p. 16).

Carlina Rinaldi (2012), a pioneer of the Reggio Emilia model, promoted the idea of "pedagogy of listening." In talking about the role of adults in education practices, Rinaldi states that a pedagogy of listening articulates the many ways that preschool-aged children's expressions of themselves can be understood. The idea that children express themselves, and their theories about the world, through multiple ways has inspired research in preschool settings. Although none of the work reviewed specifically pertains to language and literacy pedagogy, there is an interest in broad conceptions of "everyday" lives and relevance for visible listening, a reference to the importance of making children's different voices visible in pedagogy (Rinaldi, 2012).

In asking what conditions support listening with young children, studies include questions about children's experience of "everyday" and their perspectives about early childhood settings. In these studies listening is concerned with providing conditions that support children's needs, such as listening to children's preferences in activities and resolving conflict (Finch, 1998; Miller, 1997), outside play (Clark & Moss, 2005) and transitions to school (Dockett & Perry, 1999). Young children's views encouraged researchers to view participation as part of wider discussions regarding childhood services (Clark, 2005; Hill, Davis, Prout, & Tisdall, 2004).

Viewed through a language and literacy lens, some studies initiated by communication researchers recognized children's "visual and multisensory techniques" (Clark, 2005, p. 494) as tools of communication between adults and young children in early childhood settings. In language and literacy terms (while not stated as the focus of the studies), the children's use of technology, such as cameras, video recordings, visual arts, and drawings, led the researchers (Cameron, 2007) to acknowledge the importance of these "techniques" in gaining more information about children's relationships and insights (Rinaldi, 2012). Likewise, role-play and drama (Cousins, 1999; Finch, 1998; Miller, 1997) has been demonstrated as powerful tools for helping children explore their experiences of communicating and listening.

Ted, I engage in this conversation about listening from an autobiographical perspective. For many years I have lived in a special relationship with hearing, a relationship that starts with stories of deficit and doubt. For years, hearing loss shaped and influenced how I experienced my daily life, as well as the world of teaching which came many years afterward. There were minute-by-minute and daily instances during

these times when I thought I was being so effective at masking hearing loss, hiding within and behind the whorls and distortions of sound, when inwardly I felt afraid, and powerless, very often embarrassed. Often I felt like a failure in a hearing world. This is the space I was living in when I was hearing with my ears.

When I started to experience a gradual shift from hearing with my ears to hearing with my eyes, through lip reading, and my senses across modalities, I found (I learned) that my eyes began to do what my ears were not able to do. In teaching, young children's small voices challenged this new way of hearing and showed me a different way of relating with them. I taught my students how to face me, so I could see their faces, knowing also that the nuances of body language taught me how my internal dictionary of embodied perceptions sharpened my awareness of children and learning in the classroom. I invited my students into my world, a world of hearing and seeing sound, particularly in relation with language, through senses. In all the ways that I do not fully hear the sounds of words in their parts, I aimed to introduce my students to the beauty of language experienced aesthetically—first in sounds, in reading to them, and then in play—imagining and living in a magical space with language, always reminding them that they belonged with language like a home. Ted, from these very humble ruminations of learning about language this way, through listening, I am consciously learning from Carl Leggo (2014), of “the possibilities of language for new ways of seeing and being” (p. 187) with young children.

Ted, there is no easy path here, as I acknowledge at the same time that language has been a site of tension for me, where missing words and hearing mistakes “mis/speak” language in my mind, particularly when I do not see one “speak” on their faces. I learned

that hearing with my ears and hearing with my eyes attuned me to sound that was not present, but I could “make” sounds present in my body. I have learned to know already, before talking begins, to fill in what is not heard. In his memoir, lawyer and historian Gerald Shea (2013) refers to this experience of searching for sounds in his description of “lyricals, as the thread and gateway to the commerce of souls and understanding” (p. 29). This is a place of great frustration and great attention where concentration is needed. I must be care-full and full of care when I listen to what others say (and do) before the words appear on their lips and faces and bodies. It is a commitment to teaching praxis, this “sensing” for what my students are talking about “beforehand.” Lipari (2014) offers a perspective about this idea of “misunderstanding as both an ethical practice and an inextricable partner in communication” (p. 8).

Listening and paying attention to sensing is difficult and exhausting, and when I need to feel the sounds into words, there is an attunement that I have not learned to describe in words yet. This idea of not being able to articulate the meanings of listening in this context reminds me of another quote from your collection of short sayings on listening. I notice that you have a saying from Martin Heidegger, and here is another from Heidegger, which appears in a book written by Wolff-Michael Roth (2012). It is a quote that starts with the quest for listening as a topic of inquiry, because “the one who cannot hear and has to feel, can perhaps very well, and for this reason, listen” (Heidegger, as cited in Roth, 2012, p. 62). I can relate to Heidegger’s bold, but insightful statement. I no longer dwell in hearing as a deficit. Instead I experience listening (and hearing) as an embodied process, achieved through my ears and eyes, but also my bones, nose, and

hands! Ted, in some ways I have learned to “perform” listening, to be engaged in a polyphonic orchestration—a pedagogy of listening situated ontologically.

Indeed, in teaching and living pedagogically with children in education, the places where I perceive and attend in multiple ways of listening have shaped me. I am reminded of Cynthia Chambers and Antoinette Oberg’s (2004) advice when it comes to how researchers view and position autobiographical texts in inquiry as ethical sites. Everyday perspectives and experiences offer a potent and deeper understanding (Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers, & Leggo, 2009) of the complexities of listening relations. In this inquiry, Ted, the ethical presence lies in the interconnections between my topic, in seeking to understand children’s literate lives through relations of listening, and my lived experience as a hearing-impaired teacher and researcher. In this inquiry, I hold the ethical concern for the “isness” of listening, as a stance for being fully present with human-centered meanings of listening (Aoki, 1993/2005).

I have waited to the end of my letter to talk about the significance of curriculum theorizing in the wake of your urgent attention that we call upon “*sonare* to dwell juxtaposed with *videre*” (Aoki, 1990/2005, p. 373) in the midst of inquiry. I embrace with pedagogical care the potential of developing a deeper understanding of hearing and listening to young children’s lives, and what this means for teacher education. Specifically, how might we begin to understand new meanings of literacy curriculum if bringing *videre* out to the forefront is imagined and lived in classrooms? Ontologically, I have assimilated *videre* into the embodied meaning and understanding of my world, and perhaps, Ted, your call and our shared commitment to pay attention and listen to children’s meanings of their curricular and literate lives in the world is, indeed, a

readiness for conversation. I am full with inspiration. I am hopeful for this “dwelling place . . . where one may hear the inspirited beat of earth’s measure, and rhythm” (p. 375).

| ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ |

Inquiry of “In-Between”: Ethical Listening

July 8

Dear Ted,

In the preface to *Curriculum Intertext: Place/Language/Pedagogy* (Hasebe-Ludt & Hurren, 2003) David Geoffrey Smith (2003) relates his good fortune of “falling under the spell of Ted Aoki” (p. xv). I too, acknowledge good fortune for having as my teachers many eminent Canadian curriculum studies scholars who in their early careers were immersed in your classes, institutes, teachings, and mentorship. In the Hasebe-Ludt and Hurren volume, Smith talks about “intertext” as a concept of influence; a perspective of witnessing your curriculum life situated within belonging “in-between,” always heard with a sense of inclusiveness amongst differences, stories, and backgrounds (p. xv). Smith echoes your curricular wisdom, Ted, bringing to our attention your caution about unexamined social constructs that set up oppositional binaries of the Cartesian either/or (Aoki, 1993/2005). In the contemporary *topos* of curriculum theorizing, Smith elaborates that binaries—this or that—arrive as divisions that force us to choose, discriminations that create conditions for categories, for example, related to race, class, gender, or childhood (p. xv).

Ted, before I move on in my conversation, I include you as a sentient listener in a significant reflection leading to a beautiful “a-ha” moment. In this space beside mine, I hope you will hear your own voice, your wisdom and teachings “at work.” For me, your generous gift presented itself as a reflexive working-through, laying out my awareness of dualisms in the subject field of literacy education in a perspective that allowed light to shine through my perceptions of tension. You poignantly lived and shared your 1945 experience of teaching reading to your Grade 1 students, and the lying-in-wait angst that surfaced some years later in your own reflections. I take a moment here to recognize the historical record of literacy research as shaped by waves of political forces that have privileged particular approaches, methodologies, and epistemological perspectives over the last four or five decades (Pearson, 2004). I remember finding myself drawn to these historical tensions and political stories in education during my undergraduate studies while writing essays on reading instruction. I considered my introductions to these early inquiries as an initiation into the field of literacy pedagogy, as well as a heavy responsibility in guiding my being into teaching young children with an appropriate background in the discipline.

It is not my interest to walk through the storied past of these times except to acknowledge that binaries/dualisms/pendulum swings can still garner emotion in teachers and are still present in teaching. In the language used to name the early swings that befell on “this or that” dualisms, there are traces of epistemological stances in subject positioning around literacies. In recent decades the field has known terminologies denoting binaries, such as phonics or whole language, individualized reading or language experience, basalized texts or literature-based texts, and again, recently positioning

stances about literacies such as traditional literacies or new literacies, school literacies or out-of-school literacies, print literacies or digital literacies. Ted, I feel the rudiments of dualisms every day, and hear teachers' daily interpretations of these terms in literacy education today. In the field of early childhood literacy, such terms as "value-laden" and "contested" can draw emotion from readers and teachers studying broad-based literacy pedagogy and theorizing from various positions. For example, Ted, in my current role as an early childhood literacy leader and teacher mentor in a large urban school board, I often hear from Grade 1 teachers who say in the same sentence, "My student(s) can navigate through YouTube and find their favourite video but can't hold a pencil or write their name." I have listened to many stories like this where the presence of the word "but" holds the power of dualism and binary thinking when teachers talk about their students' literate lives and lived experiences. In the same way that Cory's next year's teacher winced her face as if in pain and exclaimed that she "had her work cut out for her next year," there are arrays of feelings and philosophical positions converging in and on and surrounding all aspects of young children's lives and literacy learning experiences.

The alternative to a landscape of dualisms situated in social constructions of either/or, this or that, is to dwell in the landscape you envision, Ted—a curriculum landscape with no finite end, of both *this* "and" *that*, a place vibrant with tension opening to many possibilities (Aoki, 1993/2005). David Smith (2003) represented your profound meaning of "and" in the curricular space of in-between when he wrote, "Living in-between can be exasperating....In-betweenness is the deep ethical ground out of which it is possible to negotiate a conversation between factions, between persons, between

traditions...of making different sides feel...possibly, understandable to each other” (p. xvi).

Ted, your wisdom in theorizing “in-between” is such a hopeful place for the landscape of curriculum work to flourish and expand. I also view this space as an invitation. Beholden to your vision of possibilities, of making something understandable, I borrow your theoretical principles of “in-between” within the space of “and” to explore the meanings young children want us to know about their lives and their literacies. I view such a site as a hopeful place for inquiry. The very human realm (Aoki, 1993/2005) of entering into the language of education, for the purpose of understanding young children’s lived experiences as literate beings and literacy learners, is both a site of curriculum and a landscape for inquiry. I am curious about relations of listening, between teachers and students, parents and children, parents and teachers. How do we listen to young children and what do these relations tell us about their lives as literacy learners? In this landscape of voices and stories, I wonder what children’s stories about literacies mean in the contexts of everyday life and curriculum theorizing?

In this realm of both *this and that*, of children’s movements across boundaries and borders of school and everyday life, I imagine a hopeful place for *sonare* (Aoki, 1990/2005, p. 373) to dwell and live fully. I agree with David Smith in his directive that “in-between” is a relational term, and as such it encompasses a specific address, specific and particular in nature, never generic (p. xvi). In this space, I also theorize “in-between” as the ethical ground within the particular, specifically the address that describes the lived landscape of young children’s literacies. I theorize “and” as the space that is created in

the middle, this with that, home and school, traditional literacies and new literacies, print literacies and digital literacies.

Ted, I am at the close of another letter. As the sounds of this conversation bridge across (sometimes) tensioned worlds of time and place, listening and hearing, pedagogy and research, literacies and life, researching and teaching, I feel privileged to be in the midst of stories yet to come.

Sincerely, in listening,

Janet

Chapter 3: Methodology

The aim of my inquiry was to develop an understanding of pedagogical relations of listening to two Kindergarten-aged students in contexts of home and school and to make meaning of everyday experiences of literacy learning in early childhood classrooms. Related to this aim were the following objectives:

- To understand the phenomenon of listening to young children's stories of literacy experience in everyday life through an Aokian perspective of pedagogical theorizing;
- To explore the meaning of relations of listening and literacy pedagogy in early childhood classrooms;
- To understand the ways in which listening relations are experienced and acknowledged by young children, teachers, and parents.

I begin this chapter with a description of the qualitative research design that shaped my actions related to the aim of the inquiry. First, I discuss philosophical ideas of *interpretivism* (Mertens, 1998; Schwandt, 2000; Smith, 1993) as an approach of qualitative research (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Using strategies of narrative inquiry I created the research texts that represent the stories of experience and relations between students, teachers, and parents. Next, I discuss the contexts of the inquiry including participant selection, qualitative methods of data collection, and protocols for analysis. Lastly, I describe the ethical considerations of researching with children, and my positioning and biases as a researcher. Embedded within this design and throughout the research texts, I incorporated the influence of Ted Aoki's

(1978/1980/2005) interpretive orientation of curriculum inquiry and pedagogical theorizing.

Locating Qualitative Research

Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (2005) state that “qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 3). Thomas Schwandt (2007) describes qualitative research as broadly aimed at understanding the meaning of human action. Within the aims of my inquiry, qualitative research design emphasized a close attention to the interpretive nature of understanding experiences in the contexts and interactions of people’s social, historical, and cultural situations (Creswell, 2007). Likewise, Creswell asserts that the qualitative researcher reports a detailed, complex picture through active engagement in situations in their natural settings (p. 249). Jennifer Mason (2002) remarks that qualitative research allows us to explore the social world, including the texture and weave of everyday life. In social-world contexts, qualitative aims are achieved through a range of philosophical underpinnings, different traditions, and schools of methodological principles (Hatch, 2007; Mason, 2002; Schwandt, 2007).

Interpretivist Methodology

As one approach of qualitative research design, I chose interpretive inquiry because of its methodological ways of understanding social phenomena. As a philosophical framework, interpretivism in educational contexts met the aims of my inquiry towards understanding the phenomenon of listening in pedagogical relations. From the German word *verstehen*, “understanding” was Wilhelm Dilthey’s (1833-1911)

aim of the human sciences in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in response to the growing prominence of positivist epistemologies (Schwandt, 2007, 2008).

Interpretive researchers aim for understanding through the meanings and intentions that people ascribe to their actions and interactions (Smith, 2008). For Smith, the importance people place on their own interpretations of their own activities situates the interpretive researcher in a moral practice, requiring researchers to take notice of peoples' perspectives and conditions within activities (2008). Schwandt (2000) states that to understand the meaning of a particular social action in natural situations, interpretivist researchers need to have a grasp of the intention and meaning of the phenomenon itself. Similarly, John Creswell (2007) adds that meanings are often varied and multiple, thus the researcher is required to "look for complexity of views rather than narrowed meanings" (p. 3). The approach emphasized my role as the researcher and interpreter of data. Social and pedagogical relations in teaching and literacy learning take place in situations and places in young children's everyday lives. An interpretive approach to qualitative design also supported the significance of "understanding" by attending to language and discourse in self-reflective and interpretive ways (Clarke, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) asserted the idea that understanding was more than a description of the experiences of human actors (as cited in Schwandt, 2007). In Gadamer's emphasis, understanding is tied to language, whereby *verstehen* is achieved by entering into conversation or dialogue (Gadamer, 1975/2004). Gadamer points out that understanding is a process of being involved in "how" we know something in our everyday experiences. We are born into language, the "medium where

I and world meet or rather, manifest . . . original belonging together” (p. 469). He described conversation as the essential “comportment achieved” (p. 391) through the relation between language and understanding. Researching children’s lived experience of literacy learning through language, across borders of home and school, indicated the suitability of theorizing “understanding” through Gadamer’s perspective of language. Consistent with this focus on language and everyday life in the context of school life and teaching, I also turned to Ted Aoki’s interpretive-inquiry orientation.

An Aokian situational interpretive-inquiry orientation. Ted Aoki’s situational interpretive-inquiry orientation (1978/1980/2005) is aligned with and guided by his principles of curriculum inquiry. Through a methodological lens, Aokian insights of human and social transformation and change promoted my deeper attention to interpreting the meaning of literacy pedagogy as theory.

Authored in the 1970s, Aoki’s three possible orientations reflect his reconceptualist view of curriculum inquiry: (1) analytic-empirical, for inquiry aimed at explanatory and technical knowledge, (2) situational-interpretive, conceived through the search for meaning, and (3) critically-reflective, as concerned with critical understanding for social action (1978/1980/2005).

A situational-interpretive orientation informed the potential for phenomenological understanding of pedagogical themes of literacy learning and teaching. Through his situational lens, Ted Aoki, views relations in the social world as “I-in-my-world” in lived situations with another’s “I-in-the-world” (p. 104). In the everyday situations of classroom life, his orientation of inquiry guided my questions about meaning related to situations in dialogue with teachers and students. Aoki’s interpretive orientation is not

concerned with arriving at generalizations through inquiry activities; hence, the personal meanings in each situation are interpreted in different ways as everyday life is experienced.

In situations of everyday life in classrooms with teachers and students, in relations of pedagogical listening and literacy education, narrative strategies provided the approach most suitable to capture stories of lived experience.

Narrative Inquiry: Relations, Stories, Meaning

If we wish to understand the deepest and most universal of human experiences, if we wish our work to be faithful to the lived experiences of people, if we wish for a union between poetics and science, or if we wish to use our privileges and skills to empower the people we study, then we should value the narrative.

(Richardson, 1997, p. 35)

Narrative inquiry as a form of interpretive inquiry, as phenomenon and method, focuses on human experience. By nature humans have a compulsion to tell stories, to narrate and consume stories (Cobley, 2001). We make sense of things through our stories and tell them in order to perceive and understand the world, ourselves, and others' lives (Lewis, 2007). An established device for describing the work of narrative researchers is to think of the phenomenon to be studied as "story" and the inquiry as "narrative" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1991).

Personal conditions are always in interaction with situations of experience; for example, feelings, responses, desires, conditions, and the environment always exist in some manner to form the context of lived experience. Narrative inquirers are aware of the contextual influences and professional discourses in which they live and work and

how these may impact the inquiry (Rosiek, 2005). This is particularly relevant to the social conditions of narrative inquiry that situates the researcher in relationship with participants in some manner with the inquiry. Similarly, narrative is the primary way through which people organize and relate their lived experience; everywhere, people experience and interpret their lives in relations and in relationship to time (Polkinghorne, 1988; Richardson, 1996).

I adopted a narrative-inquiry methodology to elevate an understanding of listening in relations of lived experiences of two Kindergarten-aged students. As a window into the complexities of pedagogical relations of listening, this narrative inquiry acknowledged the centrality of relationships in the stories of students, teachers, and parents. Situated in educational contexts of literacy pedagogy and literacy learning, narrative-inquiry strategies addressed the aims of embodied meanings of listening.

In the midst of relations. Positioned as a researcher and teacher in this inquiry, I was attuned to the reality of life in schools knowing that lived experience in early childhood classrooms is complex, complicated, and fundamentally unpredictable. My inquiry focused on pedagogical relations of literacy and relational listening. In the way that narrative inquiry situated temporal and contextual relations of lived experience in the two classrooms, I was attentive to listening to multiple voices, the relations of interconnectedness, and situations of literacy learning. Through an Aokian lens, the notion of relations is viewed in contexts of social situations, as continuous interpretations of personal meaning (Aoki, 1978/1980/2005). Awareness to the tensions inherent in all inquiry activity reminded me of my heightened perceptions of researcher relations and positions. The relational aspects of being a teacher and researcher with/in

familiar teaching activities invited deeper conversations (Mickelson, 2000) with participants during research activities.

Young children's stories. By the time young children begin schooling they have developed a capacity for narrative understanding through a lifetime of lived experiences (Lewis, 2007). Knowing that story is a natural structure for constructing meaning of experience, young children also encounter life narratives as learning. In the Kindergarten classroom, children participate and create their learning experiences through play, through imaginative interactions with objects and peers, into stories of lived experience. In the various ways in which contexts are identified, most young children compose, enact, and retell their stories orally, through language. Grumet (1991) notes that we are constituted by our stories, as told to others and to ourselves. Turner understands that storying is one of our most important cognitive activities: “[W]e think in small spatial stories . . . basic stories we know best are small stories of events . . . they constitute our world and they are completely absorbing” (Turner, as cited in Lewis, 2007, p. 5). According to Lewis (2007) stories work together to create meaning. Through listening and observation, I attended to the contexts of children's small spatial stories during play, as lived experience and meaning-making narratives.

Ted Aoki's scholarship characterizes the practical and concrete interpretation of pedagogical “conversation” as the phenomenological study of “true human presence” (Pinar, 2005, p. 80). Pinar elaborates further saying Aoki's view of language is not limited as a tool by means of thoughts recorded into words (Pinar, 2005). Phenomenologically, Aoki views language as a conversation in curriculum between two people “guided by an interest in understanding more fully what is not said by going

beyond what is said” (Aoki, 1981/2005, p. 227). I engaged an Aokian perspective of “human presence” as an invitation for listening and understanding more fully. Through this Aokian lens of presence with language, young children’s stories of lived experience (in particular settings and contexts) enhanced my perceptual awareness in understanding their meaning (Aoki, 1981/2005).

Inquiry Context and Design

Primary site. Westerton Hill School (a pseudonym) is a public, suburban elementary school in a major city in Alberta, Canada. It is a Kindergarten-to-Grade-4 school. At the time of my research, the enrolment was 580 students, aged five to approximately nine years old. Reggio Emilio instruction has been adopted into the Kindergarten classrooms. The Reggio Emilio approach at Westerton Hill School encompasses values that view the child as competent and full of complexities, as a citizen with full rights in the community and society. Physical classroom spaces are shared, and this arrangement encourages communication, relationships, and collaboration. The school is devoted to teaching and learning through creative arts, discoveries, interdependence, and choices in the learning process.

During the data collection phase at Westerton Hill School I was a part-time literacy resource teacher in an administrative Learning Leader position. Responsibilities included reading-intervention program development and implementation, teachers’ professional development in literacy pedagogy, and language-and-literacy learning support in Grade 1 to Grade 4 classrooms.

Student participants. Kindergarten classrooms were chosen for participation. There were eight Kindergarten classes distributed between four full-time teachers with

morning and afternoon classes. The Kindergarten-aged students were not involved in my teaching assignment at the school; therefore I did not have teacher-student classroom relations with the children in the Kindergarten community prior to the research activity. The Kindergarten program was designated as half-day attendance. Initially, I visited both classrooms as a teacher “volunteer.” In my capacity as Literacy Leader I often visited classrooms and the students were familiar with seeing me “at work.” During these early visits to the focal classrooms, I spent time with teachers and their students, as an observer, while engaging in getting-to-know activities. Examples of these activities included read alouds, discussions about picture books, working with small groups of children, and/or assisting the teachers with materials or art-based activities. During this teacher-as-volunteer phase, letters of intent and invitations were sent home with all students. A designated meeting with parents for the purpose of disseminating further information regarding the research activity took place at the school, after regular Kindergarten scheduled hours.

For the selection of two students, all students’ names whose parents had already expressed interest and support and attended the information research meeting went into “a hat” from which two names were drawn anonymously. From here, an enclosed, sealed envelope with permission forms was sent home with the two students.

Grace (pseudonym chosen by student) was five-and-a-half years old at the time of data collection. She was the oldest child in her family with one younger brother, who was three years old. Grace lived in the neighbourhood of the school and often remarked that she could hear the school bell from her house. Grace stayed at her mom’s house during the week and with her dad on weekends. She has received support from a speech therapist

since she was three years old and speech therapy continued during her Kindergarten year. Grace liked to do arts and crafts at home and at school, and remarked that she loved to put her art on the fridge at home.

Bobbie (pseudonym chosen by student) turned six during the data-collection phase of the inquiry. He was an only child in his family and lived with his mother and father. Bobbie attended before-school and after-school care with a nanny shared by other families and walked to school every day. Bobbie liked to play video games at home, and he also liked to swim on the weekend and go golfing in the summer.

Teacher participants. The Kindergarten teachers were colleagues in the context of our professional constellation of relationships as “staff members.” I did not have past or current partner team-teaching relations with any member of the Kindergarten team, and was not familiar with their personal teaching pedagogies in practice. Two teachers participated in the inquiry. Both teachers had less than three years of continuous-contract classroom teaching experience at the time. The teachers completed their Bachelor of Education degrees in the province of Alberta, although they attended different universities, in different cities. The two teachers shared a common teaching area. The classrooms can be visualized as a clamshell, where the hinge of two equal halves is the open space that links the two classrooms. The teachers worked together for six months in a collaborative, team approach to planning instruction. With this organization of space and practice, all students moved freely across both classroom spaces. Permission to conduct the inquiry at the school was granted from the administrative team consisting of the Principal, Assistant Principal, and another Learning Leader.

Emily Carter (chosen pseudonym) is a continuous-contract teacher and had been at Westerton Hill School for eight months. She had two years of combined classroom teaching in three previous schools on temporary contracts. Emily has two early-childhood-aged children of her own in Grades 1 and 3 in their neighbourhood school. Emily had former experience working with a university researcher during her Bachelor of Education degree program. She expressed the value of an ongoing opportunity to grow professionally through the research activity outlined and shared her enthusiasm to be working with colleagues. Emily is currently completing applications to a university for the purpose of beginning a Master of Education degree.

Riley Wyatt (chosen pseudonym) was a novice teacher who accepted a classroom position on immediate completion of her teacher-training program ten months prior to the data-collection phase of the inquiry. Riley has a previous undergraduate degree in Environmental Sciences. She worked in this field for two years as a research assistant prior to starting her teaching career. Likewise, Riley was very comfortable having professional peers as part of her classroom practice and welcomed the opportunity to participate in the research activity.

Parent participants. The mothers of both Kindergarten children participated in the inquiry activities. Lynne (Grace's mother—chosen pseudonym) was a stay-at-home mom during the school-day hours. She enrolled Grace in the afternoon Kindergarten schedule, describing Grace as “not being a morning person.” The afternoon Kindergarten program suited Lynne as this schedule allowed her to spend time with the children in the mornings. Lynne worked out of the home in the evenings and weekends in the hospitality industry, and she noted that her place of work was only five minutes away from the

house. Lynne attended the information session for this inquiry. Norah (Bobbie's mother—chosen pseudonym) was a professional counsellor for adult students in a college at the time of data collection. She enrolled Bobbie in the afternoon Kindergarten schedule because it was suitable for child-care providers and her work schedule. Norah commented on her memories of completing her Master's degree when she filled out the permission form. Norah read the letter of invitation that was sent home with all students in the two Kindergarten classrooms.

Data Collection

The aim of data collection and analysis in this inquiry was to understand the meanings and experiences of listening relations within pedagogical encounters of literacy learning. In the qualitative, interpretive tradition, my methodological framework was aligned with the ontological and epistemological ground of narrative inquiry, supported with interpretive and hermeneutic sensibilities. I placed emphasis on language, relations, and listening in understanding pedagogical relations of literacy learning. The research activities and modes of data collection focused on the centrality of language, in stories and narrative representations. In order to account for the possible, different modes of data collection in this interpretive inquiry that involved the two teachers, two students, two parents, and myself as the researcher, I provide a map (Appendix A) to itemize the data collection activities and the methods I used, and an outline of interview activities (Appendix B).

Conversational Interviews

Children. The classroom was a natural place for establishing relationships with the students prior to commencing the schedule of inquiry procedures (Appendix C). The

word *conversation*, rather than interview, helped me convey the informal nature of interactions with the two students in everyday classroom time. In this form of data collection, I was in the children's classrooms or their homes for these informal interactions, where a natural flow of children's activities occurred (Carr, 2000; Smith, Duncan, & Marshall, 2005). The conversation/interview schedule with the students (Appendix D) was flexible and responsive to natural opportunities that occurred in the everyday conditions at home and at school. I had two interviews with each child in their homes, with their parent/s in attendance. Conversations as interviews with students at home included participating in their everyday activities as well as informal interactions and conversations during regular afternoon classroom activities.

Interactions between students and their peers and/or their teachers in relation to literacy activities were also observed and recorded. One example of peer interactions and activities that occurred every day in the classroom was "Center Time." The teachers posted a visual schedule on the whiteboard every morning with picture cards under the label "Centers for Today" which organized the designated 45-minute blocks for students to explore activities and play in designated spaces. The students moved freely, following the classroom protocol that four children were allowed to play at a time in each centre. At times I sat in a chair by the story corner and observed Bobbie and Grace as they played and engaged with their peers. Over several months, I observed Grace and Bobbie, by themselves and with peers in a variety of centre activities. During this time, I observed and recorded Grace and Bobbie's conversations with peers two times.

At times, Grace and Bobbie asked me to play with them. Grace often chose quiet areas to play, such as the writing table, painting easel, the art table, and activities that did

not require her to ask a peer to be her partner to play a game. Bobbie played with a small group of boys most regularly. He preferred activities that were undefined, which allowed creative play with imaginary props. Bobbie did not explore centres that offered print-literacy materials such as felt pens, paint, crayons, drawing, or cutting/gluing. He was very attracted to the iPads and the Smartboard. Oftentimes his teacher reminded him that other students were waiting for a turn, gently asking him to try another centre.

I also used Julia Ellis's (1998a) method of conversational activity with the students. In this strategy, called pre-interview activities (Appendix E), Ellis suggests involving children in activities that provide an opportunity for the child to share an expertise, or show a skill, or describe an artefact of their choice. The purpose of this conversational strategy is to allow children to relate events and express perceptions (Silver, 2001) through informal talk (Malchiodi, 1998) prior to an individual interview. The strategy is similar to narrative responses as accounts of everyday life, for example, in an image or individual *identity text* (Cummings, 1986). The pre-interview activities provided an informal way for young children to think about and reflect on their stories and experiences. I found that pre-interview activities provided information about their experiences without exhausting them with questions during an individual interview (Einarsdottir, 2007; Ellis, 2006).

Teachers. I met with the two teachers individually and together, for informal conversations and semi-structured or unstructured interviews (Appendix F). The decisions surrounding this form of data-collection strategy were dependent on arranging each teacher's schedule in a way that minimized disruption with their everyday lives outside of school. All interviews took place while teachers were at school, outside

teaching-assignment hours. On two occasions the teachers responded to journal invitations. For this reflection activity, I entered their classrooms for a literacy-related activity.

I interviewed each teacher twice on two themes. For example, the interviews included questions that lead to: (1) understanding literacy and contemporary lives of young children; and (2) understanding relations of listening. The interviews maintained a conversational tone, with open-ended questions. Each interview was approximately one hour long and recorded digitally for later transcription. The interviews took place at a suitable location in the school, usually their classrooms or my office.

Silverman (2001) described experiential meanings of interviews in contemporary society and popular culture as central to making sense of our lives. His work in categorizing informal conversational and unstructured interviews has probed the idea of interviews in terms of the kinds of research tasks linked to what kind of knowledge is sought in the process. For example, an in-depth, semi-structured or unstructured interview aims to elicit stories of experience, whereas an active interview is framed as an *interactional encounter*. Chase (2005) suggests an interview structure that is situated as a conversation (as much as possible) and allows the participant to be like a narrator telling his or her own story. I engaged another focus by inviting rich conversation through open-ended questions and pedagogical conversations with the participant teachers. I was conscious about my sense of presence (Aoki, 1981) in the conversations. This insight developed my attention to heightened awareness of ethical care for hearing and listening. Attuning to an Aokian sense of presence increased an embodied sense of listening, which

enhanced the interview conditions for the teachers' deeper personal reflections and connections.

Parents. There were two interviews with each parent, at the beginning and at the end of the data-collection phase of inquiry. The interviews adhered to a semi-structured format and lasted about 45 minutes up to one hour (Appendix G). In agreement with parents, the interviews occurred in the family home, at times and days convenient to the family. The children were present during the interviews on one occasion; however, participation was not an expectation, and often they went away and came back. The interactions during the visits provided another opportunity to observe relations of listening and perceptions of literacy as the parent and child engaged in conversation during the interview. In glimpses, the interviews provided another perspective on the topic with respect to holistic understandings of listening relations and literacy in the contexts of everyday life.

Narratives, Stories, and Autobiographical Reflections

Children. Julia Ellis (1998b, 2006) contributed key ideas to support researching holistically with children and youth. Attending to an increased sensitivity to language, Ellis (2006) developed a deliberate method for including young children's visual artefacts and interview responses into a "narrative portrait." In this researcher activity, Ellis pays attention to interpretation in generating the narrative portrait. The clusters of stories developed through the parents' and children's interview transcripts were generated with ethical awareness of values, concerns, and perspectives consistent within the aims of the narrative method.

I adopted Ellis's framework as a strategy to understand each student's historical, social, and cultural life experiences. Over time topics or themes of interest evolved across each child's record, developing into narrative portraits, through interviews, play, and visual-journal sharing. An important consideration in the narrative-portrait strategy relates to Ellis's (2006) argument that the purpose of the narrative portrait is to "provide a sense of 'who' the child is right now, alerting me to salient aspects of the children's experience—from their perspective" (p. 124). I found that the narrative-portrait method was a holistic record of the child. This strategy for interpreting Kindergarten-aged children's narratives helped establish a method for clarifying descriptions and themes for narrative analysis. In addition, recorded data of the students at play in the classroom, with other students or with the teacher, were collected as small spatial stories, as described by Turner (1996).

Teachers. Making a conscious effort to gain deeper understanding and detailed perspectives of relations of listening and literacy pedagogy was the goal of the narrative methods in this inquiry. I maintained an openness to accept each teacher's personal meaning making and representation of field texts and/or inquiry questions. The teachers responded to research activities through already established routines of written reflections of teaching. Reflections took the form of: (a) research anecdotes that made something comprehensible (van Manen, 1990); (b) narrative stories representing life experience in the classroom (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990); (c) personal and professional experience of life writing (Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers, & Leggo, 2009). Teachers participated in this reflective practice on listening and literacy two times during the four-month data-collection phase. I suggested that they focus on one child at a time within this reflexive

activity. I provided time for them during the course of the Kindergarten “day,” on a schedule of their choosing. In this activity, I was the teacher in their classrooms, as they participated in the research activity of journaling elsewhere in the school. The purpose of this research activity was to provide time, to engage without class-time constraints. This writing-and-reflection activity normally lasted less than one hour.

In addition, at the end of each interview, the participating teachers received a prompt or open-ended question. The question reflected upon the cluster of ideas/themes that were revealed in the interview. The teachers had one to two weeks to respond by email. The purpose of the response activity was to validate a reflective stance on the interview. During the analysis phase, the writing responses were interpreted and triangulated with clusters and themes accordingly.

Autobiographical narratives of life writing. The additional voice in this data is my researcher account of lived experience. Personal writing across all chapters of my dissertation presents fragments of creative non-fiction and autobiographical texts that position me as living within the inquiry, as thoughts and experiences during the inquiry influenced my inquiry. I entered the research activity with a specific experience and background in order to fulfill the research goal of uncovering the holistic “wholeness” of relational listening in literacy pedagogy. My bias is not fully bracketed, although I also acknowledge that this inquiry was not a self-study nor the topic of inquiry, but rather, one of the sites of the inquiry (Chambers, 2004).

As a methodological fit to the inquiry, the autobiographical voice I incorporated throughout this inquiry represented an additional contribution and important perspective on the pedagogical knowledge I bring to the conversation on listening and literacy. The

autobiographical data identifies with two related stances of connectivity. The first is life writing as praxis (Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers, & Leggo, 2009) whereby in the writing, I see more clearly my relations to circumstances, both past and present, with a sharper attunement to their implications in my teaching and research life. In addition, I looked at ways in which my autobiographical writing (for example, Chapter 2) brought forward the shifting aspects of self and, thereby, opened a way to write about my experiences in a broader social and cultural context. Within this, I also attended to and included in the inquiry the broader cultural and reflexive dimensions of teaching and curriculum issues (and listening) in ways that I have lived in education over many years. In a hermeneutic condition for seeking understanding, my life writing and autobiographical voice opened critically and creatively to new ways of conversing heartfully.

Data Analysis

“Narrative analysis refers to a family of analytic methods for interpreting texts that have in common a storied form” (Riessman, 2007, p. 539). Concerning analysis, Creswell (2007) adds that narrative data needs to be analyzed for the story these texts have to tell. Schwandt (2007) describes analysis as the activity of making sense of the data, interpreting, and theorizing data. Schwandt defines analysis as a means to break down a “whole into its component parts and through reassembly the researcher comes to understand the integrity of the whole” (p. 6).

I then adopted Julia Ellis’s (1998a) method of developing narrative portraits as a strategy for observing and listening to multiple dimensions of lived experiences in contexts. For example, the children’s portraits consisted of compilations of conversation data recorded during pre-interviews, oral narratives recorded and transcribed during play,

literacy events at school and home, as well as records of field notes and observations taken during informal interactions during journal time. Through the first reading and leading up to additional deep readings, I was attentive to clusters of themes evolving from the narratives.

My analysis started from the beginning activity, from the time the first narrative “text” was collected. For example, the participant teachers engaged in unstructured, conversational interviews with open-ended questions evolving under an initial question, “What does it mean to listen to young children in the classroom?” The conversation went in many directions within the interview, which was an indicator to me that I allowed the teachers to show their understanding, beliefs, and values with care and respect. All interview narratives were transcribed professionally because of my inability to comprehend digitally generated speech due to my severe hearing impairment. All transcriptions of recorded data for the six participants were completed in one week, a total of 124 pages of narrative data.

During the early phases of creating and organizing files for the six participants, and reading through the texts while writing notes in the margins of transcriptions and observation notes, I analyzed four clusters of themes, emerging ideas, and discoveries (Ellis, 1998a). At the same time this sequence of analysis prompted me to search for initial meanings of what was uncovered, which might be clarified further by the autobiographical writing responses that the teachers completed in one to two weeks following each interview. The interpretation and analysis of these two related activities informed the nature and scope of later activities toward the end of the four-month phase of data gathering.

Likewise, the sequence of activities and interpretation and analysis of children's narratives required understanding of narratives in their contexts. In the case of young children's visual art, drawings, literacy practices, or other multimodal literacy artefacts, the analysis is focused on the relationship to meaning and identifying the contexts of literacy learning. As complementary texts in relation to the whole data, a methodology for analyzing multimodal or semiotic compositions was not included for analysis. For this inquiry, my aim is situated in understanding the meaning of relations in pedagogical contexts of literacy experiences. Therefore, I focused importance on the ways in which young children interpreted their stories of literacy learning through artefacts in their visual journals. Their stories revealed how the children interpreted the meaning of the sketch in their journals in context with a literacy practice. I then analyzed the students' "showing and telling" stories as a theme of relations and literacy experience.

Questioning my interpretations in the analysis of the data sometimes uncovered gaps, omissions, or inconsistencies (Ellis, 1998a). Re-reading, with attention to defining clusters, "seeing" emerging multiple meanings, and uncovering themes are all important during analysis.

Narrative-inquiry processes have no definitive end-points. Therefore, I listened for meaning and themes of relations to "speak" for themselves in the composition and representation phase. The ontological belief that bound my understanding and the hermeneutic interpretation was the belief that reality is always changing. To this point, "the rigorous and systematic application of meaningful thought" (Patterson & Williams, 2002, p. 27) guided interpretation towards writing the structured research texts.

Structure and Interpretation of Research Texts

The voices of parents, teachers, and students revealed multiple layers of meaning in relations of listening. The stories acknowledged the complexities of documenting lived experience in learning situations in settings of home and school. From small words in their complicated stories of human living, I endeavoured to create a responsible, thoughtful, humane conversation of pedagogical relations of listening. I turned to the voices that I listened to and listened deeply with heartfelt awareness, in order to interpret and represent the narratives. Trusting an embodied sense of perception when hearing and listening to stories of others, I acknowledged that this is the language I need to listen to. I agree with Smith (1991): consciousness is “always and everywhere, in the middle of stories...of and in the nature of human experience” (p. 201).

I adopted a framework for representation introduced by Carl Leggo (2008) and Pauline Sameshima (Leggo & Sameshima, 2014). Their framework for representing many kinds of genres as research texts provided support in my endeavour to write creatively, and to highlight the various configurations of relational themes within the narratives through interpretation.

Leggo and Sameshima’s (2014) work focuses on “three principal dynamic areas of narrative representation of inquiry: story, interpretation, and discourse” (p. 541). As integral to many genres of research writing involving narratives, Leggo and Sameshima understand *story* as “what happened?” while interpretation addresses “so what?” and *discourse* refers to “how we tell stories, the ways we shape and communicate stories to others” (p. 541).

The narrative representations that follow in the next section honour the relations and complexities of teaching and literacy learning with/in the lived experience of five-year old Grace, her mother Lynne, and her Kindergarten teacher Emily. Likewise, five-year-old Bobbie, his mother Norah, and his Kindergarten teacher Riley also represent the tensions and experiences of moments in the classroom and at home for both Bobbie and Grace.

The six narrative sequences are introduced by *the story*—as a pedagogical reflection, a memory in life writing, or a theoretical thread. *The discourse* sections are composed in three voices for each Bobbie and Grace, with their teacher and mother. Presenting the discourse in three voices highlights the complexities of relation/s in ecological and authentic narratives of experience. Finally, each of the six narrative sequences are addressed by *the interpretation*, titled as *Lingering Notes*, as influenced by Ted Aoki.

The inquiry was designed to capture and listen closely to the multiple ways of understanding listening relations with children. Specifically, the design deliberately focuses on data sources based in narrative and story forms, to be collected from young children, their teachers, their parents, as well as the researcher's perspectives surrounding the phenomenon of listening relations and literacy learning. The data encompasses visual and interview fragments, as collections of memory, emotions, experiences, theorizing, interpretations, and perspectives of everyday life with listening, and may be expressed and created in imaginative ways. As Leggo and Sameshima (2014) remark, “the important point about making narratives...is not necessarily about the actual events, emotions, and experiences that are narrated, but more relevantly about the ways in

which...experiences are narrated” (p. 545). For example, Grace’s narratives are represented in poem-like transcriptions (Glesne, 1997; Richardson, 2000). Through a poem-like structure, Grace’s stories in this narrative form closely illuminate her rhythm of speaking.

As a researcher immersed in speaking, writing, and doing autobiographical research (Hasebe-Ludt, et al., 2009), I envision the possibility of interpreting these texts as a weaving of “being-ness” in the world. In each one of the relational narratives, my autobiographical life-writing narratives are incorporated into the first section (the story) of the six sequences of narrative representations.

Aoki’s (1992/2005) curriculum of pedagogical watchfulness and thoughtfulness reminds me that as a researcher I need to reorient myself to an “embodied thought and soul” (p. 196) in the lived moments of representing these stories of relations. A multiple-voice research approach theorized by Hasebe-Ludt et al. (2009) promotes and supports close epistemological connectivity. The authors’ conceptual foundation of literary *métissage* (from the Latin *mixtus*) is the creative weaving and braiding of stories. By valuing the “mixing” of research stories, the writing locates each participant of this inquiry in “interconnectivity, weaving the personal into the warp and weft of the public, political, and pedagogic” (Hasebe-Ludt, et al., 2009, p. 205).

Ethical Considerations and Research With Children

The inquiry is guided by and adheres to governance and institutional mandates established in Canada through the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans guidelines (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of

Canada, 2010). In addition, knowledge and understanding of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (The Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1989) confirm the rights of children as legally binding. This includes the right of children to have a voice in decisions about them. In recent years, implementing children's rights in early childhood has intersected with contemporary images of the child to heighten and include children's perspectives and voices in early-childhood research (Farrell, Tayler, & Tennent; 2002). Currently, researchers involved with designing research projects with a child-centred approach acknowledge the need to regard children as social actors and participants and move to listen to young children's voices and perspectives in contexts of early-childhood research (MacNaughton & Smith, 2005).

Framing research in and through a children's-rights perspective supported my goal of hearing young children's voices and seeing children as active participants in shaping research for and about them. In this inquiry, I focused on child participation and agentic voice in the following ways: (a) each child chose a pseudonym identity; (b) each child had an active and participatory role during data collection [in the classroom and in the child's home]. For example, the children's right to withdraw data was honoured; and, (c) guidelines that outline protocols for respect and agency were reviewed with the children and parents during the interviews. The children's agenda (e.g., sharing, discussing, questioning) guided the focus of interviews and informal conversations.

An ethical issue that arose in this inquiry concerns the negotiated aspects of sustained coherence to study protocols with the focal children's caregivers (parents and/or teachers). The inquiry project involved two sites, the school and each child's home. The potential for issues to surface was closely monitored. The two children's

meaningful participation in the school and in the home may have been influenced by parents' individual styles of parenting (e.g., speaking for the child, lack of engagement or over-guidance, unexpected alterations in scheduling, missed interviews, etc.).

The primary ethical responsibility for the respect, safety, and inclusiveness of the focal children in every situation they encountered was with me in the school and their homes. This primary clause guided all aspects of the inquiry, and through clear communication and extensive consultation with the children throughout the inquiry, each child was held in a position of honour and ethical care.

Attending to researcher bias. In the culture of school life, positioning myself within the “familiarity” of being a teacher was helpful in developing an identity position as researcher. Building identity within the familiar ground of “teacher” and “school” and “researcher” seemed to benefit from my insider’s understanding of the research site. Conducting research in the familiar setting of classrooms prompted my additional awareness of understanding school routines and protocols that guide teachers’ daily schedules. Through reflexivity I acknowledged how awareness of role-based positioning (Bailey & Baldassare Hopkins, 2011; McVee, 2011) highlighted the interplay of positions within my identity roles as teacher, colleague, and doctoral researcher. Seeking “harmony” and “balance” when multiple positions (such as teacher, colleague, or researcher) seemed to overlap helped me maintain and adhere to the research protocols and design.

Through my reflective stance of the various role-positions I brought into the inquiry, I was also aware that researcher bias could have been a threat to the validity of the inquiry. My attention to subjectivity attuned me to recognize that I am also in the

social world around me and that I have values that could be apparent in the research. One example of researcher subjectivity is my sensitivity to hearing. I bring an acute understanding and unique experience of hearing and listening to the research inquiry. During instances where I need to read lips and body language, I “double-check” for hearing mistakes, either through repeated questioning, asking for clarification, or marking recordings for verification. In addition, I take responsibility for including subjectivities in hearing and listening as a perceptual benefit to the interpretation of texts and human experience.

Chapters 4 and 5 that follow portray the interpretations and representations of the lived experiences of the Kindergarten-aged children, Grace and Bobbie, their respective teachers, Emily and Riley, and their mothers, Lynne and Norah. Their accounts reveal relations of pedagogical listening as experienced through literacy practices and events, at home and at school. Through an interpretive lens influenced by Aokian pedagogy, the stories encourage us to linger, opening up to a deeper realm of listening to young children’s hearts.

Chapter 4: Storied Relations of Listening and Literacy Learning

Grace

I begin Grace's narrative with a memory. During the analysis phase of working with Grace's narratives, I was drawn to the links between memories of lived experience as a parent with the research I am exploring. Autobiographical life writing has permitted me to "interrogate the roles and functions and positions of the I" (Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers, Leggo, & Sinner, 2014, p. 100) in my life with my research. Grace's lived experience of adjusting to school and classroom relations allowed me to place myself in memories and stories, to understand and also question the social conditions embedded within Grace's narratives.

My eldest son Connor attended the small school in the village on the outer boundaries of the Scottish highlands where we lived for one year. He can still tell a story about being five and petting the sheep with their baby lambs, always ready to meet him beside the school as we arrived each day. Seven years later, and three countries between, my three sons attended a large K-6 campus in a southern hemisphere metropolis. They have memories of the guards at the steel-gated entrance, pollution-monitoring flags staged to warn of harmful air readings each day, languages, cultures, teachers, and the childhood joys of everyday lunches at picnic tables "on the equator." During this decade of global transiency and schooling, my sons were exposed to, and experienced five different national curriculums within various paradigms of European and Eastern traditions—all the while ready to pick up and pack up and move—where to next?

I wasn't a teacher during these years. As a mom I watched and listened, and oriented myself to our environments as quickly as possible. As I reflect on these times I

realize that I consciously situated myself in the middle space, somewhat akin to an Aokian bridge. I was committed to helping my sons live and thrive in the conjunctive space of “and” while listening to understand their feelings and experiences of tension when “this or that” surfaced in disjunctive spaces of newness and unknowns. In the way that life experience teaches us about possibilities and/in ambiguity, I often wondered, “How do my sons’ teachers *know* these young transient children?” and “What compels their teachers to invest emotionally in relationships with these young Canadian boys?” Over the years this question stayed with me, and I carried it forward into my career in teaching. When I meet young children today for the first time, usually with their parents, I want to hear their stories. I invite children to tell me about the time when What was it like for you to ? I am interested in their life histories and stories of learning. I am always enlightened by and receptive to parents when they also offer to tell me their stories of being a learner, a reader, and a writer as children. In a hermeneutic sense of story, our understanding of our historicity as a personal life experience comes to our awareness (Gadamer, 1975/2004; Smith, 1991), and it is this openness to situations and stories that bear on educational experience as lived (Connelly & Clandinin, 1991). In practice, I have always known young children to be natural storytellers; they want to tell their stories, share their experiences, and in doing so, they make meaning of their lives. There is never enough time for the stories children have for teachers. In our stories and those showing the relations of literacy learning and listening, the role of language in human understanding is a creative act in interpretation (Smith, 1991).

Memory Stories of Literacy Learning: Lived Experience

The “research poems” (Glesne, 2006; Richardson, 1997) that follow are representations of the interviews with five-year-old Grace, her mother Lynne, and her teacher Emily. The poems draw out the essence of memories of past experiences as if held in a certain light (Leggo & Sameshima, 2014) of importance. As interpretations of “feeling and being a reader” drawn from the semi-structured interviews, I am interested in emotional associations of learning-to-read experiences held in memories over time. The representation of poetic transcription illuminates the wholeness of Grace’s spoken words, in light of her short, matter-of-fact responses in speech. Lynne and Emily’s interviews are also represented as poetic transcriptions.

I don’t think I knew any different	Emily Carter, Grace’s Teacher
I always felt like a reader My mom was an elementary teacher My dad was a teacher as well We were always reading books I don’t think I knew any different.	
At school I specifically remember red and blue phonics books They were plaid I loved those phonics books They’re amusing They’re fast You got it right.	
I definitely saw myself as a reader My whole family is readers There was importance placed on reading There was more effort I don’t really have a strong memory of it at all I always felt like a reader.	

In the town I was raised,
everyone knew everyone in the neighbourhood.
This was how it was at school too.
Even as a kid I was aware of how I fit in at school.

I remember in grade two being told by my mom
I was going to visit the special teacher.
Everyone knew that the special teacher
helped kids who were behind or struggled.
For me it was reading, mostly comprehension,
[although I say that now as an adult].

As a kid I just knew that I had to go see her for reading
not really knowing why.
This was a big deal
None of my friends had to go.
I was self-conscious.
I remember walking down the hall by-myself and
feeling like everyone knew where I was going.
I went to her room for most of Grade 2.
Just for Grade 2.

“V” helps make “I love you”**Grace**

It's two hearts
And our hearts have some stuff that we love.
“V” have [sic] for “I Love You.”
I know that letter helps make “I Love You”
I just knowed [sic]
When I was three.

I remember all my letters in my name
My mom always writed [sic] my name
But one morning
I felt like I remembered it.
“Mommy! I remember my name!”
And then I always spelled it
When I was four.

I do it by myself now
I make the letters in the air
Sometimes I just do it on the table
Like this.

A Lingering Note: Silence in Relations

Five-year-old Grace, her mother Lynne, and her teacher Emily have memories of being and becoming, and knowing themselves as “readers.” From this view they share a life experience as literacy learners. In our humanness there are as many meanings of reading-as-experience as there are humans in the world. Emily has very little memory of a singular event about being a reader when she relates, “I don’t know anything different.” Later in the interview she remarks on the reading and writing connection when she explains how, when going back to school to become a teacher, she read more, as a strategy for helping her attain new skills in writing. With a sociocultural perspective, Emily’s development and mastery in reading, used as a cultural tool, supported her perceived development in writing in broader contexts as a new education student, in her words “to get her back into that writing mode.” Emily also related a connection about her Kindergarten students, “a lot of our kids that aren’t reading yet, they’re printing.”

Lynne’s memory of being a reader takes her back in time to a visualization of walking down the hall in Grade 2 and feeling different, feeling that everyone was watching her, and everyone in her small town knew she was going to the teacher who “helped kids who were struggling with reading.” Lynne’s view of her experience from a deficit perspective was an embodied feeling that she touched on a few times during the interview. For example, she shared that she buys workbooks and practices printing, letters and numbers with Grace “because I want her to be ready to read and write, and not have my experience of needing help.” As a mother remembering herself in childhood, Lynne describes herself as “an okay learner” and at the same time interprets her early memories of “needing help” as a school related experience that she hopes Grace can

avoid. Lynne places emphasis on “fitting in” and “being accepted” as meaningful life factors that represent success in school life.

Grace shares her exquisite memories when talking about her perceptions of being and reading. The words, *I love you*, had meaning to her when she was three, when she relates that ‘v’ was in the word ‘love’. As an example of environmental print, Grace learned that ‘v’ had meaning, and recognized it “everywhere, mostly on the fridge,” relates her mom. Grace told her story about being four, and learning the letters in her name. Her story was full of body actions, expressive voice, and joyous pride in relating her story with excitement in learning these letters. Being able to transfer concepts of alphabet letters from concrete to visualizations ‘printed’ with her finger on the table during the interview was a proud moment of confidence for her.

The three stories are unknown stories. That is, they are silent, they have not been heard by, or shared between the three people in this educational relationship—as student, mother, and teacher. The stories, as currently told, are embedded, historical memories of being and becoming literacy learners. In an Aokian sense, the hiddenness of the three stories reveals a pedagogical moment for me, and I am attentive to listening for the lesson. Like Gadamer’s (1975/1989/2005) idea of historical consciousness, our understanding of ourselves in relation with others in our situated various contexts of everyday lives can reveal to us a new reality. In teaching and learning, listening to education experience of those we are in relation with, holds a deeper potential for understanding the meaning of underlying cultural and social aspects of literacy pedagogy in classrooms. The poetic transcriptions of Grace, Lynne, and Emily’s memories

contextualized through historicity of stories provide a pivotal access into pedagogical relations of listening.

Relational Listening: Everyday Presence

I thought a lot about how I should bring myself into the Kindergarten classroom during my six-month inquiry relationship with Emily and Riley's classrooms. With heightened perceptions and awareness, I was very motivated and focused on learning their rhythms of language and interaction in the play sites around me, and at the same time endeavoured to recognize the natural flows of the children's movements so as not to interrupt their lived curriculums.

I remember my first visit in early October, a request from Emily and Riley to drop by to meet their students at the story corner after the entry bell. I had a picture book tucked into my arm, and I was looking forward to performing the story as I stepped through the door. Before settling in to the story chair, everywhere around me, at tables, in corners, on the carpet, at the sand table and light table, in the breakout room full of wooden blocks, in the tent, and at the art table, my every sense was called by the sounds and motions of young children playing, doing, and pretending. I became very aware, quickly, that the Kindergarten students, unaware of my presence in their space, were hard-at-work as they created and lived their stories, spontaneously and vividly present.

Children's stories brought alive in their play interactions held a significant energy in the classroom, and subsequently, from this meeting onwards guided my research activities in Emily's classroom. At times the children's interactions unfolded stories in a look between two students, sometimes mingled in silence amongst objects, sometimes dissolved unexpectedly, co-habited side by side, splintered in moments, and sometimes

carried over from one day to the next. In these events, the children’s interactions with peers show how their natural language in play, as unstructured literacy events, are experienced as lived curriculum. As classroom observations and narratives evolved, pedagogical themes of literacy stories, engagement, and social interaction stood out while watching Emily. In particular, the 40-minute block of free playtime in her daily schedule struck me early on as a significant site for observing teacher interactions with students in play. Emily moved around the room quietly and deliberately, watching and listening in while her students worked at the various play sites around her classroom. In Aokian pedagogy, observing Emily during these times was not so much the way she was “watching” her students in storied play, but rather, in these moments she was showing more the person she was as she watched. Emily showed a presence for listening in her interactions, much like the quality that Ted described in his wife June’s teacher, Mr. McNab in Fanny Bay, BC—a mindful watching for the good in a tensioned situation that the teacher sees (Aoki, 1992/2005, p. 196).

Joining in	Emily
<p>I interact with children during play. The children are very receptive to me joining in and will often ask me to play with them. I try to be very open-minded in their direction of where the play is going because it’s my intention to create a space where they can do that—explore. Sometimes their direction means I have to act silly so I have to be open to vulnerability! I am also careful to walk away and allow them time to continue on without my intrusion.</p> <p>Their play is like storytelling. It’s all about getting to know them, and I have always believed that building relationships with my students happens during play. So, I</p>	

do join in because at times I can role model possibilities for literacy in their play and at times I want to engage with them in a less directed learning opportunity. I'm thinking of the *Kindergarten Cafe* experience that happened last week in the kitchen play centre. I didn't tell the children about "a change" to the centre. I wanted them to use their imagination and make a connection themselves. I was thinking of a space in their real lives that all of them have experienced, so I thought of a restaurant.

Hillary came into the classroom and noticed right away, "There's a new centre! I love it when Mrs. C. makes a new centre! I'm playing there today!" Someone thought it was a new kitchen, and then Hillary remarked, "No! It's a restaurant. Look at the sign!"

At snack time, Hillary leads the conversation. Three girls are planning and creating the scenario for playtime and someone says, "We need to write a menu." Grace tells her that they will need to ask Mrs. C. to write it, but Hillary advises that she can "write like a kid."

The restaurant is now in full swing. I ask the group who have asked me to play with them, "What's on the menu today?" Brianna says, "Panini!" And Carly says, "Hot dogs!" With pen in hand, I carefully sound out the words and print them and then I draw a picture beside and mention that a picture might be helpful for customers who can't read. Next I ask how much money do they want to charge because that's what a menu is for—to let people know what they have to pay when they eat at a restaurant. Carly runs to the cash and looks down at the coins in the play money tray and says, "two dollars."

I print the Number 2 and show them how to print a dollar sign, making an "S" with two vertical lines. Other children wander over and they pick up pens and start making an S.

At that moment I listen and slowly slip away from the restaurant centre. Glancing back I see Hillary pick up the pen and she is sounding out the word “sandwich” and writes “snw” on the menu, then she draws a picture and then prints 2 \$. I couldn’t have planned a literacy lesson to teach them what they learned when they played here. In fact I think play is a child’s most natural state of learning.

A real teddy bear	Grace & Emily
--------------------------	--------------------------

Grace was working at the plexi-glass easel by herself one afternoon this week. She was drawing a bear with the gold pen. I remember noticing her attention and how focused she was on her drawing. Here we are in June, and I can reflect back to last fall and remind myself how apprehensive and cautious she was when she came into our classroom. I always bring the children together to the story corner to start our afternoon. After our ‘hellos’ and sharing routines, some children do need to check-in with me personally once we get started, to know I am close by. Grace needed to do that. It took me awhile to realize that her way of showing this need for connection, to get started, was to tell me her stories. These were her everyday stories that she brought from home, to school. Sometimes they were about her aunt, or her brother, mostly about the people in her life. In a way I think this was important for her because she was anxious for quite awhile, but I could also see her settle more easily when she told me her stories.

As I listened to Grace tell her stories, I recognized how building a relationship through doing that was also her way of working through the difficult time of leaving her mom and starting her afternoon at school, right from the beginning of the year. For Grace, telling her stories and giving her my time to listen is still more than just listening.

I know it's an important aspect of my time with the children, and for my program, but I am realistic, too. It's impossible to engage with all the kids every day at that level of really listening to them. At the same time I am encouraging all my students to develop friendships with their peers, so they can learn how to tell and listen to each other. So it's always about trying to find that balance. This part, learning to share stories by telling them with other children, encouraging Grace to share with her peers in the way she needs to tell me her stories, has been a challenge for her.

The day that Grace was working alone at the easel turned out to be something special for her. She was drawing her teddy bear, full of details, and when she had half of her drawing complete, another child approached her, which surprised her a little bit. Grace always shows an awareness of her surroundings by watching what other students are doing and where they are, so when Sasha came up to the easel, Grace was surprised. In a brief exchange between them, Grace said, "Sasha is going to show me how to draw a real teddy bear!"

I was working with students at the wet table, but I was listening to Grace and Sasha when I picked up on Grace's excitement in her voice. Grace immediately assumed an observer role in the interaction, by waiting for Sasha to show her how to draw a real teddy bear. There wasn't any conversation between them, more like side-by-side play. Grace picked up the gold pen and continued drawing her half-finished teddy bear, and Sasha looked on. It became apparent that Sasha did not know how to draw a teddy bear, and quietly copied Grace's drawing. Grace did not realize that she was being the 'teacher' and Sasha was learning to draw the 'real' teddy bear by watching her. This was such an important moment for Grace, and as I watched, I stepped away from the wet table

for that instant moment to acknowledge Grace's drawing of her own, real teddy bear. This little scene, where I can step into a play interaction, whether it is verbal or non-verbal is so powerful for building their self-esteem and for building relationships and knowing—letting them know that they're safe here. There's so much going on in their stories.

A Lingering Note: Attentiveness

Ted Aoki reminds me that the web of relations linking Grace, and Grace's teacher Emily, occurs in lived spaces, between and among and in the midst of everyday life, of school, and curriculum. This idea of "relation" is a dominant theme drawn from the research data, observing their interactions, interviews, and narratives. Eleven definitions in *Collins English Dictionary* (CED) verify the breadth of contexts for "relation," of which one definition purports "the position, association, or status of one person or thing with regard to another" (p. 1365). The noun "relation" comes from the 14th-century Anglo-French root word *relacioun* that emphasizes "connection" and "act of correspondence" (Online Etymological Dictionary). The idea of "connection" evoked by the word *relation* in pedagogical contexts resonates with a later change that takes place in French, meaning "to establish a relationship."

Interpreting text through an Aokian lens, and as a reader, is to linger with Ted's theme of "pedagogy" in naming the context of relations in education. Via Late Latin from Greek, pedagogy comes from two roots: in combination with the prefix form *paideia* or *pedae*, "the child, the young" and the root *agogue* that indicates "to lead, leading in education" (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2017). In 1992, Ted provoked readers and teachers through an article seeking to understand meanings of pedagogy while

recognizing “the seductive hold of the scientific” (Aoki, 1992/2005, p. 187) in education. In seeking attunement, Ted suggested the idea of listening to the layers of voices for an understanding of what teaching is, with particular emphasis on the care and meaning of pedagogical being with children. To see and hear more deeply then, the layers of voices in teaching reveal the places of lived moments and care, of pedagogic watchfulness and pedagogic thoughtfulness (Aoki, 1992/2005). Ted shaped this theorizing of pedagogy through stories of lived experiences, leading us to recognize the place and meaning of such deeply tactful, caring situations.

Emily’s pedagogic care, in listening relations with her students, prompts me to suggest an orientation of Aokian pedagogy that I interpret through her pedagogic attentiveness. Emily’s “hearing” of teaching, regarding what teaching is, dwells in her pedagogic way of “listening-in” for her students. In one interpretation of an inner layer of teaching, her planning of the Kindergarten Café as a site for literacy learning and play allows her students to explore and discover an authentic everyday event. Grace and her peers’ dialogue reveal their imaginative play, while practicing a new discourse and uses of literacies in writing a menu, reading a menu, experimenting with the meanings of symbols and the authentic roles of language in their everyday lives. Emily’s attentiveness to pedagogical invitations, whereby her students explore literacy learning in play, for real life scenarios, yields another deeper layer of listening in teaching.

Emily takes the role of a character at her students’ request to respond spontaneously to their imaginative capacities “with an open mind.” In this regard, Emily’s pedagogical attentiveness is a position of caring reverence that she has developed through insight for developing relations with her students. There are no aligning Student

Learner Expectations (SLEs) or learner outcomes to describe Emily's attunement of "being" with her students in their relations together. At other times, Emily's pedagogical attentiveness is a lived curriculum of silence. During moments of teaching, when Emily gently steps away from her role in their play, or when she listens in silence to Grace from nearby, she demonstrates insight and awareness, and senses her students' needs as learners. In these moments of silence, Emily's pedagogical attentiveness is visible in her listening, and in her interactions with her students, her leading speaks of what teaching truly is.

Relations of Listening: Voices Matter

Throughout Emily's conversational interviews she often made comments about and included in her narratives, her pedagogical practice of holding children's voices in high regard. She often talked about how early childhood classrooms are pivotal grounds for empathy and care. Caring responses guide her in all her interactions with her students. Nel Noddings's (1984) care ethics illustrate the relations of empathy in Emily's common ground for understanding herself in connection with her students. In listening to Emily use the words "their voices matter" in her conversations and journal entries, she also does not diminish the complexity of feeling the tension in her listening to children's voices in "mattering."

There's only two of them and 40 kids

Lynne

Grace's year in Kindergarten is like a first year for me, too. She's my oldest, so it's interesting to experience school again through her. I just want everything to go well for Grace so I worked on getting her ready for school for months before she started Kindergarten. I bought printing books and kindergarten skills books before the school

year started and we've been working on them regularly. Grace likes to work in the books and is happy to practice. I have always felt that kids do better in getting ready for school if they practice skills such as printing their name and knowing numbers. And look at the fridge! Grace has everything on it. With everything else we have to think about for Grace's speech, I just wanted her to be prepared and school might be easier for her.

There are a lot of kids in there. I don't know how teachers do their day-to-day activities. The two teachers and the 40 kids is a lot to pay attention to. I've never been in the classroom this year so I don't know what it's like for them but I can tell that Grace and Mrs. Carter get along very well. I think about that because if it wasn't for Grace's challenges over the years, I don't know . . . it's kind of like, I think her challenges with speech forced a relationship between the two? I think that helped. I'm sure a lot of it has to do with Grace's personality. She really is just an easy-going sweet kid. I guess I'm really aware of those factors that go into their relationship and that extra attention must have helped. I'm sure Mrs. Carter is like that with all the kids. Grace really likes Mrs. Carter. I'll never forget the time when I saw Grace running to give Mrs. Carter a hug and she started to cry.

The table by the window	Grace
<p>Can I show you this in my journal? I have my stories in here I know the story because of the words I tell the teacher the story The teacher puts on the words So I know what it's about</p> <p>If I didn't have the words I would just tell the story with the pictures On here I had to ask the teacher if I rather</p>	

K or the C because I know K and C both make
Kuh kuh kuh.
I don't know these words here
That's why I like to tell my stories with pictures
Pictures sometimes helps [sic] kids show a story.
My teacher showed me.

This my picture story about Mother Earth.
Mother Earth means it's our planet.
And Mother Earth, we love her.
My picture shows me with Mother Earth.

Sometimes I try and help the Earth because
I sometimes pick up some garbage at school.
Do you know Mother Earth sometimes?
I learned about Mother Earth from my teacher.

I learn how to draw things
It's what I like the best
My favourite place at school is the table by the window
It's near the sun
It's the near window to my mom when I'm at school
My house is six houses from school
It's where I like to do my arts and my journal book
My teacher lets me work there.

I'm not ready for Grade 1
I don't like going in the morning
My mom works and I wouldn't see my mom very much
And I don't like the morning

Their voice matters at school**Emily**

I keep going back to how important it is to listen to my students' stories. And in knowing how I feel, how important this is in my practice, another part of me wrestles with how exhausting it really is to listen to every story. This comes up for me over and over in a week and sometimes even day to day, especially when I'm tired, or I'm stressed about something, and in my mind I just want to say to the student, "Okay, off you go now." Or I can hear myself saying in my mind as a child is speaking, "What do you need

to be doing right now?” I can actually go through that in my head, and I know it’s more about me, and I hear that inner voice say, “Oh my goodness.”

So, maybe I need to experience that place to remind myself of what my students teach me. Oral language is so important in Kindergarten. My students’ thinking and their social lives in the world around them, so much is accomplished in every minute of the time we take to talk and listen to each other in Kindergarten. Just recently someone said to me, “Well when your Kindergarten kids get to Grade 1, the teachers aren’t going to sit there listening to their every story. There isn’t time!” And I remember thinking to myself, “Well, my students aren’t in Grade 1. They’re in Kindergarten, and their voices matter to me now. Their voice matters at school.” Through all that oral language we build their sense of self, we understand who they are, and they hear their own voice. I think we have to give them that opportunity a little bit more—not just in Kindergarten.

A Lingering Note: Listening in the “Isness”

I linger consciously with Emily’s tension-filled words about listening in teaching. She points out to me that she “keeps going back to the importance of listening to students’ stories,” and in the same moment shares her inner speech about “wrestling with herself” during times of challenge and difficulty in listening. I see and hear this recurring thread in Emily’s lived experience as her struggle with a pedagogical dualism, her personal “this or that”—in essence the experience for her is about the difficulty between being present with students’ (and their stories) and the challenges of being present in moments, and between moments, with young children at all times. Ted would not describe Emily’s struggle as situated in the realm of the Cartesian sense of either/or where it might be construed that Emily was struggling with “this or that” of her teaching

between curriculum-as-planned or curriculum-as-lived. In an Aokian interpretation of multiplicity, whereby Ted draws inspiration from Deleuze's suggestion of placing ourselves in between in the midst and among curricular entities (Deleuze & Parnet, as cited in Aoki, 1993/2005, p. 297) there is a place where "this and that" can help us explore new possibilities. For Emily, experiencing herself as "being" present in the midst of listening curriculum, of living well with her students, her living in/with tension of "and" holds more meaning about care alongside possibilities.

Through her reflexive insights shared during our conversations I interpret Emily's experience of tensioned listening as "presence-in-care" with her students. I contemplate the possibility of this as a way to describe early childhood teachers' reflexivity of naming tensioned listening as a pedagogical stance that is innately connected to what Ted might include in his description of the "isness" of teaching. In the complexity of listening deeply, in the context of acknowledgement and validation of her students' voices—to have been listened-to—Emily describes a relational pedagogy of listening in classrooms where tension dwells inseparably from the "isness" of teaching. In her beliefs about engaging with children's stories of lived experience, as a pedagogical stance for oral literacy teaching and learning, Emily is pedagogically inspired in living with tensioned listening through her trustfulness in relations with her students.

During interviews with Emily, she oftentimes linked her practice of listening to listening to her students' stories during play. Immersing herself in the milieu of play as a pedagogical strategy for listening is also a dynamic attentiveness to relations in her teaching. Emily is aware of her heightened sensation of inner tension in listening, and for

her, the experience is ubiquitous to linking relations of teaching and literacy pedagogy in this way, as her “being” with teaching dances alive in tensioned listening.

Chapter 5: Stories of Tensioned Literacies and Continuities of In-Between

Bobbie

Early insight garnered during my inquiry activity with Bobbie drew me into his impressions of literacies through his encounters with technology. His developing sense of selfhood came through during conversational interviews at home with his family. Many times these narratives of personal experiences of everyday life included themes of participation in gaming with his father, as an observer and as a player. In addition, his wider exposures to digital practices were enacted imaginatively in the stories that he retold to me when viewing his Kindergarten sketch journal during interviews.

In the months of observations and conversations in Bobbie's Kindergarten classroom, I listened to a young child's tentative voice in his relational encounters with peers and his teacher. His narratives of selfhood in the classroom, within the contexts of learning to be at school, initiated my embodied sense of listening for the meanings of Bobbie's lived experience of "who am I in this place?" Through interpreting Bobbie's clusters of stories, artefacts, and statements of his everyday life, I was aware of and listened to his gestures, his eyes, and body language. By experiencing a young child "bringing" himself from home to school, his tentative voice in relations and literacies from home to school were significant to understand. Bobbie was telling me about the ways in which home and school held very different meanings to him. One of the ways that home and school held different meanings was apparent in how he ascribed meaning to his everyday life through his uses and roles he assigned to diverse literacies.

Literacies: Traditions and Continuities

As described earlier in Chapter 3, Julia Ellis (1998b, 2006) contributed key ideas from hermeneutics to support my holistic aim in understanding Grace and Bobbie's lived experience viewed through a lens on listening. Ellis's idea of including children's visual artefacts and conversational interviews together helped shape my understanding of Grace's and Bobbie's "being" into their narrative portraits. Through listening and viewing Bobbie's clusters of stories and artefacts in his Kindergarten visual journal with him, a sensitivity to language provided salient and immediate verbal and non-verbal cues and discoveries of his traditional, text-based experiences of literacy learning.

Positioned as a researcher during the conversational interviews I was also aware of (and felt) a unique pedagogical affordance. At times I had the feeling of being in-between, of being a teacher and a researcher, and imagined being Bobbie's kindergarten teacher with his visual journal opened between us. My teacher being marvelled at how he revealed meaning making differently when talking about his school-based artefacts and representations. Bobbie used vocabulary that he did not replicate during any conversational interviews that preceded or followed. His visual journal represented one cultural domain, an artistic/aesthetic domain that he did not enter at any other time, in his other contexts of literacy learning. It became an embodied dwelling place for me—to listen and not be limited by the usual measure of classroom time. We did not have to rush. In these moments, I even let my mind wander, for seconds only, thinking about what Ted Aoki might have remarked about this dwelling in the midst of research. What must I glean from this pedagogical privilege of being a teacher, while observing and listening as a researcher to a young child's interpretations of his artful responses? I hold

this pedagogical query, of feeling in-between as a teacher and researcher, as an in/spirited space where I can resist being one-or-the-other in my positioning. Instead, Ted has theorized this space as a heartfelt response that recognizes a conscious sensitivity (Aoki, 1986/1991/2005, p. 165) to what it means to experience and acknowledge the deep uniqueness of a teaching and researching situation.

It was the job that day	Bobbie
--------------------------------	--------

I remember making this—it's a rose. This one's really important to me. See these? That's the petals of my rose. I made it for my mom but she hasn't seen it yet. You know I can't bring my journal home until after Kindergarten so she won't see it. I used yellow to paint it. There's more yellow on my favourite part, where the petals go together. Well actually my teacher did that part for me. It was the job that day to do that flower.

On this page is my picture with glitter. I really love glitter. I like all kinds of it. It looks beautiful here [Bobbie holds up his journal]. I can't really remember what we were doing on this page but I've got lots of different colours of glitter at home too. I have silver, brown, pink, blue.... I really like it because it's like a rainbow. I could do that glitter picture at home too.

Oh that one too. It's totally my best. I did the picture with all the colours and purple and the teacher did that when she put my name at the bottom too. I can do my name on the computer easy! And I can do it lots of ways on the iPad with KidPix too. My teacher did that [Bobbie points to a line] but I painted that though. I think it's awesome. See, it's about Matisse. I put those letters on the top here. That's his name. We looked at books about him and he loves to make art. Matisse is a guy who's sick and he's a real guy

who loves to make art. Do you know that I was just a first artist [sic] when I was two? It's when I did art for my mom. I know that. And now I'm an artist all the time.

The three places in his life

Norah, Bobbie's Mother

Bobbie has so many different influences in his school day, and I find myself feeling that I should be negotiating something—every one of them is like a partition for him. They don't run into each other for him. I watch him working at keeping them all separate. He's an only child so I don't know if all kids do this but when he goes from place to place he is thinking about the rules. So, the three places in his life are different, and I try to teach him the expectations of each place without squelching his personality.

One of his places is at Ingrid's house. She's from the Philippines and is taking an English as a second language course. In the Philippines she was a nurse and a midwife, and education is really important to her. And so he started at Ingrid's place when he was three, just turned three when I think about it. Her basement is set up like a classroom, with the alphabet, numbers—very traditional in her culture. And even now, she makes sure the three boys sit down and practice their writing. She has a Christian sort of book called *Promises Are Promises* and she teaches a lot of her morals from these kinds of biblical stories. We're not Christian but I don't care. I just like that she's sharing her religion with them—that's fine with me. And Bobbie loves it! He's totally fine with it, like totally fine with it!

When he talks about school, he talks about the active things that they do. He talks only about the things he doesn't do here at home. He loved the dance workshop, and in-line skating and all that. And he just doesn't talk about what they've learned in the classroom. One of the things we did to get him excited about Kindergarten was to

download some of the apps linked on the school website. We did that so that he would feel like there were familiar things around him, something that could translate back and forth from home to school, because he “gets” technology. He gets it and I think he gets its usefulness. We’re very technology oriented in our home. He sees us using technology and wants to know what we do.

At home with us we’re always—other than when he’s directed us—we’ve always tried to really integrate learning into something he’s already doing. So, like yesterday we were counting the days until his birthday party. We went to the calendar and counted forward and then he had to count backwards to figure it out. It’s the same with reading. If I were to say to him “read this for reading sake,” he’s like, “you can read it to me then.” If there’s something to motivate him, he’ll do it. He’s a very externally motivated child, very.

They never say that

Riley Wyatt, Bobbie’s Teacher

I know there are different ways of talking about literacy but in kindergarten, I find it kind of interesting thinking about what it was like this year moving from Grade 1 to kindergarten. I have come to find in teaching kindergarten that children are quite capable in terms of making decisions and understanding ideas or concepts that one might think are beyond them. This is my second year of teaching but really my first full year of having my own class. I recognize how my classroom is likely similar to past generations of teachers in that we have building centres and art centres and play centres. With all the different things children are exposed to I think they can still be very imaginative in that they still learn from play.

A couple of months ago Emily and I introduced our students to Matisse by teaching about his life and looking at art books. We wanted the children to hear stories about artists and through art bring that idea of being an artist closer to them. With books that I read to them, their minds are like sponges. They remember things and they look at the pictures they probably could tell the story. I find it kind of interesting. In my Grade 1 class last year, I would say to the students to pick some books from the tubs and read them on the carpet. Oftentimes they would say, “Well I don’t know how to read.” Whereas in my kindergarten class this year, they never say that—instead they’ll just sit down and they’ll make up their own story through the pictures. Most of them see the words are on the page but they’re not drawn to the words. They have great imaginative stories when they look at the pictures, so I was asking myself this year, what happens when students go to Grade 1? What is really interesting to me is that I only feel this emotion when students are looking at picture books. When Emily and I have the iPads on a table for our students, I don’t think about how they ‘look’ at a story on the screen. And the children have never come up to me feeling disappointed that they don’t know how to ‘read’ a story on the iPad. They look at the two in a completely different way—like a storybook is for ‘real’ reading and a screen is for looking at. That’s the one thing I feel about technology. Children are more tech-savvy than previous generations because of the prevalence of technology in their lives. When I listen to my students tell these stories like we were watching their video games, I wonder a lot about the effects of technology on society.

A Lingering Note: Layers of Being

With his visual journal as an invitation for conversation during our early interviews at school, Bobbie consistently engaged with his journal differently than other literacy practices and other contexts of everyday life. Often he used words of pride to talk about his artwork. I interpret the personal meaningfulness of his artwork by his repetitious use of language phrases such as “important to me” and “this is my favourite” or “that’s totally my best.” As personal representations, Bobbie’s journal is acknowledged as a significant documentation of his school life literacy experiences. He described his artefacts through the mediums he was exposed to, such as paint, glitter, and colour. In listening and sensing Bobbie’s body language, our conversations lead me to perceive an emotional value when sharing and describing his creative representations. As literacy worthy of communicating to others, he often related that he could do this artwork at home as well. Also noteworthy in the transcriptions and in field notes is Bobbie’s disinterest in talking about or sharing any of the teacher-generated texts that accompanied his artful responses. Other than his name, when lettered or numerical text appeared on the page Bobbie related, “The teacher did that.” When pointing out his name to me on some of the pages he wanted me to know he could do that on the computer, or the iPad, “better” or “faster.”

Linking literacy practices between home and school is well documented (Dyson, 2003; Hull & Schultz, 2002; Pahl & Rowsell, 2010, 2012). As these researchers and others comment on the importance of noticing the continuities (rather than discontinuities) of children’s literacy practices across home and school, Bobbie’s

familiarity with an additional literacy practice piques my attention toward noticing and listening for other contexts and uses of everyday literacy practices in his life.

By situating this inquiry in Aokian views of curriculum theorizing, of attending to the tension of possibilities embedded in literacy experiences as the aliveness in-between spaces of dualisms (Grumet, 1995), I resist being drawn into interpretations of binaries of “this or that” when listening to Bobbie talk about his everyday life. It is when I listen to Bobbie’s mother Norah, that I realize the difficulties of “being” in-between. Norah comments on her observations that Bobbie compartmentalizes places and contexts of his everyday life. She recounts how Bobbie is learning “the rules” of each of these contexts, of becoming aware of what the expectations are in “his three places” at home, at school, and at his caregiver’s home in the community. Norah’s perception of Bobbie’s developing sense of place, of learning what to expect, of learning how to “be” in each place raises my awareness to salient, and subtle factors that might also influence or mark how Bobbie negotiates everyday life contexts of literacy learning. Norah alludes to this possibility when she remarks that “Bobbie gets technology . . . we’re technology oriented in our home.”

Literacies: Listening in the Borders

Mid-way through the school year, the two Kindergarten teachers participated in two conversational interviews together with me. The conversation provided an opportunity to listen to them talking about their students through literacy planning. An evolving topic through the course of one of the interviews related their teaching aims in engaging their students during read aloud story time. The two teachers specifically related how their deliberate planning was aimed at establishing routines for listening to

the reader, and routines for questioning upon the completion of the story reading. For example, Emily remarked, “They’re engaged and just hanging on your every word to the point where they are predicting what comes next—they know the structure of the story, they start to listen for the repetitive play with words.” Likewise, Riley notes, “I think even the excitement that they show when you bring new books into the book shelf, they sit down with a friend and they mimic the expression that you used . . . they copy that.”

Through this sequence of conversation the two teachers decided to try an additional step—to ask the students to bring a favourite picture book from home that would be read aloud by their teacher, while each student would share their connection to the book they brought to school from home. I listened to their discussion and interpreted storybook reading as a literacy practice at home and at school, holding different meanings of participation in each context. In addition, as each child’s choice of picture book transcended these borders of place, this cultural artefact for each child might also generate what Gutierrez, Rymes, and Larson (1995) called a third space learning place, a generative space representing neither the dominant culture of the school nor those of the students’ duplication of the story event as performed at home. I decided to focus on these narratives and perhaps this space as a generative place for creating a new possibility for literacy learning in the Kindergarten classroom might be enhanced through understanding the meanings within narratives of listening to young children’s lived experience.

Might be one way for him to talk	Norah
---	-------

I know that there is stuff about schooling that he has learned. He’s still learning expectations of a classroom routine for sure, but when it comes to others things he already knew he kind of dismisses school. Maybe he learned it in a different way

somewhere else, or in a different context. When he gets home he won't talk about what he did at school, so does he do the same when he gets to school—does he put up a bit of a wall about home too? I'm kind of thinking he keeps everything in different places in his mind and that's him. He says this to me, "No, kindergarten, we talked about it in kindergarten, I'm done talking about it."

I do think about the technology connection for him and think that it might be one way for him to talk about home and school at the same time. A while ago, Mrs. Wyatt sent messages out to say that the kids could bring in a book from home as long as parents allowed it and names and everything were in it. And that excited him. We read *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* at home and he wanted to take it to school. I had to tell him that it would take Mrs. Wyatt a long time to read that book to the class, but the part that was different for me was seeing that he was willing to share his world from home, maybe? I think the book idea was a great idea. To me I was seeing this through a child's thinking process, "this is a piece of me from my other world," and sharing it with people at school—that's what he liked about it. It would be nice to see more of that. I have to say, the logistics of school and the time for "real time" [participant emphasis] to form relationships would be hard. So far in Kindergarten I don't really feel like they get what Bobbie is about yet, but there's a few more months of school. I think Mrs. Wyatt and Mrs. Carter got to know pieces of him. I just feel that listening to all those kids is quite an exhausting environment, which kind of, are any of them showing their best selves?

They care about that person

Riley

Emily and I realized that we just wanted to slow things down. We were in assessment mode for a few weeks, carrying around our clipboards and taking students out

of the classroom or over to a table to ask them about letters and numbers, and we just wanted to pull back. We were saying to each other, “we don’t want to do anything fast for a while” and so we went to our bookshelves. The kids are right with us too. It gives us time, to listen to them a little bit more and letting them settle in with us, with this beautiful literature.

At that point we thought that we could stretch out this special time by inviting the students to bring in their favourite book from home. We wanted them to know that this wasn’t “show and tell” and we hoped that the kids would bring in storybooks that were meaningful and precious to them at home, too, sharing and reading another bookshelf of beautiful literature. That’s what we hoped for.

In reality we were a bit surprised in ways that we didn’t predict. It backfired on us a bit because most of the kids brought in trade books about Barbie and Lego and Scooby Doo because they wanted to show their friends what they were into—like a status item—not the beautiful literature we were hoping to share. The read alouds were sometimes too long, and the kids were wiggly, and the magic was slipping away for us. Truthfully, it’s like maybe we didn’t think this was good literature at all—we put a judgment on it. I was proud of the kids though. They knew those books were important to a classmate, and they showed they care about the person. They didn’t care much about a poem or the horribly written Scooby Doo book, but they cared about each other. They showed appreciation. We felt the importance of bringing something from home to share but how do you make it clearer to parents...maybe if we could have more of a relationship with the parents where you could be more clear in what meaningful literacy is. We looked through those Barbie books or whatever and I felt like I was wasting my time. The kids loved it though!

And then Bobbie wanted to bring a video game to share and one of Emily's students brought in her iPad from home.

You're allowed bringing it	Bobbie
-----------------------------------	---------------

Well I just talked to my friend Ricky. You're allowed bringing Wii to Grade 1 you know. I have a Wii. You can bring games to school after this. I can bring my own lunch from home too, like chocolate chip cookies but not peanuts.

A Lingering Note: Sonorous Borders

What started as a discussion for planning literacy instruction, with the aim of “slowing things down” and “stretching things out” the teachers devised a sequence of lessons focused on picture books, this after a period of “clip-boards and assessments” in the two Kindergarten classes. From this initiative an unexpected site of tension evolved. Riley and Emily engaged their students in lessons for meaningful listening and questioning during picture book read aloud experiences in the classroom. With evidence of having met their instructional goal for engaging with “beautiful picture book literature” the teachers acted on their reflection by inviting students to bring their own picture books from home to school. During the course of three weeks of observation and classroom visits Emily and Riley read aloud students’ books from home. As both teachers responded during one of the conversational interviews together, the activity in their measure was “a flop—it backfired” on them. In their words they were disappointed that the majority of books that came from home were based in pop culture, and social video media interests from the students’ everyday lives. Reading these texts to the students as read aloud activities was “boring and a waste of valuable time.” In post reflection,

segments of interviews by the teachers acknowledge that they made a “judgment” and “placed a value on the quality” of books the children brought to school. In hindsight they decided that they were not explicit enough in their instructions, and, in the future, if they did the activity of bringing something from home to school they would communicate more effectively with parents. The last comment ascribed to the activity during the interview was a remark by Riley, “The kids loved it though!” [Original emphasis]

Based on my teaching experience, I can relate to Riley’s and Emily’s critical voices. Teachers are reflective and reflexive beings during times when things don’t go as planned, or as hoped. In this instance, Emily and Riley focused on their individual parts in assigning judgment and imparting a value when students brought their home cultural artefacts into the realm of school. It could be interpreted that Riley and Emily privileged beautiful picture book literature over pop culture materials. The source of tension that the teachers reflect upon is their own affective experience of “boredom” and “waste of time” when reading pop-culture children’s books at school. However, when Bobbie and his mother Norah reflect on the experience, they report a much different experience. Bobbie is unaffected altogether. Norah suggests that he not take his novel to school that they have been reading together, and Bobbie responds by suggesting to his teacher he bring his video game to school. Norah remarks that for Bobbie, she sees the value of considering this opportunity, in Bobbie’s voice as “bringing a piece of me from my world.”

Since Riley reported “the kids loved it though,” perhaps this is the most important key to this perception of tension—that in fact, it was not a tension at all for the students. What could be gained by listening differently? Ted Aoki offers a route through the

tension in teaching. In the lived experience of spaces of classroom and teachers' practices and children's literacies, Ted leads us to see and hear how understanding curriculum, such as literacy curriculum, is conversation. In early childhood classrooms could we create a new language for listening, where teachers who are working within border spaces of home and school may see themselves as bridges? In Ted's reconceptualization of teaching and curriculum, his metaphor for "bridge" proposes the tensioned space of "and" the space in-between where newness emerges (Aoki, 1990/2005). In literacy learning, where listening differently to children's voices and the literacies they bring across borders of home and school . . . might there be a space in-between where teachers can live well with tension, and imagine teaching in a "sonorous clearing so that we might recognize . . . and seek curriculum words than can sound and resound in an inspired way" (Aoki, 1990/2005, p. 369).

Literacies: Listening to Play in Imagined and Virtual Worlds

Bobbie's self-reports about his participation in virtual worlds of video console play are a recurring theme in his narrative portraits and conversational interviews. In turn, the recurring theme gleaned from my perceptions of listening to Bobbie revealed a lot about his interests and passion as a game enthusiast. His excitement for sharing this part of his everyday life was visible through his animated body language, his expressive emotions, and his quick dialogue to include me in his world. Whether talking about his journal drawings or showing me while playing his favourite console games during visits with the family, Bobbie was keen to invite me into his imaginative world.

On one of these days, after leaving Bobbie's family home and driving across the city, I reflected on my changing experiences of children's techno-literacies (Marsh, 2004,

2010; Pahl, 2005) over the years. My first position as a mother, then as an early childhood teacher, and here, as a researcher of children's lived experiences of everyday literacies evokes many memories of personal change over time. With my own sons' early experiences more than two decades ago, I remember watching them as they played their first games (introduced to them by older cousins): *Number Crunchers* and *Oregon Trail* on our first family computer, a Mac IIsi. As men in their 30s now, I rely on their memories for these specific details of our first computer while living in Southeast Asia at the time. Twenty-five plus years later, I now ask my students/research participants to show me, teach me how to play the video games they play. My interest in this change in positioning is in seeking to understand their experience; to have young children share their experience of techno-literacies allows me to listen in on their lives and their literacies. At Bobbie's house, it is my own lived experience of continuity that draws me deeper into our conversational interviews with Bobbie and my ongoing queries about literacies crossing borders of home and school. Bobbie was playing Golf Wii when I arrived and he asked me to play with him. I asked Bobbie questions in the context of this literacy experience and he showed me what to do using vocabulary and knowledge discourse about games and gaming that he had not used at school during our conversations. I realized that with Bobbie's five-year-old funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) he was, in that moment, my teacher. For Bobbie, I sensed that the answer was closely situated in his gaming relationship with his father, a shared world where father and son spend time together. My sense is that his gaming literacies provide him a social world that is very uniquely privileged in his everyday life.

The day before my birthday is the day I'm building my secret room. Well actually the builder guys are doing it. They're using a big truck when they come to build it. They're actually going to use that big digger thing that they use to make big holes. My secret room is going to be in my back yard but you can't see it because it has a trap door. And only my friends can go down the trap door into the room. The first surprise when my friends go down the ladder into my secret room is that it's really a game. You have to try to get through everything to win and do you know what's the prize? A cardboard diamond—I'm going to print out the diamond on paper crafts. And I won't be a player because I'm going to be the laser guy. I need a scientific guy to make the laser gun though. Then I'm going to need to make rectangle paths down there in the basement but it's going to be really far down. And then the next surprise for the game is I need to make signs so my friends know what to do, and then cardboard guns, like cardboard machine guns, and cardboard pistols. They're the best ones to have. I need to get the brown kind of cardboard too, like the kind you get in big boxes. And then my mom and dad are going to be the guarders of the diamond but my mom isn't going to be shooting because she doesn't like being gunshot at. But my dad does! Like it's pretend anyway. It's a game from the computer, except the one on computers it's very inappropriate because it has guns and blood. My secret room game doesn't have that. It's like a right click.... I can turn off the blood and guns.

I think teachers use more technology in teaching children, as students' life experiences seem to involve more technology. In my few years of teaching I feel my students' engagement is definitely different with technology. There is an attraction to it for sure. For some of my boys especially, like Bobbie and a few from Emily's class, it's one of the few times when Bobbie looks comfortable in the classroom, when he is on an iPad or in the games I set up on the Smartboard. It's interesting to me because I notice his body language changes when he's on the iPad, like he engages. This little group of boys doesn't show a lot of interest in other centres or other students right now. When they are together, they play characters in their video games, which always seem to include playing with imaginary weapons. The kind of play they engage, with weapons and pretend fighting, is a problem, too. Maybe that will change in time when their friendships develop with other students.

I feel like a bit of a Luddite when I think of technology in teaching young children. I mean, Internet access for information and being able to contact people around the world makes technology important to us, but I look at the effect that technology has had on society and I don't think it's always positive. When I listen to my students' stories when they come into the classroom I try to see all their identities and their differences and think that they're going to go out into society with the skills to know how they will fit into the world. Technology will have a large role in what they do and how they do that. But then I have families who come into the classroom during parent-teacher conferences and the parent hands the child their iPhone while we're talking. Maybe if I was a computer teacher, I would feel differently, but I don't feel like if I don't teach them

how to use technology and programs online that they're missing out. Even in Kindergarten they will get it somewhere else and I'm not going to feel bad that I don't have a big focus on technology in my classroom.

It takes him a while to trust**Norah**

In the first four months of Kindergarten Bobbie seemed to want to get to know Mrs. Wyatt, but then I noticed a real change after Christmas holiday break. It seemed like his focus changed. School became less about school activities and more about finding his legs socially—peer negotiations and things like that. That's when we noticed that some behaviours cropped up because I think he was working less on impressing Mrs. Wyatt and more on impressing the idea of new friends and peer relationships. I think the thing that is most difficult for him is being in a structured learning environment, and then add on to that, the relations with other kids. In his world up to now he's always just had friends for playing—they're not for learning beside—they're for playing. It's like Bobbie has been trying to figure out what his place is at school. It's like he's not quite sure how to play at school versus just playing. I can see he's figuring out what is allowed in play at school, because his favourite pretend play is video game characters, but I get the sense that the teachers don't allow it. When he talks about play at school it's usually about what he does when the Kindergarten classes go outside, never about playing at centres, or with the blocks, or doing things with other kids. I've noticed that it takes him a little while to trust people and to really warm up to people. But once he establishes that trust, he trusts you with everything. When we noticed the changes in his relations with Mrs. Wyatt we thought that maybe he was trying to figure out what a relationship with a teacher is.

A Lingering Note: In-difference

Bobbie's imaginative game play enacted through his knowledge of virtual video game environments at home, such as his example of "building a secret room" for his friends to play his imagined virtual game in his back yard, can be interpreted in layers of meaning. Interpreting Bobbie's elements of storytelling when relating his design of a video game for his friends can be interpreted as an exploration of narrative forms of story structure and narration (Pahl, 2005). In addition, Bobbie experiments with traditional literacies (making signs for directions) and a spatial map (making rectangle rooms) to assert his imaginary intention of game authenticity. As Marsh (2004) might note, Bobbie demonstrates his ideas of textual understanding of gaming by drawing on relationships between popular culture and experiences in his contexts of everyday literacies.

Another layer of meaning in Bobbie's lived experience is his desire to enact video play in the unique environment of the Kindergarten classroom. When we talk about play in our conversational interviews, it appears that Bobbie thinks about his Kindergarten classroom differently than he does about his home. The larger spaces and variety of toys and available objects for play attracts three or four other boys' play into a realm of new imaginative dialogues framed by their favourite video games. It is here, in the borders of play space with a group of boys, that video game play also becomes a lived experience of tension. During observation and in her journal writing Riley remarks that "pretend weapons and pretend fighting is not acceptable play" in the Kindergarten classroom. Bobbie interprets correctly that the school rules mean that pretend play in the form of gaming is not allowed but he perseveres in trying to find a way to play within these constraints. I observed Bobbie and his friends huddled inside the play tent, and in smaller

corner spaces, devising invisible toys to enact their video play sequences. Riley's conversational narratives reveal a theme of difficulty and tension surrounding Bobbie's dramatic play. Bobbie is navigating new territory during his Kindergarten year—figuring out boundaries of play, behaviour expectations and roles, and his relations with other people, not only peers, but also his teacher(s) and the culture of schooling. In viewing my field journal, I noted on many occasions that Bobbie often roamed around the classroom, not sure what to do with the structures of play in place. His mother Norah provides an interpretation of Bobbie's play and lived experience of schooling when she comments that "something changed in his relationship with Mrs. Wyatt after the holiday break" and Bobbie is "trying to figure out his place" including her evaluation that Bobbie is quietly processing the idea of "what is a relationship with a teacher." Likewise, Riley feels her own ambivalence, with regards to the pedagogical presence of technology in early childhood classrooms. She states that she "feels a bit of a Luddite" remarking that she can think of good uses of technology in society but "I don't think it's always positive."

As an interpretive stance I lean towards Ted Aoki's (1996/2005) perspectives on difference in order to understand relations while listening to the tensions within planned and lived curriculum. I imagine a strand of curriculum theory where literacy learning and listening pedagogy can "vibrate with difference" (Aoki, 1993/2005, p.299) and at the same time accept tension as a hopeful place. In all the complexity of relations within classrooms, the narratives of Bobbie, his mother Norah, and Bobbie's teacher Mrs. Wyatt reveal how living together in schools, in the perceived lived difficulty of technology and literate worlds of teachers' personal pedagogy and children's lives in early childhood classrooms can be imagined as a place open to possibilities (Aoki, 1993/2005). Listening

to Bobbie's video game play in this space of the middle, where literacies are viewed as continuities, is also the place for dwelling in and with tension.

Chapter 6: Meanings and Moving Forward

I pause to reflect. Linger in the reflection . . . I am convinced now that in becoming enchanted with the eye, there lurks the danger of too hurriedly foreclosing the horizon where we live as teachers and students . . . thereby diminishing the place of other ways of being in the world. The time is ripe for us to call upon *sonare* to dwell juxtaposed with *videre* . . . It is imperative that the world of curriculum question the primacy of *videre* and begin to make room for *sonare*.

(Aoki, 1990/2005, p. 373)

on this bridge, we are in no hurry to cross over; in fact, such bridges lure us to linger . . . a site or clearing in which earth, sky, mortals, and divine, in their longing to be together, belong together.

(Aoki, 1996/2005, p. 316)

To Linger With/in Listening and Literacies

Ted Aoki's heartfelt words about lingering in other ways of being in the world of curriculum inspired me to take up the inquiry challenge to dwell in my questions. Among the many ways of being in the world with Ted's curriculum theorizing I sought to linger in an interpretation of *sonare* through a pedagogical inquiry of listening relations. In situations of early childhood literacy learning, this inquiry aimed to listen to young children's stories of literacy experiences and interpret meaning through an Aokian perspective on pedagogy. This inquiry was inspired by Aokian interpretive orientations to understand the meanings of

listening relations, as experienced and acknowledged by two kindergarten-aged students, and their teachers and parents. Ted has theorized pedagogical inquiry as a heartfelt response that recognizes a conscious sensitivity (Aoki, 1986/1991/2005, p. 165) to what it means to experience and acknowledge the deep uniqueness of a teaching and researching situation. I have embodied Ted's pedagogical principles throughout this inquiry. Through this process of analysis, interpretation, and representation, I recognize six pedagogical elements of meaning making that contribute to understanding relations of listening and literacy learning in early childhood education contexts.

1. Relations: enfolded in becoming. In an Aokian sense, the hiddenness of the life stories of the students, their teachers, and their parents revealed the embodied connections of shared and acknowledged meanings of being learners. Like Gadamer's (1975/1989/2005) idea of historical consciousness, our understanding of ourselves in relation with others in our various contexts of teaching can reveal unique realities. When teachers listen to the stories of students and their parents, they can understand more clearly the meaning of underlying cultural and social aspects of literacy pedagogy. Memory stories, when "un-hidden," suggest a kind of relation that reveals how teaching pedagogy is inclusive of all our stories. In literacy learning, our underlying differences in language and experience enact and enfold our becoming (Aoki, 1987/2005).

2. Relations: as pedagogical attentiveness. In this inquiry, interpreting text through an Aokian lens was to linger with Ted's theme of "pedagogy" in naming contexts of relations in education. To see and hear more deeply, the layers of voices in teaching revealed pedagogic watchfulness and pedagogic thoughtfulness (Aoki, 1992/2005). In

another inner layer of teaching, I interpreted Emily's pedagogical relation with Grace as attentiveness. Pedagogical attentiveness yielded another layer of relations of listening in teaching. During moments of Emily's pedagogical attentiveness (as a lived curriculum with silence), for example when Emily stepped away from her role in play, or when she listened-in silently to Grace from nearby, she demonstrated insight and awareness, and sensed her students' needs as learners. In these moments of silence Emily's pedagogical attentiveness was visible in her listening, and in her interactions with her students. Her leading through listening with attentiveness, in silences, speaks to the embodied presence of her relationship with Grace and her classmates. Emily's relational knowing through attentiveness embodies how she develops a deep understanding of her students' learning needs.

3. Relations: tension as presence in teaching. Listening is difficult. This is the tension that Emily returned to repeatedly. Her statements of the importance of listening to students' stories often shared the same moments with her inner speech about "wrestling with herself" during times of challenge in listening. I see and hear this recurring thread in Emily's lived experience as her struggle with a pedagogical dualism, her personal "this or that"—in essence the experience for her is about the difficulty between being present with students (and their stories) and the challenges of being present in moments, and between moments in pedagogical situations. Within an Aokian interpretation of multiplicity, Ted draws inspiration from Deleuze's suggestion of placing ourselves in between, in the midst, and among curricular entities (Deleuze & Parnet, as cited in Aoki, 1993/2005, p. 297). By interpreting a place where "this and that" can help us explore new possibilities, Emily did not yet sense the experience of herself living in/with tension of

“and” where such a place, in Aokian ways, might have provided Emily new possibilities in her pedagogical practice. I forward the idea that Emily’s “presence-in-care” with Grace and her students is a tensioned pedagogical stance that is innately connected to what Ted might include in his description of the “isness” of teaching. In the complexity of listening deeply, in the context of acknowledgement and validation of her students’ voices—to have been listened-to—Emily described a relational pedagogy of listening in her classroom where tension dwells inseparably with teaching. Emily was aware of her heightened sensation of inner tension in listening. As a site for further search for meaning, Emily’s experience offers us an example ubiquitous to linking relations of teaching with literacy pedagogy. In this interpretation her “being” with teaching and pedagogical relations with students danced alive in tensioned listening.

4. Literacies: layers of being. Understanding the meaning ascribed to experiences of literacies at home and at school was one of the aims of this inquiry. Bobbie’s developing sense of place, of learning what to expect in school, and learning how to “be” in each place, raised my awareness to salient and subtle factors. I interpreted Bobbie’s conversational interviews as layered experiences of “being” that might also influence how young children negotiate everyday life contexts of literacy learning. When talking about visual artefacts of literacy at school Bobbie often related that he could do artwork at home. Also noteworthy in the transcriptions and in field notes is Bobbie’s disinterest in talking about or sharing any of the teacher-generated texts that accompanied his artful responses. Bobbie pointed to his name on all his visual journal artefacts and related how he “did” his name “better and faster” at home on the computer or iPad. When lettered or numerical text appeared on the page that was added by his teacher he either

ignored it or pointed out, “The teacher did that.” It is when I listen to Bobbie’s mother Norah that I realized the difficulties of literacies experienced and lived as places.

5. Literacies: bridges with/in borders. Emily and Riley reflected on their individual parts in assigning judgment and imparting a value when students brought their cultural artefacts from home into the realm of school. It could be interpreted that Riley and Emily privileged beautiful picture-book literature. The source of tension that the teachers reflect upon is their own affective experience of “boredom” and “waste of time” when reading pop-culture children’s books at school. This is the most important key to this perception of tension—in fact, it was not a tension at all for the students. In reflection during analysis I asked what could be gained by listening differently? In the lived experience of classroom spaces of teachers’ practices and children’s literacies, Ted leads us to see and hear how understanding curriculum, such as literacy curriculum, is conversation. Creating a new language for listening in early childhood classrooms, where reflexive teachers within border spaces of home and school may see themselves as bridges, is one example of a new conversation for literacy pedagogy. In Ted’s reconceptualization of teaching and curriculum, his metaphor of the “bridge” proposed the tensioned space of “and” as the space of in-between where newness emerges (Aoki, 1990/2005). In literacy learning, listening differently to children’s voices and the literacies they bring across borders of home and school can be conceptualized as a space where teachers can live well with the tension of disparate values assigned to literacies.

6. Literacies: in-difference. Understanding the meanings of children’s stories was another aim of this inquiry. Bobbie’s elements of storytelling when relating his design of a video game for his friends can be interpreted as an exploration of narrative

forms of story structure and narration (Pahl, 2005). In addition, Bobbie experiments with traditional literacies (making signs for directions) and a spatial map (making rectangle rooms) assert his imaginary intention of game authenticity. As Marsh (2004) might note, Bobbi demonstrated his ideas of textual understanding of gaming by drawing on relationships between popular culture and experiences in his contexts of everyday literacies. In the classroom borders of play, spaces for a group of boys that relate to video game play also became sites for tension. The classroom rules meant that pretend play in the form of gaming was not allowed if play involved pretend weapons, but Bobbie and his friends huddled inside the play tent and in smaller corner spaces, devising invisible toys to enact their video play sequences. Riley's conversational narratives revealed a theme of difficulty where perhaps children's intentions in play can be honoured without tension. Much like all Kindergarten students, Bobbie was navigating new territory—figuring out boundaries of play, behaviour expectations, and roles. In relations with his teacher(s) and the culture of schooling, the question gleaned from the inquiry leads to the recurring quandary of “what is a relationship with a teacher?”

Relations with Previous Research

The findings of my inquiry are broadly aligned with the body of scholarly research in early childhood contexts of literacy learning. In regard to literacy pedagogy and relations in contexts of literacy practices in school and home situations, my findings harmonized with aspects of the scholarly record. Across all contexts of the inquiry, the findings represent Kindergarten-aged children's lived experience, through their voices and perspectives. The literature reviewed for my inquiry also emerged through pedagogical categories of curriculum studies and theorizing, and contexts of listening in

psychological and educational contexts. Although my findings are generally compatible with these areas reviewed in previous chapters, my findings on listening pedagogy as a lived phenomenon of relations in teaching and literacy learning offer new dimensions to the conversation.

An understanding of children's literacy learning in relation to culturally situated contexts was of interest in sociocultural inquiries. Aria Razfar and Kris D. Gutierrez (2013) suggested that the relations of practices in classrooms should always be in our minds because literacy is more social than individual. How children make sense of their lives and how we, in turn, listen to the voices of young children and their learning in diverse contexts is pedagogically important. The findings in my inquiry supported these statements. Complementary, yet unique findings related to culturally situated contexts of literacy elaborated an understanding of the complexities inherent in listening to young children's perspectives. My findings revealed examples of how teachers' awareness, through reflexivity, uncovered their value-laden judgments about literacies after reading children's pop cultural texts brought from home.

Another finding was related to young children's diverse roles as participants in technology, representing their sophisticated funds of knowledge (Moll, 2000). A large body of research has reported on traditional contexts of literacy pedagogy with attention on changing dynamics that assert pressure on education's need to re-frame understanding about literacy learning across contexts (see Razfar & Gutierrez, 2013). Even though the focus of this research relates to older elementary school aged students, my inquiry was compatible with this body of literature. My findings provide narratives of lived experience that young children in their first year of schooling are demonstrating funds of

knowledge that surprised their teachers. In related perspectives, the narratives reveal how, in moments of teaching, early childhood teachers are gaining awareness of how students interact in changing dynamics of literacy instruction.

One of the main concepts from earlier reviews on listening pedagogy in curriculum contexts is that of listening as an instrumental skill in language development related to teaching literacy in early childhood contexts (Helgesen, 2003; Morley, 2001; Scrivener, 2005; Wolvin & Coakley, 2000). Pedagogical relations of listening in early childhood contexts found in my inquiry were not represented in the body of listening research. From a pedagogic and psychological perspective, researchers outside of early education have made parallel interpretations to education. Listening has been studied as a form of moral support and as key to interpersonal communication (Nichols, 2009) and linked to an alternative aesthetic—framing listening as a relational “reading” of people and texts alike (Pike, 2004). These notions of listening as “moral support” and “listening as a relational reading” were in the background of my inquiry. My findings extended pedagogical perspectives, whereby a relational ethic of listening was inherent in teachers’ verbal and nonverbal pedagogical encounters. Secondly, relational aspects of listening appeared to be a source and site of reflexivity when teachers engaged in pedagogical reflection during conversational interviews.

Reflexive “Check ins” During Inquiry

This inquiry has been primarily concerned with understanding the relations present in the lived experiences of two Kindergarten-aged children through narratives of listening and literacy pedagogy. Within this, the inquiry included perspectives of two teachers and the children’s parents in relation to teaching pedagogy and literacy learning.

The participant narratives in my inquiry cannot explain the experiences of other Kindergarten-aged children. I designed the conversational and open-ended interview questions, and therefore participants' responses were limited by the possible interpretations of my questions. The narrative stories developed may or may not be applicable to other inquiries designed to understand lived experiences of young children.

In Chapter 3, I considered the difficulty of researcher bias in my inquiry. Throughout all layers of the inquiry it was important that my reflexivity remained attuned to my position as a researcher, teacher, and colleague. On occasion I was aware of some confusion arising amongst school personnel during interviews where borders of positioning appeared to blur at times. Similarly, my roles with young children, which are also relational in nature, increased my examination of researcher influence. I engaged intentionally with reflexive "check ins," which contributed to my developing ethical care as a researcher.

The narrative findings of my inquiry are limited by the research design involving two children, two teachers, and two parents. Based on a random pool of "first-to-reply" responses to letters of interest, all participants were residents in the same demographic community. The two teachers volunteered to participate in the research activity.

Another difficulty was perceived related to language and vocabulary. I realized early in the inquiry activities that I needed to verify participants' use of terms during interviews. For example, I realized that teachers and parents described and defined educational words such as "literacy" and terms related to "literacy instruction" in different ways. When this occurred I did not change the language used by participants. In

response, I asked questions for clarification without altering the original intended meanings ascribed by participants.

Implications and Suggestions for Practice

My inquiry addresses a gap in listening as pedagogy related to young children's experiences of literacy learning as students and their everyday experiences of literacies across borders of home and school during their Kindergarten year. The inquiry focused on relations emerging or present, by and through listening to two children's stories and experiences of literacy learning from the perspectives of teachers, parents, and the children in an educational relationship. A proposal for future research draws my interest into developing and applying relational theory on the values placed on literacy practices in more diverse settings and a wider demographic of young children's lived experiences. In addition, my inquiry gave voice to teachers' tensions and the challenges inherent with and interpreted by the meanings they ascribed to listening as pedagogy. In this context, the inquiry provided lived narratives of pedagogical practice and relations, which would be of interest for ongoing research in the field of pre-service teachers' experiences of living pedagogically in the classroom. Furthermore, the inquiry evoked parents' questions and wonderings about "what teachers do" in developing relationships with their children. Parents' narratives provided a glimpse into their day-to-day experience of what literacy means for their child. Implications drawn from the inquiry include the importance of parents' sense of trust in their perceptions of a teacher's relationship with their child. Lastly, the children's narratives and stories elaborated lived experiences of literacies in everyday life, and the ways that contexts of literacy learning and literacy practices are shaped by children, their teachers' values, and the culture of family life. The implication

for practice drawn from this inquiry lends to the importance of listening to the underlying perspectives of children as meaningful to literacy learning and pedagogy. In this sense of pedagogical listening teachers are situated closely to young children's lived experience, whereby identities and interests show through in literacies crossing borders between everyday life and school life. Similarly, the inquiry invites teachers to seek reflexivity in understanding literacy practices as an opening for understanding change in the classroom through children's everyday lives.

Through a lens inspired by Aokian curriculum theorizing this narrative inquiry offers a unique view of pedagogy for the field of early childhood literacy. Through autobiographical life writing, narrative methodology, and teachers' reflections of practice, an Aokian interpretive orientation allowed for the meaning structures of situations and relations of the everyday world to come through. Ted Aoki's perspective of conversation provided a framework for researching listening pedagogy as a bridge for understanding the meaning of children's perspectives ascribed to their literacies and teachers' literacy instruction. In context, this inquiry invites listening into teachers' practice, viewed through pedagogic attentiveness, with a sense of emerging becoming in literacy education.

Lingering, Weaving, and Dwelling in In/spirited Reflection

Dear Ted,

Reflecting on my journey, across years of generating texts of my pedagogical queries of teaching while engaged in curriculum inquiry, and seeking deeper pedagogical meanings in autobiographical ruminations through life writing, it is time to bring my dissertation to closure. Ted, I have struggled with the abruptness of an ending. I returned

to Cynthia Chambers' words about what keeps me awake at night, and again I reflect on the ways in which my inquiry will always keep me at attention. Recently I turned my heart's quandary to kindred voices around me and listened. In serendipitous echoes the essence of your voice was close by when Erika generously shared her memories of a long ago conversation with you. Erika begins, "When I voiced some similar worries about my own dissertation, Ted said to me that "you will never be finished with the writing of this text . . . it is a dissertation that is also not a dissertation," evoking Gadamer's words and the hermeneutic circle at work. But Ted also told me to accept the need to bring a closing to a text and a process, such as a dissertation/not dissertation" (E. Hasebe-Ludt, personal communication, June 29, 2017). So as you and Erika offer guidance I have been working on the need to attend to closing my dissertation as a process, "with the help and advice of kindred relations like Ted" (E. Hasebe-Ludt, June 29, 2017).

I return to an earlier time in my process when I aimed for understanding embodied meanings of listening in curriculum through your eloquent words describing your embodied encounter ascribed to listening to Bobby Shew's performance. I realized that I have been seeking "a sonorous clearing . . . and the curriculum words that can sound and resound in an inspirited way" (Aoki, 1990/2005, p. 369). When listening to the voices of teachers, parents, and students, I was also awakening to personal meaning in/with the reporting of my research that appears in earlier chapters of this text. Over time, and deep attention, I listened for an embodied unfolding of a sonorous clearing. In this reflexive way with words I conceptualize a space that invites and opens to the wholeness of inspirited listening as an encouraging possibility of lived curriculum. Such a clearing imbues the suspended moments of time and consciousness, and here, the

goodness of relation and interaction between teacher and student becomes the generative clearing and “isness” where listening truly lives. In relations of literacy pedagogy, I believe teachers must learn to recognize themselves and their students in this clearing for this is the place where tension and difficulty will also arise. Ted, I imagine this sonorous place for listening as transformative—perhaps just moments in our daily lives in classrooms when the rhythms of attentiveness open us to compassion and possibility. Perhaps it is possible for us, as educators, to listen to our students as if seeing ourselves (with empathy) in a mirror, to know when to suspend our pre/conceptions and pre/judgments during moments of listening in times of complexity of everyday life. And Ted, perhaps in doing so, we embolden our capacities of ethical care, as you have helped us in understanding the meaning of listening with care. This is an imagined clearing, full of the possibilities for literacy learning through valuing our differences. In such a dwelling for beings to live, through our interconnections, with inspirited language and care, I can now imagine a strand of curriculum theory where literacy learning and listening pedagogy can vibrate in new ways of understanding.

In reflection of my inquiry process, I also linger anew with what it means now for me to acknowledge change, a transformation, and the meaning of “inspirited *humus* that nurtures *humans*, [emphasis in the original] where dwelling is a dwelling with others on earth under the sky” (Aoki, 1993/2005, p. 300). Sensing such an opening evolved over years, and notably, in quiet times with pedagogical difficulty of hearing and teaching. In the midst of difficulty, and reflecting upon what it means to renew connections to teaching within difficulty, theorizing *sonare* [emphasis in the original] provided a perspective from which to start. In my inadequacy with words Ted, your listening eye and

visionary ear for curriculum, and your sensuous humane pedagogy, and the heartfelt gift of “being” both a teacher and learner in our conversation, has heightened my abilities to hear.

Throughout the activities of inquiry, teaching, and everyday life I am learning to trust and embrace my capacities for embodied hearing and attuned listening. Ted, I often relate to hearing and listening as my ontological ground for knowing and understanding and interpreting the world around me. I am learning the responsibility of this positioning, this way of making meaning and theorizing curriculum through my lens. In reading your autobiographical text about seeing yourself one day in the midst of the view of the sakura and the rose (Aoki, 1979/2005), I borrow from you a lingering thought, an embodied thought that brought me closer to my own lived experience of hearing loss and of inquiry, inseparable—for I know that what I hear and how I hear is because of who I am. I am what I hear. I am how I hear. The importance of the ordinary moments in my daily life, in research activities, and in the moments when I require of myself the embodied acuity of sensing and insight, this is my “true human presence.” It is the thread that continues to hold the weaving of the parts of my life into the whole.

Ted, just prior to introducing you early in the text through my letters, I also invited our readers into our conversation through sharing a life-writing story. The story I shared that day related my memory of meeting a Canadian weaver in Scotland and buying a work of her creation. The occasion was meaningful for the language she used and the memory of her sensuous touch of natural threads of earthly coloured strands of wool lying across her hand. Suzanna held each thread, showing how the threads were shaped into the weaving, while telling her story of how they touched in one place. I used

this story to create an image for the reader of the several linking strands of my inquiry with the hope that my weaving of parts may be visualized. In the writing of this dissertation, through the difficulty and challenges of language, the weaving of strands has revealed a sonorous opening.

Today, I acknowledge how my knowing each strand has always been present in the conscious presence of being with others in our relations. Today, I embrace your pedagogy as my ongoing ontological ground for teaching and learning with young children, and the teachers of language and literacy nurturing their hearts. Today, I linger in contemplation, listening for and attuned to the tension with/in *sonare* and *videre* so that together with our kindred relations we can hear each other in all our voices. Today, as in everyday, living humanely in the *humus* of each other and the world, our authentic conversations are never empty. In closing the process of my dissertation that is not a dissertation, thank you, Ted, for walking beside me on this journey of learning and becoming.

On a bridge that is not a bridge . . . to dwell, listening

Janet Pletz

References

- Aoki, T. T. (1978/1980/2005). Toward curriculum inquiry in a new key. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 89-110). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1979/2005). Reflections of a Japanese Canadian teacher experiencing ethnicity. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 333-348). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1981/2005). Toward understanding curriculum: Talk through reciprocity of perspectives. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 219-228). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1983/2005). Curriculum implementation as instrumental action and as situational praxis. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 111-123). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1985/1991/2015). Signs of vitality in curriculum scholarship. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 229-233). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1986a/2005). Teaching as indwelling between two curriculum worlds. In Ted T. Aoki (Ed.), *Inspiriting curriculum and pedagogy: Talks to teachers* (pp. 7-10). Edmonton, Alberta: Department of Secondary Education, University of Alberta.

- Aoki, T. T. (1986b/1991/2005). Teaching as indwelling between two curriculum worlds. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 159-165). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1987/2005). Inspiring the curriculum. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 357-365). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1990). Themes of teaching curriculum. In J. T. Sears & J.D. Marshall (Eds.), *Teaching and thinking about curriculum: Critical inquiries* (pp. 111-114). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Aoki, T. T. (1990/1991/2005). *Sonare and videre*: A story three echoes, and a lingering note. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 367-376). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1992a/2005). Layered voices of teaching: The uncannily correct and the elusively true. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 187-197). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1992b/2005). In the midst of slippery theme-words: Living as designers of Japanese Canadian curriculum. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted. T. Aoki* (pp. 264-277). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1993a/2005). Humiliating the Cartesian ego. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 291-301). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- Aoki, T. T. (1993b/2005). Legitimizing lived curriculum: Toward a curricular landscape of multiplicity. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 199-215). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1996a/2005). Imaginaries of “east and west:” Slippery curricular signifiers in education. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 313-319). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aoki, T. T. (1996b/2005). Spinning inspirited images in the midst of planned and live(d) curricula. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 413-423). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Bailey, N., & Baldassare Hopkins, M. (2011). The positioners and the positioned: Reflective explorations of the dynamic positions of novice researchers and graduate students. In M.B. McVee, C.H. Brock, & J.A. Glazier (Eds.), *Sociocultural positioning in literacy: Exploring culture, discourse, narrative, & power in diverse educational contexts* (pp. 73-93). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (1998). *Local literacies: Reading and writing in one community*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Baurain, B. (2011). Morality, relationality, and listening pedagogy in language education. *International Journal of Listening*, 25(3), 161-177.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2011.604604>
- Bruner, J. (1975). From communication to language: A psychological perspective, *Cognition* 3(3), pp. 255-287. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0277\(74\)90012-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0277(74)90012-2)

- Burnett, C. (2016). *The digital age and its implications for learning and teaching in the primary school*. York, UK: Cambridge Primary Review Trust. Retrieved [September 18, 2017] from <http://www.cprtrust.org.uk>
- Burnett, C., & Merchant, G. (2013). Learning, literacies and new technologies: The current context and future possibilities. In J. Larson & J. Marsh (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of early childhood literacy* (pp. 575-586). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cameron, C. (2007). Understandings of care work with young children. *Childhood*, 14(4), 467-486. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568207081854>
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, (2010). *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, December 2010*. Retrieved [November 5, 2012] from website: http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf
- Carr, M. (2000). Seeking children's perspectives about their learning. In A. Smith & N. Taylor (Eds.), *Children's voices: Research, policy, practice* (pp. 37-54). Wellington, NZ: Pearson Education.
- Chambers, C. (2004a). Research that matters: Finding a path with heart. *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies*, 2(1), 1-19. Retrieved [July 29, 2016] from <http://jcacs.journals.yorku.ca>
- Chambers, C. (2004). Antoinette Oberg: A real teacher . . . and an organic but not so public intellectual. *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies*, 2(1), 245-260. Retrieved [July 29, 2016] from <http://jcacs.journals.yorku.ca>

- Chambers, C., Hasebe-Ludt, E., Leggo, C., & Sinner, A. (2012). Opening to a heart of wisdom. In C. Chambers, E. Hasebe-Ludt, C. Leggo, & A. Sinner (Eds.), *A heart of wisdom: Life writing as empathetic inquiry* (pp. xix-xxix). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Chase, S.E. (2005). Narrative inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches, voices. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 651-679). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Clark, A. (2005). Listening to and involving young children: A review of research and practice. *Early Childhood Development and Care*, 175(6), 489-505.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03004430500131288>
- Clark, A., & Moss, P. (2005). *Spaces to play: More listening to young children using the mosaic approach*. London, UK: National Children's Bureau.
- Cobley, P. (2001). *Narrative*. Abington, UK: Routledge Publishers.
- Cole, M. (1996). *Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Collins UK (2006). *Collins English dictionary* (6th ed.). (2006). Glasgow, UK: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Connelly, M., & Clandinin, J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5), 2 -14. DOI: 10.3102/0013189X019005002
- Connelly, M., & Clandinin, J. (1991). Narrative inquiry: Storied experience. In E. Short (Ed.) *Forms of curriculum inquiry*. (pp. 121-153). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Cousins, J. (1999). *Listening to children aged four: Time is as long as it takes*. London, UK: National Early Years Network.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cummings, J. (1986). Projective drawings. In H. M. Knoff (Ed.), *The assessment of child and adolescent personality* (pp.199-214). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Davies, J. & Merchant, G. (2009). *Web 2.0 for schools: Learning and social participation*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Deleuze, G., & Parnet, C. (1988). *Dialogues*, (H. Tomlinson, Trans.). New York: Columbia University Press. (Original work published 1977).
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). (2005). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dockett, S., & Perry, B. (1999). Starting school: What do the children say? *Early Childhood Development and Care*, 159(1), 107-119.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0300443991590109>
- Dyson, A. (1993). *Social worlds of children learning to write in an urban primary school*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Dyson, A. (2003). *The brothers and sisters learn to write: Popular literacies in childhood and school cultures*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Einarsdottir, J. (2007). Research with children: Methodological and ethical challenges. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 15(2), 197-211.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13502930701321477>
- Ellis, J. (1998a). Interpretive inquiry as a formal research process. In J. Ellis (Ed.).

- (1998). *Teaching from understanding: Teacher as interpretive inquirer* (pp. 15-33). New York, NY: Garland Publishing.
- Ellis, J. (1998b). Narrative inquiry with children and youth. In J. Ellis (Ed.). (1998), *Teaching from understanding: Teacher as interpretive inquirer* (pp. 33-57). New York, NY: Garland Publishing Inc.
- Ellis, J. (2006). Researching children's experience hermeneutically and holistically. *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 52(3), 111-126. Retrieved [October 5, 2012] from <http://hdl.handle.net/10515/sy56k16w7>
- Farrell, A., Tayler, C., & Tennent, L. (2002). Early childhood services: What can children tell us? *Australian Journal of Early Childhood*, 27(3), 13-17. Retrieved [July 2, 2012] from <https://questia.com/library/journal/1G1-94198785>
- Finch, S. (1998). *An eye for an eye leaves everyone blind: Teaching children to settle conflicts without violence*. London, UK: National Early Years Network.
- Gadamer, H-G. (1975/1989/2004). *Truth and method* (2nd rev. ed.). New York, NY: Continuum. (Original work published 1975).
- Gadamer, H-G. (2001). *Gadamer in conversation: Reflections and commentary* (R. Palmer, Ed. & Trans.). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Gee, J. (2004). *Situated language and learning: A critique of traditional schooling*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Ghiso, M. P., & Spencer, T. (2011). Editorial: Early literacy in contested spaces. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 12(4), 293-296.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/ciec.2011.12.4.293>

- Gillen, J. & Hall, N. (2013). The emergence of early childhood literacy. In J. Larson & J. Marsh (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of early childhood literacy* (2nd ed., pp. 3-18). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Glesne, C. (1997). That rare feeling: Re-presenting research through poetic transcription. *Qualitative Inquiry* 3(2): 202-221.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/107780049700300204>
- Glesne, C. (2006). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Government of Alberta, Alberta Learning. (2000). *Elementary English language arts program of studies*. Retrieved [July 2, 2016] from Alberta Education—
Government of Alberta website: <https://education.alberta.ca/english-language-arts-k-6>
- Grumet, M. (1991). Curriculum and the art of daily life. In G. Willis & W. Schubert (Eds.), *Reflections from the heart of educational inquiry: Understanding curriculum and teaching through the arts* (pp. 74-89). Albany, NY: Statue University of New York Press.
- Grumet, M. (1995). The curriculum: What are the basics and are we teaching them? In J. L. Kincheloe & S. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *Thirteen questions: Reframing education's conversation* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Gutiérrez, K. (2002). Studying cultural practices in urban learning communities. *Human Development*, 45(4), 312-321. DOI: 10.1159/000064995.
- Gutiérrez, K.D., Rymes, B., & Larson, J. (1995). Script, counterscript, and underlife in the classroom: James Brown versus Brown v. Board of Education. *Harvard*

- Educational Review*, 65, 445-471. DOI: 10.17763/haer.65.3.r16146n25h4mph384
- Hasebe-Ludt, E., & Hurren, W. (Eds.). (2003). *Curriculum intertext: Place/language/pedagogy*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Hasebe-Ludt, E., Chambers, C., & Leggo, C. (2009). *Life writing and literary métissage as an ethos of our times*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Hatch, J. A. (2007). Back to modernity? Early childhood qualitative research in the 21st century. In J. A. Hatch (Ed.), *Early childhood qualitative research* (pp. 1-22). New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.
- Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and time*. (J. MacQuarrie, Trans.). New York, NY: Harper & Row. (Original work published 1927).
- Helgesen, M. (2003). Listening. In D. Nunan (Ed.), *Practical English language teaching* (International ed., pp. 23-46). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Hill, M., Davis, J., Prout, A., & Tisdall, K. (2004). Moving the participation forward. *Children and Society*, 18(2), 77-96. DOI: 10.1002/chi.819
- Hull, G. & Schultz, K. (2002). *School's out: Bridging out-of-school literacies with classroom practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Hymes, D. (1962). The ethnography of speaking. In T. Gladwin & W. Sturtevant (Eds.), *Anthropology and human behavior* (pp. 13-53). Washington: Anthropological Society of Washington.

- Iannacci, L., & Whitty, P. (2009). Introduction to reconceptualist perspectives. In L. Iannacci & P. Whitty (Eds.), *Early childhood curricula: Reconceptualist perspectives* (pp. 7-31). Calgary, AB: Detselig.
- Jalongo, M. (2010). Listening in early childhood: An interdisciplinary review of the literature. *International Journal of Listening*, 24(1), 1-18.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10904010903466279>
- Janusik, L. (2002). Teaching listening: What do we do? What should we do? *International Journal of Listening*, 16(5), 5-39.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2002.10499047>
- Jardine, D. (1997). Their bodies swelling with messy secrets. In T. Carson & D. Sumara (Eds.), *Action research as a living practice* (pp. 161-166). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- John-Steiner, M., Connery, C. & Marjanovic-Shane, A. (2010). Dancing with the muses: A cultural-historical approach to play, meaning making and creativity. In C. Connery, V. John-Steiner, & A. Marjanovic-Shane (Eds.), *Vygotsky and creativity* (pp.3-15). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Knobel, M. (1999). *Everyday literacies: Students, discourse and social practice*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Larson, J. (2005). Breaching the classroom walls: Literacy learning across time and space in an elementary school in the United States. In B. Street (Ed.), *Literacies across educational contexts: Mediating learning and teaching* (pp. 84-101). Philadelphia, PA: Caslon Press.

- Larson, J. (2006). Multiple literacies, curriculum, and instruction in early childhood and elementary school. *Theory Into Practice*, 45(4), 319-329.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4504_5
- Larson, J., & Marsh, J. (2005). *Making literacy real: Theories and practices for learning and teaching*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Larson, J., & Marsh, J. (2103). *Making literacy real: Theories and practices for learning and teaching* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lee, C. D. & Smagorinsky, P. (2000). *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research: Constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Leggo, C. (2008). The ecology of personal and professional experience: A poet's view. In M. Cahnmann-Taylor & R. Siegesmund (Eds.), *Arts-based research in education* (pp. 89-97). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Leggo, C. (2014). Contemplating and complicating curriculum by attending to language: Twenty-six metonymic moments. In W. Hurren & E. Hasebe-Ludt (Eds.), *Contemplating Curriculum: Genealogies/Times/Place* (pp. 183-198). New York: NY: Routledge.
- Leggo, C., & Sameshima, P. (2014). Startling stories: Fiction and reality in education research. In A. Reid, P. Hart, & M. Peters (Eds.), *A companion to research in education* (pp. 539-548). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
DOI: 10.1007/978-94-007-6809-3_70

- Lewis, P. J. (2007). *How we think, but not in school: A storied approach to teaching*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Lipari, L. (2012). Rhetoric's other: Levinas, listening, and the ethical response. *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 45(3), 227-245. DOI: 10.5325/philrhet.45.3.0227
- Lipari, L. (2014). *Listening, thinking, being: Towards an ethics of attunement*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Listen. (2016). In *OnlineEtymologyDictionary.com*. Retrieved [November 5, 2016] <https://www.eymonline.com/word/listen>
- MacNaughton, P., & Smith, K. (2005). Exploring ethics and difference: The choices and challenges of researching with children. In A. Farrell (Ed.), *Exploring ethical research with children* (pp. 112-123). Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Malchiodi, C. (1998). *Understanding children's drawings*. New York, NY: Guildford Press.
- Marsh, J. (2004). The techno-literacy practices of young children, *Journal of Early Childhood Research* 2(1), 51-66. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476718X0421003>
- Marsh, J. (2007). New literacies and old pedagogies: reconceptualizing rules and practices. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 11(3), 267-281. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13603110701237522>
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative researching* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- McVee, M.B. (2011). Positioning theory and sociocultural perspectives: Affordances for educational researchers. In M.B. McVee, C.H. Brock, & J.A. Glazier (Eds.), *Sociocultural positioning in literacy: Exploring culture, discourse, narrative, & power in diverse educational contexts* (pp. 1-19). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Merchant, G. (2015). Moving with the times: How mobile digital literacies are changing

- Childhood. In V. Duckworth & G. Ade-Ojo (Eds.), *Landscapes of specific literacies in contemporary society: Exploring a social model of literacy* (pp. 103-116). London, UK: Routledge.
- Mertens, D. (1998). *Research methods in education and psychology: Integrating diversity quantitative & qualitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mickelson, R. (2000). Corporations and classrooms: A critical examination of the business agenda for urban school reform. In K. A. McClafferty, C. A. Torres, & T. R. Mitchell (Eds.), *Challenges of urban education: Sociological perspectives for the next century* (pp. 127-173). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Miller, J. (1997). *Never too young: How young children can take responsibility and make decisions*. London, UK: National Early Years Network.
- Mills, K. A. (2016). *Literacy theories for the digital age: Social, critical, multimodal, spatial, material and sensory lenses*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Moll, L. C. (2000). Inspired by Vygotsky: Ethnographic experiments in education. In C. Lee & P. Smagorinsky (Eds.), *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research: Constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry* (pp. 256-268). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Moll, L., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory Into Practice*, 31(2), 132-141. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00405849209543534>

- Morley, J. (2001). Aural comprehension instruction: Principles and practices. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd ed. pp. 69-85). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Nichols, M. (2009). *The lost art of listening: How learning to listen can improve relationships* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Noddings, N. (1984). *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Noddings, N. (2003). Is teaching a practice? *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 37(2) 241-252. DOI: 10.1111/1467-9752.00323
- Noddings, N. (2005). *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Nunan, D. (1997). Listening in language learning. *The Language Teacher*. Retrieved [October 5, 2012] from: <http://www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/files/97/sep/nunan.html>
- Pahl, K. (2005). Narrative spaces and multiple identities: Children's textual explorations of console games in home settings. In J. Marsh (Ed.), *Popular culture, media and digital literacies in early childhood*. London: Routledge/Falmer (pp. 126-145).
- Pahl, K., & Rowsell, J. (2010). *Artifactual literacies: Every object tells a story*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Pahl, K., & Rowsell, J. (2012). *Literacy and education*. London: Sage.
- Patterson, M. E., & Williams, D. R. (2002). *Collecting and analyzing qualitative data: Hermeneutic principles, methods, and case studies*. Champaign, IL: Sagamore.

- Pearson, P. D. (2004). The reading wars. *Educational Policy*, 18(1), 216-252. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904803260041>
- [Pedagogy](#). In *OnlineEtymologyDictionary.com*. Retrieved [November 15, 2016]
<https://www.eymonline.com/word/pedagogy>
- Pike, M. (2004). Aesthetic teaching. *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 38, 20-37.
 DOI: 10.1353/jae.2004.0020
- Pinar, W., & Grumet, M. (1976). *Toward a poor curriculum*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.
- Pinar, W. (1994). *Autobiography, politics, and sexuality: Essays in curriculum theory*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Pinar, W. (2004). *What is curriculum theory?* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Pinar, W., Reynolds, W., Slattery, P., & Taubman, P. (2004). *Understanding curriculum: An introduction to the study of historical and contemporary curriculum discourses*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Pinar, W. (2005). "A lingering note": An introduction to the collected works of Ted T. Aoki. In W. F. Pinar & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted. T. Aoki* (pp. 1-85). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Pinar, W. (2012). *What is curriculum theory?* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Pletz, J. (2008). Literature-as-lived in practice: Young children's sense of voice (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge AB.
- Polkinghorne, D. (1988). *Narrative knowing in the human sciences*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Razfar, A. & Gutiérrez, K. (2013). Reconceptualizing early childhood literacy: The sociocultural influence and new directions in digital and hybrid media-tion. In J. Larson & J. Marsh (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of early childhood literacy* (2nd ed.) (pp. 52-70). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Razfar, A. & Yang, E. (2010). Sociocultural theory and early literacy development: Hybrid language practices in the digital age. *Language Arts*, 88(2) 114-124. Retrieved [September 16, 2016] from <http://ncte.org/journals/la/issues/v88-2>
- Relation. (2016). In *Merriam-Webster.com*. Retrieved [November 15, 2016] from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/relation>
- Rice, S. (2007). Moral perception, situatedness, and learning to listen. *Learning Inquiry*, 1(2), 107-113. DOI: 10.1007/s11519-007-0012-2
- Richardson, L. (1996). Speech Lessons. In C. Ellis & A. Bochner (Eds.), *Composing ethnography: Alternative forms of qualitative writing* (pp. 231-239). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Richardson, L. (1997). *Fields of play: Constructing an academic life*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Richardson, L. (2000). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp.923-948). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Riessman, C. (2007). *Narrative analysis for the human sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rinaldi, C. (2012). The pedagogy of listening: The listening perspectives of Reggio Emilia. In C. Edwards, L. Gandini, & G. Forman (Eds.), *The hundred languages*

- of children: The Reggio Emilia experience in transformation* (3rd ed., pp. 233-246). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger
- Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rosiek, J. (2005). Toward teacher education that takes the study of culture as foundational: Building bridges between teacher knowledge research and educational ethnography. In G. Spindler (Ed.). *New horizons in the ethnography of education*. (pp. 259-286). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Roth, W. M. (2012). *First-person methods: Toward an empirical phenomenology of experience*. Rotterdam: Sense.
- Schultz, K. (2003). *Listening: A framework for teaching across differences*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Schultz, K., & Hull, G. (2002). Locating literacy theory in out-of-school contexts. In K. Schultz & G. Hull (Eds.), *School's out! Bridging out-of-school literacies with classroom practice*. (pp. 11-32). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Schwandt, T. (2000). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: Interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social constructivism. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 189-213). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Schwandt, T. (2007). *The Sage dictionary of qualitative inquiry* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

- Schwandt, T. (2008). The relevance of practical knowledge traditions to evaluation practice. In D. L. Smith & P. R. Brandon (Eds.), *Fundamental issues in evaluation* (pp. 29-40). New York: Guilford.
- Scrivener, J. (2005). *Learning teaching* (2nd ed.). Oxford, UK: Macmillan.
- Shea, G. (2013). *Song without words: Discovering my deafness halfway through life*. Boston, MA: DA CAPO Press.
- Silver, R. (2001). *Art as language: Access to thoughts and feelings through stimulus drawings*. Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.
- Silverman, D. (2001). *Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analyzing talk, text, and interaction* (2nd ed.). London, UK: Sage.
- Smith, D. G. (1991). Hermeneutic inquiry: The hermeneutic imagination and the pedagogic text. In E. Short (Ed.). (1991), *Forms of curriculum inquiry* (pp. 187-205). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Smith, D. G. (2003). Preface: Some thoughts on living in-between. In E. Hasebe-Ludt & W. Hurren (Eds.), *Curriculum intertext: Place/language/pedagogy* (pp. xv-xvii). New York: Peter Lang.
- Smith, D. G. (2012). Foreword: Spiritual cardiology and the heart of wisdom. In C. M. Chambers, E. Hasebe-Ludt, C. Leggo & A. Sinner (Eds.), *A heart of wisdom: Life writing as empathetic inquiry* (pp. xi-xv). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Smith, J. K. (1993). *After the demise of empiricism: The problem of judging social and educational inquiry*. Westport, CT: Praegar.

- Smith, A., Duncan, J., & Marshall, K. (2005). Children's perspectives on their learning: Exploring methods. *Early Child Development and Care*, 175(6), 473-487.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03004430500131270>
- Thayer-Bacon, B. J. (2003). *Relational "(e)pistemologies"*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Turner, M. (1996). *The literary mind*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- UN General Assembly (1989). *Convention on the rights of the child*. Treaty Series, vol. 1577 (p. 3). United Nations, NY: New York.
<http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b38f0.html> [accessed 30 November 2017]
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. London, ON: The University of Western Ontario.
- Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wohlwend, K. E. (2009). Early adopters: Playing new literacies and pretending new technologies in print-centric classrooms, *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 9(2): 117-40. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798409105583>
- Wolvin, A., & Coakley, C. (2000). Listening education in the 21st century. *International Journal of Listening*, 14(1), 143-152.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2000.10499040>

Appendices

Appendix A: Range of Data Collection Methods and Strategies

Method	Children	Teachers Parents	Research Examples	Focus
Informal interactions	•		Smith, Duncan & Marshall (2005)	Interactions take place alongside ongoing activity Classrooms Homes
Conversations/ Interviews (Individual/pair)	•	•	Chase (2005) Silverman (2001)	Participant as narrator Elicit stories of experience Perceptions of literacy and literacy pedagogy Everyday contexts
Pre-interview Activities	•		Ellis (1998b; 2006)	Relationship building with children (initiated by researcher-whole class activity). Material for interview with focal children later.
Narrative Portraits	•		Ellis (1998b; 2006)	Holistic portrayal drawing Sketch journal (Generated by researcher, portrait of children's life data)
Life Writing (As research text)		•	(Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers, & Leggo (2009)	Research methodology (researcher) and method of praxis, first person stories (teachers) Letters (researcher)
Visual images, Drawing Sketch Journals	•	•	Dockett & Perry (2005) Pahl & Rowsell (2012)	Digital images, representation and visual story telling Literacy artefact (home and school)
Post-interview Reflections (Teachers' response to open-ended question)		•		Anecdotes Poetry Memory work Experience

Appendix B: Schedule of Interview Activities

Week	Target Participant	Activity	Analysis
1			
2	Teacher (A): Mrs. W	Conversation 1(A) Writing Reflection 1(A)	Conversation 1(A) Reflection 1 (A)
3	Teacher (B): Mrs. G	Conversation 1(B) Writing Reflection 1(B)	Conversation 1(B) Reflection 1(B)
4			
5	Parents and Focal Child A	Interview: in home	Parent interview
6	Parents and Focal Child B	Interview: in home	Parent interview
7			
8	Mrs. G. and Mrs. W.	Conversation 2 (A + B)	Conversation 2
9			
10	Focal Student A	Interview: at school	Student A interview
11	Focal Student B	Interview: at school	Student B interview
12	Teacher (A): Mrs. W	Conversation 3 (A) Writing Reflection 3 (A)	Conversation 3 (A) Reflection 3 (A)
13	Teacher (B): Mrs. W	Conversation 3 (B) Writing Reflection 3 (B)	Conversation 3 (B) Reflection 3 (B)
14		Classroom visits ongoing	
15		Classroom visits conclude	

Appendix C: Researcher Activities (Description)

1. Classroom Visits

- Once weekly visit in the two classrooms, for two hours
- Purpose: Informal observations of teacher and student interactions and conversations with focal students (recorded) engaged alongside

2. Pre-Interview Activities (4 times during schedule, approx. bi-weekly)

- Pre-planning dates with teachers at teachers' discretion (teachers and researcher plan activity together).
- Whole class activity led by researcher
- Mrs. G. and Mrs. W. observed one child each of their choice other than focal child during the researcher-led activity
- Pre-interviews with focal children
- Purpose: to develop material for conversation with focal child

3. Narrative Portraits (developed for each focal child, ongoing)

- Researcher collected visual material, anecdotes and observational records towards developing context for conversation activities and interpreting data
- Researcher's ongoing narratives: reflections, life writing, auto-ethnographic fragments
- Purpose: to develop storyline of focal child's experiences throughout inquiry phase

4. Interpretation (ongoing)

- Of interview data
- Guided activity toward each stage of interpretation activities
- Attention to developing contradictions, omissions, gaps, unseen beginning with initial data to end of inquiry
- Purpose: Maintained cohesion and focus on inquiry questions

Appendix D: Informal Conversation/Interviews with Students

The interview/conversations with students occurred at school, and at home, at the beginning and end of the inquiry. During my weekly visits to the classrooms, I had opportunities for short, spontaneous interactions with the children without a script, within the context of my participation in classroom activities as a volunteer. The purpose of having conversations in both sites of home and school supported children's different perspectives and views to come out through, and in relation to, different literacy practices, contexts, and activities at home and at school.

Questions posed to student at school:

- What is your favourite activity at school?
- What things do you like to do? With a friend? By yourself? With your teacher?
- Can you tell me why you like to _____ ?
- Have you ever brought something from home to school for sharing?
- There is a Smart Board in your classroom. What do you use it for?
- What does your teacher like to do on the Smart Board?
- Do you listen to music? Do you listen to stories? Do they feel different to you? What do you like to read?
- How do you and your friends at school know how to take turns?
- How do you know when your teacher needs you to listen to her?
- How do your friends and your teacher know that you have something to share with them?
- When do people listen to each other?

Questions posed to student at home:

- What is your favourite room in your home?
- What is fun to do with a friend? By yourself? With your Mom? Dad?
- Do you have a favourite toy? Book? Game?
- What do you like to do on the computer? iPad? Nano? iPod?
- What would you like to do at school that you do at home?
- What would you like to do at home that you do at school?
- If you could take something to share at school every day, what would it be?
- How do you feel when you have someone to play with? Games? Watch TV?
- What does listening mean? How do you know when your family listens to you? When do you want your family to listen to what you have to say?
- Do you read stories with someone at home? Do you have a favourite story? What is reading? What do you read?

Appendix E: Framework of Pre-Interview Activities with Students

The activities were presented to both students, and cohered with teacher plans and curricular connections.

Examples of Pre-Interview Activities Adapted from Ellis (1998; 2006)
Getting-to-Know-You Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sketch journal: Drawings or representation of important, favourite, or significant experiences, objects, or memories.• Read-aloud activity Activities to Introduce Contexts of Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child drew a picture, of event, time, place, or took photos where different contexts of literacy at home and at school.• Child drew pictures or took photos, of event, time, place, or practice of literacy that makes them feel “it’s their own” (in contexts and/or emotions). Remembering and Reflecting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drawing or telling: one of favourite activity—like to read/write; and one that is not favourite• Drawing and/or telling: something you would like to bring from home, at school, and something you would like to have at home, from school Expressing Understanding or Personal Experience About Listening <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draw two pictures: one about what it feels like when someone listens to you; one about what it feels like when someone ignores you

Appendix F: Guiding Questions for Interviews—Teachers

The detailed timeline of data collection and interview schedule appears in Appendix F. The purpose of this section was to provide examples of the types of questions that guided initial discussion during interview conversations with participating parents, teachers, and students. The interview questions reflected and also responded to influences that were uncovered in previous activities.

1. Informal conversations with the two teachers (unstructured interviews)

The first teacher interview took place in the first week of the inquiry. The first interview was the one-on-one with each teacher. The interviews occurred at a time and place that was convenient for each teacher, for about one hour. Although the schedule here suggests set questions, they will best serve as possible guiding questions for deeper conversation for the planned interviews. The first part of the interview will be devoted to setting the tone with questions related to becoming a teacher, path to the school site, teaching experience, etc.

- Can you describe your experience of teacher preparation?
- Why did you, how did you, decide on becoming an elementary teacher?
- How did your life experiences prepare you for teaching young children?
- How would you describe the skills about teaching that can't be taught that must be lived and learned "on the job"?
- Have you ever thought about what "being" means to your teaching?
- Describe your unique personal qualities that have prepared you to be a teacher of young children.
- What task, activity, or time of day in the classroom is the most challenging with 18-20 in your care?
- How do teachers "make note" and recognize young children's individual skills and expertise in the classroom?
- What does it mean when I ask, "How do young children 'bring' their lives to school?"
- Do your students tell you about their activities at home? Would you describe any of these activities as literacies? In what way?
- How would you define literacy based on your own experiences of how you use reading and writing in your everyday life?
- How do your students listen to you? To each other? How would you describe "pedagogy of listening?"
- What does listening mean to you in everyday life?
- How do you assess listening in teaching literacy?
- Have listening practices changed in larger contexts of society? What influences change?
- Have listening habits changed over time?
- What influences listening in our everyday life as a teacher?
- How would you describe your students' experiences of listening in the classroom?

One of the planned interview conversations with teachers involved a paired conversation wherein both teachers participated. The purpose of this conversation was to engage with the participants in a way that “mined” the pedagogical understanding of reflective and collaborative discussion between two teachers who share the same teaching space. The aim of the interview was to capture a depth and richness of language and talk through open-ended questions around broad themes young children, teaching, practice, listening, and literacy learning

Appendix G: Semi-structured Interviews—Parents

The parent interviews took place in the home. A portion of time was dedicated to introducing the project, establishing rapport, and answering questions. The purpose of the parent interview was to develop the context to the child participants' background experiences, everyday literacy practices in the home, and parents' thoughts/perspectives on reading and writing and listening. The questions provided general prompts and guidance to the interviews.

- How would you describe your experience of learning to read and write as a child?
- Can you recall a pivotal time, or moment at your son/daughter's age, when you thought of yourself as a reader, or writer?
- How do you carry memories and experiences of reading and writing into your feelings and actions as a parent?
- What kinds of reading and writing do you practice in your everyday life? At work? At home?
- Can you describe how you learned or acquired the ways you read and write now compared to how you learned to read and write as a child?
- Do you share reading and writing activities with your child?
- How do you read and write with your child at home?
- How would you explain reading and writing at school, and reading and writing at home?
- Has your child's decisions and choices about reading books changed now that he/she is engaged in a home-based activities from school?
- How is literacy important to learning? Does your child need the same skills that you learned as a child? Or are they different today? If so, how?
- Do you use technology in your home on a daily basis? Social media?
- What has your child learned from you by watching and listening during these activities?
- How would you describe the ways you listen to your son? Daughter? What is important about listening in your family?
- What is important to you about education today? What are your dreams for your child's experience with school?